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City of Winchester Trust response to the WCC Vision and Development Principles consultation exercise for Station Approach October 2022

Questions 1 and 2

- *Who are we as a respondent?*
- *How do we currently use the Station Approach area?*

The Trust has 500 members; the vast majority live in Winchester and will be well acquainted with the Station Approach study area. We are in effect Winchester's civic society and are dedicated to ensuring that the city is a vibrant and desirable place to live and work, study and visit. We do this by working to protect Winchester's rich heritage and its essential character by pursuing our vision for the future, so that Winchester remains a great city today and for generations to come.

The Station Approach study area is a key part of the city where many people live, work, arrive into, leave from and also pass through. Some of the area is within the conservation area and most of it is adjacent to the conservation area. Development is likely to impact on the setting of listed buildings. The area and adjacent buildings are visible from high points around the city. The relationship of any development should respect not only the scale of the immediate surroundings, but in this case because it is such a prominent area, it should respect the core of the city and the eastern downland also.

Questions 3-6

- *Comments on the Council's suggested Development Principles*

By and large we agree with the four Development Principles set out on page 2 of the 'feedback form' which are:

- *A connected sustainable development*
- *Development for Winchester's future*
- *High quality design, positive placemaking*
- *Co-creating with residents, businesses and stakeholders*

However, we would like you to add another Principle (or expand the first principle) to include the three Priorities of the adopted Winchester Movement Strategy (*reduce city centre traffic; support healthier lifestyle choices; invest in infrastructure to support sustainable growth*).

PRESIDENT
Professor Joy Carter CBE DL
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Question 7

- *How do we travel to or through the area?*

The Trust is committed to sustainable methods of travel and will always put walking, cycling and public transport ahead of cars within the city, especially the Station Approach study area, which has a high degree of air pollution and is degraded by vehicle congestion, vehicle paraphernalia and vast areas of tarmac. The area around the station should become an exemplar of a sustainable low carbon transport interchange.

Questions 9 and 10

- *How important is it to include better facilities in the Station Approach area for the following modes of transport?*
- *What other facilities would you like to see in the Station Approach area?*

Proposals for the public realm should include the following:

- a. Good pedestrian routes connecting the area with all parts of the city are important.
- b. Pedestrians should have priority in the immediate area of the station.
- c. Good cycle routes should be planned for, with facilities for secure, weather-protected, conveniently located parking which should include e-charging and repair facilities and good signposted links to cycle networks.
- d. Bus infrastructure should include good terminal facilities set a little distance from the station, and include real time information of arrival and departure times and sufficient space to accommodate all routes serving the district.
- e. Taxi stands should be near bus stands but have a lower priority to buses for space and convenience for access to the station if choices have to be made between them.
- f. Private cars should have no more than equal priority with taxis in the hierarchy of transport modes in terms of stopping space and proximity to the station entrance.

It is vitally important that in considering development proposals, WCC and HCC embrace the adopted Priorities of the Winchester Movement Strategy and reduce vehicle movements in the Station Approach study area. Station Approach is potentially the most sustainable part of the city, and any development proposals (residential, employment, other uses) should have zero car parking. The only car parking that should be considered is 'park and walk' public car parking possibly on part of the Cattle Market redevelopment and/or preferably on the Worthy Lane Coach Park site.

Little or no parking (residential, employment or public car parking, other than some disabled car parking) should be provided as part of the Carfax redevelopment.

Questions 11 and 12

- *How important is it to include the following within the public and shared spaces around the Station Approach area?*
- *What else would you like included within the public and shared spaces around the Station Approach area?*

There are significant opportunities for attractive public realm improvements within the Station Approach study area, particularly at Station Hill, Station Road, Upper High Street,

Sussex Street, the Carfax Junction and Andover Road. There would be space for all the things listed in Question 11, including space for public events. Providing a vehicle-free open area in front of the eastern station entrance would be an attractive feature, with taxi and bus stands at a greater distance from the station.

At the moment, all the public spaces (streets and spaces) are dominated by vehicle carriageways and traffic paraphernalia, designed to keep pedestrians and vehicles apart. They have been designed to give vehicles priority over all other public realm users. This needs to be reversed. There are many opportunities for pedestrianisation and well-designed shared spaces (ie which should be predominantly hard-landscaped and be used as pedestrian spaces over which some vehicles might have access).

Train passengers exiting the station on the east side should emerge from the station into a civic space, from which clear attractive pedestrian routes take them into the city centre. Redevelopment of the Territorial Army site in Newburgh Street for housing would enhance the pedestrian route from the station to Upper High Street and Westgate.

On the west side, passengers should be provided with a path across the car park and stairs up onto Andover Road, which will serve those living in the north of the city and the growing population of Kings Barton.

The Trust welcomes the recently constructed stairs linking the station for pedestrians to the junction of Stockbridge Road and Cranworth Road.

There needs to be a mechanism for funding public realm improvements which are reinforced by adopted planning policy. As well as Government grants and CIL money, funding from developers via S106 planning agreements should be investigated.

Question 13

- *What commercial uses do you think should be provided within the Station Approach area?*

There are good opportunities for a mix of uses on all the development sites. The topography of the main sites will be challenging, and therefore large floorplate commercial development is unlikely to be suitable. Again, all the proposed uses should be designed with zero car parking.

The quantum of residential, employment and retail development should be considered in the context of development being proposed in the draft Local Plan for all the other allocated sites in Winchester.

Question 14

- *If the Station Approach area is appropriate for further residential use, what kind of accommodation do you think is suitable?*

There are good opportunities for residential development, particularly affordable housing, on all of the development sites.

The Cromwell House site and land to the rear of the shops in Stockbridge Road have potential for redevelopment (possibly high density residential). This area needs to be included within the red line and added to the Study Area.

The Network Rail car parking sites have redevelopment potential for residential and other uses. Rather than providing commuter parking adjacent to the station, why not combine commuter parking with park and walk (so commuters park their cars and walk to the station)? Then railway land can be released for high density residential development (including some student housing). This could release money for public realm improvements.

There are good opportunities for residential development on the Cattle Market site, adjacent to Worthy Lane and on the Carfax site along Gladstone Street, both of which are residential streets.

The Conservative Club, within the Cattle Market site, is a fine period building which has been devalued over time with unattractive extensions, uPVC windows and fencing. It has the potential to be improved and incorporated into redevelopment proposals. It should therefore be included within the red line of the Study Area.

Question 15

- *How would you like to be able to use the Station Approach area in the future?*

It is most important that the public realm (ie the streets, squares, pathways and cycle routes) are safe and have pedestrian priority. They should be well-designed places to arrive at, to leave from, to stay in, to enjoy and to pass through. The Station Approach area should be a destination with its own identity, where people live, work and do their shopping and which they use for leisure. It should be designed as a highly sustainable city quarter.

The walking journeys from the Station into the city at the moment are unattractive and to new visitors, confusing. Walking from the station into the city needs to be a positive and enjoyable experience which is pedestrian-friendly and largely traffic-free.

It is of the utmost importance that attractive, safe pedestrian routes are created that link up with the city centre and the main city establishments. These should be considered at the same time and should be an integral part of the master planning. The Trust has always considered that the main pedestrian link from the station to the city centre should be via Station Road and Upper High Street, where one quickly enters the historic city streets and spaces. This main pedestrian route has been proposed in the HCC feasibility studies. To achieve this, through traffic would have to be re-routed from Upper High Street, Station Road and Gladstone Street, with two-way traffic being introduced along Sussex Street. The Trust believes this traffic flow change should be given priority and introduced at an early stage as the Carfax site is redeveloped.

The use of Sussex Street for two-way traffic will form the basis of how buses, taxis and vehicle access will serve the station.

For the visitor, Station Hill and Station Road (and a redesigned Carfax Junction to make it more pedestrian-friendly) and the new development on the Carfax site, should announce themselves as a pedestrian-friendly, well-designed gateway to Winchester.

Question 16

- *Is there anything else you'd like to tell us that might inform the development of a future vision for Station approach?*

It appears that the Council will expect the main developer to produce the masterplan for the Station Approach Study Area. The Trust believes that the Council should be in charge of the master planning process as it develops. History tells us that developer-led masterplans promote developer expectations/interests, which are often not fully tested and which can result in overdevelopment.

It is most important that the development on all sites has active frontages at street level and that the scale, proportion and articulation of development is in character with the existing context. This is particularly the case with development along Gladstone Street and Worthy Road.

As previously mentioned, it may be possible that part of the Cattle Market site together with all of the Worthy Lane Coach Park site, could be developed as a 'Park and Walk' facility serving the city and station commuters. On the Cattle Market site there are levels that could be exploited for decked parking. Any vehicle access to the Cattle Market site would be better from Andover Road. On the Cattle Market site, any car parking should be concealed by other uses above and along the edges of Andover Road and Worthy Lane.

City of Winchester Trust
14 October 2022