

TOWN CENTRE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND PJA MEETING

THURSDAY 13 MAY

1:30PM

Held remotely on Zoom

NOTES - *DRAFT*

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Present:

Accessible Stratford represented by Elizabeth Dixon

BID represented by Joe Baconnet

Royal Shakespeare Company represented by Geraldine Collinge (Chair)

Shakespeare Birthplace Trust represented by Mark Ratcliffe

Shakespeare's England represented by Helen Peters

Stratford-upon-Avon District Council represented by Cllr J Fradgley, Pat Matjaszek and Tony Perks

Stratford Society represented by John Scampion

Stratford-upon-Avon Town Council represented by Cllr Toby Lee, Cllr Richard Vos and the Town Clerk, Sarah Summers

Stratford Town Trust represented by Sara Aspley

Town Transport Group represented by Colin Stewart

Warwickshire County Council represented by David Ayton-Hill, Aaron Corsi, Cllr Kate Rolfe, Stephen Rumble and Philippa Young

Co-opted: John Stacey

PJA represented by Ashley Fletcher, Annabel Keegan, Karl Kropf and David Moores

Observers: The Mayor, Cllr Tony Jackson

Clerk: Mrs. Margo Galvin

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Tim Aucott and Julie Lewis.

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed Ashley Fletcher, Annabel Keegan, Karl Kropf and David Moores from design consultants PJA to the meeting.

2. Minutes from previous meeting held on 22 April 2021.

It was noted that, as today's meeting was an extraordinary meeting of the Strategic Partnership Group, approval of the previous meeting's minutes should not be an agenda item.

3. Update on CRF

The Chair updated that Stratford would be able to benefit from knowledge sharing through the culture specific WMCA CRF bid if it were successful but would not benefit financially as Stratford is outside the combined authority area.

David Ayton-Hill confirmed that the CRF bids close on Friday 14th May for the WMCA. Warwickshire's CRF deadline is the 20 May.

4. Update on the application for the Levelling up Fund

David Ayton-Hill confirmed that Warwickshire County Council can submit one Transport bid to the Levelling Up Fund and that it wishes to support the Stratford Town Centre Bridge Street/High Project as the preferred scheme. The Levelling Up Fund is a Capital fund and the first round of bids is due on 18th June 2021. It will be a challenge to submit a compliant bid within the very tight deadline, but the recommendation is to submit in round one, rather than wait for round two in 2022.

Tony Perks confirmed that SDC is supportive of this proposed bid to improve the centre of Stratford and advised that the Council is working on a second bid related to the Gateway site that will complement this one. The two bids would work together. It is not expected that the SDC bid will cause any delay to the Birmingham Road work. He confirmed that Stratford is in a priority 2 group for potential Levelling Up funding and the recommendation is to apply in the first round while funds are still available.

The Chair advised that a consultation process will be built into the bid.

Cllr. Rolfe noted that integrated working will be essential across the Birmingham Road, Gateway and Bridge Street/High Street projects.

The Chair thanked David Ayton-Hill and Tony Perks for their updates and handed over to Annabel Keegan of PJA to present the design options for the Town Centre Bridge Street/High Street Project.

5. Proposed designs for the Bridge Street/High Street project

PJA presented four options, based on CIHT Guidance, which are summarised below. A full information pack will be circulated to members.

Option 1 - Enhanced Street (as per TC.5 Project)

Overall design approach	Widened footways, narrowed carriageways
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Key features:	Standard road markings; 100mm kerb height; controlled crossing in Bridge Street; courtesy crossing High Street; maintain public transport U-turn at roundel; 12 parking spaces (including 4 disabled) in Bridge Street; 4 disabled spaces High Street; new trees in Bridge Street.
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Option 2a - Informal Street (option b from consultant brief) – see Henley Street for reference

Overall design approach	Widened footways, narrowed carriageways
Key features:	Road markings removed; courtesy crossings in Bridge Street and Bridge Street; tree planting; 14 parking spaces (incl. 4 disabled) Bridge St, 4 disabled spaces High Street; 60mm kerb height, surfaces colour matched with Henley Street. Starts to provide more design continuity between Meer St, Henley St, Bridge Street, Waterside.

Option 2b - Informal Street (wide central space) – Ramblas style

Overall design approach	Widened central space, narrowed carriageways
Key features:	Road markings removed, courtesy crossings in Bridge Street and Bridge Street, new central space in Bridge Street for activity, tree planting Bridge Street, parklets introduced High Street; maintain U-turn at roundel; parking: loading bay only Bridge St, 4 disabled spaces High Street; 60mm kerb height. Provides a continuous pedestrian promenade from Henley St to Waterside. Pedestrians and vehicles become more integrated.

Option 3 - Pedestrian Prioritised Street (option c from consultant brief) – see Upper Henley Street for reference

Overall design approach	Widened footways, narrowed vehicle track
Key features:	Level surface, Courtesy crossing, Bridge Street pedestrianised 10.00-16.00, widened footway High Street; maintain U-turn at roundel

Observations raised by the meeting:

Pat Matjaszek noted that there may be issues accommodating the Mop fair into the proposed designs. It was confirmed that the Mop charter has specific legal requirements which need further investigation. However, it was felt that any design proposal should not be based on the needs of the Mop.

Joe Baconnet raised the question of hostile vehicle mitigation. PJA will look at this.

Cllr. Rolfe noted that the proposals focused mainly on Bridge Street and that there should be more focus on the pedestrianisation of High Street.

Elizabeth Dixon highlighted the need for accessibility requirements to be taken into account in any design options, especially if buses will not be permitted beyond the roundabout point.

Cllr. Fradgley noted that large, empty buses currently travel through the centre of town. Since all the design proposals feature narrower vehicle carriageways, smaller, electric buses could be an alternative.

Joe Baconnet noted the importance of managing the expectations of Bridge Street traders in the light of any changes to parking arrangements in the design proposals.

Overall, it was felt that a hybrid design solution might work e.g. Option 2b (wider central area: Ramblas-style) and 3 (Pedestrian Priority style). However, this needs to be discussed further.

Next steps

- PJA to issue a full information pack after this meeting.
- The Task and Finish Group to meet early w/c 17th May to discuss the options so that a co-ordinated response can be provided to PJA by Thursday 27th May.
- PJA to work up the preferred option and provide a visualisation and cost estimate.

6. Date of next meeting

The Task and Finish Group will meet on Monday 17th May at 3pm via Zoom.

Dates for future Strategic Partnership Group meetings will be confirmed shortly.

The meeting closed at 3:30pm.