

# COUNCIL

**CHAIRMAN:** Cllr Timothy Golder

**DATE:** September 2017

**REPORT OF:** Tony Watson, Business Manager, Economy and Assets and Cllr Doug Hellier Liang Portfolio Holder for Economy, Skills and Tourism

**SUBJECT:** Newton Abbot, Market Walk

## PART I

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Council resolve to

- (a) approve the investment in Market Walk Shopping Centre as summarised in part II of this report.
- (b) Delegate authority to the business manager for Economy and Assets to confirm the final seating and lighting scheme for the centre.
- (c) Approve the removal of the central market square kiosks.

#### 1. PURPOSE

To consider the recommendations to refurbish Market Walk shopping centre. The design proposals are set out in appendix 1 of this report and costings in part II.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

The adopted Local Plan (2013-2033) outlines a vision for Newton Abbot as a traditional town growing substantially in size which will develop into a well-balanced and increasingly self-sustaining community. This will be achieved through a mixed development of residential, retail and employment opportunities within the town centre.

The Council acquired Market Walk Shopping Centre in February 2016 as a means of intervention to ensure that it is in a position to promote, influence and deliver future development opportunities in the town centre and ensure that it delivers the right community benefits.

The centre plays a key role in the heart of Newton Abbot and its proximity to the Market Hall and Outdoor Market.

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As part of the wider development, there is a real opportunity to grow Newton Abbot's lunch time and night time economy and develop the town's leisure and tourism offer.

There are possibilities that a cinema complex could be created, alongside an improvement in the quality of retail provision in subsequent phases. To further support this, there are early plans for a new hotel in the town centre. Proposals are at an initial stage and will be considered as subsequent phases.

### **3. MARKET KIOSKS AND OUTDOOR MARKET**

Further work is being undertaken in order to re-set the Market Hall as the heart of the Town. A further proposal will be made in 2018 that will look at the Market Square and improvements to the Market Hall.

However the initial project to improve the aesthetic and appeal of the centre has highlighted that the existing kiosks in the market square act as a physical barrier to the Market Hall.

In order to realise the full extent of the centre improvements it is proposed that the market square kiosks are to be removed, with the businesses, where possible re-located into the Market Hall.

The removal of the kiosks will serve to expose the front elevation of the food hall and help to promote this area as a viable and active part of the town. Market Hall retailers will be given opportunity to utilise the external space and with the addition of public seating in the market square and the market stalls will be moved back into the market square, creating a central fixed market rather than a dispersed and disconnected run of stalls.

Loss of revenue is reported in Part II of this report, where possible this is to be minimised.

### **4. DESIGN PROPOSAL**

Worked scheme designs are shown in appendix 1, with indicative paving, lighting and seating examples.

The proposals are the beginning of a series of immediate improvements to brighten the look and feel of Market Walk. With further works throughout the scheme phased over the next 2 to 3 years.

Improvements to existing building frontages within Market Walk are necessary to improve the image of the centre to attract new occupier investment that the town needs to ensure it remains competitive and attracts and retains shoppers.

The key considerations for the improvement works to the centre focus on creating a sense of place, quality area of public realm, open airy and spacious

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place to visit and shop and retain the individuality of Newton Abbot and specifically the market heritage of the town.

The recommended design seeks to re-establish a strong link between Courtenay Street and Market Walk through the removal of the bulkhead and associated storage.

The existing design is now very dated and requires modernisation, the proposal is to construct a new façade to the front of the retail units. In doing so, individuality is intended to be created by separately illustrating the units, vertically with different materials and colours. It is also proposed to achieve an improvement in thermal efficiency through this design.

The proposal would enable the future colour scheme of the centre to be amended and changed in line with retailer needs. The removal of the low level canopies works to create a sense of scale and place in the centre where people are free to move.

The existing harsh exterior which is dominated by brick and concrete will be broken up by changes in the depth of the front elevations of the shops and the variety of building heights.

In order to ensure the centre has an appeal for shoppers throughout the calendar the removal of the low level canopies will be replaced by a glazed high level canopy over the main walkway from Courtenay Street down to the Market Square.

It is also proposed for the existing paving from Courtenay Street through to the Square, to be replaced. Fixed benches and bins will be included in a new design scheme to complement the exterior finishes and new lighting.

The area of shop fascia's to be replaced will focus on the main walkway from Courtenay Street through to Newlook and Oggy Oggy. A plan showing the area is included in appendix 1.

Part of the proposal requires first floor storage space to be taken back from Romans Original Ltd who occupy the area. There will be a minimal change to the revenue budget. This is reported in part II.

Further improvements to the market square, post office and market hall will be reported on at a later date.

### **5. PUBLIC EXHIBITON**

An exhibition has been held in the market square on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> September to publicise the proposed works to members of the public. Initial briefings have also been help with key stakeholders, the Town Council and Town Centre Manager.

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Initial response from Retailers has been very positive, noting that the proposed design would help to connect the centre to Courtenay Street.

### 6. MAIN IMPLICATIONS

**Financial:** The proposed refurbishment will be a Landlord capital expenditure item that will not immediately correlate with an uplift in rents. However the work is anticipated to increase demand.

Achieving the opening from Courtenay Street through to Market Walk will require taking space back from Romans who use the area as storage, this will have an effect on the rent. This is shown part II.

**Legal:** The existing tenants are contractually entitled to 'quiet enjoyment' of their premises, the works will be scheduled and managed in such a way as to minimise disruption and ensure the shops can continue trading without issue.

**Risk:** The works will be undertaken in a public area with a high volume of pedestrians and centre users. Precautions will be taken during the build to manage and mitigate risk and conflicts with members of the public.

**Community Safety/Crime & Disorder:** The main shopping centre is an easily accessible area for members of the public. Where practicable the proposed design has been prepared in such a way as to minimise anti-social behaviour. Access to the overhead canopy will be restricted and the main parade will be managed to deter rough sleeping.

**Timescale:** Due to retailer trading requirements it is intended that the shop front works commence in February 2018 with the intention of completion occurring by Summer.

### 7. GROUPS CONSULTED

District Councillors – All  
Planning  
Environmental Health  
Newton Abbot Town Council and Town Centre Manager  
Newton Abbot Police

**Tony Watson**  
Business Lead for Economy & Assets

**Cllr Doug Hellier Liang**  
Portfolio Holder for Economy, Skills  
and Tourism

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| <b>Wards affected</b>                              | Newton Abbot                                  |
| <b>Contact for any more information</b>            | Tony Watson and Tom Butcher                   |
| <b>Background Papers (For Part I reports only)</b> |   |
| <b>Key Decision</b>                                | Y   |
| <b>In Forward Plan</b>                             | Y   |
| <b>In O&amp;S Work Programme</b>                   | N   |
| <b>Community Impact Assessment attached:</b>       | N   |
| <b>Appendices attached:</b>                        | 1: Scheme Proposals<br>2: Construction Layout |