
Halesowen Area Committee – 4th September 2008

Report of the Director of the Urban Environment

Halesowen Town Centre Development

Purpose of Report

1. To update the Committee on progress with regard to physical developments taking place in Halesowen Town Centre.

Background

2. At the 14th March 2007 Halesowen Area Committee, Members requested that progress reports be presented to future committees with an update on progress with regard to the development of the Cornbow shopping centre, bus station and town centre management issues. Since the last report presented to Committee on 2nd July 2008, officers from the Council met with representatives from Vale Retail and CENTRO on the to discuss progress and operational meetings, most recently on the 10th July 2008. Over the lifetime of the development period, officers will continue to liaise with Vale Retail, CENTRO / WMPTA and the Police to ensure building works are carried out and communicated to the public in the most efficient and effective way. The Town Centre Working Group of Members and officers last met on 30th July 2008 to consider the issues raised by the partners. The Head of Policy, Executive and Support Team will provide a verbal update on the outcomes of the Progress Meetings and Working Group at this Committee.

Cornbow Centre

3. Vale Retail have confirmed that the project is over half-way complete and remains on programme. High level cladding has been completed on the south elevation and is now progressing down the east side. By the 1st August all final floor construction will be complete. By the end of July the structural elements of the ramp which will allow vehicular access to the car park decks will be completed. Work is also progressing on the installation of the travelators, stairs, sprinkler systems, ductwork installations, electrical fix, terrazzo floors and refrigeration. The internal fit out is scheduled to start work in early August. Practical completion remains scheduled for 10th November and the scheduled store opening date is at present Monday 24th November 2008.

Halesowen Bus Station and Highway Realignment

4. The highway works are advanced as much as possible apart from those items that interface with the bus station or are affected by Statutory Undertakers works. The lighting columns, the majority of traffic signs and the pedestrian guardrail are now installed. The block paving outside Maybrook House is now complete and the surface finish to the footways in front of Andrew Road car park are expected to be completed by the middle of August having been delayed by Central Networks (Electricity). The surface course on the highway is expected to be completed around September/October time when surfacing of the bus station will take place. Of the 4 Puffin crossings in the scheme, 1 by Barclays Bank is now complete, 1 on the High Street is affected by National Grid (Gas) main replacement and as yet cannot be completed and the other 2 can not be completed until the bus station works are substantially complete, which is expected to be in September.

Town Centre Management Issues

5. Against the background of the various major regeneration projects currently taking place in Halesowen officers are working to ensure that the town centre remains attractive to shoppers and visitors. Town Centre Management have an ongoing entertainment and activities programme taking place in Somers Square. Since the date of preparation of the last report to this Committee on the 2nd July 2008 the following has taken place.

Friday 13th June: Halesowen Development Group Festival of Arts – Somers Square

Over 600 children provided an afternoon of entertainment for parents, shoppers and visitors of Halesowen in Somers Square. The entertainment of singing dancing and music was provided children from: Caslon, Newfield Park, Earls, Tenterfields, Hasbury, Lutley, Lapal, Howley Grange, Hurst Green, Huntingtree, Olive Hill, Our Lady & Saint Kenelm, Colley Lane, Manor Way, Windsor, Halesowen Church of England schools. The afternoon was attended by Mayor Councillor Ray Burston

Saturday 5th July: Halesowen Community Safety Day – Somers Square

The West Midlands Police in partnership with Town Centre Management held the second Halesowen Community Safety day. Against the background of the serious message of personal safety and crime prevention, shoppers and visitors were provided with entertainment and activities. The diverse entertainment and activities ranged from a face painter, caricaturist, stilt walkers and historic Police vehicles to a mediaeval law and order demonstration with stocks, and a bouncy castle. The afternoon was attended by Mayor Councillor Ray Burston and Mayoress Debbie Burston. The event was very well attended by the public.

6. At the time of the preparation of this report the following free children's Activities and Entertainment for Halesowen were due to take place during the

Summer of 2008. Feedback on these activities will be reported at future meetings of this Committee.

Tues 22 nd July	Rumples circus skills	Somers Square
Thurs 24 th July	Brum & Dudley children's street theatre	Somers Square
Fri 25 th July	Ray Roberts Mini Fun Fair (three fair rides for small children)	Somers Square
Tues 29 th July	Climbing Wall	Somers Square
Thurs 31 st July	Children's Games Arena	Somers Square
Fri 1 st August	Ray Roberts Mini Fun Fair (three fair rides for small children)	Somers Square
Saturday 2 nd August	Halesowen By The Sea	Somers Square
Tues 5 th August	Bouncy Castle	Somers Square
Thurs 7 th August	Climbing Wall	Somers Square
Friday 8 th August	Ray Roberts Mini Fun Fair (three fair rides for small children)	Somers Square
Tues 12 th August	Bouncy castle	Somers Square
Thurs 14 th August	Children's Games Arena	Somers Square
Fri 15 th August	Ray Roberts Mini Fun Fair (three fair rides for small children)	Somers Square
Tues 19 th August	Brum & Dudley children's street theatre	Somers Square
Thurs 21 st August	Rumples circus skills	Somers Square
Fri 22 nd August	Ray Roberts Mini Fun Fair (three fair rides for small children)	Somers Square
Tues 26 th August	Airborne Adventure	Somers Square
Thurs 28 th August	Bouncy Castle	Somers Square
Fri 29 th August	Ray Roberts Mini Fun Fair (three fair rides for small children)	Somers Square

Finance

7. A number of the issues raised within this report have a direct financial implication on the Council. However, all costs detailed which fall on the Council will be funded by existing capital or revenue budgets held within Economic Regeneration Division.

Law

8. Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 enables the Council to do anything which it considers likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of any part of the Borough. The Council will carry out Highway improvement / maintenance work under the Highways Act 1980.

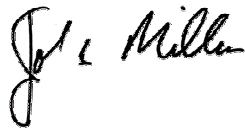
9. The Council is empowered to improve Highways under section 62 of the Highways Act 1980. Traffic Regulation orders are made under powers contained in section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The traffic calming Act 1992 amends the Highways Act 1980 to allow works to be carried out to promote safety and to preserve or improve the environment. Section 111 of the local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to do anything calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of its functions.

Equality Impact

10. A principal role of the Directorate of the Urban Environment is to encourage inclusivity amongst all sectors of the community, including the needs of children and young people. The Combow shopping Centre development responds to the strong demand amongst the local community for the presence of an anchor retail food store. A principal aim of the bus station development is to improve accessibility for all users to and from the town centre in a safe and secure environment. This work has been conducted in full accordance with the Council's equality and diversity policies and should in no way have any prejudicial impact on different racial groups, disabled people, both genders and / or other relevant groups.

Recommendation

11. That the Committee notes the progress of development in Halesowen Town Centre.



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John B Millar
Director of the Urban Environment

Contact Officers:

Rupert Dugdale
Head of Economic
Regeneration Delivery
(01384) 815538

rupert.dugdale@dudley.gov.uk

Martyn Holloway
Group Engineer - Transportation
(01384) 5426

martyn.holloway@dudley.gov.uk

List of Background Papers

Background documents used in the preparation of this report:-

Halesowen Area Committee Report: Agenda Item No. 17 (24th January 2008)
Available via: <http://cmis/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=10384>

Halesowen Area Committee Report: Agenda Item No. 12 (12th March 2008)
Available via: <http://cmis/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=10384>

Halesowen Area Committee Report: Agenda Item No. 18 (2nd July 2008)
Available via: <http://cmis/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=10384>