

additional papers 2

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tue 2 Apr
2013
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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J Bayley and M Craggs
Democratic Services**

**Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Tel: (01527) 64252 Ext: 3268 / 3267 Fax: (01527) 65216
e.mail: jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk /
michael.craggs@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk**

Welcome to today's meeting.

Guidance for the Public

Agenda Papers

The **Agenda List** at the front of the Agenda summarises the issues to be discussed and is followed by the Officers' full supporting **Reports**.

Chair

The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting. Generally to one side of the Chair is the Committee Support Officer who gives advice on the proper conduct of the meeting and ensures that the debate and the decisions are properly recorded. On the Chair's other side are the relevant Council Officers. The Councillors ("Members") of the Committee occupy the remaining seats around the table.

Running Order

Items will normally be taken in the order printed but, in particular circumstances, the Chair may agree to vary the order.

Refreshments : tea, coffee and water are normally available at meetings - please serve yourself.

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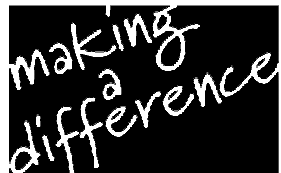
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Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

2nd April 2013

7.00 pm

Committee Room Two

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: Juliet Brunner Andrew Fry
 (Chair) Pattie Hill
 Simon Chalk (Vice- Gay Hopkins
 Chair) Pat Witherspoon
 Andrew Brazier
 David Bush
 John Fisher

5. Access for Disabled People Task Group - Monitoring Update Report

(Pages 1 - 30)

J Staniland, Exec Director - Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services

To consider a monitoring update report on action that has been taken to implement recommendations made by the Access for Disabled People Task Group in August 2012.

(Report attached)

(Abbey Ward);

Access for Disabled People Task Group: Response to the Group's Final Report presented to the Executive Committee on Tuesday 21st August 2012

Members approved the majority of the Group's recommendations, though have requested that further work be undertaken in response to a couple of recommendations and a report on the subject be presented for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course.

APPROVED RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	DATE REQUIRED BY
<p>Recommendation 1: a user friendly version of the map (detailed in Appendix E of the main report) demonstrating the location of disabled parking spaces and Shopmobility in Redditch town centre should be produced and promoted on the Council's website, on the Redditch Matters e-magazine and on the Palace Theatre's website and should be promoted to local businesses to use;</p> <p>a) the contents of this map should be reviewed every twelve months to ensure that the information remains accurate.</p>	<p>Officers have requested that the map appears on both Redditch Borough Council's and Redditch Palace Theatre's websites.</p> <p>The potential for copies of this map to be made available through the Redditch Town Centre Partnership are also being investigated.</p>	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft content of the map at a meeting on 8th January 2013. Subject to inclusion of information indicating the location of Dial a Ride collection and delivery points in the town centre Members commented that they were happy with the content.</p> <p>Officers subsequently updated the map in January 2013 to incorporate the extra features requested by the Committee. (Appendix A).</p>	<p>Not specified but COMPLETED.</p>

<p>Recommendation 2: Redditch Borough Council should work with the Redditch Town Centre Partnership, Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department and the Kingfisher Shopping Centre to introduce collection and delivery points in the town centre that could be used by vehicles transporting people with disabilities</p>	<p>The attached map (Appendix A) shows a number of existing drops off points already located throughout the town centre which, it is felt, is sufficient. The Redditch Town Centre Partnership is still undergoing discussion with Highways concerning traffic movements at Church Green East particularly for businesses. A disabled drop off point will continued to be investigated and Members will be updated.</p>		<p>Not specified.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: Taxi companies should be offered licences to operate adapted vehicles for a longer period of time than standard vehicles to incentivise taxi firms to increase the number of adapted vehicles in their fleets. The vehicles should be permitted to operate for these lengthier periods of time subject to passing the three inspection tests and the MOT that the Council's licensing regime requires for each vehicle.</p>	<p>The Licensing Committee initially considered this recommendation at a meeting on 17th December 2012. Members concluded that more detailed information was required before a decision could be taken on this matter and a further report was requested.</p>	<p>The Licensing Committee considered the proposal at a meeting on 11th March 2013. During this meeting it was agreed that taxi drivers should be offered licenses for adapted vehicles for 12 years, rather than the 9 years for standard vehicles, subject to the outcomes of a six week period of consultation with local taxi drivers and the local Taxi Association. The Committee has requested that the outcomes of the consultation process be reported for Members' consideration at the Licensing Committee meeting on 1st July 2013.</p>	<p>Not specified and subject to the outcomes of the consultation process.</p>

<p>Recommendation 4: Taxi drivers should be offered disability awareness training, which would include information about manually assisting people with disabilities, by Redditch Borough Council.</p>	<p>The Licensing Committee initially considered this recommendation in further detail at a meeting on 17th December 2012. Members concluded that more detailed information was required before a decision could be taken on this matter and a further report was requested.</p>	<p>The Licensing Committee considered the proposal in further detail at a meeting on 11th March 2013. During this meeting it was agreed that taxi drivers should be required to undertake mandatory disability awareness training. Members were advised that a suitable training provider had been identified and that participation in the course would cost approximately £20 per participant.</p> <p>Implementation of this recommendation will be subject to the outcomes of a twelve week period of consultation.</p>	<p>Not specified and subject to the outcomes of the consultation process.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: A disability awareness session should be delivered as part of the Member Development Programme at Redditch Borough Council.</p>	<p>Members are asked to note that Officers consulted all Members in advance of and during the equality training session in January 2013.</p> <p>The following question was asked of Members: “what subjects do you want to be briefed on in detail.” Prior to the training session no responses were received. At the end of the session Two members responded of which one requested disability equality training.</p>	<p>An equalities training session, focusing on all forms of equalities, was delivered on 30th January 2013.</p> <p>At the latest meeting of the Member Development Steering Group Members discussed training requirements for 2013/14. Disability awareness training was not included in Members’ preferred training schedule for the year.</p>	<p>Not specified.</p>

<p>Recommendation 7: Ward Members should be made aware that they can use their knowledge of the local community to assess the condition of the pavements and dropped kerbs located in their wards and report their findings for the consideration of Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department and Redditch Borough Council's Environmental Services.</p>	<p>There may be the potential to include some information on this subject in the Member induction process.</p>	<p>The final report published by the Access for Disabled People Task Group provided Members with the information referred to in the recommendation.</p>	<p>Not specified.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: The Council's Planning Department should consider arranging for funding from Section 106 agreements to be allocated to the installation of tactile signage in the town centre for the use of people with sensory impairments.</p>	<p>No updates were available for this meeting.</p>	<p>No updates were available for this meeting.</p>	<p>Not specified.</p>
<p>Recommendation 10 (a): Officers undertake further work into the following areas that should be reported for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequently by the Executive Committee at a later date:</p>	<p>Officers have investigated this proposal in detail and are reporting back for Members' consideration.</p>	<p>Officers have produced a proposal for a shelter over the waiting area at the top of the ramp outside Shopmobility.</p> <p>The Council will require the Kingfisher Shopping Centre's approval to carry out the works, and have sent a request for this matter to be considered.</p>	

<p>a) a review of the potential to install a canopy over the ramp access to Shopmobility.</p>		<p>The cost to install the shelter, including Landlord approval costs, would be £4,857.00.</p> <p>Generally, in cases where the Council installs bus shelters planning permission is not required because these structures are often installed on Council land. However, as the shelter would be installed on private land planning permission would be required in this case.</p> <p>The proposed shelter design (attached at Appendix B) could be amended.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 10 (b): Officers undertake further work into the following areas that should be reported for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequently by the Executive Committee at a later date:</p> <p>b) a joint review in partnership with Apollo 2000 of the potential for the Council to undertake landscaping work in the company's car park in return for using the car park as a collection and delivery point for Dial a Ride vehicles.</p>		<p>This report has been produced and is available for Members' consideration. (Appendix C).</p>	<p>Available for this meeting 02/04/13. COMPLETED.</p>

Recommendation 10 (c): Officers undertake further work into the following areas that should be reported for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequently by the Executive Committee at a later date:

c) a joint review with the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, concerning the potential activation of the RNIB React system in the centre.

The following responses have been received on this suggestion:

Kingfisher Centre

In respect of RNIB React system –

- The integrity of the system is in doubt. The service has reportedly never worked properly.
- The centre understands there are four speakers sited around the shopping centre, but they don't appear to have any documentation to show their locations. The centre would question the demand for such a system. The centre has never had any customers suggest such a facility, or indeed comment on the absence of such a facility.
- A contractor looked at the system and advised that it has been superseded by newer equipment. On testing the George's Walk entrance speaker continually activated without trigger and led to complaints from a nearby shop.
- The system is installed in Birmingham City Centre. It would be useful to get some indication of usage, how it is promoted, how

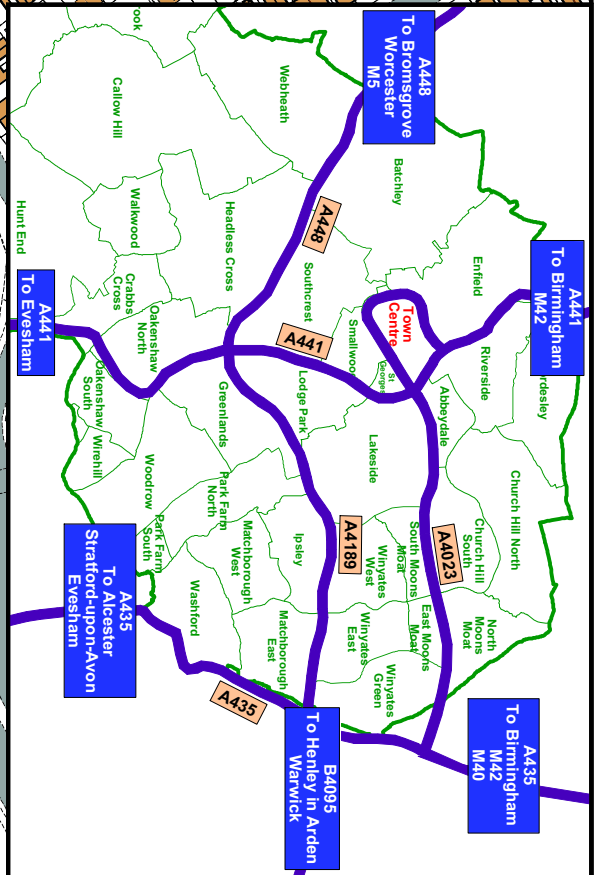
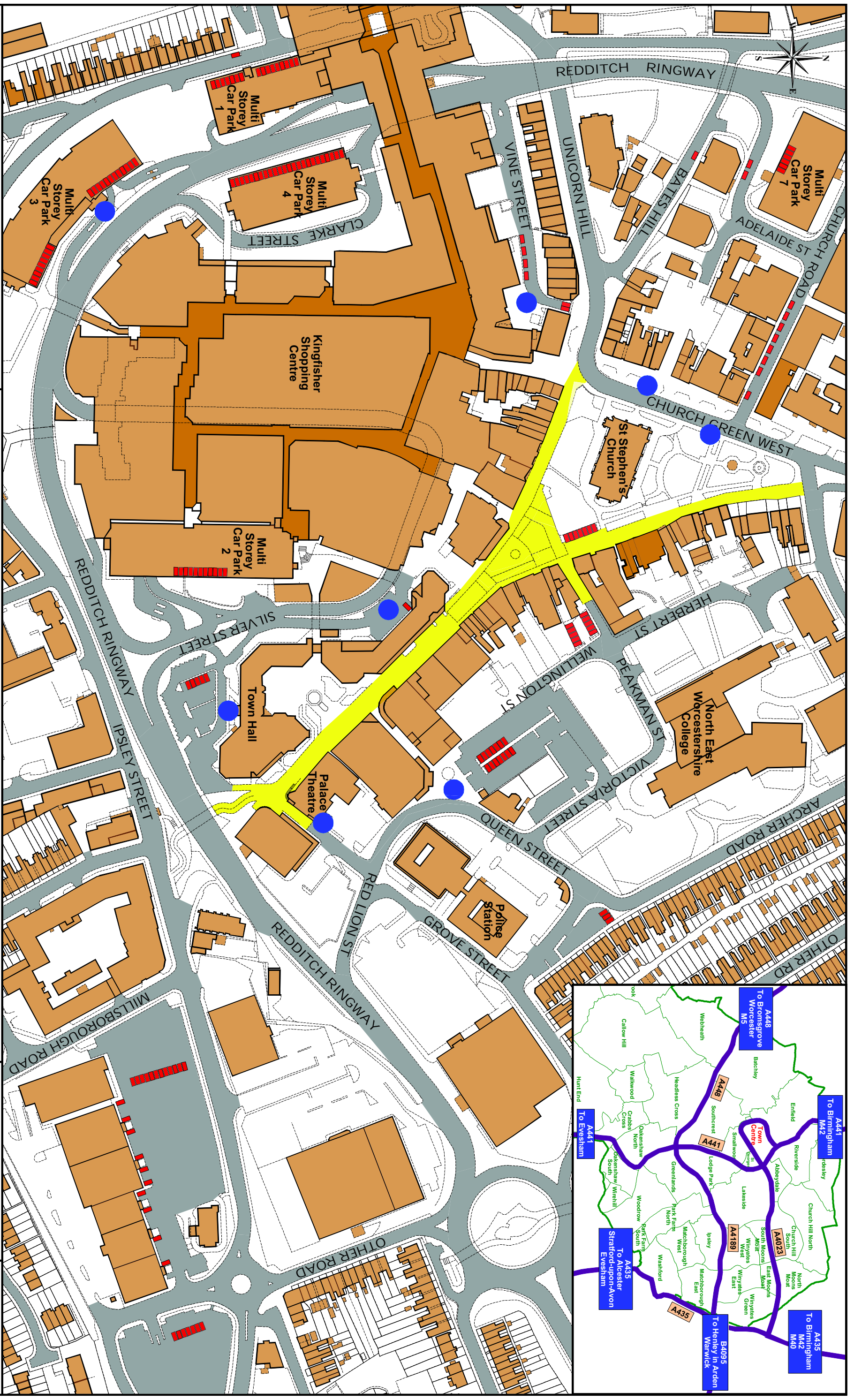
	<p>it is distributed across the Cities access points and transport hubs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• As it stands the centre would question its value and benefit. <p><u>Age UK</u> Age UK would very much endorse the proposal to consider activating the system and suggest that a firm date is set for the officers to report back, rather than leaving it as “at a later date”.</p> <p><u>Summary</u> It is important to note that having a RNIB system is not a legal requirement, therefore cannot be enforced on private land such as the Kingfisher.</p> <p>It may be a discussion could take place between Age UK and the Kingfisher Shopping Centre if they have evidence as to whether there is a need and the potential costs</p>		
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<p>Recommendation 10 (d): Officers undertake further work into the following areas that should be reported for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and subsequently by the Executive Committee at a later date:</p> <p>d) a review of the implications of introducing disabled parking spaces and a Dial a Ride collection and delivery point in the former covered market area.</p>	<p>A report has been provided on this subject for Members' consideration. (Appendix D).</p>		
<p>Recommendation 11 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should receive the following update reports in six months time:</p> <p>a) an update concerning the support provided by Officers to the Redditch Disabled Access Group in relation to disability issues; and</p> <p>a) a report monitoring the implementation of the group's recommendations.</p>	<p>This report is the update to the Committee (11a). The update in relation to support for the Redditch Disabled Access Group has been attached for Members' consideration. (Appendix E)</p>		<p>02/04/12.</p> <p>Item 11a has been COMPLETED.</p>

Recommendations pending a decision (these decisions may need to be made by either a Redditch Borough Council body or an external organisation)

RECOMMENDATION	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICERS DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY
<p>Recommendation 5: Worcestershire County Council’s Transport Department should work with local bus operators to apply for any future Better Buses Area Funding from</p>	<p>This recommendation required the approval of Worcestershire County Council’s Transport Department.</p> <p>There was no update available.</p>		<p>Head of Community Services – lead contact officer for transport?</p>	

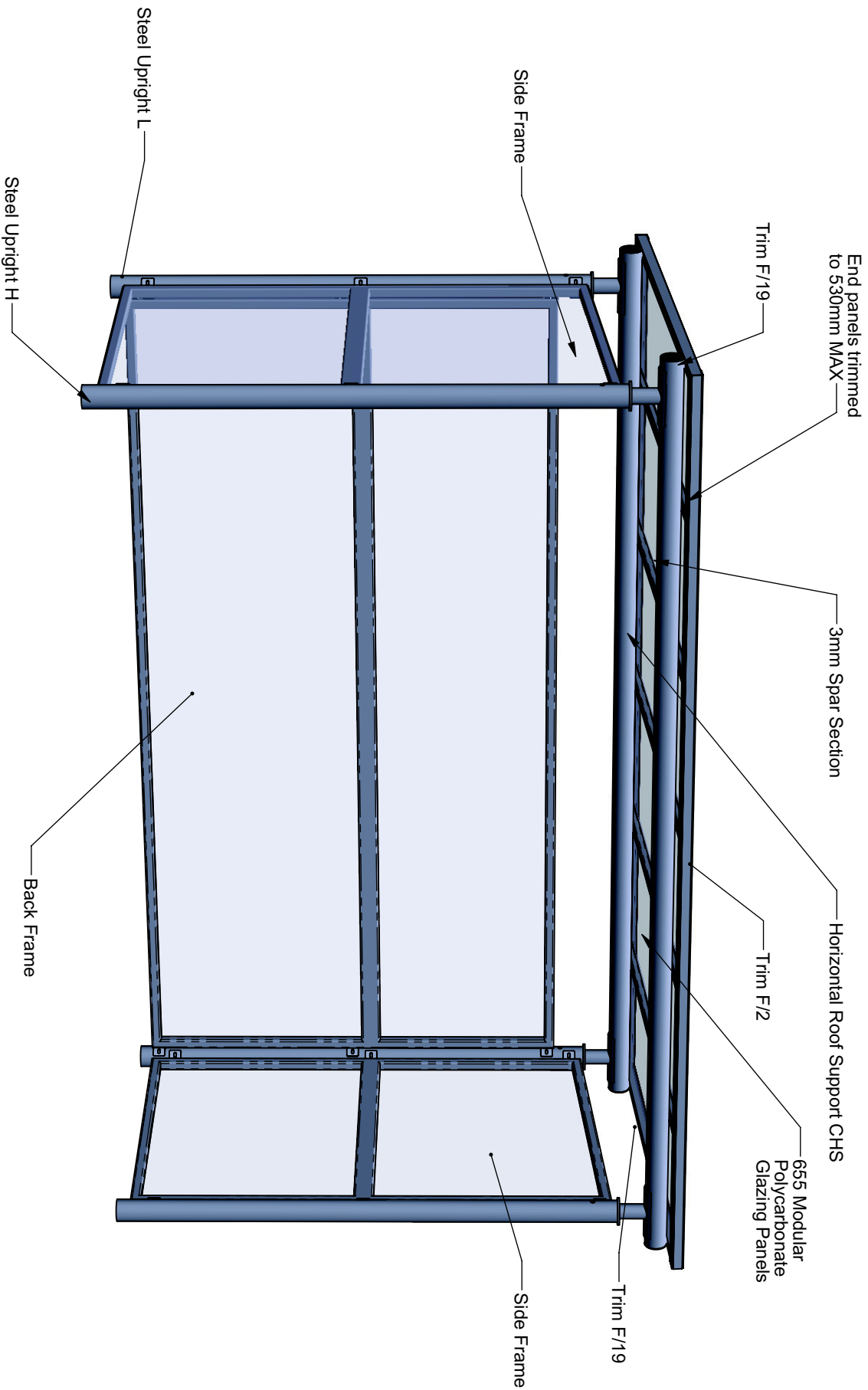
<p>the Department for Transport to finance the installation of audio-visual equipment on buses operating in Redditch Borough.</p>				
<p>Recommendation 9: Redditch Town Centre Partnership work with the Kingfisher Shopping Centre to introduce additional seating in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, involving an investigation of the ergonomics of the seating provided.</p>	<p>A discussion has taken place with the Kingfisher who stated that additional seating has already been implemented within the centre and is well utilised. It is not realistic to allocate specific seats for disabled users as this could not be enforced.</p> <p>As the centre is undergoing reconfiguration with the new owners this recommendation will be noted when future changes take place.</p>		<p>Planning Officer with lead responsibility for the Redditch Town Centre Partnership.</p>	



Disabled Car Parking Spaces in Redditch Town Centre

- Key**
- Pedestrian Area
 - Disabled Car Parking Spaces
 - Dial-a-Ride drop off points

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 Ordnance Survey 100024252
 Drawing No. P2187/3A



General Notes:
All Dimensions in mm

Project **Kingfisher Centre Bus Shelter**

Date Issued **28-10-13**

Drawn By **KQ**

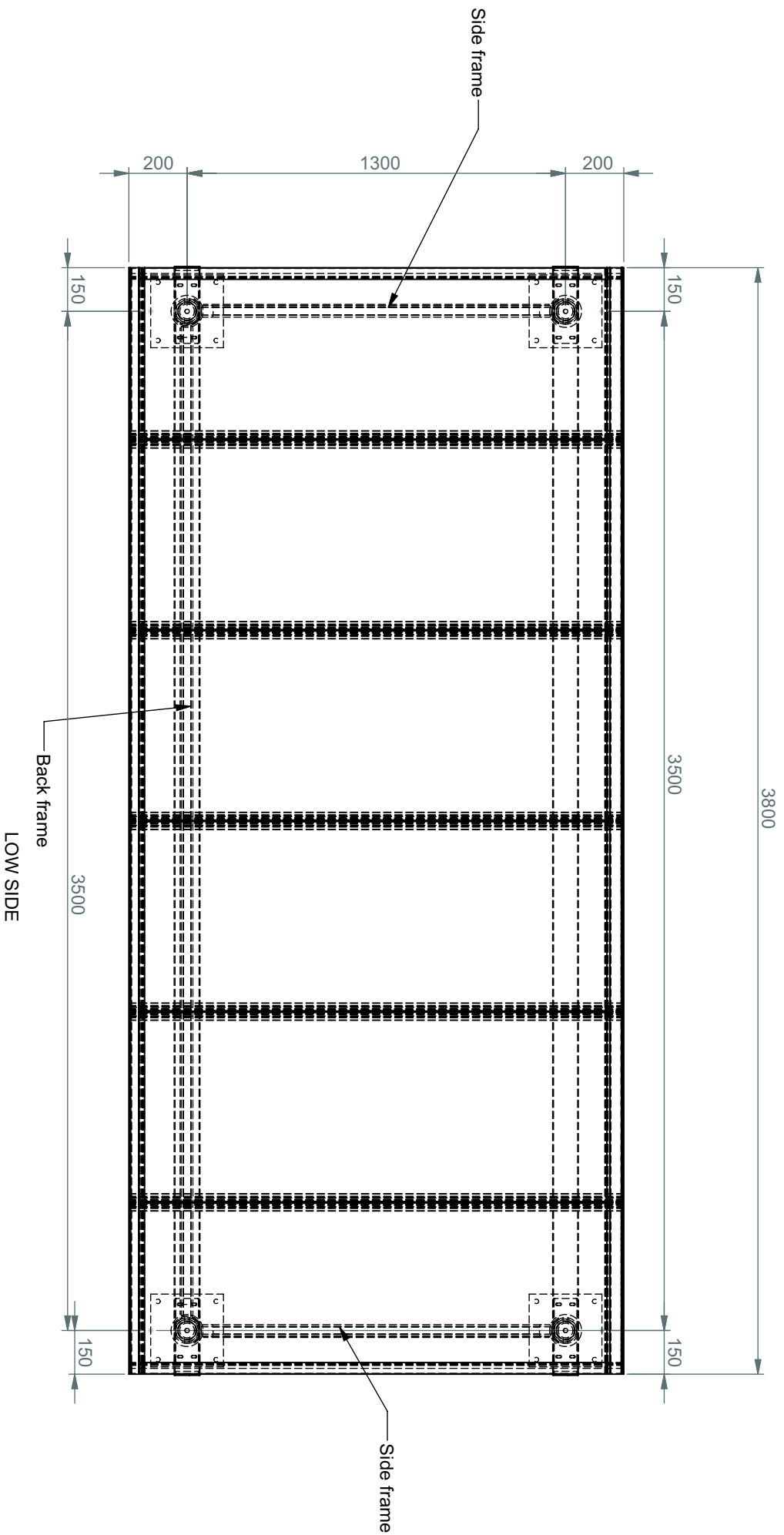
Ch'd By **RPP**

Drq No. **AS-A-001**

Issue. **A**

Scale **NTS**

A&S Landscape
 Alpine House - Drayton Road
 Shawbury - Shropshire - SY4 4NZ
 Telephone: 01939 250066 - Fax: 01939 252122
 Email: sales@aandslandscape.com



General Notes:
All Dimensions in mm

Project Kingfisher Centre Bus Shelter

Date Issued 28-1-13

Drawn By KQ

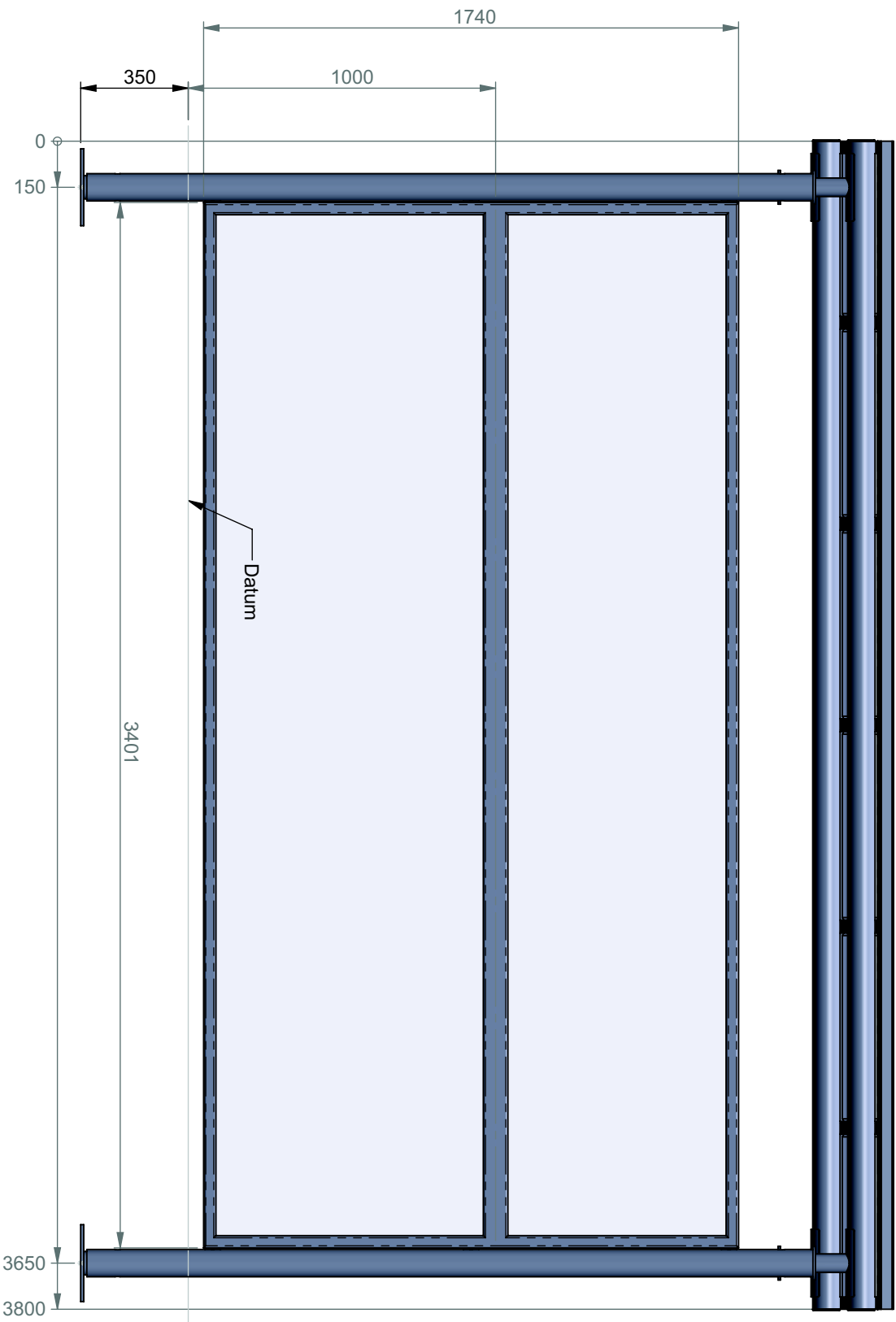
Ch'd By RPP

Drg No. AS-A-002

Issue. A

Scale 1:20

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 Alpine House - Drayton Road
 Shawbury - Shropshire - SY4 4NZ
 Telephone: 01939 250066 - Fax: 01939 252122
 Email: sales@aandslandscape.com



General Notes:
All Dimensions in mm

Project Kingfisher Centre Bus Shelter

Date Issued 28-1-13

Drawn By KQ

Ch'd By RPP

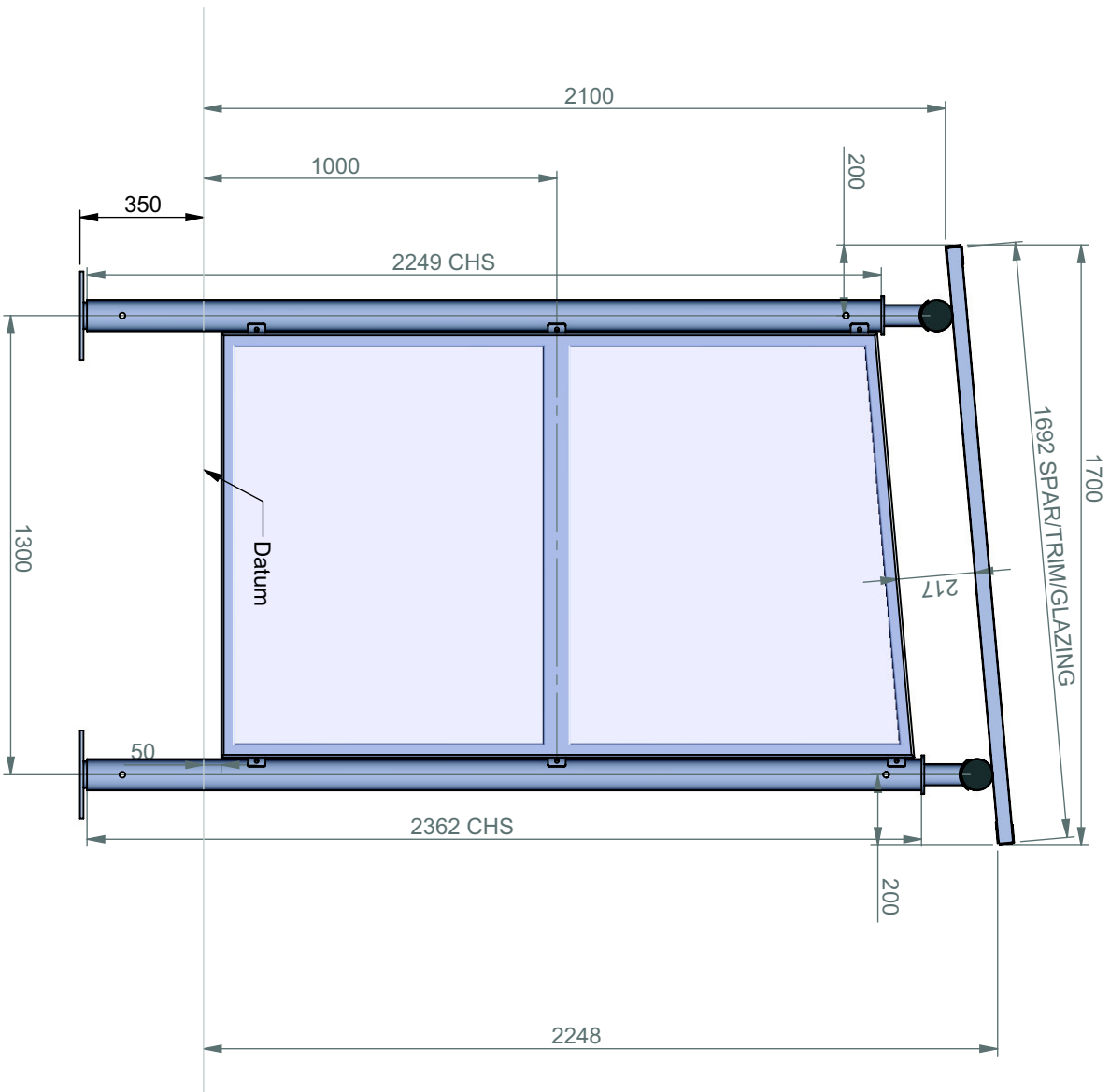
Dwg No. AS-A-003

Issue: A

Scale 1:20

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Alpine House - Drayton Road
Shawbury - Shropshire - SY4 4NZ
Telephone: 01939 250066 - Fax: 01939 252122
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General Notes:
All Dimensions in mm

Project Kingfisher Centre Bus Shelter

Date Issued 28-1-13

Drawn By KQ

Ch'd By RPP

Drwg No. AS-A-004

Issue. A

Scale 1:20

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 Shawbury - Shropshire - SY4 4NZ
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Apollo Partnership

'a joint review in partnership with Apollo 2000 of the potential for the Council to undertake landscaping work in the company's car park in return for using the car park as a collection and delivery point for Dial a Ride vehicles'

Dial a Ride vehicles drop off/pick up at the Palace Theatre once or maybe twice a month, depending on what is showing. We have an arrangement with the CPE service to allow us to drop off/pick up outside the side doors as most customers have very poor mobility or disabled and need assistance from the driver.

For access to the Town Centre we would use Town Hall car park, Shopmobility or the back of the Post Office. As the Apollo site is further away and due to the reduced mobility of the Dial A Ride Users, there would be no advantage for DaR customers to be dropped off/picked up at this site.. Officers therefore feel that any partnership would have very little benefit to the authority.

Having reviewed the potential workload it would seem to be very onerous on Redditch Borough Council in terms of potential workload and have little or no advantage. The Apollo car park is not secured and is readily accessible to members of the public at any time of the day or night and so the ability of a Dial A Ride vehicle to pull on to the car park area requires no input from Apollo other than gaining any formal agreement that may be deemed appropriate.

In terms of the maintenance Officers would need to consider the site as a whole as the piecemeal approach to maintaining some, as opposed to all of the landscape, would be very difficult to manage effectively.

Officers would therefore need to appreciate that there is an extensive area of peripheral planting that would need to be pruned at least twice per annum. Some of this is adjacent to the ring road and would need the necessary traffic management system to be put in place for the duration of any works.

The shrub/planted areas would require weed treatment which again, if done chemically, would be at least two applications per year. There is also a more formal area of landscape adjacent to the subway which would require the grass to be cut (approximately 12 – 14 times per year) and it is assumed that prior to any such work all litter will need to be removed from the shrub and grass areas. Any materials that cannot be recycled on the site would have to be removed, with RBC being responsible for the necessary tipping fee.

The liability aspect of any work undertaken on the site would also need to be considered as Officers

Officers would effectively be taking on a contractual role and therefore it is normal in such circumstances that any accident or injury resulting from any work or omission carried out by us would mean the Council would be liable for any potential claim.

The work would also have to be programmed in to the Council's system to fit in with other scheduled work. The resources to carry out the additional work would also have to be allowed for as this may have an impact on other programmed tasks that are carried out.

There is also consideration of any public requests, comments or complaints regarding the site as these would need to be recorded by someone and responded to accordingly. Is this something that Apollo would facilitate or would they expect RBC to take this on as the Council would effectively be "managing" the maintenance of the site on their behalf.

Estimated costs can be supplied if necessary to show what our financial liability might be.

Ruth Griffin
Dial a Ride and Shopmobility Manager

Carl Walker
Environmental Services Manager

Appendix D

A review of the implications of introducing disabled parking spaces and a Dial a Ride collection and delivery point in the former covered market area.

Kingfisher Centre – Response to Proposal

In terms of the proposal for disabled parking on the Market Area:

- this is not a suitable use for this area on the basis of traffic movements and conflict with pedestrians moving through the underpass to and from Walter Stranz square.
- There is an excess of provision of disabled parking around Redditch, including open areas for adapted vehicles.
- This appears to work against the highly regarded Mobility Centre provision sited on Car Park 3 at a time when the revenue requirement to sustain this facility is fickle.
- Footfall in and around the Town Centre is currently very sensitive and the proposed disruption would not be welcome, adding more reasons for shoppers to stay away from the town centre.
- Finally, the costs of creating, maintaining, policing and enforcing this facility seem unreasonable in the current financial climate. This will not add any more footfall, simply move it around, reduce business revenue and add running costs.

Needless to affirm – the centre would not be supportive of such a proposal.

Shopmobility & Dial-a-Ride

The dial a ride service already drop customers at the Town Hall and at the back of the post office. These customers are able to walk short distances and visits are specifically for the Town Hall or the Post Office (PO). If mobility is poor then we would normally drop and pick up from Shopmobility so the customer can access all areas of the town centre using the Council's mobility equipment.

The route suggested by Members would not make sense for the service. Dial a Ride buses already have to turn the buses around when dropping off/picking up at the rear of the PO and would not be able to drive in and out safely on the proposed route.

More staff would need to work at Shopmobility if the idea was to have equipment taken down to this area for those using the disabled parking or as a drop off/pick up point. Officers had previously considered a satellite office in one of the empty shops for Shopmobility but would say that the cost would outweigh the demand. It is a very isolated area for more vulnerable customers unless the Council charges for this service to allow us to offer this.

Age UK

Inevitably, Age UK would be pleased to see the old covered market area used for disabled parking, certainly until such time as there is both finance and an appetite to redevelop that area. As well as benefiting many older people, such a use would likely bring about a much greater footfall to that area which, in turn, would enable Age UK to reach a much greater number of older people through the Information Centre in Market Walk.

Age UK would like to see any closures to Fountain Passage be avoided or at least kept to an absolute minimum. Age UK are unconvinced by the arguments about such a closure would increase footfall for Alcester Street businesses and the market traders. Rather, the increased difficulty of reaching Alcester Street from the Kingfisher Centre would deter those likely to undertake non-essential visits AND would decrease the visibility of the Age UK Information Centre to those not using the area to park. It would also make it more difficult for visitors to reach the Town Hall.

Age UK would also appreciate co-ordination and promotion of Dial a Ride pick up/drop off in this area.

Hereford & Worcester Fire Service

The area that has been suggested would not really present any issues regarding access etc. for emergency vehicles or Firefighting activities.

West Mercia Police, Traffic Management

Having looked at the proposals and the attached report it is clear that the area in question is presently in the ownership of Redditch Borough Council and therefore is to all intents and purposes private land. In such circumstances West Mercia Police would not in the normal course of events offer comment on what would effectively become a private car park.

However given that the report also mentions that consideration could be given to the making of an order to include the area in the Civil Parking Enforcement scheme then this does open things up slightly.

There is a potential for pedestrian and vehicle conflict shown in the drawing and I am of the opinion that if a formal stage 1 or 2 safety audit were to be undertaken on the proposals, I am sure that the audit team would require the designer to detail how this safety issue can be satisfactorily addressed. The issue could be possibly resolved by introducing hard physical constraints on the edges of the pedestrian areas to prevention

vehicle intrusion into those areas, with a marked pedestrian crossing across the line of the vehicle entrance/exit path.

If this was a car park within the public highway then I would not support any such proposal until those conflict issues had been resolved safely and satisfactorily.

RBC Cleansing

Officers have looked at the plan provided and have concerns of the proposed area being a “chicken run” for people dropping off and shooting back out onto the market traders / skip area in front of Car Park 2, this is currently quite dangerous as people use it “unofficially” and the speed they come up the ramp is an accident waiting to happen.

We have operatives working in this area as well as vehicles picking up the debris / rubbish picked up from the town centre, also the sweepers fill up with water at the site and visibility is quite restricted due to the amount of vehicles parking in the trader’s area.

The ramp was only designed as an emergency access and is narrow in width with built up walls either side, it is the only pedestrian access from the area and is not only used by RBC staff, it is used by the general public as well as market traders and the traders from the car wash under car park 2.

Officers feel this access needs to be kept as pedestrian and emergency access only and the gate provided should be used at all times to slow any traffic that does use it to a minimum.

North Worcs EDR

Officers share Cleansing Officers’ concerns about the proposed area being a “chicken run” for people dropping off and shooting back out onto the market traders / skip area in front of car park 2 and the “accident waiting to happen”.

Similarly, I agree that it is clear that the ramp was only designed as an emergency access and is narrow in width with built up walls either side and feel this access needs to be kept as pedestrian and emergency access only and the gate provided should be used at all times to slow any traffic that does use it to a minimum.

RBC Planning Policy

The *Borough of Redditch Local Plan 3* has designated the former covered market area as a site that is officially located within the town centre and within what is referred to as the Retail Core, or the primary retail area in the town. All areas that are designated as part of the Retail Core are protected by a local planning policy, *Policy E (TCR).5 Retail Core*. This policy discourages use of

Retail Core areas for non-retail uses. There are also plans to redevelop large parts of Redditch town centre over the next few years, as detailed in the *Redditch Town Centre Strategy*. As part of this process the former covered market area has been identified as an appropriate location for a mixed use development, which would entail a significant element of retail expansion. Redditch Town Centre has limited scope for retail expansion with regards to land available; the redundant market area site is one of the best opportunities available for retail allocation. Not making retail allocations thus means we are not in conformity with planning policy as we are not meeting the retail need as set out in the forthcoming Local Plan No.4.

Summary

It is clear from the stakeholder feedback above that the majority view is that disabled parking spaces and a dial a ride drop off point are not supported. Officers would therefore ask the Committee to resolve that no further action be taken on this matter.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2nd April 2013

MONITORING UPDATE REPORT – SUPPORT PROVIDED TO DISABILITY ACTION REDDITCH

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett, Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership, Councillor Phil Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management and Councillor Greg Chance, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, Head of Planning and Regeneration and Head of Regulatory Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	None
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

An update concerning the support provided by Officers to the Redditch Disabled Group (now Disability Action Redditch) in relation to disability issues.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that
the report be noted.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

3.1 None – the officers concerned are currently employed by Bromsgrove District Council.

Legal Implications

3.2 The Equality Act 2010 requires all public authorities to pay “Due Regard” to the need to

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

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Disability is one of the nine Protected Characteristics.

The Council's support for Disability Action Redditch demonstrates evidence of "Due Regard."

- 3.3 The Building Regulations 2010 impact upon the correct access and use of buildings by disabled people within certain parameters. There is no legal obligation to offer professional support to action groups within this legislation.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.4 The Equality Policy Officer's post has a wide range of responsibilities outside of the support role for Action Group. None of these responsibilities are specifically laid down by statute.
- 3.5 The Building Control Manager's post has a wide range of responsibilities outside the support role to the Action Group. These responsibilities are laid down by statute and therefore there is no discretion as regards prioritising between the support given to the Action Group and the day to day responsibilities of the post.
- 3.6 The creation of shared services has compounded the extent of these responsibilities over multiple authorities without an expansion of the resource.
- 3.7 The Building Control team continue to provide advice in relation to disabled access to properties as and when required.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.6 No specific implications with this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

No specific risk with this report.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – list of support provided

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Disability Action Redditch Constitution.

7. KEY

Not applicable.

AUTHORS OF REPORT

Name: Adrian Wyre and Fiona Scott

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E Mail: a.wyre@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk and f.scott@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel:01527 881350 and 01527 881719

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Appendix 1

An update concerning the support provided by Officers to the Redditch Disabled Group (now Disability Action Redditch) in relation to disability issues.

Support from Officers comprises of the following actions :-

Fiona Scott – Equalities Policy Officer

There is a relevant Council website page which includes details the meetings of the Action Group which is kept up to date with minutes of meetings. There is a link from the Council's website to the DAR website. The link to report Hate Crime has been sent to DAR with the intention that this is then added to the DAR website but this hasn't been actioned yet. See <http://redditch.whub.org.uk/cms/about-your-redditch/equality-and-diversity/disability-equality.aspx>

The Policy officer attends meetings of DAR whenever possible and brings relevant issues and news items to the attention of the group. These are then circulated by support staff from Directorate Support. The issues can be local, regional or national items, for example the Carer's Rights Day event in Redditch in December 2012, the Learning Disability Big Conversation in Worcestershire, the consultation on change from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment and the reports on disability hate crime – "Hidden in Plain Sight" and "Out in the Open". A request for a volunteer secretary for DAR was put to council staff but there was no response.

The Policy officer has arranged for guest speakers to attend meetings. For example the October 2013 meeting, Sarah Kelsey attended to explain and discuss the nature and incidence of disability related hate crime. Two managers from Wychavon District Council attended the November meeting to explain their remit in relation to local car parking enforcement. As a result a request was made for the Community Safety Team to provide some awareness training in hate crime issues and reporting procedures for the Civil Enforcement Officers who cover Redditch. This is in hand.

The Policy Officer manages and controls the process for the Annual Betty Passingham Disability Access Awards in partnership with members of the group. This includes arranging for publicity through the Council's website and press mechanisms, co-ordinating the list of nominations and writing to nominees and those making nominations. There is some follow up work of individual enquiries and this information is reported back to the group for discussion and agreement.

An awards ceremony is then organised and certificates and stickers are commissioned. The next one is planned in mid to late Spring. A pop banner for the awards was provided for the 2012 awards.

The Policy Officer issues regular information of interest to the local community through the Redditch Community Forum. Many of these items are relevant to disability equality. These items are then brought to the attention of a wider audience as well as the Action Group. The Policy Officer has agreed to summarise the recommendations from "Out in the Open" – EHRC report on Disability Hate Crime for the January 2013 meeting.

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Adrian Wyre – Buildings Control Manager

Prior to the creation of a shared building control service, the then manager Mr Colin Audritt offered extensive support to the DAR group. The creation of a North Worcestershire wide shared building control partnership saw the responsibilities of that post widen considerably to cover three authorities. Accordingly without a commensurate rise in resources, the ability of the current post holder to offer the same level of support as was previously enjoyed was lost

That said the current post holder has endeavoured to attend DAR meetings as and when possible and to date has only been unable to attend 3 of 16 possible meetings.

It is understood that the support offered to DAR prior to sharing of the building control service ran beyond the traditional duties and normal building control remit. Such wider support which had hitherto required a large time resource is not now considered possible without detriment to the statutory functions of the building control role.

It is however fully appreciated that a technical advisor of buildings, access provisions and use by disabled people is a firm requirement of the DAR and this requirement will continue to be met as best possible within current resources. Technical advice on both the wider legislative issues and site specific problems will be provided to the fullest extent possible where within the expertise field of the Building Control Manager.

Outside this field, advice and support has and will continue to be provided as a researcher and link to appropriate external bodies. As a typical example of this, a link to Worcestershire county Council highways has been established and resolutions surrounding highway closures and dropped kerbs have been brought to the group.

In addition, investigation into the legal boundaries surrounding the potential use of section 106 monies for DAR initiatives has been investigated.

The support capability of Building Control Manager due to tight resources and the desires of the DAR may not always meet favourably. Building Control is a statutory local authority function but does operate in a competitive environment. The need to ensure that the health and safety of building projects with 3 authority areas is paramount. In tandem with this, significant demands are placed on building control regarding dangerous structures and income generating functions all of which are currently being serviced with minimal resources to assist corporate cost savings. It is not therefore currently envisaged that support to DAR by the Building Control section will significantly increase without additional corporate resources.

Directorate Support Officer attends meeting taking minutes, circulate minutes and agenda. Annually books the rooms for meetings and provides meeting rooms, tea and coffee free of charge to the group.

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DISABILITY ACTION REDDITCHConstitution 19 April 2010

1. Name There shall be a Disability Action Redditch group for disabled people in the county of Worcestershire (Hereinafter referred to as "Disability Action Redditch " or 'DAR') It is the former Redditch Disabled Access Group
- 2 Objectives The objectives of the DAR shall be
- a) To support disabled people in efforts to ensure safe and easy access to buildings and facilities
 - b) To help provide equal access to services and amenities for disabled people
 - c) To maintain contact with local and national organisations and disseminate information and advice to and from national and local organisations with the concerns of local people in mind
- 3 Membership Any visitor will be eligible for membership application. Membership shall be open to any person whose application for membership is accepted by the elected committee of the DAR. All other attendants of each DAR meeting will be known as Visitors. Visitors will NOT be allowed to vote in any decisions made by the DAR. Items to be voted on shall be proposed to the group in writing
- 4 Annual General Meeting There shall be an Annual General Meeting (Hereinafter referred to as AGM) held in April. At least twenty-one days clear notice till be given in writing to each member of the DAR. The AGM shall:-
- a) Receive reports from the RDAG Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer regarding the DAR's work and finances of the previous year.
 - b) Nominate new Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
 - c) Members vote and elect the above mentioned posts.
 - d) Voting by proxy shall be made in writing to the secretary prior to the AGM and only for the AGM
- 5 Committee The committee shall be elected at the AGM. This Committee shall consist of the Three above mentioned posts plus two other members. The committee must consist of no less than five people. This committee shall remain elected until the next AGM. At meetings of the committee the quorum shall be three with the chairperson having the casting vote.
- 6 Duties and Powers of The committee The committee shall:-
- a) This committee shall meet at least twice a year.

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- b) The committee shall have power to fill by co-option any vacancies occurring in membership during the year.
- c) Promote activities in furtherance of the objectives of the DAR.
- d) Administer such funds as may be available to the DAR. The DAR's financial year runs from 1st April through to 31st March each year

7 Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called at anytime by the committee or on the request of no less than one third of the elected members of the DAR. The secretary will inform all members about this meeting no less than fourteen days of this special meeting. Timing and place of special meeting will be decided by the committee and forwarded with the fourteen day notice.

8 Amendments

Amendments to the constitution can be discussed as part of "Any other Business" in the agenda. All proposed changes must be discussed by members and agreed to by no less than two thirds of the DAR. Any proposed changes must be agreed no later than the March meeting before the AGM. The secretary will send a copy of the newly proposed constitution to all members, so it can be voted for and accepted at the AGM.

