

Future High Street Fund, Newton Abbot update - March 2021



Over-arching Newton Abbot Vision:

The premier South Devon market town; providing facilities for an increasing local and wider population. The town centre will become a pedestrian friendly place with good transport connections, increased leisure and entertainment opportunities, a high quality market and retail offer and an enhanced night time economy.

Future High Street Fund Purpose

Renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that drives growth, improves experience and ensures future sustainability. It will do this by providing co-funding to successful applicants to support transformative and structural changes to overcome challenges in their area.

- ▶ Strategic, Economic, Commercial, Financial and Management case
- ▶ Must comply with HM Government appraisal guidance
- ▶ Future High Street Fund (FHSF) is Assessed via; Value for Money (50%), Strategic fit (20%) & Deliverability (30%)

FHSF Vision for Newton Abbot

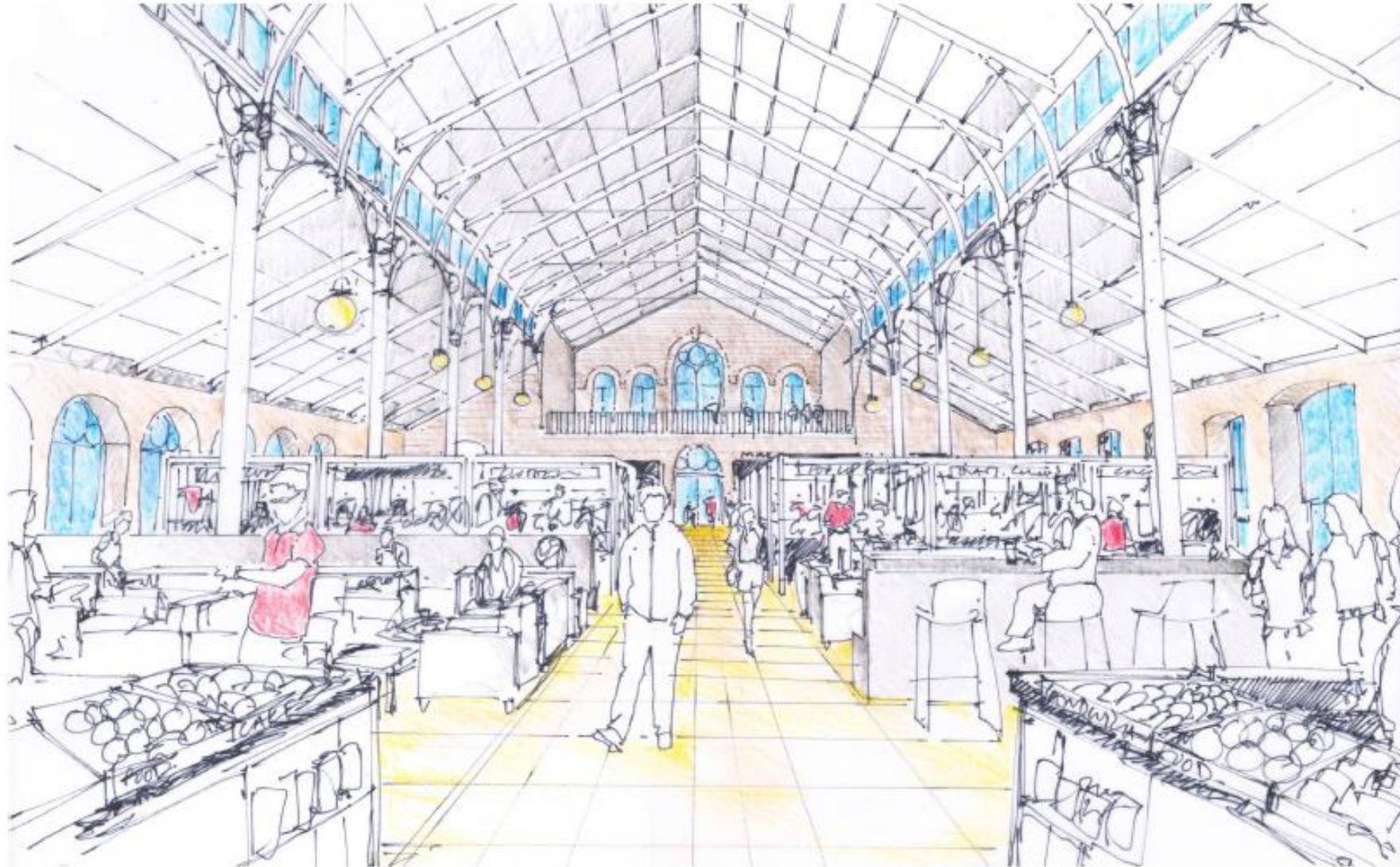
- ▶ Enhance resilience of the town centre to meet a range of current and future challenges;
- ▶ Secure the positive future of key public buildings in the town centre, which are currently a cost burden;
- ▶ Provide a broader and better quality offer of town experience to support footfall including tourism;
- ▶ Deliver improved quality of pedestrian public realm and access for all;
- ▶ Improve the safety, quality and appeal of access to town via active travel.

Re:Cap Project Proposals

- ▶ Scope of the fund:
 - Physical Infrastructure
 - Local enhancement to support local economy
 - Transport, traffic flow & access improvements
 - Supporting change of use of buildings

- ▶ Elements to the bid:
 - Markets Quarter
 - Cinema Development
 - Queen Street Enhancements
 - National Cycle Network Route 2 improvements

Market Hall & Alexandra Cinema - Vision



Perspective- Market hall
Group Ginger

Modern Multi-Screen Cinema - Vision



E1 North East Elevation
1:100

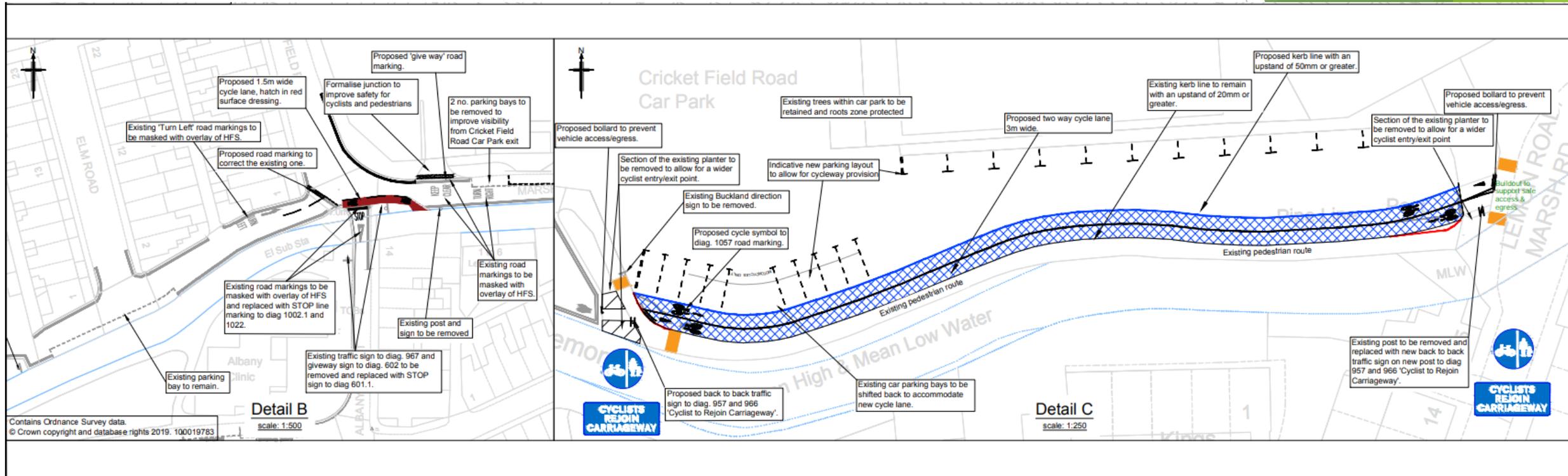


Queen Street Enhancement - Vision



Supporting sustainable modes and promoting walkable, accessible neighbourhoods

National Cycle Network Route 2 Enhancements



Enhancing the legibility and junction safety of the National Cycle Network Route 2 that serves Newton Abbot and also offers wider connectivity. This shows the stretch via Cricketfield & Victoria Place

Funding - Provisional Award

- ▶ Announced 26th Dec 2020 - provisional award of 69% Newton Abbot - £9.2million, required to revise bid package to match this figure
- ▶ Essential to retain strong Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) to be successful
- ▶ Options review by external contractor, focussed on best opportunity to secure funding/greatest impact for regeneration.
- ▶ Car park decking lowest BCR & least strong component for bid
- ▶ TDC reviewing potential for intelligent car park signing, and may be future funding opportunities that could support car park scheme

Current Town Centre Business Uses - March 2021



Newton Abbot Town Centre GOAD Map 2021

Queen Street Businesses Comparison / Trends

Change in types of businesses on Queen Street:

	2021	1999
Shops	44	82
Of which are charity shops	11	5
Take away	13	13
Café	14	4
Office/banks	18	19
Residential	6	0
Hairdressers/barbers	11	4
Services	20	5
Opticians	6	3
Vacant	7	2
Pubs	2	3

Summary - Queen St. public survey 2020_(130respondees):

- ▶ 59% agreed that the pavements along Queen Street need to be widened for improved quality of experience for pedestrians shopping and walking through town, whilst 14% had no strong opinion and 27% disagreed;
- ▶ 48% wanted an increase in disabled access parking spaces on or close to Queen Street, whilst 32% had no strong opinion and 21% did not agree;
- ▶ 86% supported enhanced greening of Queen Street, provided it is well maintained, whilst 13% disagreed with new greening;
- ▶ 55% agreed they would visit Queen Street more often if notable improvements to the public realm were made, whilst 17% had no strong opinion and 28% disagreed.

Teignbridge, Relevant Strategic Objectives

Relevant Teignbridge Ten, Core Council Strategic Objectives:

- ▶ **Going to Town** - Investing in Town Centres
- ▶ **Great Places to Live & Work** - Well designed, quality neighbourhoods
- ▶ **Out & About & Active / Moving up a Gear** - Providing opportunities for an active lifestyle / Improving travel options
- ▶ **Investing in Prosperity** - Creating jobs and wealth locally

Other relevant Documents & Policies:

- ▶ **Newton Abbot Masterplan (2018)** - Regeneration vision for Newton Abbot, link: [Masterplan - Teignbridge District Council](#)
- ▶ **Teignbridge Local Plan (2013 - 2033)** - supports priority active & sustainable travel modes, improvement of the built environment and sustainable town centres. No net loss of car parking in the town centre not feasible now as part of FHSF bid, loss of up to 35 spaces, but part of a broader review.
- ▶ Supports redevelopment of town centre markets area to take advantage of its strategic position to accommodate various events and markets, expanding retail, leisure, cultural, cinema and food and drink offer.

Relevant Newton Abbot Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Objectives

- ▶ Ensuring coherent cycling network - legible & safe
- ▶ Remodelling traffic priorities Queen Street
- ▶ Retaining & enhancing greening
- ▶ Supporting & encouraging footfall in town

Relevant Devon County Council Strategic Objectives

▶ Devon Carbon Plan

Collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders to achieve net-zero by 2050.

▶ Health & Wellbeing - One Small Step

Measures to support a healthier lifestyle choices, including increased physical activity and weight loss.

▶ Road Safety

Improving the safety for all road users and with an increased focus within towns and cities on the most vulnerable road users - pedestrians and cyclists.

▶ Walking & Cycling Investment Strategy

Includes measures to improve the active travel connections in the town centre area of Newton Abbot, including improved linkage between the rail station & core of town.

▶ Devon Economic Recovery Plan

Newton Abbot cited as 2nd most vulnerable locality in Devon as part of the DCC Covid Economic Recovery Prospectus

Historic Market Town celebrating it's 800th year





Markets Quarter Vision

The Markets Quarter incorporating a mixed-use retail, leisure, community and business uses will respect the town's heritage, whilst stimulating the local economy and providing a strong identity through placemaking and place management.

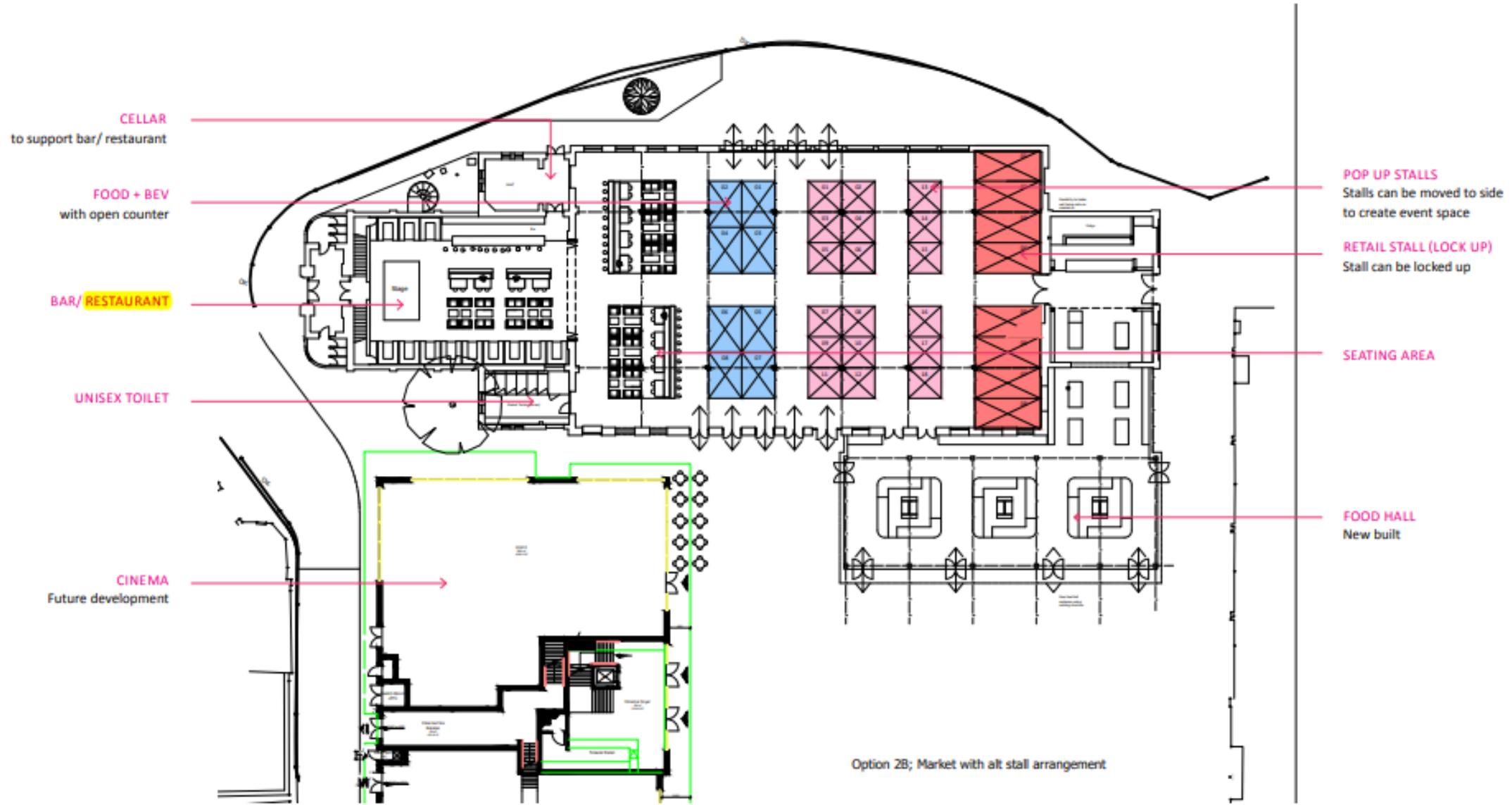
Market Hall & Alexandra Cinema - Vision



Perspective - Food hall

Group Ginger

EXISTING SIDE ADDITION RETAIL UNITS REMOVED, REDUCED POP UPS INC. STAGE IN CORN EXCHANGE, 1:350@A3















Summary - Market & Alexandra Cinema engagement survey 2020

- ▶ 86% agree the market is important to the town but it is not seen as a destination in its own right.
- ▶ Main demographic 45 years plus and we need to appeal to a broader market.
- ▶ The incorporation of the Alexandra Cinema & the Market Hall has attracted opposition, Memorandum of Understanding is being developed to work with NADMACS to bring forward the inclusion of the theatre element in the wider scheme.
- ▶ The public survey showed widespread support for the scheme in principle, with a desire for more fresh food retail, the addition of street food and a modern market aesthetic which offers independent retailers, with more live music, events and evening entertainment.

Stakeholder Response

NADMACS and Friend's of the Alexandra

- ▶ Supportive of regeneration of Newton Abbot Town Centre and realisation that such opportunities do not often arise.
- ▶ Key concern is loss of a dedicated theatre space, with a dedicated stage and accompanying layout via the internal reconfiguration of the Alexandra Cinema & key question is why can't similar provision be achieved within the upcoming delivery proposals.
- ▶ The FHSF criteria requires transformational structural changes that offer a sustainable long-term outcome, a redevelopment or refurbishment alone would not fit the funding stream or necessary robust outcomes.

Market traders

- ▶ All Food Hall respondents supported the addition of street food.
- ▶ The key concern for traders was the pop-up style flexible retail stall and the potential loss of securable retail space. However, this is a valuable part of the delivery offer as it provides the flexibility and resilience required under FHSF.

Further Info. Vision - Market Hall & Alexandra

- ▶ The cinema operator is already committed to moving into new multi-plex facilities to meet the evolving needs of their customers.
- ▶ The Alexandra is primarily used as a cinema with the theatre space only currently being utilised for a few weeks per year by a local amateur dramatics group. The scheme focuses on internal reconfiguration to enable the building to operate from the day into the evening.
- ▶ Opening up the architecture of the venue will showcase the building's heritage features sensitively, revealing the windows & enhancing the venue, whilst making it an appealing place to spend time.
- ▶ Live music performances, open mic nights, comedy nights and live performances by the local youth theatre and amateur dramatics groups, retaining the spirit of the venue as a community and performance space.
- ▶ Various options were considered, including retaining a dedicated theatre space, but such a facility was not deemed viable in the medium to long term without significant financial support. This would likely have declined further due to Covid-19 impact.
- ▶ The stakeholder issues raised can be addressed in part, at detailed design stage.

Cultural Quarter for Newton Abbot

Newton's Place
£2m investment 2020



Passmore Edwards Library
£1.7m investment 2012



Market Hall & Alexandra Cinema - Vision



Local Evidence

- ▶ Town centre vacancies were 4.5% in 2016 and 6.5% in 2019
- ▶ The 2019 rate for footfall on Queen Street is 13.49% lower than the average rate over the 5-year period between 2015 - 2019 inclusive.
- ▶ Market Hall footfall declined by -35% over 5 year period (to March 2020)
- ▶ FHSF offers the ability to enhance the range and quality of town centre attraction, including evening economy, with potential to attract more tourism.
- ▶ Deliverability of new build multiplex cinema had stalled due to viability & required securing this type of external funding.
- ▶ Independent operation of the Market Hall and Alexandra Cinema buildings are not sustainable, as supported by independent business case assessments, risking the future of these important heritage buildings.
- ▶ Strong demand, via Teignbridge Cycle Forum's wide range of stakeholders, for enhancing the NCN Route 2 in town centre vicinity.

Case Studies & Wider Evidence - Active Localities

- ▶ A lack of physical activity contributes directly to a notable proportion of long-term illnesses and premature deaths in the UK, and costs the country an estimated £7.4billion including £0.9billion direct costs to the NHS (Public Health England 2016).
- ▶ In Teignbridge, 68% of adults are overweight or obese , higher than both the Devon and UK average (61%), and reinforced by low levels of physical activity. Feedback indicates that safer and more appealing walking and cycling routes would encourage wider uptake (Census 2011).
- ▶ Enabling people to cycle and walk increases the level of social interaction on streets and in neighbourhoods. This has been shown to have a positive impact on issues such as loneliness and builds improved levels of trust in communities (Living Streets, 2020).
- ▶ Access to private motor vehicle is not feasible for some households. Lack of transport options is recognised as a factor in joblessness (ODPM, 2003) and insufficient low-cost transport options can be linked to declines in employment (CfIT, 2002).
- ▶ Property near high-quality cycle paths and networks have been found to support higher sales prices and walkability attracts higher rents, revenues and resale values (Raje & Saffrey 2016).

Case Studies & Wider Evidence - Active Localities

- ▶ Cycling contributes approximately £5.4billion annually to the UK economy via economic benefits to businesses, as well as wellbeing benefits (DfT 2015).
- ▶ Monitoring of footfall is a good indicator of business performance; this is impacted by the quality of the shopping environment.
- ▶ Numerous studies have shown that while cyclists spend less per visit, they tend to visit shops more regularly resulting in higher overall spends (e.g. Clifton 2012; TfL 2011; O'Connor et al 2011).
- ▶ Piccadilly, Stoke-on-Trent, a £10 million investment to make the area more pedestrian-friendly = 30% more footfall. New businesses, cafes and restaurants have opened. The project's success has led to further strategic investment in public realm improvements in the town.
- ▶ Coventry City Centre - new pedestrian areas, a new civic square, clearer signs and better placement of street furniture were credited with a 25% rise in footfall in the town centre on Saturdays.
- ▶ Altrincham, Greater Manchester, £15 million investment in the public, new market, better streets, pavements and crossing points are credited with increasing footfall by 25% between 2010 and 2017, and further year-on-year increases were expected. Town centre vacancy rates also dropped from 30% in 2010 to 7.9% in 2018.

Queen Street Vision - Artists Impression



Supporting sustainable modes and promoting walkable, accessible neighbourhoods

Letter of Support - Newton Abbot Community Interest Company

Generally in support of FHSF proposals - but some Queen Street concerns:

- ▶ Ensure tree planting is significant & firm part of this element of work;

Stakeholders will continue to be involved via the detailed design process on species & locations, to ensure good links with Newton Arboretum work. Good-quality tree pits cost up to £10,000. There is a budget of up to £60,000 reserved for tree planting & high-quality herb/flower planters.

- ▶ Seek to reduce traffic flow & speeds on Queen Street;

There is budget allotted to resolve the review of potential for traffic restrictions on Queen Street. Speed will become 20mph & remain so. Improvements to side-road crossings are included.

Letter of Support - Town Centre Partnership

General support for FHSF proposals except Queen Street - key concerns:

- ▶ Avoid loss of parking in the eastern reaches of Queen Street to support current business use;

This has been addressed as part of the revision following engagement.

- ▶ Provision needed for safely crossing eastern reaches of Queen Street;

Detailed design process to review potential for enhanced safety of informal crossing provision (eastern end).

- ▶ Focus on widening pavements from Albany Street westwards to Courtenay Street;

This has been recognised in the proposals following the engagement process and will form part of the draft detailed designs that will be consulted on.

- ▶ Ensure greening and outdoor seating does not negate the benefits of widening pavements;

Feedback to-date will be informing the detailed design process, to ensure the maximum benefits are attained from widening pavements, and there will also be further stakeholder discussion and public consultation.

- ▶ There is potential for greening at The Avenue, Devon Square & Lemon Square junctions;

This already forms part of the proposals.

Letter of Support - Chamber of Trade & Commerce

General support for FHSF proposals - but Queen Street/NCN Route 2 key concerns:

- ▶ Further provision for pedestrians at junctions, & for safely crossing eastern end;

Detailed design process to include consideration of continuous crossings where possible & to review potential for enhanced safety of informal crossing provision (eastern end).

- ▶ There is no attempt to slow or reduce movement via Queen St.;

There is budget allotted to continue to review the potential for traffic restrictions on Queen Street, which DCC requires further understanding of prior to committing to. This will include continued discussions with key stakeholders and the potential to trial this via public events fund. Speed limit will become 20mph & remain so.

- ▶ Supportive of pavement widening in the western reaches;

The objective is to achieve the greatest widening capacity at the western reaches and that will be reviewed in more detail during the production of detailed design plans, with stakeholder & public input.

- ▶ Pedestrianise Albany Street;

Most stakeholders are promoting the desire for traffic restrictions for the western reaches of Queen Street and this means that traffic would require to utilise Albany Street to exit Queen Street.

Letter of Support - Chamber of Trade & Commerce continued...

- ▶ Greening is not properly incorporated, meaning lost opportunities;

Draft proposals in engagement process did not specify full detail the greening measures to allow for open ideas to be put forward & the Chamber has shared some really useful inputs, and will continue to be involved via the detailed design process. There is a budget of up to £60,000 reserved for greening.

- ▶ Avoid loss of parking in the eastern reaches of Queen Street to support current business use;

This has been addressed as part of the revision following engagement.

- ▶ Cycle parking along Queen Street requested; this has been incorporated following engagement.
- ▶ Proper link rail station to town centre needed; budget is allotted for provision of a safe link into the Devon Square/Oak Place network, with further delivery anticipated via Garden Communities.
- ▶ Cycling on pavement suggested for Queen St./partial stretches of Queen St.; this was reviewed but considered a high-risk for conflict with pedestrians in this shopping environment.
- ▶ Marsh Road, clarity needed for all users; this is being covered by 20mph limit & instating signs illustrating to motorists to expect vulnerable road users on-foot.

Letter of Support - Wolborough Residents' Association

General support for FHSF proposals - but Alexandra & Queen Street key concerns:

- ▶ Concern over the loss of use of the Alexandra Cinema as a theatre; The Alexandra Cinema is only used as a theatre space for approximately 3-weeks per year. Continuation of its current use is unsustainable and is likely to result in public loss of a focal building in Newton Abbot. During the detailed design process key stakeholder discussions will continue, based on the bid principles.
- ▶ Parking reconfigurations & wider pavements generally supported, provided greening measures don't compromise width gained & ensure overall transformation. Retain access for less mobile persons; Detailed design process to include potential for provision of limited-mobility priority spaces and disabled parking capacity retained or enhanced. Tree planting & other greening locations will be fully considered and consulted on with stakeholders & public.
- ▶ There is no attempt to slow or reduce movement via Queen St.; There is budget allotted to continue to resolve the potential for traffic restrictions on Queen Street. This will include continued discussions with key stakeholders. Speed limit will become 20mph & remain so.

Next Steps...

Subject to final approvals internally:

- ▶ Cycling enhancement delivery 2021/22, led by DCC (with key TDC support)
- ▶ Queen Street enhancement delivery process 2021-2023/4, led by DCC (with key TDC support)
- ▶ Market & cinema project delivery process 2021-2024/5, led by TDC, and to include planning application/s.

Next Steps, Engagement Plan...

Queen Street proposals:

- ▶ Hold key stakeholder input sessions during production of draft detailed design plans (anticipated summer/autumn 2021)
- ▶ Public consultation on draft detailed design plans, for minimum 6-week period (anticipated winter 2021/spring 2022)
- ▶ Review & factor in feedback and report back via key stakeholder update sessions & via webpages / other media.
- ▶ Continue to discuss with key stakeholders the delivery timeframe and any major changes.

Market Hall & Alexandra Cinema:

- ▶ Hold key stakeholder engagement sessions during production of draft detailed design plans (anticipated autumn 2021)
- ▶ Public engagement on draft detailed design plans (anticipated winter 2021/spring 2022)
- ▶ Review & factor in feedback and report back via key stakeholder update sessions & via webpages / other media.
- ▶ Continue to discuss with key stakeholders the delivery timeframe and any major changes.

Finishing thoughts....

- ▶ This is an unusual opportunity to benefit from a sizable investment into our most populous Teignbridge town.
- ▶ The FHSF package will form one notable part of a wider vision for the town, and seeks to ensure versatility, sustainability and resilience, and a place that feels good to spend time in and encourages visitors.
- ▶ Investing into a town is important: it adds value to a locality, supports vitality and enhances appeal for further investment as part of a vision, driving it forward.
- ▶ The Council is looking at the potential scope for Newton Abbot Garden Community and what this means locally.