

Walton on Thames Future High Streets

Business stakeholder visioning

June 2023



INTRODUCTION

Future vision for a more vibrant and prosperous town centre!

Future High Streets government funded

High Street and Bridge Street focus

Support local businesses and residents, by:

- Engendering civic pride and 'Love Walton'
- Enhancing Walton's wider identity and attractiveness for visitors and shoppers
- Enabling more frequent street events
- Supporting street greening and cleaning
- Promoting walking and cycling for getting to the town centre



INTRODUCTION

This session

Brief the consultants

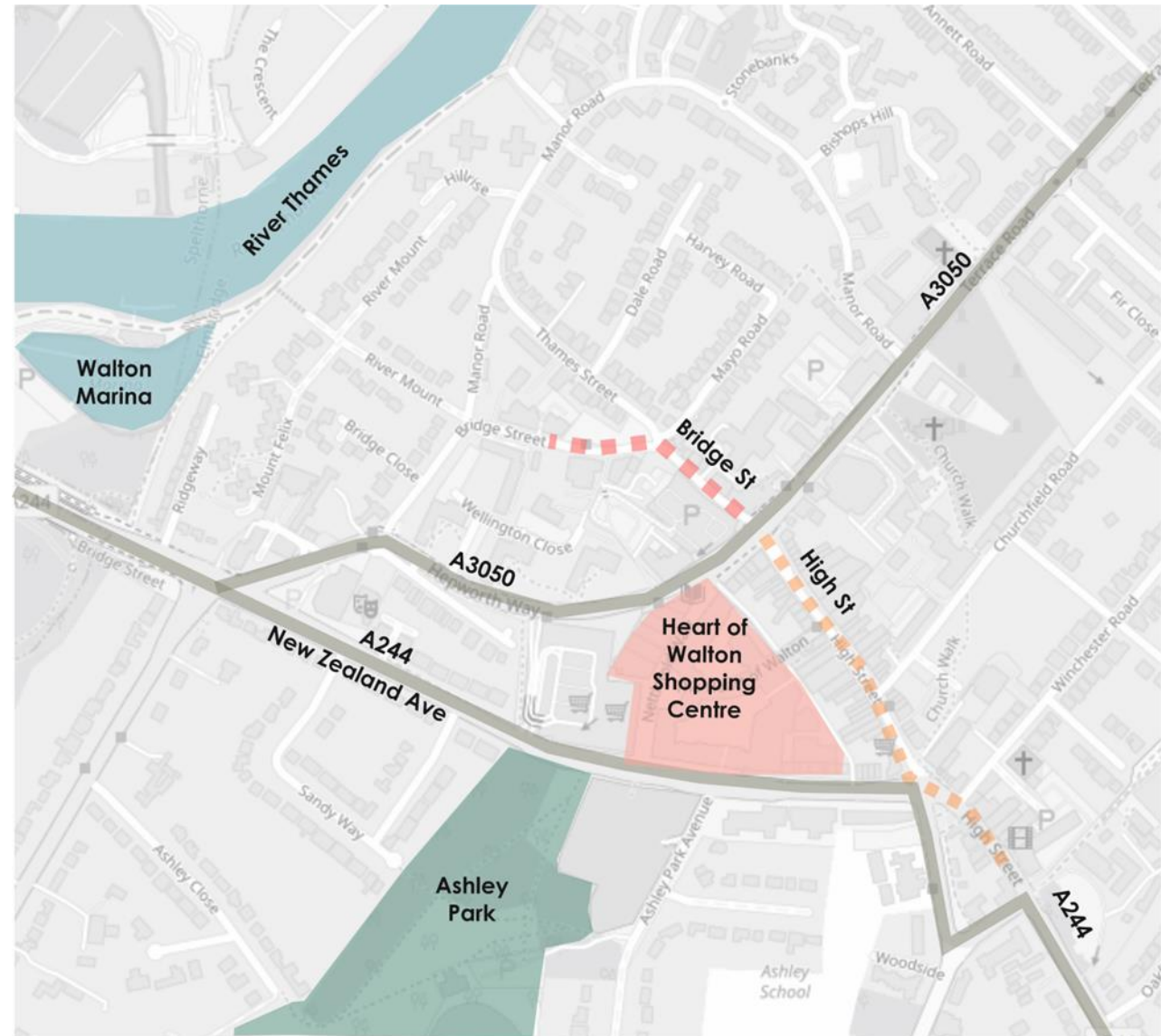
What we've seen and heard so far

Considerations

Your turn

- Where are we now?
- What's achievable?
- What needs doing?
 - Immediately
 - In the future

Next steps



LOCAL CONTEXT – HIGH STREET



LOCAL CONTEXT – HIGH STREET



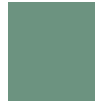
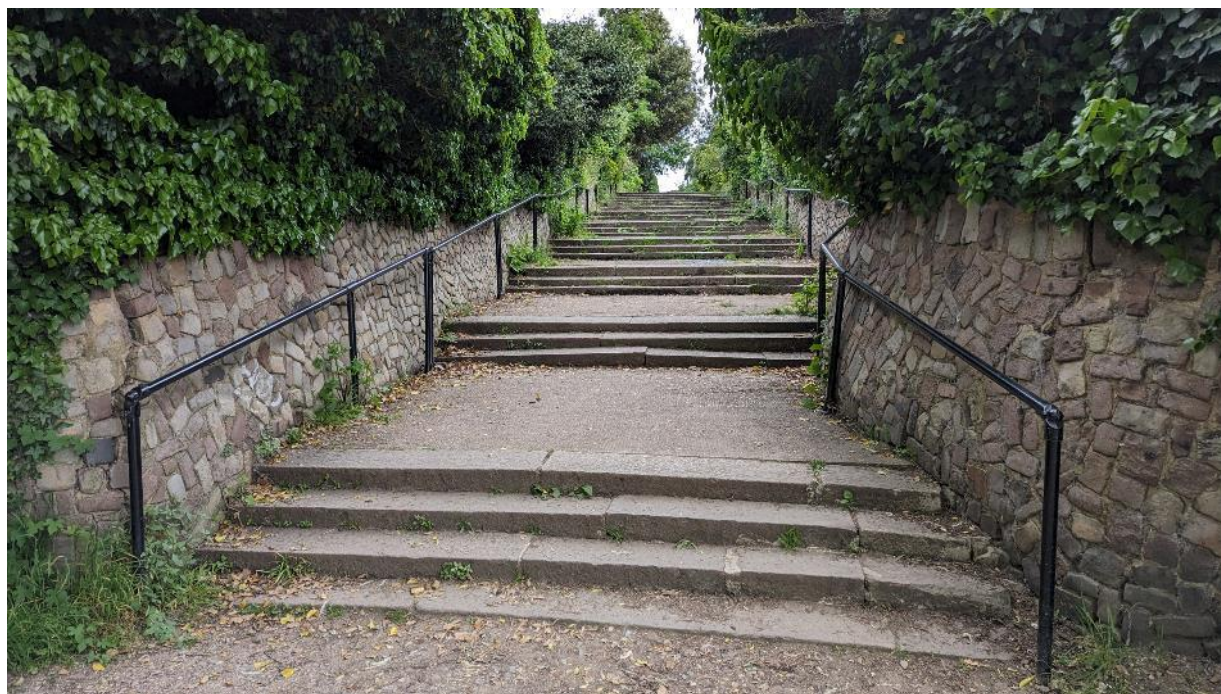
LOCAL CONTEXT – BRIDGE STREET



LOCAL CONTEXT – CONNECTIONS



LOCAL CONTEXT – CONNECTIONS – TO THE RIVER



LOCAL CONTEXT – CONNECTIONS – EXTENDED HIGH ST & STATION



LOCAL CONTEXT – CONNECTIONS – EXTENDED HIGH ST & STATION



LOCAL CONTEXT – BRIDGE STREET



HIGH STREET EXISTING SITUATION – WHAT WE FOUND

Pros

- Well laid out and accessible
- Well maintained street environment
- Good width footways
- Some greening
- People-scaled streets

Cons

- Vehicle prioritisation
- Lack of soft landscaping
- Poor quality crossings
- Variable quality street furniture
- Lack of nighttime economy
- Lack of seating
- Lack of connectivity to station
- Poor cycle facilities
- Poor wayfinding / signage



BRIDGE STREET EXISTING SITUATION – WHAT WE FOUND

Pros

- Close to the river
- Varied street layout
- Intimate scale
- Limited traffic flow

Cons

- Dominated by vehicles / parked cars
- Narrow footways
- Poor wayfinding / signage to river
- Disconnected from rest of town centre
- Aldi / Wilko canopy
- Lack of seating / cycle parking
- Poor bus stop waiting facilities

WHAT WE FOUND – AROUND THE TOWN

Pros

- Convivial ambiance
- People-scaled environment
- Quality local / independent businesses

Cons

- Co-existence with through traffic
- On-street parking
- Large-scale road junctions
- Long road crossing distances and waiting delays
- Indistinct links to station and river
- Lack of specific cycling facilities
- Inflexible streets
- Lack of identity

WHAT DO YOU THINK - WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Pros

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-
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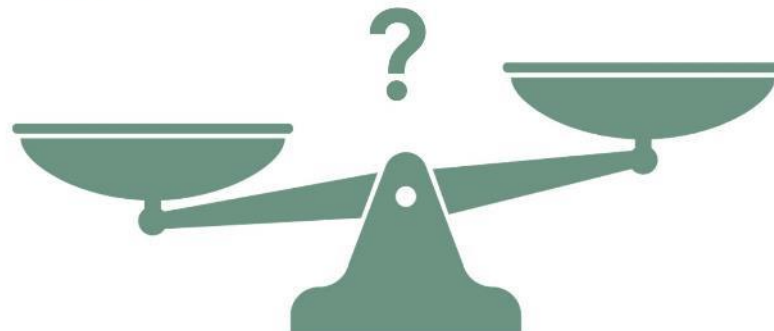
Cons

-
-
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CONSIDERATIONS



CONSIDERATIONS



- More parking:
 - = better access
 - = more traffic
 - more traffic = degraded streets
- Street closure:
 - = less traffic = quieter / calmer streets
 - = less traffic = less business visibility
 - = lack of street activity out of hours
 - = servicing access difficulties
- Street greening & wider footways:
 - = better quality and healthier streets
 - = more room for pedestrians
 - = displaced traffic and queues
- Smaller road junctions
 - = easier and safer to cross roads
 - = increased traffic delays and congestion

WHAT CAN BE DONE?



PEDESTRIANISATION

PEDESTRIAN ZONES ARE AREAS OF A CITY OR TOWN RESERVED FOR PEDESTRIAN-ONLY USE AND IN WHICH MOST OR ALL AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC IS PROHIBITED.



RESTRICTED ACCESS

RESTRICTED ACCESS STREETS ARE DEFINED AS STREETS THAT RESTRICT CERTAIN VEHICLES / USERS AT CERTAIN TIMES OF THE DAY



FLEXIBLE SPACE

IS A SHARED ENVIRONMENT WHERE ALL USERS ARE PERMITTED BUT IN A CAREFULLY MANAGED / PLACEMAKING LED MANNER



ONE-WAY STREET

ONE-WAY STREETS ARE SOMETIMES USED TO MANAGE TRAFFIC AND CREATE ADDITIONAL SPACE FOR OTHER USERS INCLUDING BUSINESS SPILL OUT AREAS / SEATING



TYPICAL HIGH STREET

THESE ARE STANDARD STREET ENVIRONMENTS WHICH PERMIT ALL TYPES OF USERS. THERE MAYBE PARKING AND LOADING RESTRICTIONS IN PLACE. TEND TO BE DESIGNED AROUND MOVEMENT RATHER THAN PLACEMAKING



SUCCESSFUL HIGH STREETS



Bishopthorpe Road, York

Well maintained buildings and interesting architecture



Preston High Street, Preston

Retail, leisure and cultural offer during the day and night-time



Elizabeth Street, London

A flexible street environment which can adapt to changing needs throughout the day / week / month and year



Croydon, South End, London

Quality, well maintained and hard-wearing public realm that is accessible to all



Ashington High Street, Northumberland

There is sense of place where the negative impacts of traffic and parking are mitigated and managed



Dun Laoghaire, Ireland

Quality flexible seating and planting to accommodate alfresco dining, where appropriate

WHAT CAN BE DONE - WHAT DO YOU THINK?

The BID's aims

- Engendering civic pride and 'Love Walton'
- Enhancing Walton's wider identity and attractiveness for visitors and shoppers
- Enabling more frequent street events
- Supporting street greening and cleaning
- Promoting walking and cycling for getting to the town centre

WHAT CAN BE DONE – WHAT NEEDS DOING?

Immediate Action & Quick Wins

-
-

Medium-term

-
-

Long term?

-
-



NEXT STEPS

Further investigation

Meetings, incl. with SCC

Proposals

Reporting

Action!