# High Street Renewal Programme for Midsomer Norton

Love Our High Streets: Scheme Proposal for a new Market Square at The Island

November 2021















## Contents

This Love our High Streets Scheme Proposal summarises the scope of the interventions sought through the WECA Full Business Case November 2021. It sits alongside this document, and other background evidence, and forms part of B&NES Council's High Street Renewal Programme.

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Perspective Illustration of the Proposed Town Square in small event mode, Nicholas Pearson Associates

## The Proposal

A funding package of approximately £895k has been earmarked from the WECA Investment Fund's 'Love our High Street' programme to support Midsomer Norton High Street renewal, subject to Full Business Case. The initial proposal put forward by B&NES Council, which successfully ringfenced this funding, was focused on the creation of new public realm at The Island. The proposal aims to support local businesses and the Grade II listed Town Hall by improving their setting and providing a flexible civic events space for community use and street markets. This new public space would reinstate the historic Market Square and replace an area which is poorly laid out and dominated by cars.

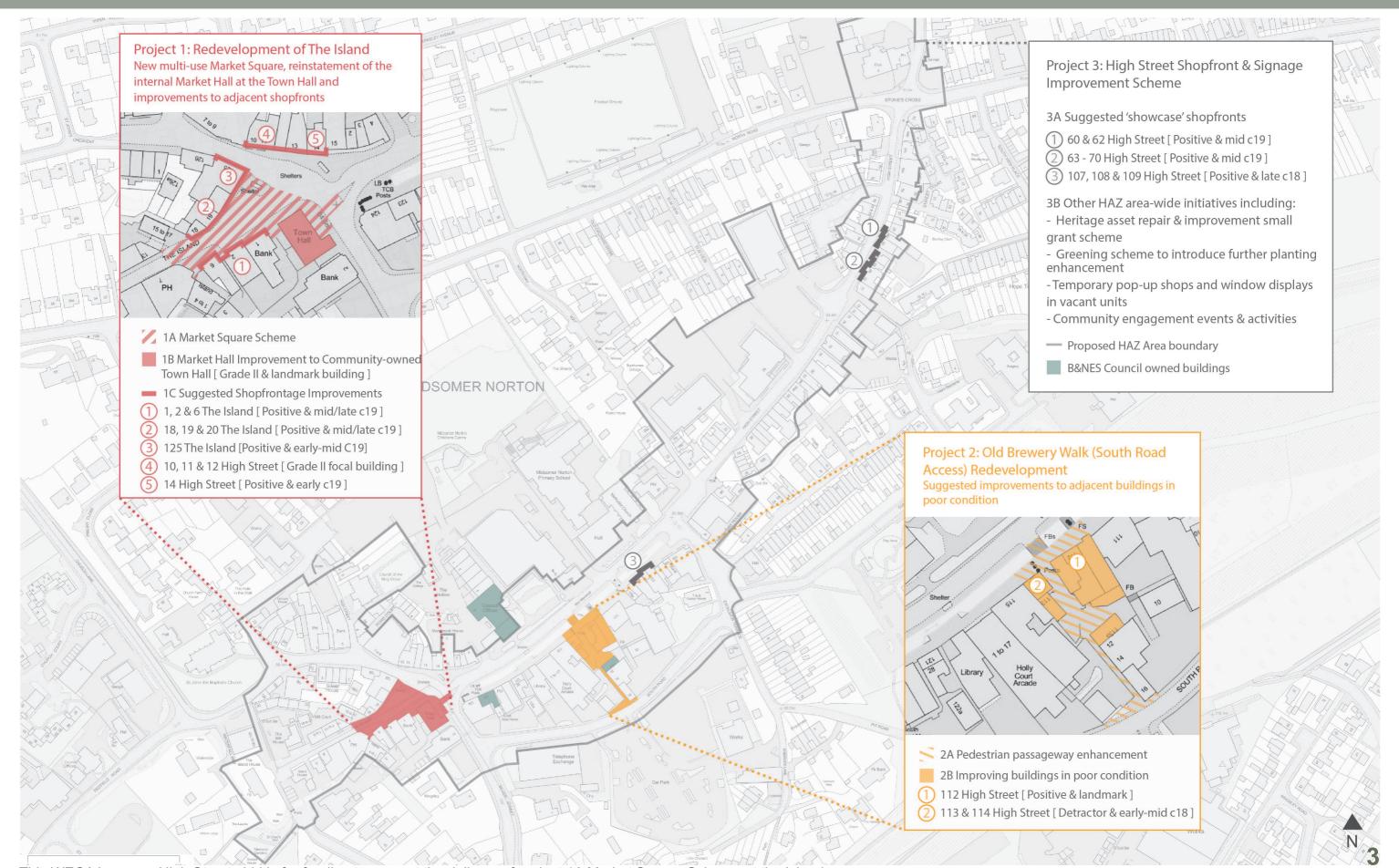
Since 2019, B&NES Council has secured an additional £1.346m in match-funding for the Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal programme, using the WECA funding as a catalyst for various funding bids. The match funding is as follows:

- £981k investment from Historic England as part of their High Street Heritage Action Zone programme;
- £300k from B&NES Council (£180k CIL and £120k capital);
- £45k from Midsomer Norton Town Council
- £25k from Midsomer Norton Town Trust

In addition, Midsomer Norton has been awarded further funding for separate, but complementary, schemes including £85k for the 3-year High Street Cultural Programme (MHCLG, Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund) and £24k from B&NES Council's allocation of the Welcome Back High Streets Fund 2021-22 (European Regional Development Fund).

This WECA scheme bid includes capital costs for construction, materials for the public realm and project management and those for technical design, delivery, monitoring and stakeholder engagement. As discussed with WECA, the bid also incorporates funds originally allocated to the scheme via the 2018 F&D application and associated February 2021 Change Request. Subject to approval via an accompanying Change Request, these funds are to be reallocated to the scheme for both Revenue and Capital elements.

## Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal Programme Summary



## Partners, Engagement & Consultation

The redevelopment of The Island and the proposed design for the new Market Square has been developed in consultation with the Midsomer Norton High Street Heritage Action Zone project stakeholders, including representatives from the following organisations:

- -Historic England
- -Midsomer Norton Town Council
- -Midsomer Norton Town Trust
- -Midsomer Norton Community Trust
- -Somer Valley Chamber of Commerce
- -B&NES Ward Councillors for Midsomer Norton North and Redfield

Additionally, a community consultation was carried out for the concept designs between November and December 2020 with 32 formal responses received. 22 of these responses expressed full or general support for the proposals and 5 did not express an overall view but wished to raise general queries. A further 5 respondents raised concerns which have since been addressed or mitigated as far as possible.

The community consultation report is included within the FBC documentation at Appendix 2.







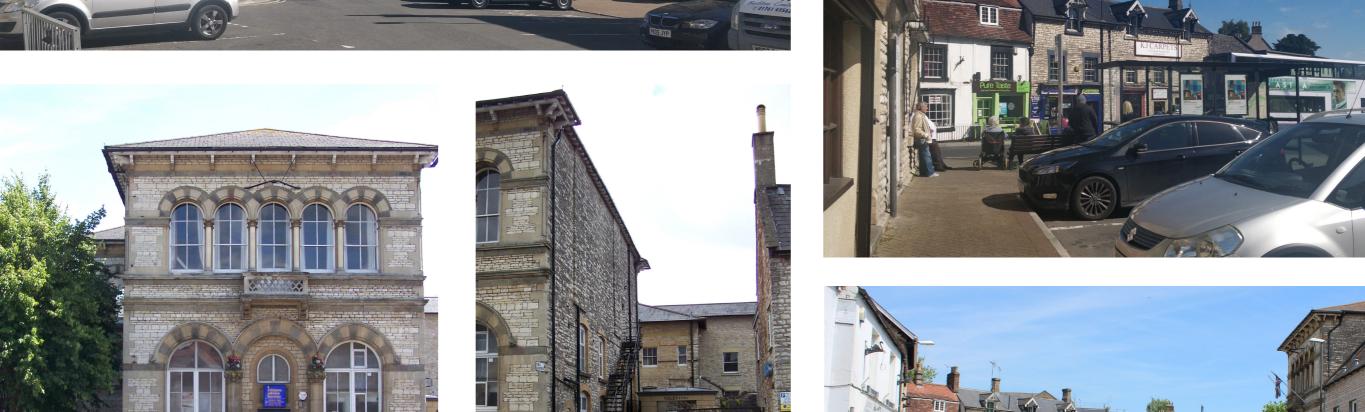




## **Current Condition of The Island**







## **Precedent projects**

#### Woodstock, Oxfordshire



Frome, Somerset



Design precedents which have informed the designs show public spaces that combine flexible civic spaces and market spaces, incorporating car parking and creating squares which can be used for activities at a variety of scales - everyday and for special events or market days.



Salisbury, Wiltshire





## **Scheme Proposal**

For the purposes of the Full Business Case the Council team has worked with landscape architects Nicholas Pearson Associates, engineers AECOM and the High Street HAZ Steering Group to develop a detailed scheme design RIBA Work Stage 3. In addition, further technical design to RIBA Stage 4 has informed the scheme costings and the draft technical designs are summarised here.

A further stage of stakeholder and community engagement will inform the final technical design.

## Scheme Proposal: A New Market Square for Midsomer Norton

#### **Detailed Design**

In consultation with local residents, businesses and interested parties and the feedback directly incorporated into the scheme.

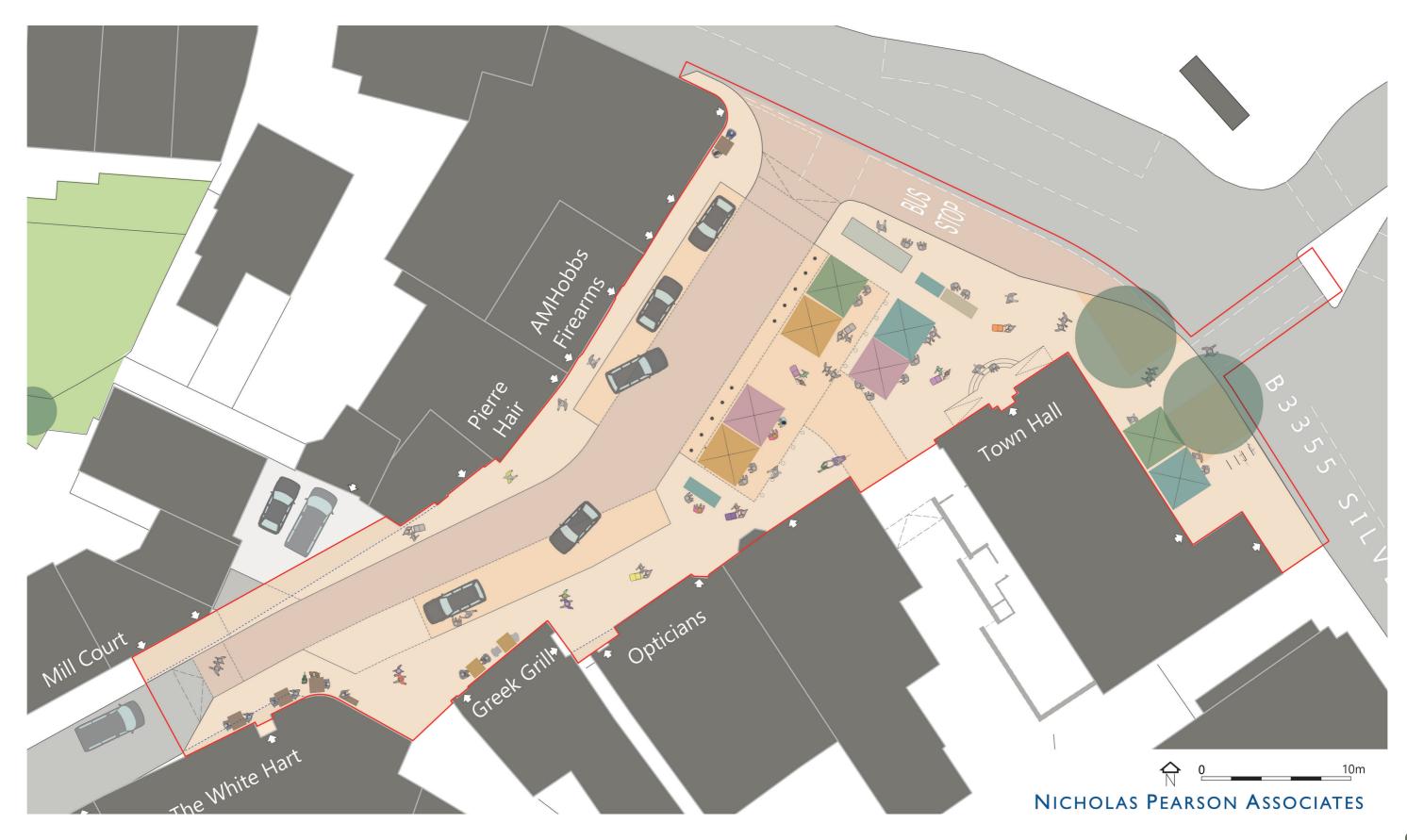
Key to the design of the new Market Square is ensuring the public open space can accommodate a variety of different functions and can be configured for day-to-day use, civic activities, small-to-medium scale community events – including street markets— and large-scale special events e.g. local festivals, traditions and bespoke markets.

As such The Island redevelopment scheme aims to:

- •Provide a welcoming, safe and attractive place that local people can enjoy;
- •Create events space with the right infrastructure to support markets, cultural activities and civic occasions;
- •Enhance the western end of the High Street to complement the historic Town Hall and support nearby commercial uses;
- •Support the community and civic function of the Grade II listed Town Hall which has recently been transferred into community ownership and is undergoing a major transformation project.

The designs that follow provide an indication of the flexibility and useability of the new Market Square.

## Detailed Design: A New Market Square for Midsomer Norton



## Mode plans showing flexible use

#### **'EVERYDAY' USE WITH PARKING**



**FULL MARKET USE** 



**'EVERYDAY' USE WITH PARKING & LOADING** 



**MEDIUM EVENT USE** 



## Technical Design: A New Market Square for Midsomer Norton

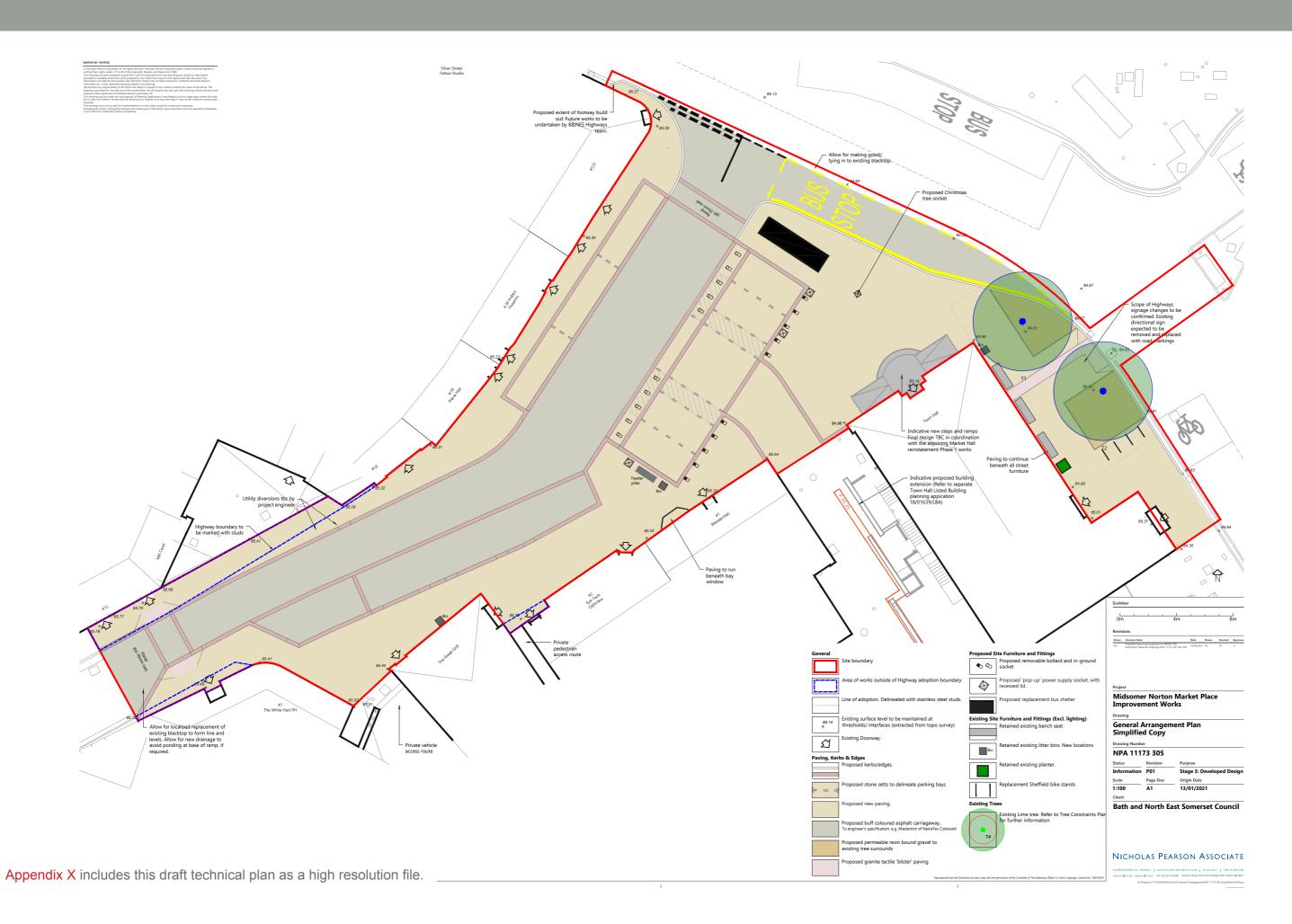
### **Technical Design**

Following the community consultation feedback and additional technical work carried out in consultation with the engineering and landscape design consultants, the design proposals were revised to address design constraints, increase pedestrian and road user safety and respond to potential risks including the location of services/utilities and the underground river culvert. These changes include adjustments to the width and position of the carriageway, minor changes to the position of car parking/loading spaces and the provision of paved areas outside 125 The Island and the White Hart pub.

Whilst changes may be made within future technical phases (RIBA Work Stage 4), the final Stage 3 designs are considered to mitigate risks as far as possible, better support local businesses and improve the long-term viability of this area.

The project team are working to ensure that the river culvert beneath the site is in good condition, so that construction works can progress without delay. The final technical design will include any further minor amends to layout, materials and infrastructure (e.g. power and water supply points) for the market square.

## Technical plan (draft)



## **Full Business Case Logic Model**

#### Aims and **Objectives**

Objective 1: To develop and deliver public realm improvement works at The Island, Midsomer Norton, to create a new multi-use Market Square for community events, civic occasions and cultural activities including markets.

Objective 2: To provide a welcoming, safe and attractive public space, with high-quality surface materials, street furniture and events infrastructure, to support/ enhance the leisure, business and cultural offer of the High Street.

Objective 3: To support the local economy by boosting footfall to the High Street and providing space and associated opportunities for a diverse mix of businesses to thrive

Objective 4: To provide improvements to the 'at risk' Conservation Area and enhancements to the setting of heritage assets including the Grade II listed Town Hall, White Hart pub, Jersey Dairy Stores and nearby locallylisted buildings

Objective 5: To support the transformation of the Midsomer Norton Town Hall as it moves into community ownership, including the reinstatement of the internal ground-floor Market Hall, by providing high-quality civic space directly adjacent.

#### Inputs and Resources

- Project Expenditure of £1,221K being £845k capital and £50K revenue grant from WECA, with match funding from B&NES of £326K
- Total Capital expenditure becomes £2.241m for B&NES' High Street Renewal Programme, being: £976k investment from Historic England's HSHAZ programme £300k from B&NES Council (£120k of capital funding and
- £180k CIL) £45k from Midsomer Norton Town Council £25k from Midsomer

Norton Town Trust

- Additional revenue funding of £85k for Historic England's Local Cultural Programme and £24k for the European Regional Development Fund's 'Welcome Back' funding.
- Opportunities for capital and revenue expenditure support as part of WECA's £500k Recovery Fund High Street Catalyst Grant to support the Vacant Unit Action Project.
- Operational expenditure covered by B&NES' existing maintenance commitments in the High Street.
- In-house expertise relating to urban public realm design and implementation, project management, engineering, stakeholder engagement, events and arboriculture.
- Access to the Highways framework contractor

#### **Activities**

- £1.171m capital and £50k revenue expenditure on the creation of a new Market Square at The Island.
- · Comprehensive public realm design work and associated technical and investigative works required for the space e.g. engineering and arboricultural input, trial holes, culvert and utilities investigations.
- · Design, development and installation of new street furniture and public realm additions including seating, bus stop infrastructure. cycling infrastructure. street trees and planters.
- Design, development and installation of new lighting and events infrastructure including power supply.
- Project Management and additional officer support where required.
- Community and stakeholder engagement in detailed design activities and consultation.
- · Associated postconstruction monitoring and evaluation processes.

#### **Outputs**

- Delivery of public realm improvements through the creation of a new multi-use Market Square at The Island, Midsomer Norton. This will be monitored and quantified in terms of the m2 of accessible public space provided through the scheme (target of 970sqm).
- Provision of high-quality events infrastructure including at least two high-voltage power supply units to support street markets, civic occasions and community events and activities of varying scales. The number of infrastructure items installed, community events held at the Market Square (104 events as target) and associated increase in attendees/volunteers will be monitored against baseline.
- Provision of 10 best-practice compliant car parking spaces, including two fully-accessible bays for disabled users, along with a dedicated loading bay for deliveries and market/events vehicles.
- · Provision of a new policycompliant vehicle turning point as part of the pedestrian and road user safety improvements.
- Provision of a new pedestrian walkway on the western side of the High Street, adjacent to 125 The Island as part of the pedestrian and road user safety improvements.
- · Provision of a new replacement bus shelter and enlarged bus cage on the High Street boundary.
- Provision of approx. 15 replacement/new street furniture items as part of the public realm improvements, including bike stands.

#### **Direct & Indirect Outcomes**

- · Comprehensive public realm improvements at The Island through the creation of the new Market Square (target of 970sqm).
- Provision of improved events infrastructure to support street markets, civic occasions and community events and activities of varying scales. Number of infrastructure items installed, community events held at the Market Square (104 events as target) and associated increase in attendees/volunteers to be monitored against baseline.
- · Provision of improved public transport and cycling infrastructure (public/business perception surveys targeting 10%+ improvement against baseline).
- Pedestrian/road user safety and accessibility improvements, including best-practice compliant car parking spaces, new fully-accessible bays and dropped kerbs throughout (50%+ decrease in reported Serious Incidents targeted).
- Benefits for businesses through improvements to the road layout and the provision of a new loading bay for deliveries (business perception surveys targeting 10%+ improvement against baseline).
- Improved street furniture provision with number of new street furniture items to be monitored (target of 15).
- Benefits and greater support for nearby businesses and stakeholders as a result of The Island being more attractive and practical, therefore increasing footfall (10%+ increase targeted) and encouraging a more diverse range of businesses and activities in this area e.g. markets. Percentage decrease in vacancy rates to be monitored via periodic surveys (general increase in commercial unit occupancy and 5%+ increase in High Street use mix against baseline targeted).

#### Indirect

- Regeneration benefits to the western end of the High Street, improvements to the character and appearance of the 'at risk' Conservation Area and enhancements to the setting of nearby heritage assets including the Grade II listed Town Hall and White Hart pub (improvement in 'very poor' Historic England At Risk condition status targeted).
- Raised profile of The Island as a destination and events spaces and greater support for the civic/community function of community-owned Town Hall (general increase in visitor numbers targeted against pre-pandemic baseline).

#### **Impact**

The impact of The Island redevelopment scheme have been calculated as follows:

- Supporting 30 gross FTE jobs during the construction and operational phases:
- · Generating 30 total net additional FTE jobs in the South West, including 10 for residents of the WECA area and B&NES during the construction and operational phases;
- Contributing a total net additional £3.6 million GVA over 4 years, including £3.2 million concentrated in the WECA area and £2.4 million in **B&NES**:
- Generating £2.7 million expenditure over 4 years at market stalls and existing town centre businesses;
- · Generating social value of £110,000 over 4 years through supporting people returning to work;
- Generating social value of £15,000 over 4 years through supporting apprenticeship opportunities;
- Generating social value of £280,000 over 4 years through supporting volunteering opportunities;
- Generating social value through enhancing opportunities for volunteering and promoting healthy lifestyles through physical activity and active travel. Number of community events and associated increase in attendees/volunteers to be monitored against baseline.;
- Promoting economic resilience through increasing town centre footfall and linked expenditure.

Source: Turley Economic and Social Impact Analysis, Sept 2021

## **Project budget**

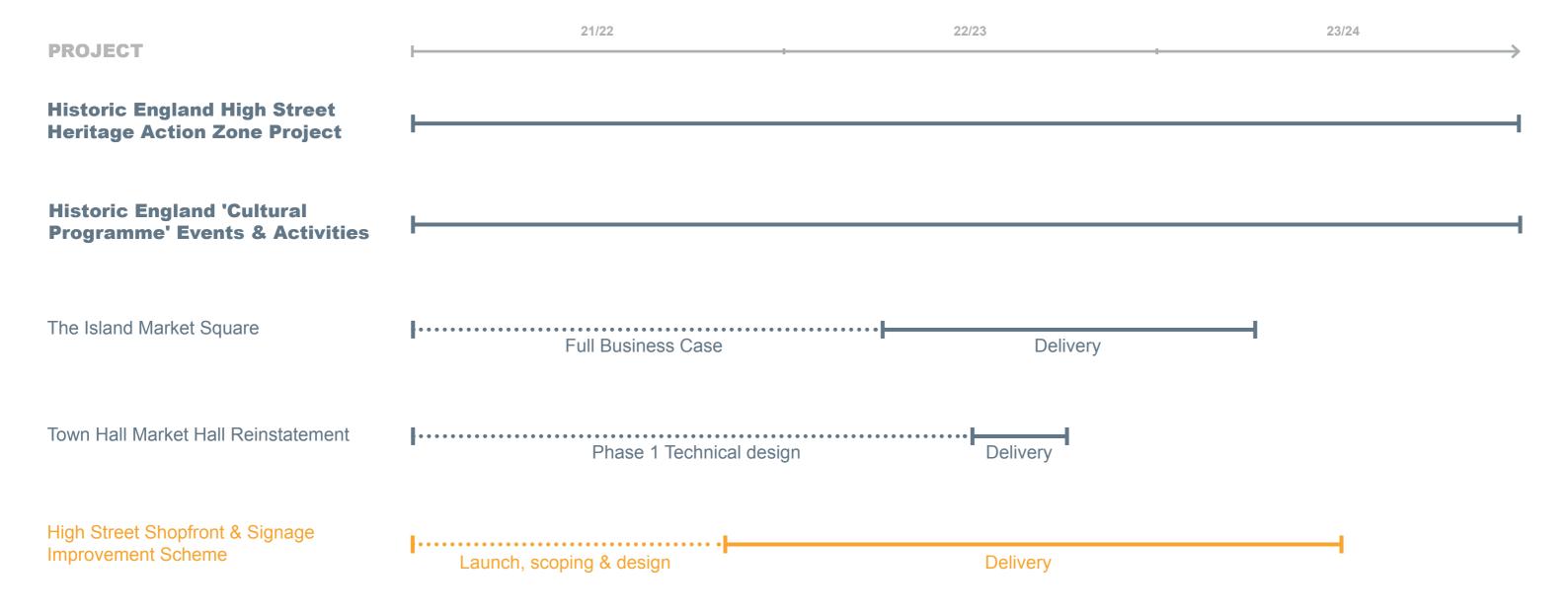
## A £1.221m project to support Midsomer Norton's High Street Renewal Programme, utilising £0.895m earmarked from the West of England Investment Fund's 'Love our High Street'.

This will be part of the wider Midsomer Norton High Street Renewal Programme of £2.241m which has been established for the area. Funding is broken down as follows:

- -£895K West of England Investment Fund's 'Love our High Street'
- -£976k investment from Historic England as part of their High Street Heritage Action Zone programme
- -£300k from B&NES Council (£180k CIL and £120 Corporate Supported Borrowing)
- £45k from Midsomer Norton Town Council
- £25k from Midsomer Norton Town Trust

Spend category	Included within WECA LOHS bid	Match-funded Sources
Project Management, Consultancy and Contractor fees	£341,963	B&NES £68,256
Market Square Construction Work	£152,990	
Materials	£242,669	Historic England £226,000 Midsomer Norton Town Council £20,000
Contingencies (including tender price inflation)	£107,378	B&NES £11,744
Revenue Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation	£50,000	
TOTAL	£895,000	£326,000

## **Project Plan**



High Streets Reopening & Renewal
Economy & Growth
Bath & North East Somerset Council







Bath & North East Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives