

TROWBRIDGE FUTURE HIGH STREET FUND

Update Report for Area Board

7 January 2020



Inner Circle Consulting have been appointed to develop a bid for the Future High Streets Fund for Trowbridge Town Centre. The basis of the bid will be a Green Book Business Case for 3-5 interventions, for a maximum total of £15m.

This will also include an update to the 2014 Trowbridge Masterplan and a Delivery Strategy for the identified interventions. The scope of this workstream is to update the 2014 masterplan through: a) acknowledging interventions that have been delivered since its completion, b) testing the deliverability and suitability of the remaining proposals, and c) identifying other opportunities, if appropriate.

The delivery strategy will focus on demonstrating how the interventions could be delivered, and will include a cashflow model showing incomings and outgoings of funding for the lifetime of the masterplan delivery period. This piece of work will support the financial and the management cases for the FHSF bid.

Below is an update on progress for these workstreams.

Masterplan Update

A review of the unimplemented interventions is nearing completion, focusing on testing whether the aims of the 2014 masterplan are still deliverable. The aim of the review is to identify which aspects of the 2014 masterplan are no longer appropriate or deliverable due to market conditions and develop alternatives to these, then to produce a costed delivery plan to facilitate delivery of the whole.

A summary of the findings to date is as follows:

- The current masterplan proposals are based on 'good practice' for any town centre, and generally relevant for the town centre's needs. This means, however, that some of the proposals are fairly generic and could benefit from a more place-specific approach, guidance and intended outcomes.
- There is a need to develop an approach and timescale for delivery of the masterplan proposals – this will be addressed through the Delivery Strategy.
- There is an opportunity to identify how the current and potential proposals meet other aspirations, such as environmental and economic growth targets for the town centre and, potentially, the region.

Next steps:

- Inner Circle and the Client Team are working to conclude the initial findings by end January with a view to undertaking Stakeholder Engagement with the Area Board, key stakeholders (eg. Town Hall Trust), and Senior Officers by 14 February 2020.

Future High Street Fund (FHSF) bid

A Rough Order of Magnitude (ROM) setting out a high-level FHSF ask was submitted to MHCLG in early November. The basis of the bid is to enhance Trowbridge's offer to attract longer visitor stays, improving movement within the town centre, and enabling high quality development and town centre offer.

Emerging proposals, which will be tested with stakeholders, are grouped across three themes:

1. *Creating a new cultural quarter*, possibly through the refurbishment of the Town Hall as a social venue and arts centre, providing a focal point for the town centre.

2. *Enabling good growth & vitality*: promotion and curation of vacant spaces within the town centre to facilitate the development of a vibrant and desirable offer of retail, leisure and commercial economy to improve vitality and the evening economy offer. This will be done through land assembly at Court St and lower Castle St.

3. *Improving footfall and accessibility*: highway works to improve safe movement and convenient pedestrian access within the town centre.

Next steps:

- A meeting is scheduled with Government to review proposals on 9 January.
- Stakeholder engagement to refine proposals prior to submission of the draft Business case (target dates: 27 Jan – 21 Feb)
- A draft business case is under development for submission to Government mid-March.

Timescales overview

