

MARKET BOSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

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The Parish Office is open Thursdays 10.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m. and other times by appointment

Mr S Jones
Cultural Services Manager
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18 April 2023

Dear Simon

Re: Market Bosworth Town Centre Redevelopment Scheme

Further to my email of 5 April 2023 regarding the Parish Council's preferred option for implementation of the Town Centre Redevelopment Scheme, plus the amount we can contribute financially, I now write on behalf of the Council with additional information to explain why we believe the scheme to be so important to our community.

During the public engagement events and consultations for the Market Bosworth Neighbourhood Plan adopted in 2015, it became very evident that priority concerns which the community of Market Bosworth wished to be addressed included the following in the town centre:

- a) the priorities for residents:
 - 1. pedestrian safety in the town centre e.g. when crossing roads
 - 2. lack of short term parking for residents wanting to support local businesses
 - 3. reducing speed of traffic in town centre due to
 - i. increasing numbers of children at 3 schools
 - ii. increasing elderly population and limited mobility within a growing number of this age group
- b) the priorities for businesses:
 - 1. additional parking/short term parking opportunities were needed to increase footfall
 - 2. measures to reduce speed as local businesses have observed many 'near misses' to pedestrians crossing the roads

3. improvements required to make Market Bosworth a safe and attractive prospect for visitors and residents to utilise local services and facilities

- c) the requirement of the Parish Council to improve the Market Place ‘square’

As items a) and b) are outside the powers or duties of a parish council and could not be identified as policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, the significant consensus of concerns from residents and businesses prompted the Parish Council to seek help from Leicestershire County Council (LCC) Highways. A review was undertaken by LCC Highways in 2016 and an initial report on Road Safety Assessment dated June 2016 identified that despite the lack of any serious or fatal accidents the nature of the layout of the town centre, the speed of traffic and volume of pedestrians and car users did require serious consideration. A draft schematic identifying a potential solution was proposed as part of the report.

A professional external assessment of the proposals identified potential projected benefits would include: attract more passing trade; rationalise parking; encourage quicker and safer parking; provide more parking; create a more pleasant and friendly high street environment.

In order to move forward with the project, we were encouraged with the support of HBBC Officers and Councillors to apply for funding from the Developing Communities Fund (DCF) to progress this draft idea into a working proof-of-concept. We submitted our application for Phase I of the project in 2017. LCC Highways consultants prepared a proof-of-concept scheme which demonstrated a working solution which:

- a. Prioritises pedestrian safety
- b. Introduces a 20mph limit through the town to limit speed
- c. Extends the one-way system through the Market Place and Main Street
- d. Develops a parking strategy for the town centre
- e. Reduces out-of-date/unwanted street signs and other clutter
- f. Resurfaces the Market Place with materials and finish that are fit for purpose but still in keeping with environs.

In October 2018 a two day consultation was held in which residents, businesses and stakeholders were invited to consider the detailed drawings, see a scale model showing the proposed layout and changes and ask questions. The consultation was independently monitored by the Rural Community Council and the consultation responses indicated that 87% of people voted to support the proposals outlined.

In 2019 the project was recognised as viable by the Parish Council and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) and a letter of support was offered by the businesses group (see attached) to progress the project. LCC Highways were invited to move the project forward by undertaking the necessary surveys and detailed analysis to identify the costs for implementation of the scheme. Regrettably, whilst this phase of the work was scheduled to commence in April 2020, the pandemic and demands on the LCC Highways team to undertake priority work meant that the project stalled. However, the work was carried out in 2022 since when two options for implementation have been identified by LCC Highways.

One option is a full public works scheme including full refurbishment of the cobbled Market Place ‘square’ and all road works carried out using heritage and high specification materials at a total cost of around £4.4million. The other option is to address all the essential highways solutions using basic materials, omitting refurbishment of the cobbled ‘square’ at a total cost of £240,000 (price held for the calendar year 2023). There were a number of questions resulting due to the disparity between the two solutions offered. Following email exchanges and two face to face meetings with Highways this year it became evident that the £240,000 solution meets all the requirements identified in a) and b) as well as addressing the proof-of-concept points a.- e. The Market Place ‘square’ refurbishment can subsequently be implemented by the Parish Council as and when funds can be found. The existing highways infrastructure are standard not

heritage or high specification materials so the proposed solution to implement the £240,000 scheme was agreed by the Parish Council to be a suitable solution.

Market Bosworth Parish Council, the Bosworth Vision Planning Group and the business community all support the proposal to implement the £240,000 scheme. Highways have agreed to waive their fees for survey work from £91,500 to £45,000 and have suggested the surplus £46,500 be put towards the scheme (this total of £91,500 is already agreed with HBBC who are to pay 69% or £63,135 from allocated DCF funding while the Parish Council pays 31% or £28,365). This leaves £193,500 to be found for implementation. Regrettably, as a small parish the Parish Council is only able to find £90,000 from its reserves towards the cost and seeks your support and help to find the residual £103,500.

Since the pandemic the traffic situation has worsened considerably. Local businesses such as Bosworth Hall Hotel, The Dixie Arms, The Black Horse Restaurant and the Dental Surgery now only allow people to park who have valid permits. The lack of available parking is seriously affecting the footfall to local businesses and is forcing residents to drive further afield to do their shopping rather than support local shops. Market Bosworth is fortunate to have gained a lion's share of day visitors to the country park, and we have increased numbers staying at the hotel, the bed and breakfast establishments and the new holiday lodges development, but with recent new activities such as the weekly Park Run and the growing number of cyclists and walkers enjoying our rural setting, the existing safety issues have been exacerbated. The Parish Council seeks to improve the current situation and to ensure sustainability of the town centre in the future. The proposed solutions if implemented will have a massive positive impact for all road users, residents, visitors and businesses and we would welcome any support you can offer to help us achieve this positive outcome.

Yours sincerely

C M Monkman

Mrs Cathy Monkman
Parish Clerk