

## Minutes of the Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone Advisory Group

Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022, 10.00am, Microsoft Teams

### Attendees:

Bob McManners	BM	Chair
Chris Myers	CM	Durham County Council
Kathryn Watson	KW	Durham County Council
Jules Brown	JB	Historic England
Anne Allen	AA	Durham County Council
Bryan Harris	BH	Durham County Council
Cllr Sam Zair	SZ	Bishop Auckland Town Council
Cllr Andrew Jackson	AJ	Durham County Council
Liz Fisher	LF	The Auckland Project
Andrew Walker	AW	Bishop Auckland & Shildon AAP
Lianna Francis-Kelly	LFK	Historic England

### Apologies:

No apologies received.

### ITEM

### ACTION

#### 1.0 Welcome and Introductions

1.1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced LFK of Historic England.

#### 2.0 Review of Minutes and Actions last meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

2.2 Actions:

2.2.1 Item 7.1 - CM said that the project would extend beyond the lifetime of HAZ and would be picked up by DCC Regeneration Teams work programme.

2.2.2 Item 7.2 – Revised FHSF report circulated. To be covered in Item 5 – Regeneration Update

2.2.3 Item 7.3 – To be covered in Item 5 – Regeneration Update.

2.2.4 Item 7.4 – BM had provided JB with Town Investment Plan contact details.

2.2.5 Item 7.6 – AA had prepared a briefing note on Mechanics Institute and forwarded to CM to discuss with James Etherington, DCC Legal Team.

2.2.6 Item 7.7 – HE funding for Mechanics Institute legal work being considered.

2.2.7 Item 7.8 – discussions had not been required.

2.2.8 Item 7.9 – Castle Curtilage Project underspend – TAP in discussions with HE.

2.2.9 Item 7.10 – LF would circulate TAP's draft 'Bishop Auckland Big Picture' report when completed.

LF

2.2.10 Items 7.11 to 7.14 – all actions had been completed.

### 3.0 **Update from the Brighter Bishop Auckland Partnership**

- 3.1 BM gave an update from the Brighter Bishop Auckland Partnership (BBAP) Board meeting which took place on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021.
- 3.2 BM proposed that in future the meeting minutes of the BBAP Board and Advisory Group be shared between the two groups as a more efficient way of information sharing and this was agreed. **BM/GB**
- 3.3 Future High Streets Fund (FHSF) Bus Station and MSCP projects - RIBA Stage 3 (Developed Design) work had commenced, and Planning Application anticipated Spring 2022. CM to update on further FHSF projects in agenda item No.5.
- 3.4 Stronger Towns Fund (STF) – BM had concerns that a progress update had not been received following a meeting of its Board in December.
- 3.5 The Auckland Project's (TAP) Spanish Gallery was open until 18<sup>th</sup> December, closing for several weeks before re-opening on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022. All TAP attractions would re-open on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022.
- 3.6 TAP was planning an exhibition 'Bishop Auckland Big Picture' in its communications hub at 43 Market Place
- 3.7 Development works at Bar Mondo had commenced.

### 4.0 **Project Manager's Report**

- 4.1 AA gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining progress since the last meeting:
  - 4.1.1 King James I Academy Lodge (home of Durham Amateur Football Trust) – redecoration works carried out by Trades4care with 4 apprentices/students from Bishop Auckland College.
  - 4.1.2 Official opening of football heritage shop 'The Bishops' at 44a Market Place by Bob Thursby. Project now has 15 new volunteers staffing the shop 6 days a week.
- 4.2 Shop fronts/façades improvements and repairs (2-22 Newgate) – working with Napper Architects to produce a suite of designs and schedules for repairs and costs which would enable HAZ to undertake works as a future project when funding available.  
JB said that funding offers to building owners must be sent before the end of Year 3 and Historic England was currently considering a single contract for works on all buildings which would require the agreement of as many of the owners as possible.
- 4.3 Town Building Re-Use–
  - 4.3.1 Gregory's bakers planning development works and restoration of stained glass. Also plans to bring neighbouring property back into use.
  - 4.3.2 St Anne's Church – grant for minor repair works awarded. It was hoped that South facing roof and internal works would now come forward.
  - 4.3.3 Enriching the List – this year's target was to submit 15 reports to the national list. HAZ's Newcastle University Intern focussing on war memorials and Auckland Park.
- 4.4 BH gave an overview of the Bishop Auckland Local List with a power point presentation. He reported that the nomination period had closed, and a long list of 71 varied entries was being considered. BH expressed his thanks to those who had contributed and said he would update **BH** on the consultation list at the next meeting. BH said that although the pilot scheme was coming

#### **4.0 Project Manager's Report (cont'd)**

to an end, DCC would be continuing the project and that nominations would be welcomed. From March 2022, nominations could be made via DCC's updated website interface and project information would be available on the DCC website. A PR campaign around the publication of the first list was planned.

#### **5.0 Any Other Business**

##### **5.1 The Auckland Project**

LF gave an update on developments. KW referred to preparations for the Visitor Accommodation Workshop and asked who she should contact within TAP. LF suggested she contact Robin Brown, Chief Operating Officer.

JB asked if TAP's Accommodation Strategy would be made available. LF said internal discussions were needed on the accommodation requirements around the Market Place and she would look at bringing Historic England into those discussions. **LF**

CM and KW would prepare a report on under capacity in town centre visitor accommodation and circulate to the group. **CM/KW**

##### **5.2 Regeneration Update**

5.2.1 Future High Streets Fund – an updated report had been circulated prior to the meeting. CM reported recent scheme developments:

- Cost profile of each project being looked at due to 30% cost increase in materials and labour.
- Bus Station and Multi Storey Car Park – public engagement on developed designs planned.
- Two public realm schemes 'on hold' pending cost review; bus station and multi storey car park to Fore Bondgate; and Fore Bondgate to Newgate Centre.
- New access point between North Bondgate and Fore Bondgate.
- North Newgate Street Public Realm (no. 44 to Cooplands) – works to be coordinated with several other planned schemes (re-development of 9-11 Newgate and TIP scheme). JB said proposed works under the CAGS scheme on the opposite side would also need programming into the works schedule.
- Spanish Gallery Market Place Public Realm – works to be undertaken outside the main tourist season. Proposal for Traffic Regulation Order amendment for removal of one parking bay.

JB requested sight of the procurement exercise final brief for 9-11 Newgate Street and CM was to forward a copy to him when completed. **CM**

JB referred to engagement and said he would make a formal request to GW and CM for details of the engagement timetable for each project to ensure that Historic England did not miss the opportunity to influence content.

BH said that the requirement for pre-application consultation with Historic England had been incorporated within Consultants' commissions for each scheme.

## **5.2 Regeneration Update (cont'd)**

### 5.2.2 Town Investment Plan

CM reported that the project list had not yet been finalised and once this had been decided, business cases would be submitted to Government.

A Memorandum of Understanding with Government had now been signed and the Monitoring and Evaluation framework agreed by Government.

- 5.2.3 Property Re-Use Fund – KW reported that there were 17 Expressions of Interest for the town centre; 3 of which now had planning consent, 4 currently in the planning application system and 2 in progress. KW was to draw up a map showing the locations of each application and would present it at the next meeting. **KW**

## **5.3 FHSF Schemes**

SZ indicated that the town's Boots store was planning to close and BH confirmed that company policy was not to have more than one operational site within any settlement.

AJ asked if it would be possible to lobby Boots to encourage them to reverse their decision, and if it was possible, to do it as a matter of urgency. CM said that he could look into this. **CM**

- 5.4 JB said that the next meeting would be the first meeting of the final year of the HAZ. Before then himself, AA and the HE team would be reviewing the Delivery Plan which would be tabled at the meeting, however, any changes would be communicated to members in advance of the meeting. JB asked members to consider ways in which to celebrate the end of the HAZ and its success. **ALL**

## **6.0 Date and Time of next meeting**

- 6.1 Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2022, 10.00am. LF invited the group to meet at the Spanish Gallery, Bishop Auckland, subject to Covid-19 restrictions.