

DISABILITY AND INCLUSION FORUM

MONDAY, 6 JANUARY 2020

PRESENT: Angela Clark, Lisa Hughes, Sharon Bunce, Sharon Carrigan, Peter Haley, Dominic Manley, Robin Pemberton, Claire Watson, Dean Yorke, Councillor Gurch Singh, and Councillor John Bowden (part of meeting)

Also in attendance: Councillor David Coppinger

Officers: Rebecca Kelly, Rachel Kinniburgh and Shilpa Manek

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed all to the Forum.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies of absence were received.

ITEM - NICHOLSON'S COMMUNITY PROJECT: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF EMERGING PROPOSALS AND HOW ACCESSIBILITY MAY BE PROMOTED.

A presentation was given by Francesca Naddafi from JTP Architects and Daniella Favero from Exterior Architecture. Presentation attached.

Key points highlighted by the presenters and Forum Members included:

- **Introduction:** It was acknowledged that this was a unique opportunity to uplift the town centre, creating a new retail experience and making provision for arts, culture and leisure for people of all ages, with good connectivity, suitable parking and accessibility promoted throughout.
- **Question: Were the architects in discussion with the development team of the Landings development, as cohesion of all developments would be good for Maidenhead?** It was confirmed that discussions were taking place but there were limitations and restriction since some planning applications had already been approved.

[Cllr Bowden left the meeting]

- **Question: Were there any specific plans for ShopMobility and Dial-a-Ride?** There was a concern that there were too few Blue Badge and Parent-Child spaces planned on the ground floor and how links from parking to the High Street would work (e.g. upper-level parking relies on lifts which may prove unreliable) and so ground-floor services were preferred plus ramp access. Additionally, adequate spacing of parking bays to enable access/egress from vehicles with mobility equipment was essential. It was acknowledged that there were a lot of detail required to ensure parking was correct for all users. The architects confirmed that a specialist was involved in the car park development. It was agreed that a further meeting in relation to this was a good idea.
- **Question: Will pathways to/from and within the town centre provide sufficient space for navigation by mobility scooters (also cyclists), will there be daylight**

and wind testing, and will areas be covered for shelter from the elements? It was confirmed that daylight and wind testing would be conducted on new pathways and that a Lighting Strategy would be established and taken into account would be the impact of artificial lighting on navigation. It was acknowledged that a lack of covered spaces would be a concern for ShopMobility users and that generally pathways needed to allow for suitable navigation, including changing direction, by mobility-devices and pushchairs. It was acknowledged that these points would contribute to the commercial success of the town centre. It was acknowledged that the surface of uncovered paths and walkways should also be resistant to warping from adverse weather conditions as this impacted mobility-devices and consideration should also be given to low level lighting, patterning/aesthetics of surfaces for navigation by people with visual impairment or dementia.

- **Question: Are all shops in the Nicholson's Centre, currently the only covered shopping area, to relocate, and will the Nicholson's House be demolished?** It was acknowledged that vacant units in the High Street could provide relocation options whilst the project was underway. Nicholson's House would remain.
- **Question: Has the use of talking signs been considered to aid wayfinding, and what consideration has been given to street furniture (e.g. seating in communal areas)?** It was confirmed that talking signs hasn't yet been discussed and it was suggested that the architects may find contact with Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) helpful in future. It was acknowledged that whilst seating had been considered in terms of providing different heights the importance of arm-rests should not be discounted.
- **Question: Will there be provisions for changing place facilities and also safe spaces for children and vulnerable adults while facilities were in use by parents and carers?** It was confirmed that there will be changing places facilities. It was acknowledged that safe places for children and vulnerable adults as per the example in London's Westfield Shopping Centre were invaluable for parents and carers, particularly disabled parents.
- **Question: Are there any plans for an observation deck on the top of high-rise buildings?** It was acknowledged that this could be a valuable addition to draw more people into the town centre.

The Chairman thanked the presenters for their engagement with the Forum and the presenters confirmed that the meeting had generated valuable insights that would help to shape the proposals. It was agreed that ongoing engagement with the Forum would be beneficial, particularly in relation to parking design.

The Chairman queried whether the Forum's points would be incorporated into the public meeting scheduled for 14 January 2020. The presenters confirmed that they would do their best to do so however if it wasn't possible for reasons of timing then the Forum could be assured that all of the points raised in the meeting were logged for further consideration by the architects.

The meeting, which began at 11.00 am, finished at 12.15 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....