

Birmingham Road Site Task Group

10th December 2018

Note of meeting

Attending

Cllr Tom Marshall – Chair

Cllr Jon O’Hagan

Support

Ged Bowles – IEWM

Craig Jordan – LDC

1. Apologies and non-attendance

Cllr Colin Ball

Cllr Paul Ray

Cllr Andrew Smith

Not attending

Cllr Gwynth Boyle

Cllr Mark Warfield

Cllr Robert Strachan

2. Feedback from SWOT analysis

Ged Bowles provided a summary of the SWOT analysis undertaken by the Group at its previous meeting identifying the key points raised under each of the relevant headings. The Group was reminded that the purpose of the SWOT exercise was to help understand better how the current city centre operates and what its strengths and weaknesses are and to highlight opportunities and threats going forward. The outputs from this could then be used to develop a brief for considering the types of development and uses of existing property that would be appropriate in the city centre including on the Birmingham Road site.

The salient points were:

- Recognition that Lichfield lacks a cinema
- There is a need for better public realm
- Quality streetscape is essential in whatever development proposals come forward
- Residents would benefit from more and better leisure and recreational facilities
- Younger peoples requirements for city centre facilities need to be met
- Transport and movement considerations need to be factored in to any plans including cycling and walking.
- Open spaces, their appearance and accessibility are very important

- The history and culture of Lichfield City should play a major part in defining future development plans
- Linked to the above, promoting the city to non-residents and encouraging short and longer term stays should be a key plank of tourism strategies and supported by the provision of appropriate facilities

It was suggested that in terms of threats and risks, outside of understanding the importance of affordability and deliverability there were no such barriers holding back the Council from being aspirational and wanting the best for the city.

Action: It was agreed that the results of the SWOT analysis produced by Ged Bowles be circulated to the members of the Task Group.

3. Going Forward

Due to the low attendance at the meeting the Chairman felt that it was not possible to undertake a full appraisal of the information needed to inform the next stage of the process, that of defining a brief for a 'master planning' exercise. However the feedback summary provided by Ged Bowles was a good start as were comments received by some Task Group members on the back of the last meeting including from Cllr Ball. There followed a brief discussion as to the matters which could be considered at the next meeting of the Task Group.

Aspirations:

- Public spaces serving different purposes need to be designed into development plans eg. amenity, performance etc
- Leisure provision: in addition to a cinema what other kinds of leisure and recreational facilities would be appropriate and how would these relate to the desire to support the night time economy?
- Housing should be a key component of any plans: what kinds of housing are needed and what would be appropriate particularly on a site like Birmingham Road?
- Is there a desire for retail and if so, what kind of retail provision would be suitable?

It was agreed that the Task Group should now focus on the specific requirements of the city and how sites including Birmingham Road could contribute to delivering this.

The chairman thanked Cllr O'Hagan for his contributions to the meeting and for Ged Bowles for his feedback and help in leading the discussions.

It was agreed that a meeting of the Task Group would be called for the new year to address the issues that had emerged from the SWOT analysis and to develop a masterplanning brief based on the city's requirements. The Task Group's ideas and thoughts would then be shared with stakeholder groups.

Action: The Chairman to facilitate a meeting of the Task Group in the new year.

The meeting concluded at 7.50pm