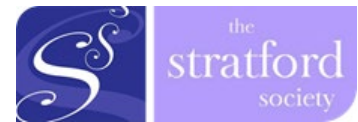


Stratford Society Planning Report for 2020

Kevin Bond, Chairman



This report covers the period from 2019 through to 2021 (April). The pandemic has seen a reduction in significant planning application but over the past few months we are now seeing increased activity.

Members will be aware that house building is increasing again with a major development along the North Western boundary of the Town. This was approved a number of years ago and we are likely also to see the Shottery development commence in the coming months. Both of these projects carry serious implications for traffic volume.

Town Centre hotel developments are planned for both the old BHS and Debenhams sites with recent publicity indicating that the Debenhams development is likely to be significantly larger. The proposed hotel development on the site of the old Picture House cinema has been held back and the future of this site is currently uncertain.

Many Town Centre shops are going through, or are likely to go through, change of tenant in the coming months. With online shopping still growing, the amount of space sought by retailers is reducing and the development of residential accommodation above shops is increasing.

The shape of the retail offering is likely to move increasingly towards the tourist and hospitality sectors. Streetscape developments, the current trial of High Street being closed from 10 am to 6 pm, in line with that in Henley Street, already has brought coffee tables onto the street and created greater space for pedestrians.

The Society has supported The Riverside Green Corridor project, which The Town Trust with Stratford District Council are proposing, subject to reduction in the additional car parking and greater use of facilities already available in The Leisure Centre Car Park. We await formal planning applications.

The Society has objected to the application for the renewal of The Stratford Wheel which is based on an application in perpetuity. We think that the development is against current District and Neighbourhood Plan policies. Similarly we objected to a planning application to permit the Stratford Waterside Market to take place on the land opposite The Encore pub. Amazingly, this market has been held repeatedly on this site under a 2014 permission but the land used opposite the pub is NOT licensed so the market has been in breach of its permission for years without enforcement. The Society believes that this is a dreadful example of the District Council failing to police its own undertakings whilst holding others to account.

During the past year we have had a number of changes to our Planning Officer personnel. Thank you to all who have helped out and welcome to Margaret Cund, who has stepped forward to take on this role with great vigour.

April 2021