

## **Transforming Tindal Square: Public Realm Improvements**

### **Your questions – [FAQ sheet]**

In June and July 2019, we presented the Concept Proposals to you and asked for your feedback. There have been several questions and points raised for clarification. Below, we have highlighted some of the key questions that relate to the Tindal Square scheme and the Chelmsford City Growth Package. These have been responded to by the project design team as appropriate.

#### **Why is this project happening?**

*58% of respondents support the plans*

It is essential that we have proposals for this area so that the re-development of the city centre does not leave this area behind. Tindal Square can play a key role in strengthening the local economy as well as the cultural offer of Chelmsford. An important new city square will be created to enhance its sense of place, optimise its public use and improve pedestrian access and enjoyment, re-connecting Shire Hall to the High Street. Public consultation has revealed a majority desire to see Tindal Square fulfil its potential.

#### **What does Prioritising Pedestrians mean for Tindal Square?**

Prioritisation will be given to pedestrians to walk and travel through Tindal Square. The road will be removed, with no entry to vehicles, and will be comprehensively paved to create a new space.

This will provide an accessible link for all pedestrians between Duke Street, heading from the railway station, to the High Street and the city core.

There will be no access to vehicles including from Duke Street or New Street. There will be access to cyclists from New Street and opposite Market Road where there will be clear signs and design features at these entry points. The signs will denote that cyclists are entering a pedestrian area indicating that they are to move through the space giving care to more vulnerable users.

#### **What will the high quality public space include?**

*59% of respondents are in favour of the creation of a high quality space to complement Shire Hall*

An attractive setting will be created to help draw more people into the historic core of Chelmsford city centre. There will be natural stone paving to respect the character of this historic environment; stylish but functional street furniture, including wayfinding; comfortable seating for the public; areas identified for tables & chairs; trees to help green the space; cycle stands at appropriate locations, and creative lighting to draw people into the city centre in the evening.

#### **What can the space be used for?**

The intention is to provide a welcoming place to meet with friends, day or night, and to create a flexible space for events and special occasions.

There will be areas for resting, to the sides of the High Street and an open area opposite Tindal Terrace. At the head of the High Street there will be opportunity for a temporary stage with audiences populating the street ahead with views along.

**Where are you planning to put outdoor seating on the High Street?**

*40% would like seating at the side of the High Street and 34% at the centre of the High Street*

We will design a compromise. The opportunity for seating areas will be beyond a clear pedestrian route located along the front of buildings, and before a clear open area located along the centre of the High Street to maintain views towards Shire Hall. These linear areas will allow opportunities for businesses to have tables and chairs whilst providing gaps for movement between as well as public seating.

**Why does there need to be a cycle link through Tindal Square?**

*51% support the creation of a cycle link through the space, compared to 31% who oppose*

The Tindal Square scheme maintains an existing cycle route east to west across the space. As this scheme is part of the Chelmsford City Growth Package, it is important that we maintain this cycle route to encourage greater use of sustainable modes of transport, to help ease congestion in the city centre. Whilst some people would prefer that the cycle route does not go through Tindal Square this is not an option that will be considered because of the importance of this route within the local cycling network. Therefore, the design will have to address and reduce any potential conflict with pedestrians. The gateway points at New Street and opposite Market Road will be a key part of the design to make it clear cyclists are entering a different kind of space where priority is with the pedestrian. Research has demonstrated that for Tindal Square a non-delineated route is the recommended approach, where footfall is far greater than the number of cyclists, and pedestrians could wander into any attempt of a cycle path through the space, if established. The delivered scheme will be accompanied by education with cyclists and other users of the space.

**What is the contraflow cycleway along Market Road for?**

The contraflow scheme is part of the Chelmsford City Growth Package which aims to improve facilities for sustainable modes of transport. It is important that this key east-west route is provided to enable access for people wanting to get to and from the city centre by bike from locations such as Writtle and Springfield. Cyclists will be able to travel in both directions between Victoria Road South and New Street via Tindal Square with these new provisions.

**Are cyclists now going to be able to use the High Street?**

No. We intend to update signage to emphasise that cycling is not permitted along the High Street and will continue to work with Essex Police to enforce this. The size, style and placement of new cycling signage will be integrated with the new public realm design.

**How will the plans affect local businesses?**

All vehicular access to the High Street area for deliveries and maintenance to businesses will be via Baddow Road. Access will be controlled via raising bollards. Traffic flow will be One Way in a northerly direction with all vehicles exiting via New Street.

An Environmental Weight limit of 7.5t will be imposed for all delivery vehicles in order to restrict the size of vehicles entering the area.

The current delivery period of 6pm to 10am will be reduced by one hour with all vehicles having to exit the area by 9am, this is to reduce interaction with pedestrians using the High street during normal shopping hours, however deliveries will now be allowed 7 days a week rather than the current restriction of only 6.

The existing loading lay-bay in Tindal Square will be removed with a dedicated loading bay provided in Duke Street.

Vehicles exiting High Chelmer Service Yard D in Tindal Square will now turn right and exit the area via Tindal Street, New London Road and Bellmead.

### **Additional Questions:**

#### **What is happening with Shire Hall?**

We received lots of comment about Shire Hall. The owner, Essex County Council, is in discussion with a developer about the future use of Shire Hall. Although the Tindal Square public realm scheme is separate to the matter of the buildings occupancy, we are trying to help by designing inclusive access to the front of Shire Hall from the space.

#### **How will the project be funded?**

The existing design works for the Tindal Square public realm scheme are funded from the Community Infrastructure Levy, which are sourced through contributions from developments across Chelmsford. This source is also intended for funding to continue detailed design and implementation. Part of the cost will be met by Essex County Council via the Chelmsford City Growth Package.

The scheme is a high priority for both Chelmsford City Council and Essex County Council and other key stakeholders but is subject to funding.

#### **How will traffic be managed on surrounding roads?**

As part of the Chelmsford City Growth package all of the signalised junctions within the city are being reviewed and changes made to their operation where required to ensure traffic flow is managed in the most economic manor. This includes the New Street / Victoria Road junction, which is also being altered as part of the New Street cycleway scheme.

Signage around the city centre will be updated to reflect the new layout and direct vehicles to the most appropriate routes through the area.

Additional temporary information signs will be erected on all approaches to the High Street area following the scheme completion advising drivers of the changes in order to stop instances of vehicles attempting to enter from the wrong direction.