

Radstock Regeneration Action Plan Consultation Report, November/December 2023

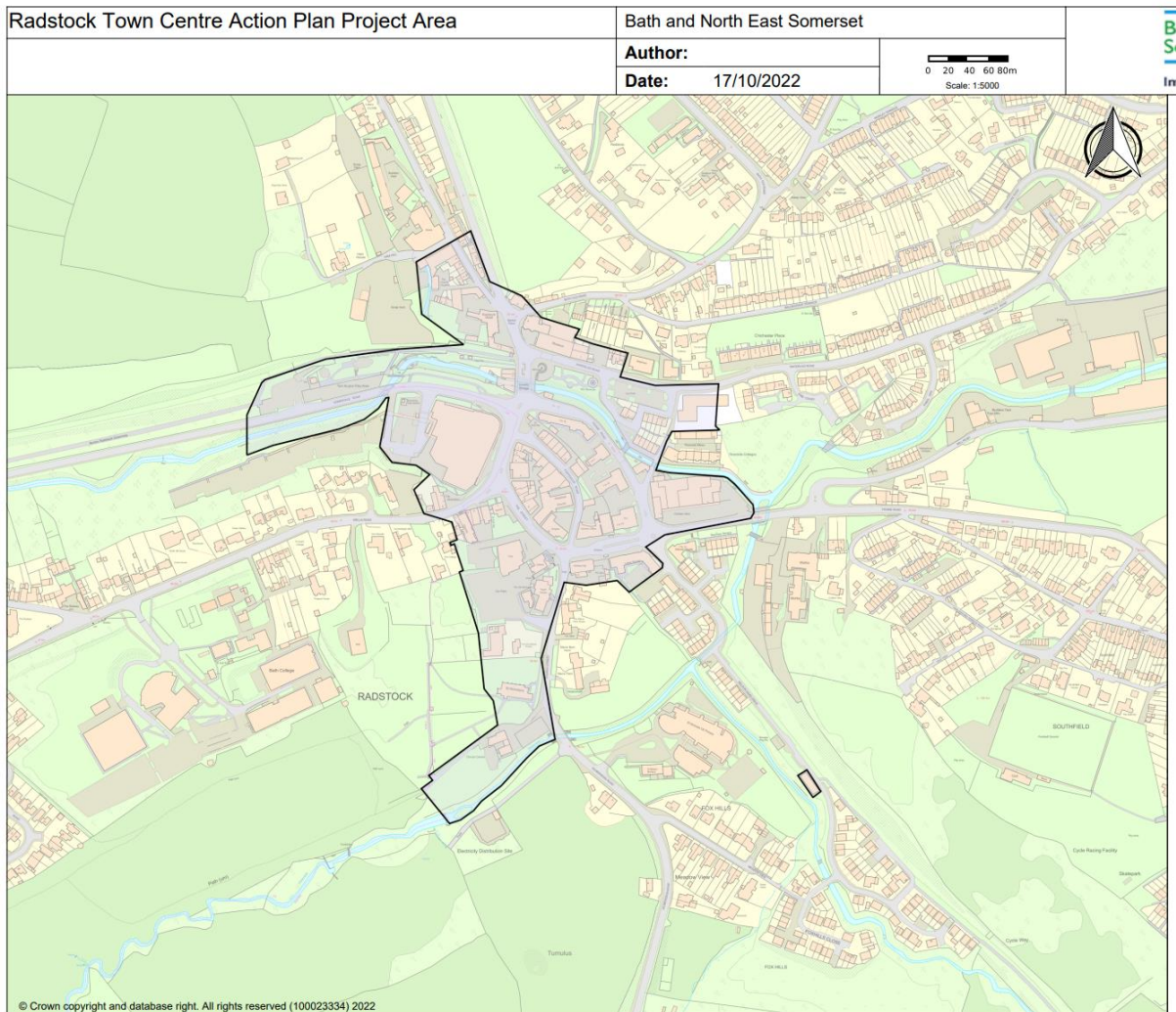
1. Introduction

Bath and North East Somerset Council has been successful in obtaining funding from the West of England Combined Authority Housing Regeneration Enabling Fund to prepare a regeneration action plan for Radstock Town Centre, working in partnership Radstock Town Council, landowners and stakeholders. This will facilitate delivery and access funding to support the infrastructure needs arising in communities including in response to strategic growth.

Radstock Town Centre Regeneration Action Plan developed by March/April 2023 and will identify opportunities, agree priority projects & access project funding. The Action Plan will be guided by the existing Local Plan and feed into the new Local Plan.

Housing and employment growth planned for the town and surrounding area means more reliance on the town centre facilities. The focus in Radstock will be on improvements to the vitality and viability of the Town Centre.

Project scoping took place early part of 2022 in partnership with Radstock Town Council, B&NES officers & members & informed engagement that took place in September/October 2022.



Consultation November/December 2023

Further consultation took place in November 2023 to receive feedback on the Radstock Regeneration Action Plan document including the project ideas that were identified in the scoping exercise and feedback from previous engagement. Once again people were informed about the engagement events through articles published in the local media following the issue of a press release.

Comments were sought through an online survey on Radstock Town Council website and are included in the table below:

Comments Summary

Comment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please look at the parking issues in Radstock centre. • Bollards needed on Fortescue road outside the shops as people are parking and driving along the pavement very close to the shop doorways which is highly dangerous. • Parking is the lifeblood of the shops and businesses in Radstock and any reduction in this will drive customers away to other places ie Midsomer Norton where parking is a lot easier in turn making businesses unviable and therefore close.

- The parking spaces in Fortescue road are too few for the amount of shops. Some of the double yellow lines that could be removed and turned into parking.
- Parking needs more monitoring to stop people overstaying the allowed time giving better turnover of customers. Church Road car park is very often full.
- It would be nice to think that people would/can walk but Radstock has quite an Elderly population and is quite spread out and need transport to get to the shops etc.
- Radstock also has some niche shops ie the dance shop. So some people travel distances to visit and spend money in other shops whilst there.

- The proposals for the Radstock town centre are on the whole welcome.
- It's great to see the proposed new trees.
- Loss of parking from Fortescue Road is a retrograde step as a small town like Radstock, and these shop in particular, are dependent to a considerable extent on car borne traffic. Loss of this parking will be harmful to the economic life of the town as people will just go and shop elsewhere. We have already lost much of our parking in the town centre with the development of the railway land. Were any shopper surveys undertake to inform this proposal? Please remove this proposal from the plans.
- I find the 'art walls' a really worrying concept. They will just encourage graffiti and look intimidating to some. They are a very urban concept, more fitting for a large city like Bristol, not for a small country town like Radstock.

- Enhancing the river bank, introduction of signage, improvements of shop fronts in Fortescue Road and The Street, additional play spaces and natural play areas across the town centre and enhancing the Miners Pool are all really good ideas.
- Bringing the "square" area into use for events and markets would be particularly welcome, especially if the "ransom strip" issue can be resolved with the Co-op, and the area opened up to Fortescue Road in front of Trinity. Bigger bus stops would be a good idea, and it doesn't look like any road space would be lost, as the central reservation would be removed to make space for the wider pavements.
- Project 8 in particular envisions the narrowing of Fortescue Road and removal of all the parking and replacement with rain gardens, seating and dwell areas. This would be a great problem to all the businesses in Fortescue Road. I understand that these projects are not finalised and there is a lot of further work to do. However, the loss of parking is likely to overshadow all the good proposals in the plan if the Council cannot reassure local people and businesses that the parking will not be lost. All of the businesses in Fortescue Road rely on this short term parking and any scheme to enhance the town centre as an active location offering shops and services should be trying to extend the parking rather than remove it.
- There is really no need for the double yellow lines in Fortescue Road, and these could be removed to provide additional short term parking. Whilst we may look towards a car free future, we are not there yet. The town centre depends of ready access by car and "pop in" customers.
- There is an out of control drug problem in the town, and Fortescue Road is affected by anti-social behaviour regularly. There have been any number of low level violent incidents in Fortescue Road in recent weeks and the problem is clearly getting worse quite quickly.
- The absence of public toilets in the centre of town is also a problem
- It is very positive that funding has been secured for improvements, which are badly needed. Anything that can be done to encourage people into town will be welcome.