



B O S T O N

B O R O U G H C O U N C I L

REPORT TO:	Planning Committee
DATE:	18 September 2018
SUBJECT:	Heritage Strategy for the Borough of Boston (Update)
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Claire Rylott
REPORT AUTHOR:	Luke Skerritt
EXEMPT REPORT?	No

SUMMARY

Boston is blessed with a rich, diverse and unique heritage and, in particular, recognised at a national level for its significant medieval and Georgian historic environment. Over the last five years this recognition, appreciation and understanding has grown as the value of both the built and natural environment is realised. Recent external investment in this irreplaceable asset has demonstrated the benefits which can be derived from this rich resource. As a result, there is now an increased need to put in place a strategy which sets out clear aims and objectives to understand, restore, protect and share this heritage.

The Strategy recognises that Boston's rich and unique heritage is an irreplaceable asset for current and future generations and is to be sensitively and proactively managed to maximise benefit for the people, economy and environment of the town and surrounding borough.

Its aim is to realise the full potential of Boston's heritage by developing understanding and appreciation of its significance, utilising its strengths and safeguarding its future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the updated Strategy is considered, agreed and endorsed by members prior to its going before Cabinet for consideration regarding its formal adoption and publication.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

To formally recognise the strategic importance of Boston's heritage in underpinning the placebranding and placemarketing of Boston as a destination.

To recognise the value of a strategic approach to heritage development in being a key lever for external investment and developing the borough as a place to live, work and invest.

To enable the Strategy to sit above, and thematically link, schemes of work that enable improvement and investment within the town and its surrounds.

To enable the Strategy and its associated action plan to prioritise and inform project planning and activity within the town and borough when opportunity is afforded.

To endorse the changes and updates made since its first publication in 2017.

The projects also fit within the following Corporate Objectives:

1. Prosperity – Attracting people and businesses to the area by raising the profile of Boston supporting the promotion of inward investment and developing our tourism, heritage and cultural opportunities.
2. People – supporting our role in meeting wider health & wellbeing needs of our community by continuing to work closely with our partners.
3. Place – supporting Boston as a place which offers a quality way of life for residents.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

That the strategy is not formally endorsed, adopted and published.

REPORT

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 This report is an update of a Strategy first developed, consulted on and drafted in 2017.

2. STRATEGY STRUCTURE AND PURPOSE

2.1 The Strategy recognises that Boston's rich and unique heritage is an irreplaceable asset for current and future generations and is to be sensitively and proactively managed to maximise benefit for the people, economy and environment of the town and surrounding borough.

2.2 Its vision addresses the facts that:

- The importance of Boston's heritage is not fully understood or acknowledged despite the significance of its historic environment being recognised nationally.
- The conservation and proactive management of the historic environment of Boston presents challenges for all key stakeholders but, once these are overcome, this resource can offer many rewarding opportunities.
- Appropriately managed and sensitively led heritage-regeneration has the potential to revitalise Boston.

2.2 The structure of the Strategy reflects five key objectives.

1. To provide tangible evidence of the value of Boston's heritage.
2. To demonstrate value through recent project initiatives and seek ways to build on excellent foundations.
3. To understand the existing and potential future challenges faced by Boston's heritage.
4. To continue to develop and build a broad base for support and appreciation of Boston's heritage.
5. To develop a series of achievable short term and longer term priority projects based on the findings of this strategy.

3. STRATEGY CONTENT

3.1 The Strategy links the value of the heritage to Boston's development, placebranding and offer as a destination and place to live.

'The concept of placemaking is to create places where people want to work, live and visit. This involves managing the identity of a place, enhancing its character and successfully communicating its strengths. The aesthetic value and access to both the historic and natural environment cannot and should not be under-estimated...'

'...Opportunities offered by the visitor economy are key to Boston's development. Development of the historic environment to enable the creation of a distinct and unique visitor experience is essential to support this.'

3.2 Successful recent investments in heritage within Boston are reviewed including the market place redevelopment, the Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas (PSiCA) shop front scheme and the signage and interpretation placebranding project 'Explore & Discover'. These and the rest of the projects have made a substantial and positive impact on Boston and have further developed and advanced partnership working in the local area.

3.3 Whilst there is much support for Boston's heritage and many opportunities to develop, there are nine key areas of activity which can be identified to establish a clear direction within the Strategy. These areas are developed and described within the Strategy but in summary include:-

- Knowledge and awareness
- Condition
- Economic viability
- Residential viability
- Unsympathetic development & re-development
- Capacity
- Community cohesion
- Location
- Attracting investment

3.4 The strategic direction of the Heritage Strategy is in line with Boston Borough Council's strategic ambition 'Boston – Open for Business' where its corporate priorities are based on 'Prosperity, People, Place and Public Service'.

Three themes can be highlighted which provide a clear focus of attention for action in relation to the nine areas to develop. These are:-

- Understanding and valuing the heritage
- Realising the potential of the heritage
- Managing and collaboration within Boston's heritage

4. OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLAN

4.1 To reconcile development of the nine identified areas with the three strategic themes a number of objectives, and associated proposed actions to address them, have been incorporated into an action plan. Whilst these proposed actions should be sought to be delivered they are not actions that necessarily should be undertaken in isolation or exclusively actions only associated with the Strategy. The intent is that heritage projects being pursued and delivered use this overarching action plan to inform their specific activity planning and community engagement so a cohesive and complimentary strategic direction to addressing Boston's heritage is achieved.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 The adoption of this document will strategically link extant and proposed schemes based around the heritage and historic offer of Boston, improving the town as a destination and place to live, work and culturally engage with. This will enable the strategy and its associated action plan to prioritise and inform project planning and activity within the town and borough. Projects in heritage realm development in being a significant opportunity and key lever for driving external investment and developing the town borough as a place to live, work and invest.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

The endorsement and adoption of the Strategy will communicate the coherent, consistent and informed perspective of the value of our heritage assets by the Borough of Boston and its partners thus increasing confidence in external funders in making investment within the town and borough.

LEGAL & EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Section 144 of the Local Government Act 1972, provides the power to encourage tourism to the Council's area.

The strategy is based on strategic aims and identified objectives, which includes building on the success of existing public realm projects to create better 'connectivity' and placemaking to highlight Boston as a destination to a wider audience.

ANY OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None known

CONSULTATION

The draft Boston Heritage Strategy was made available on Boston Borough Council's website and through social media from 17 March 2017 for comment, as well as part of a workshop facilitated by the Council's Heritage Development Officer with the Boston Heritage Forum on 20 April 2017. Members of the ViewPoint Panel, Youth Council, Elected Members, all Senior Staff at Boston Borough Council, Boston Disability Forum and Boston Chamber of Commerce were all notified that the document was available for comment. Paper copies were also made available if anyone requested them. The consultation closed on 18 April 2017. Comments were received which have been incorporated into the final draft Strategy

APPENDICES

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -

APPENDIX A

HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR THE BOROUGH OF BOSTON

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NONE

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT

NONE

FINANCE PROFORMA

BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

**PROFORMA FOR EXECUTIVE APPROVAL OF THE RELEASE OF RESOURCES
(CAPITAL AND REVENUE BUDGETS)**

FROM:

THIS PROFORMA PROVIDES THE FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS IN RESPECT OF THE ATTACHED

REPORT:

REPORT DATE:

OPTION 1	£ Year 1 2017/18	£ Year 2 2018/19	£ Year 3 2019/20	£ Year 4 2020/21	£ Year 5 2021/22
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Revenue

Total Revenue
Cost

Funding required:

Total capital cost £

Revenue cost £

Considered by:

Enter committee here

Enter Council or
Cabinet here

Date:

Financial Services Comments

Risk

Procurement

Value for Money Efficiency

This FP is valid for 3 months from FP date	If this FP is no longer required please advise Finance	If there are changes to the original report it may invalidate this document, it must be reviewed by Finance.