



NEWS RELEASE

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Plans for major redevelopment of Stratford nearing completion

Results of the public consultation on the draft plans for the multi-million pound redevelopment of Stratford-upon-Avon will be presented to local councillors today (Thursday), in the first stage of a process aimed at pressing the “Go” button on the ambitious World Class Stratford project before the end of next month.

Members of Stratford-on-Avon District Council’s Avon Area Community Committee will be given details of what the public said, and in responding to those views present proposed changes to the draft Urban Design Framework (UDF) that has been developed in conjunction with the World Class Stratford Strategy Group.

The UDF will form the blueprint for a massive revamp of Stratford, bringing it up to the standards befitting its international reputation. Key elements envisage transforming the main gateways to the town as well as rebuilding parts of the town centre, to improve it beyond recognition for the benefit of residents and visitors alike.

The revised UDF document includes ideas to create a “canal quarter” and a bustling location similar to The Lanes in Brighton, as well as tackling traffic management and key pedestrian priority areas. The framework will also show where space can be created for a major new ‘cultural attraction’ to compliment the Shakespeare offer and broaden Stratford’s appeal. The overall aim of the initiative is to breathe new life into Stratford, while retaining its historic charm.

The re-landscaping of the famous Bancroft Gardens and the Recreation Ground opposite, under Phase One of World Class Stratford, has already been given the go-ahead, subject to planning consent for some elements of the scheme. It will take place in tandem with the £113 million redevelopment of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

Work on the Bancroft Gardens – under what is known as the Waterfront Masterplan – is due to start in earnest in October this year and is costing a total of £2.5 million, mostly funded by Advantage West Midlands (AWM), the regional development agency. AWM is also a prospective key provider of cash for the wider masterplan for the whole town.

Details of the proposed changes to the draft UDF, presented to members of the district council's Avon Area Community Committee today, will be considered by the council's ruling executive on Monday 2 July and by Warwickshire County Council's Stratford on Avon Area Committee on 18th July, before being presented to a full meeting of the District Council on 23 July, for final approval.

Councillor Les Topham, leader of Stratford-on-Avon District Council and chairman of the World Class Stratford Strategy Group, commented: "This is the most exciting initiative in Stratford since the building of the original Shakespeare Memorial Theatre in 1879.

"Our ambition is to rejuvenate Stratford in a way that a town of such worldwide significance deserves, while at the same time preserving and highlighting those historic and cultural elements upon which its reputation is based. We want Stratford to be a delight not just for the millions of visitors who come here but also for the people live or work here. We want Stratford to be a place of which future generations will be proud."

Councillor Chris Saint, Economic Development Portfolio Holder for Warwickshire County Council, added: "The UDF is a culmination of many months work by partners in the project. I am pleased that we will shortly have a framework to guide future positive change within the town. The UDF is the green light for us to get on and work together to bring about significant benefits for Stratford."

Editor's note: full details of the final, approved Urban Design Framework will be presented to media and the public in a series of presentations during August, dates to be confirmed.

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About World Class Stratford

The World Class Stratford vision comprises:

- Facilitating the development of Stratford as a centre of excellence for a range of functions, including education, culture, leisure and tourism
- Ensuring Stratford remains as one of the country's pre-eminent cultural destinations by improving the quality and variety of the visitor experience to world-class standards

- Ensuring that Stratford meets the challenge to be the most significant and rewarding place for experiencing Shakespeare's legacy and genius
- Affirming the perception of Stratford's unique qualities and attractiveness by seeking to achieve World Heritage Site status
- Improving the ways Stratford's historical, architectural and landscape heritage is conserved, interpreted and presented
- Identifying and maintaining a strong sense of place and local distinctiveness in all new development
- Ensuring an adequate supply of affordable housing
- Identifying how to co-ordinate new developments and public spaces to create a distinctive whole, integrated with the existing fabric of the town
- Improving the publicly accessible areas and their connectivity within Stratford in order to enhance the visitor experience and create an environment that will support business growth and job creation
- Working with partners to improve traffic movement in and around Stratford and create an effective public transport interchange