



20 March 2019

Ms Donna Wilkinson
Principal Economic Development Officer
Chiltern District Council
King George V House
King George V Road
Amersham, HP6 5AW

Dear Ms Wilkinson

Re: Chesham - Future High Streets Fund Application

Chesham Renaissance Community Interest Company is in support of the Expression of Interest to the Future High Streets Fund on behalf of Chesham. We feel our Town Centre needs to change and requires funding as the instigator to drive further growth and renewal for the benefit of both residents and local independent businesses. Our vision is to have the Chesham High Street as a focal point for the local community: a place to socialise, shop and work. To do so we must continue to evolve our High Street and its immediate surroundings in line with the changing needs of the community and retail landscape.

Chesham Renaissance is a Community Interest Company. Its purpose is to make Chesham a better place in which to live and work. The company accepts the need for increased housing density to achieve central government planning requirements. However, it wants the necessary long-term investment to work for the benefit of the whole town. To achieve this, it has produced a 'Masterplan' which defines the benefits which need to be achieved for the people of the town.

A fundamental element of the Chesham Masterplan is a revitalisation of the High Street. We have argued that every town needs a beating heart. In the past fifty years the planning decisions made to accommodate a growing town have paid little attention to maintaining the heart.

Today we have a High Street where shops struggle to survive, there is little or no 'night economy' and the town centre becomes deserted from about 7pm. Vast areas of carparking, a four-lane highway and a brick wall divide the centre from much of the town and the established Lowndes Park.

One of the missing elements are places for people to live. Homes have made way for cars. The Chesham Masterplan proposes high density one- and two-bedroom dwellings suitable for first-time buyers and older people who wish to downsize. Multi-decked parking would provide at least the number of spaces now available.

The Masterplan further proposes that the current four-lane highway be reduced to two lanes, with additional lanes for turning right at appropriate places, a system of traffic lights to update the existing roundabout system, alongside easy access to attractive buildings. Currently this part of the town resembles an urban motorway designed to enable drivers to pass through as quickly as possible rather than stop.

We welcome the bid by Chiltern District Council for funding, which would provide Chesham with the means for immediate improvements and act as a driver for further change. A successful bid will provide an enormous incentive to others to invest in a Chesham which has designs on becoming a great place in which to live and work.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W A H' followed by a stylized flourish. A horizontal line is drawn underneath the signature.

W A H (Tony) Molesworth
Chairman