

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Executive

26 April 2018

TITLE:	Gateway Improvement Programme
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Tony Kemp – Executive Portfolio for Tourism, Regeneration & Licensing
CONTACT OFFICER:	Richard Tuffrey, Principal Regeneration Officer
WARDS INVOLVED:	All Buxton and Glossop Wards

Appendices

- 1 - Plan showing the proposed Fairfield to Station Road Buxton Gateway Zone
- 2 - Plan showing the proposed A57 western entrance to Glossop Gateway Zone

1 Reason for the Report

- 1.1 To seek authority to introduce a Gateway Improvements Programme to act as a catalyst to the development of strategically important “Gateway Zones” as follows:
 - (a) the Fairfield to Station Road corridor in Buxton
 - (b) the A57 western entrance to Glossop

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Executive is recommended to:
 - (a) Authorise officers to establish a Gateway Improvements Programme as set out in this report with an initial focus on the Fairfield to Station Road corridor in Buxton and the A57 western entrance to Glossop;
 - (b) Authorise officers to work on two early projects as part of the programme and subject to further details being brought back to the Executive as follows:
 - i. Proposals aimed at improving the front appearance of properties along the west side of Fairfield Road Buxton via a targeted grant scheme and improvements to front forecourt gardens

- ii. Prepare proposals to improve the site and area around the former Spread Eagle Public House (Riverside Inn) at Woolley Bridge where the new proposed junction of A57 and Wooley Lane is proposed in Glossop.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 This report is proposing to introduce a Gateway Improvements Programme which will, over time, bring together a whole range of regeneration initiatives aimed at improving facilities for the immediate local communities affected whilst also improving the appearance of the key strategic routes into Buxton and Glossop. It is proposed that the Gateway Improvements Programme recognises two Gateway Zones – the Fairfield to Station Road corridor in Buxton and the A57 western entrance to Glossop at Dinting Vale. Plans showing these proposed zones are appended to this report.
- 3.2 In both of these zones, the aim will be to plan a series of actions to improve the appearance and function of these key strategic locations that act as gateways and, in turn, create an improved first impression of the town. It is proposed to prepare an action plan identifying opportunities for improving these locations, taking into consideration any planned projects/ initiatives and development opportunities. The actions could range from development of housing/ employment sites, enhancement of built frontages of existing buildings, improved traffic management, alternative ways of managing street cleanliness and appearance etc.
- 3.3 The delivery of the Local Plan's vision for High Peak has taken a major step forward by the long awaited construction work relating to the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa project now being well underway and the recent announcement of the Mottram Moor to Glossop Link Road being added to the government's highways investment programme. However, realising the full potential of these developments on the regeneration strategies for the Buxton and Glossop town centres could be hindered by the poor appearance of parts of Fairfield Road into Buxton and the former Spread Eagle Public House in Glossop.
- 3.4 As quick wins, therefore, the report is proposing to focus on two immediate initiatives:
 - (a) The improvement of the appearance of a section of Fairfield Road including improvements to the public realm and some of the private properties fronting onto Fairfield Road
 - (b) Addressing the derelict condition of the existing buildings and create an enhanced gateway to High Peak at Woolley Bridge

4. How this report links to Corporate Priorities

- 4.1 The proposed gateway improvement Programme would link to Aim Three of the High Peak Corporate Plan 2017-19: *To support economic development and regeneration* – measured through sustainable towns and rural communities and increased economic growth.

5. Options

- 5.1 The Executive is recommended to authorise officers to initiate a Gateway Improvements Programme as set out in this report. The report also proposes two initial schemes for the programme in view of the present issues surrounding these two locations detracting from their immediate locality as well as diminishing the positive regeneration of their respective town centres.
- 5.2 The recommendations are set out to allow the principle of establishing the Gateway Improvements Programme to be considered separately from the two initial projects.

6. Implications

6.1 Community Safety - (Crime and Disorder Act 1998)

In terms of the proposed initial projects, both would potentially contribute to improved community safety. The former public house at Woolley Bridge is attracting trespassers who are putting themselves at danger due to its derelict condition.

Improvements along Fairfield Road may result in reduced environmental crime in that it is hoped that residents, property owners and visitors will adopt a sense of pride in their surroundings.

6.2 Workforce

Not relevant to the recommendations of this report.

6.3 Equality and Diversity/Equality Impact Assessment

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Council's diversity and equality Policies.

6.4 Financial Considerations

It is proposed to establish a Gateway Improvements Programme with an initial capital budget of £64,000 made up from existing allocations within the current capital programme shown as Heritage Regeneration Scheme (which has been suspended) and the Landlord Accreditation Scheme. Supporting revenue funding has been allowed for in the Operational Services waste collection budget.

6.5 Legal

The proposals will operate using various powers available to the Council under the Local Government Act 1972 and other legislation. The specific legal powers will be set out along with detailed proposals in later reports.

6.6 Sustainability

The proposed Gateway Improvements Programme will aim to promote improvements to properties and sites that are sustainable.

6.7 Risk Assessment

Any risks arising to the Council would be in relation to the detailed proposals which will be the subject of a later report. All risks will be set out at that time.

7. **Background and Detail**

- 7.1 The High Peak Local Plan was adopted last year which aims to promote a sustainable and growing local economy through the creation of job opportunities and affordable housing so as to help people remain in, or return to, their local communities according to local needs. It also aims to turn around the historic and industrial legacy of the area in order to grow the tourism economy. Buxton's adopted vision is to become *England's Leading Spa Town* whilst Glossop will build on its growing reputation as a destination for high-quality food and drink to provide a compelling mix of retail and leisure opportunities in an appealing town centre.
- 7.2 The plan's designated development sites reflect this overriding vision via a clustered arc of employment sites from Waterside, Hadfield to Dinting Vale, Glossop on the western edge of Glossopdale together with a corridor of housing, employment and regeneration sites from Fairfield to Station Road in Buxton.
- 7.3 Two recent developments have the potential to lead to a step-change in terms of realising the plan's strategic vision. These are the long awaited construction work relating to the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa project now being well underway and the recent announcement of the Mottram Moor to Glossop Link Road being added to the government's highways investment programme. However, for the potential benefits of these developments for the respective town centres to be fully realised, the Council needs to address the poor appearance of some gateway sites to Buxton and Glossop.
- 7.4 This report is proposing to introduce a Gateway Improvements Programme which will, over time, bring together a whole range of regeneration initiatives aimed at improving facilities for the immediate local communities affected whilst also improving the appearance of the key strategic routes into Buxton and Glossop. It is proposed that the programme should recognise two Gateway Zones – the Fairfield to Station Road corridor in Buxton and the A57 western entrance to Glossop – see Appendices 1 and 2. The report is also proposing to focus on two immediate initiatives:
- The improvement of the appearance of a section of Fairfield Road looking at improvements to the public realm and some of the private properties fronting onto Fairfield Road
 - Addressing the derelict condition of the former Spread Eagle Public House (later known as the Riverside Inn) at Woolley Bridge

Fairfield to Station Road Corridor, Buxton

- 7.5 Buxton's town centre has been the subject of a heritage-led regeneration programme for the last two decades which is shortly to reach a key milestone with the completion of the Buxton Crescent and Thermal Spa project in 2019. Whilst this programme has already transformed Buxton's overall prosperity and vibrancy, the completion of the Crescent project is anticipated to make a step change towards realising the strategic planning vision for Buxton to become *England's Leading Spa Town*. In parallel with this, the Council is making every effort to deliver a number of key housing and employment sites on the northern edge of Buxton at Fairfield. If the development of these sites can be realised, it is hoped that a significant investment can be made in the infrastructure and facilities on offer in the Fairfield community.
- 7.6 Notwithstanding the above, one of the key routes into the town centre along the A6 from Stockport via Fairfield Road presents a poor image to the town largely due to the condition of a number of the properties on the west side of the road. These properties, which are a mix of houses in multiple occupation, flats and single family homes suffer from a lack of external repairs, inappropriate alterations and untidy forecourt gardens. Whereas Council grants have been made to a number of properties (Landlord Accreditation Grants) these are focused on improving the standard of accommodation available rather than the overall appearance of the property.
- 7.7 Public concern has been expressed about the condition of these properties so that an initial project of the Gateway Improvements Programme proposes to:
- a) Fund grants aimed at improving the front external appearance of some of the properties including the front forecourt gardens. The aim would be to promote a small number of exemplary improvement schemes initially in order to demonstrate the potential improvements that can be achieved before reviewing whether the grants project should continue in either the same or an amended form.
 - b) Work with the property owners, the Buxton Town Team, Derbyshire County Council and the Borough Council's Operational Services team regarding the public realm and ways of reducing the visual impact of the large number of refuse bins.

A57 entrance to Glossop

- 7.8 As part of the Trans Pennine Upgrade programme, Highways England announced in November last year that it has identified the preferred option for the Mottram Moor and A57(T) to A57 Link Roads. This means that a budget has been created for this within the government's highways investment programme and the link road will now be the subject of detailed planning process via a Development Consent Order. Subject to the planning process proceeding smoothly, a final decision would allow the construction to start soon after 2020.

- 7.9 The Glossop end of the new link road will re-join the existing A57 to the south of the existing Woolley Bridge roundabout and, as a consequence, create an opportunity to redesign the road layout which will carry significantly less traffic and potentially create a development site. As part of the statutory consultation process the Council is required to prepare a Local Impact Report (LIR) identifying the impact of the new road on the local area. It is proposed to consider the sites around this junction including the former Spread Eagle Public House as part of this impact report.
- 7.10 In preparation of that, officers are proposing to prepare proposals to address the poor appearance of the proposed major junction which forms an entrance to High Peak. The former Spread Eagle Public House (later the Riverside Inn) which ceased trading about 10 years ago and has subsequently fallen into considerable disrepair and forms a poor image of the area. The owners have made various attempts at refurbishment, all of which have stalled due to a lack of adequate funding. The now ruinous building has attracted vandals and is already in a dangerous condition. As the building is located immediately after the entry signs to the Borough and Glossop, this presents a very poor image, as well as a safety trap.
- 7.11 It is proposed that the Gateway Improvements Programme should investigate the powers and procedures available to the Council to tidy up the site in the short term to be followed by possible development of the site in the longer term. It is also proposed to explore the opportunity to find an alternative use for this very visible gateway site that will be more visible with the arrival of the new bypass. An opportunity exists to remodel this site along with surrounding sites as part of a wider land assembly to accommodate more suitable uses, of appropriate scale, relevant to the location.
- 7.12 Subject to members approving the recommendations of this report, it is proposed to bring further details back for approval relating to both projects set out under paragraphs 7.5 -7.11 above.

Dai Larner
Executive Director - Place

Web Links and background papers

Files kept electronically

Contact details

Richard Tuffrey
Principal Regeneration Officer
Richard.tuffrey@highpeak.gov.uk
01538 395583