

Chippenham One Plan

Executive summary





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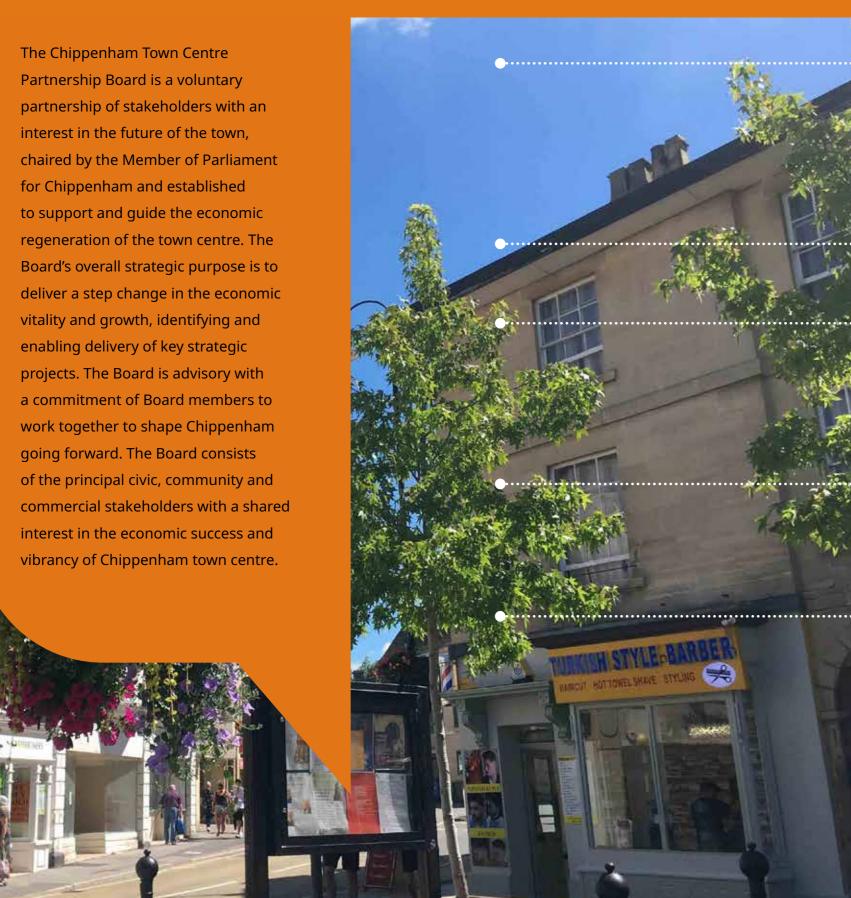
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Welcome

Welcome to this summary of the proposals of the Chippenham One Plan. This document provides an overview of the plans for Chippenham Town Centre proposed by the Chippenham Town Centre Partnership Board to boost the town's economy, enhance the environment and celebrate its heritage. It draws upon the work of the Partnership Board member organisations and other town centre stakeholders over many years, brought together though the One Plan consultation that took place in the summer of 2023.

The proposals presented are intended to provide Chippenham and its residents with a sound and workable framework for future development and investment. We believe that with the right interventions and carefully managed growth, the proposals set out in the One Plan offer a bright and distinctive future for Chippenham town centre.

What and who is the Chippenham Town Centre Partnership Board?



What is the purpose of this document?

Clear messages from the community have been received through Neighbourhood Plan, Town Centre Work and the One Plan consultation

Now it's time for us to move from 'planning' to 'delivery'

You asked that all our shared ideas and strategies be brought together in a simple document setting out the future - 'One Plan'

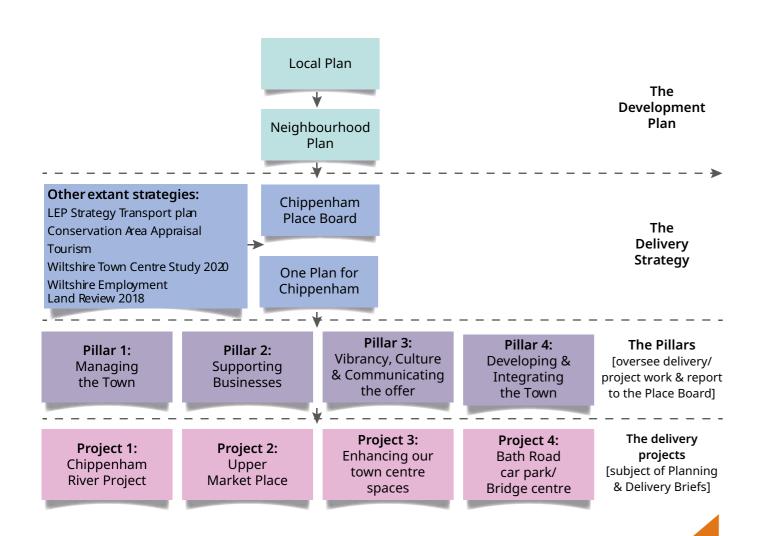
Together we have identified key projects to help Chippenham evolve and prosper

Fundamentally you confirmed to us that we are ready to start delivering together The One Plan seeks to provide the basis for a
Framework Masterplan for Chippenham with the aim
of boosting Chippenham's economy, enhancing the
environment and celebrating the town's heritage.
It purposely focuses on a few priority projects that
would boost the economy and support the vibrancy
and sustainability of the town centre. Many of
these schemes are focused on features that make
Chippenham such a wonderful place to live, work and
visit. These include beautiful natural settings such as
the river, Chippenham's historic heritage and making
more of our town centre spaces and regeneration
opportunities.

Consultation on the emerging One Plan took place from April to June 2023 and feedback from this has informed the masterplan (Chippenham_One_Plan_Consultation_Report_APPROVED.pdf). There will be further opportunity for consultation as and when the individual projects in the One Plan are progressed.

The following diagram on page five affirms the overarching messages that the community has consistently told to the Partnership Board through various consultations over the past number of years.

What is the status of this document and how does it relate to other strategies such as the Neighbourhood plan?



The One Plan brings together existing ideas and strategies in a simple, coordinating document setting out the future. It draws on the Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan as well as work undertaken by the Town Team and other community stakeholders; it is not a replacement of the important work that has gone into those documents, nor is it starting afresh.

The One Plan is not part of the statutory Development Plan but is part of the delivery strategy for the various projects identified to support Chippenham's regeneration.

Why the need to change Chippenham?

There is clear evidence that town centres across the country have experienced significant economic headwinds in recent years, including the impact of online shopping, new working patterns and the broader economic downturn and associated cost of living challenges of recent years. Traditional forms of high street uses and the reason for those visits have declined and evidence shows that consumers expect a broader offer based on experiences rather than just the ability to buy necessities. Chippenham is not immune to these trends. The Board has produced a Baseline Report which sets out the evidence of factors exerting pressure on Chippenham Town Centre and that can be read here Chippenham Baseline Report 250122 (2).pdf

Challenges facing Chippenham Town Centre

Public transport, pedestrian and cycling connectivity and links to the town centre and railway station need to be improved. The railway is a barrier to north/south crosstown traffic.
Connections are few and contribute to a bottleneck.

The road network is congested with 'bottlenecks' in and around the town centre.

Chippenham does not attract cultural visits apart from a small percentage visiting Lacock Abbey. Business parks and out of town retail parks/supermarkets do not complement the town centre and draw visitors and spending power away from it.

Chippenham retains a large proportion of convenience and DIY/hardware shopping trips but this is mainly to out of centre locations.

Chippeham leaks the majority of comparison shopping. Improvements to retail may have ceiling due to the influence of competing destinations such as Bath, Bristol, Swindon Outlet Centre and Cribbs Causeway.

Retail driven improvements may be challenging due to the current state of the UK non-foods sector and a reluctance of retailers to open new stores/ expand existing floorspace.

Summary of what the baseline reveals

Changing role of town centres - from necessities to experiences.

Lack of a single, consensual vision has been a negative.

Great opportunities remain which are currently unrealised.

Simple interventions can make a big difference.

A lack of profile for local distinctiveness - what is the unique offer?

The river is only a partially realised asset with far more to give.

REAL ALE & CIDER HOUSE

Growth in homes needs to be matched by town centre renaissance. Successful funding bids benefit from a coherent single strategy and a list of shovel ready projects.

The town needs celebrating and an image boost.

What can be done to help Chippenham adapt to the pressures identified?

Chippenham has many important underlying strengths in its core town centre assets. A historic market town with a diverse range of retail and commercial spaces, fine public spaces and community / environmental assets all within close proximity to the town's principal commercial and civic amenities. Through a coordinated partnership approach, these assets may be maximised to positively address the challenges and pressures identified and support the ongoing success and prosperity of the town. The One Plan provides a summary of the plans proposed which aim to boost the town's economy, enhance the environment, and celebrate its heritage. Some of the challenges and opportunities, linked to the town's principal strategic assets were highlighted by the community in its response to the One Plan consultation, these are considered below;

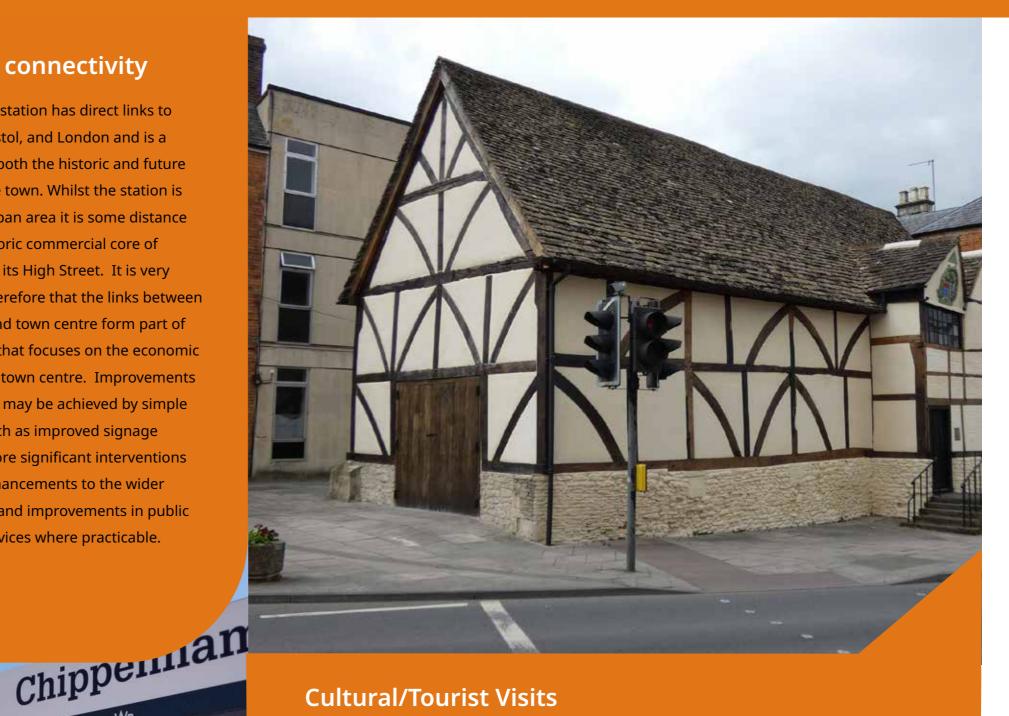


Public Transport in the town centre

Public transport connectivity and access is acknowledged as an important component of any sustainable growth strategy and should be a consideration in any regeneration plans for Chippenham Town Centre. In order to adapt to the pressures, improvements to connectivity and access may be achieved through upgraded signage, enhanced routes, and better accessibility both to and from the town centre. The consultation identified that residents would like to see reduced car presence in the town centre which to be achieved may necessitate improvements to the accessibility of public transport.

Railway connectivity

Chippenham station has direct links to Swindon, Bristol, and London and is a key factor in both the historic and future growth of the town. Whilst the station is within the urban area it is some distance from the historic commercial core of the town and its High Street. It is very important therefore that the links between the station and town centre form part of any strategy that focuses on the economic vitality of the town centre. Improvements to these links may be achieved by simple measures such as improved signage though to more significant interventions including enhancements to the wider public realm and improvements in public transport services where practicable.



Cultural/Tourist Visits

Chippenham has many important historic assets, listed buildings and public spaces. Important buildings in the town centre such Yelde Hall, Town Hall and Neeld Hall are complemented by visitor facilities including the town Museum and History Centre. Taken in combination these are a very significant cultural and community assets that may not be fully realised and could through a coordinated and curated approach brought to greater prominence and significance as components of the town's visitor offer.

Retail sector issues

Whist Chippenham remains a vibrant town centre, there is potential for improvement through a reduction in vacancy rates and making better use of some ageing retail spaces that do not serve the needs of modern consumers. Addressing these challenges should be a key part of any strategy to improve the sustainability and long-term viability of Chippenham High Street and the town's commercial core.

Although the composition of town centre uses has changed in line with national trends, the opportunities to address a reduced uptake in retail uses is significant with the potential for redevelopment of the River Frontage and Upper Market Place areas. The need for a greater focus on leisure and experience related activities to attract and retain visitors (cafe's, dining other leisure uses) alongside traditional retail was a key theme that came out of the consultation.

In order to adapt, the town centre needs to develop a clearer sense of its own distinctiveness. The river frontage and potential enhancements to both Emery Gate and Borough Parade shopping centres provide the key opportunities to deliver this.

Opportunities for Chippenham Town Centre

> Chippenham benefits from good built environment with a historic centre that is not used to its benefit.

Chippenham's food and beverage uses are more popular during the day than in the evening.

The Reel cinema on Marshfield Road attracts a 64% market share.

Town Hall
Neeld Community and Arts Centre
Emery Gide Scooping Centre
Borough Fairade Shooping Centre
Cinema ©

The town retains three

quarters of trips for

health and beauty goods.

Chippenham has excellent train links to London and Bristol, but improved access is needed to the station.

The river front is one of the town's greatest amenities but is not being utilised to its full potential and access to it could be improved.

Vacancy rate in the town centre has remained quite constant, although the make-up of the town centre has changed with an increase in service uses and a reduction in comparison goods retailers in line with national trends.

There is an opportunity to make the town centre a vibrant meeting place for the community to shop, interact and enjoy their leisure time, and a visitor destination in its own right.



Opportunities to re-dress the balance between the town centre and out of centre locations should be explored.

At crossing of the River Avon, at the south end of Charter Park, could provide pedestrians and centre locations should be explored.

At Solies

The clear themes and messages to emerge

> Riverside enhancement and flood prevention are widely supported but water levels are an issue.

Island Park is NOT to be paved, but a diversity of uses appropriate to its enhancement as a **green** would be strongly supported.

The Upper Market Place is a **prime** area for more planting and pedestrianisation facilitating a café culture.

The consultation has **confirmed** that public art installations are not seen as an important element in **enhancing** Chippenham Town Centre.

Being easier for the visitor and user of the Town Centre to easily find their way around was strongly supported by the majority of responders.

There is a **clear** thread

that Chippenham needs

more **experiences** and **activities** to draw people

in and **increase** dwell

time and in particular

the **youth** of the town.

more activities to occupy



untapped demand for more food and drink **opportunities** especially with outside dining in a green and enhanced environment.

There is high and

The **heritage** and visual appeal of the town centre needs to be displayed better.

Access to the Station and the Olympiad should not be restricted and any enhancements to the High street should be planned around this.



More trees and **greenery** are a consistent message.

While a majority want cars to be less dominant, there is still a need to ensure ample, easy parking to **support** easy visits to the town.

There was a clear preference expressed for any redevelopment of the Bath Road site to maintain **good** levels of parking and include leisure and retail



Existing building should where possible be altered so that they have an active frontage and embrace the Riverside.



The installation of traffic lights at Station Hill has been unpopular and is **clearly** a sore point with many of the community.

These messages have been condensed into 5 overarching themes. This has provided the basis on which the delivery of each project will be founded:

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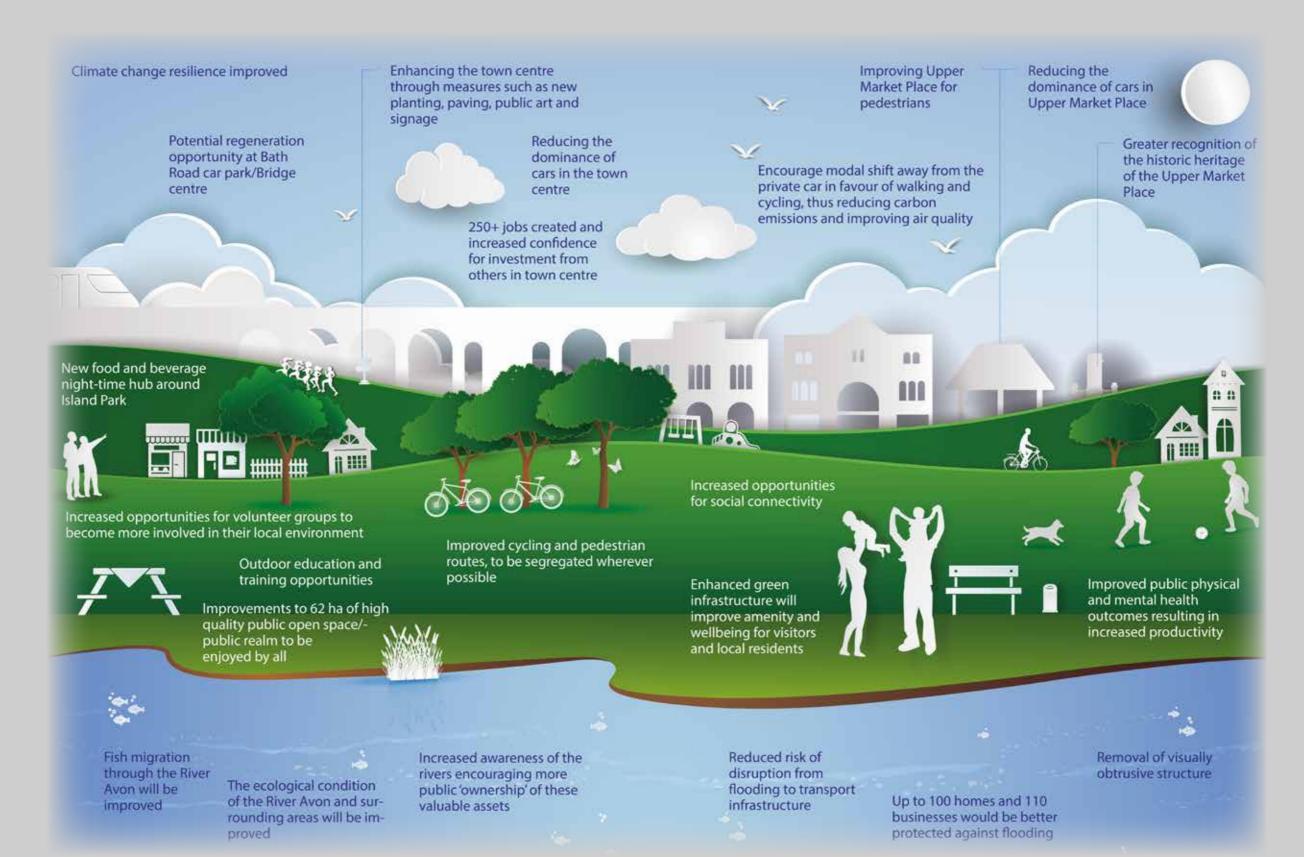




A bold vision for Chippenham Town Centre

Together we will seek to deliver a series of projects that will transform the experience of Chippenham Town Centre. It will become a leisure destination of choice, with footfall increased and a thriving, vibrant hospitality, leisure and retail offer. Chippenham's River

Green Corridor will be a lasting legacy of riverside green space and urban wildlife habitat and around 62 ha of public open space will be enhanced. The One Plan projects will recognise and enhance Chippenham's important historic heritage and will create an enterprising and thriving town centre.



Delivery based on understanding the varying character of different areas within the town centre

It is acknowledged by the Partnership Board that there are distinctive character areas within Chippenham, each of which provide identity and purpose to the various parts of the central area. A 'one-size-fits-all' approach to the regeneration of the town would, therefore, not be appropriate. Instead, individual projects will be tailored to the character of different areas of the town centre based on analysis of each area and evidence gathering, taking account of each area's urban form, heritage and existing and emerging land uses.

Defining different parts of Chippenham as quarters is an approach that is being developed locally and which are illustrated below:

Key:

- New Road/Upper New Road
- The Bridge
- Town Bridge
- High Street
- Artisan quarter
 - Leisure and learning quarter
- Town centre quarter
- Heritage quarter
- Upper Market Place
- Local Plan Town Centre Boundary

This quarters approach can form the basis of an overarching approach to the regeneration of the town centre.

Projects

Set out below are a series of projects that were presented to the community as possible opportunities in the One Plan consultation.

Chippenham River Project

The River Green Corridor, to include the replacement of the radial gate /weir, along with riverside enhancement and flood prevention was widely supported in the consultation responses. The responses to the options presented was less clear cut, with some preference shown for the retention of some form of amenity water level as part of an overall scheme.

In response to the consultation feedback, a strategic River Green Corridor Masterplan will be prepared. This will provide a framework to guide the phased development of the River Park project and the Board will seek for this to be endorsed by Wiltshire Council as a material planning consideration in the determination of any future planning application affecting land within the masterplan area.

The Master Plan approach will provide the following benefits:

- Reduced flood risk to residents and businesses.
- · Building climate change resilience.
- Enhancing existing, and creating new, spaces for biodiversity.
- Improving public enjoyment of the river.
- Helping to deliver well-designed new development which makes a positive contribution to the river.
- To provide a clear vision for community, stakeholders, developers and landowners.
- To ensure high quality development along the river corridors.
- To ensure development enhances the river setting.
- To provide guidance on flood alleviation and ecological improvements.
- To ensure that development is appropriate, and that the impacts of development are effectively understood.
- To engage local communities.

The first phase of this masterplan will include the removal of the existing radial gate at the end of its useful life, provide amenity water levels where practicable, and improve the ecological value of the watercourse.

This phase will be led by the Environment Agency working alongside the Town Centre Partnership Board. The EA has been working with the Partnership Board through the One Plan consultation to support the principle of a partnership approach where a scheme may deliver wider benefits for the local community alongside the works that the EA is required to complete under its statutory obligations.

Enhancement of the River Green Corridor, whilst maintaining and encouraging the

ecological value, is an essential part of wider regeneration within Chippenham. The masterplanning approach will ensure the priorities of the river are fully considered, the development is endorsed as a material planning consideration, and wider development acts cohesively with the interests of the natural environment.

There will also be an opportunity for subsequent phases of the River Green Corridor Masterplan, including the redevelopment the riverside frontage and improved access to the river. The Partnership board will explore funding opportunities for investment from the private sector and landowners.



The River Frontage

The river frontage, to the rear of Emery Gate and across Monkton Park, provides substantial opportunity for enhancement, which is well-supported by the community, as was made clear during consultation.

The existing facades affronting the river do not take full advantage of the potential to create a destination for retail, dining and leisure. The board acknowledges that this is an asset and therefore the One Plan advocates for this area to be enhanced, with the facades reimagined to create an active river frontage that facilitates food, beverage, and leisure, accommodating cafe culture and redefining

Chippenham as a destination with a successful public realm.

Combining several uses across the river frontage, in line with demand and the baseline evidence, whilst also actioning works to the river green corridor for enhancement of the natural environment, will aim to create a cohesive scheme that builds on the existing blue and green infrastructure. This aims to address several challenges identified in Chippenham, to include cultural/tourist visits, the decline in town centre shipping, retail unit vacancies and wider economic growth.

Upper Market Place and Enhancing the Town Centre

Feedback from the consultation made it clear that the majority support enhancing the Upper Market Place and the town centre more generally (p17-23 Chippenham_One_Plan_Consultation_Report_APPROVED.pdf) and optimising Chippenham's historic heritage.

To do this, the One Plan recommends that a number of actions are taken include strengthening of the Town core via continued support for new independent and national retailing. When development opportunities

occur seek to deliver improvements of the retail offer, public domain enhancements and opportunities for living and leisure. A key objective is to create a new greened environment with street trees and planters with seating thereby delivering people-friendly streets that improve the pedestrian and cycle experience and enhance wayfinding while reducing impact of the car.

A simple Public Realm Strategy would provide a "blueprint" to help inform and direct future schemes and changes to the public realm as they come forward in a considered and holistic way. It would set parameters for future projects. Public Realm Projects that come forward will then be subject to individual detailed design process and consultation as and when appropriate.

A Public Realm Strategy would also help to make credible funding bids for enhancement of Chippenham. The board will ensure that funding opportunities are fully explored to deliver individual public realm projects. For these reasons a public realm strategy would complement this One Plan and is something that the Place Board will consider producing when adequate resources are identified.

The High Street, The Bridge and New Road/ Upper New Road

The simple public realm strategy will also incorporate this area and the core objective of strengthening the retail and hospitality offer will apply here also. When development opportunities occur seek to deliver improvements of the retail offer, public

domain enhancements and opportunities for living and leisure. While a new balance between pedestrian and motorist will be sought care will be taken to ensure that vital vehicular access to the station and Olympiad is maintained and if possible enhanced

Bath Road Car Park/Bridge Centre

This site has been highlighted for potential redevelopment, and as such the community were consulted on its potential uses. It is a complex site and no firm consensus emerged from the consultation. Therefore this project should be considered more long term than other in this Plan and immediate delivery work will revolve around further evidence assessment, discussions and trying to produce a vision for the areas future which will satisfy all stakeholders and be of most benefit to

Chippenham. The visioning exercise will be followed by the development of a masterplan to guide future development.

Broader development of the town centre aims to address parking provision, and as such the Bath Road car park will be considered as part of wider parking facilities in Chippenham.

Several uses were suggested and have been considered. Highlighting the loss of the former youth centre and demand for more

leisure facilities, the One Plan acknowledges that the site has significant potential as a key location for an extension to the town centre, in cohesions with broader development.

Development will ensure sympathetic development noting the sites situation within the Chippenham Conservation Area and presence of Grade II Listed Bank House. Delivery of this aspect of the town centre regeneration will form part of a long-term project and fulfilment of the project is not anticipated to be imminent. Local policy advocates for the Bath Road Car Park and Bridge Centre area to form a retail extension to the town centre, and the One Plan recommends that this form part of the wider public realm strategy.

One Plan delivery phase

Now that you have made it clear what projects we should pursue to revitalise the Town Centre, the next step is to focus on delivery.

Now we get cracking!

The projects in the One Plan cannot be delivered by a single organisation. Delivery will be dependent on a range of different partners working together, including the Partnership Board, Natural England, the Environment Agency, Historic England, infrastructure providers, utility companies, private sector representatives, and the community. The One Plan is therefore based on partnership and consensus between all these different stakeholders. Its recommendations have been informed by the views of the people of Chippenham and the result of which is a document that is for the Town and its people.

The projects and interventions within the One Plan will be supported by a detailed delivery plan for each individual project. These will be based on international best practice and will be complex. In summary each project plan will identify:

- discreet project teams with leads, named teams, resources
- business case development

- funding sources, bids and match funding
- procurement of landscape architects and master planners
- RIBA design stages
- detailed engagement with stakeholders to develop detailed designs
- consent regimes e.g. planning, drainage, ecological etc
- construction procurement, engineering plans and implementation
- future maintenance arrangements.

A discreet project plan will be developed for the following projects to deliver the main objectives shown:

Upper Market Place

Objectives:

- Design and implement a public domain strategy for the area.
- Strengthening of the Town core via continued support for new independent and national retailing.
- When development opportunities occur seek to deliver improvements of the retail offer, public domain enhancements and opportunities for living and leisure.
- Create a new greened environment with street trees and planters with seating.
- Create people-friendly streets that improve the pedestrian and cycle experience and enhance wayfinding while reducing impact of the car.

- Seek funding to upgrade and improve the quality of historic buildings and shopfronts and enforce shopfront policy.
- Introduce shared space to reduce negative impact of vehicles
- Move parking away from building frontages where possible to create a larger area of enhanced public realm / a more pleasant place to sit.
- Improve setting of Grade II listed war memorial Incorporation of more green landscaping / low maintenance planting options.
- Improve setting of existing heritage assets and building such as Church and Rose and Crown.



River Avon

Objectives:

- Reduced flood risk to residents and businesses.
- Building climate change resilience.
- Enhancing existing, and creating new, spaces for biodiversity;
 Rewilding.
- An enhanced green space at Island Park to encourage public use.
- Performance spaces.
- Children's play areas / Picnic area/ trim trails.

- Public art / Enhanced public realm/
 Sculpture park.
- · Cafes / restaurants /Mobile kiosks.
- Wild swimming / Boating/ Leisure boat route/Jetty.
- More active frontages on both sides of the River Avon.
- Greater connectivity through an additional footbridge / More permeable development.
- To produce, adopt and implement a master plan to guide a phased approach to the project.

River Frontage Development

Objectives:

- Take opportunities to deliver outward looking to create an active river frontage.
- Encourage food, beverage, and leisure, accommodating cafe culture and redefining Chippenham as a destination of choice.
- Encourage residential use of upper floors and other space.
- creating active frontages to the river, where feasible.
- improving the setting of the River Park through well-designed landscaping.

- Avoiding impacts to and taking opportunities to enhance biodiversity.
- Facilitating housing and economic growth adding vibrancy to the area.
- Contributing to the planting of new trees and creation of new shaded spaces.



The High Street, The Bridge and New Road/ Upper New Road

Objectives:

- Design and implement a public domain strategy for the area.
- Strengthening of the Twon core retail area and hub of activity around Upper Market Place.
- Continue support for new independent and national retailing.
- When development opportunities occur seek to deliver improvements of the retail offer, public domain enhancements and opportunities for living and

- Encourage the café culture and facilitate widespread use of outside seating by removing parking.
- Create a new greened environment with street trees and planters with seating.
- Ensure vehicular access to the station and Olympiad is maintained and if possible enhanced.
- Seek funding to upgrade and improve the quality of historic buildings and shopfronts and enforce shopfront policy.

Bath Road Car Park/Bridge Centre

Objectives:

- Further evidential work to build a consensus over future.
- Establish a shared long term vision for the site.
- Explore the balance of uses included parking and community uses.

- Work with partners to scope viable opportunities.
- Once consensus appears, development a master plan to guide future development.



An example of the contents of a project proforma to be developed for each project are shown below.

Chippenham Town Centre Masterplan - draft template for Development and Delivery Brief production.

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Project Approach

Change control approach

Risk management approach

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Tailoring of PRINCE2

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Determining the Strategic Context and undertaking the Strategic Assessment

Scoping the proposal and preparing the Strategic Outline Case (SOC)

Planning the scheme and preparing the Outline Business Case (OBC)

Reviewing the Business Case: SOC, OBC and FBC95

07 Financial Management

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Tendering and contracts invoicing and payment Auditing and controls

08 Detailed designs and construction

Based on RIBA standard practice (see diagram)

