

PLEASE READ

CHILHAM SQUARE Community Engagement Exercise Option Displays

General

Residents and businesses in Chilham Parish will be aware of the debate around Chilham Square over the years and the desires that have been expressed to improve it. The options on display reflect the most recent round of work prompted by that debate.

Community Aspirations

A scan of official records and documents for the last ten to twenty years reveals that there have been a number of common themes to the debate, the majority of which echoed at the Open Workshop held in May. At that workshop issues and aspirations were ranked as follows ...

- 1) PARKING - control of some type, with Taylor's Hill Car Park being an integral part of any solution
- 2) MOVEMENT - needs addressing to ensure simple and safe movement, particularly for pedestrians
- 3) GUIDANCE - signs required to clarify routes and location of parking
- 4) ATMOSPHERE, APPEARANCE & USE - whatever is done needs to be simple, in-keeping with historic character, protective of building and castle-church views and flexible enough to allow community use

A simple voting exercise also revealed ...

- a clear case against treating the Square as a pure through route (i.e. ignoring the Square's role as a destination) or completely pedestrianising it
- a clear case for a substantial but not "draconian" reduction in parking provision in the Square
- strong support for retaining school drop-off/pick-up activity in the Square
- very strong support for seating plus space and electrical supply for special events - greenery was not quite as popular - lighting and special features were very definitely not popular
- a clear case for minimal or low-level traffic delineation and public space features and keeping parking out of the sight line between the church and castle
- maintaining sight lines down side streets had support, but not nearly as strong as keeping Square building frontages and the church-castle sight line clear

The concerns, aspirations and priorities listed above set the tone for the most recent round of work, providing a scale against which option possibilities could be assessed and proposals developed.

Proposals

As you look at and review the options on display, please look at them first in their broadest sense. Of particular importance are the spaces allocated to parking and traffic/pedestrian movement or left open and clear to retain views or provide seating. Where detail is shown, it is at best suggestive. Generally speaking, there is quite a bit of flexibility in terms of the materials and features that could be used and the Square ambience that might be created in each instance.

Potential Option Costs

Stakeholders have requested that the amounts needed to implement and then maintain each option are provided. Indicative amounts are shown in the table below.

Given the concept nature of the three schemes, and the range of work and materials that could be used in each case, cost ranges are supplied. It needs to be emphasised that the upper amounts, especially in the case of Options 2 and 3, reflect a relatively modest approach to the Square befitting its character.

Indicative Costs

Option	Scheme Implementation	30 Years Maintenance to Chilham's Account (above that necessary for the safe operation of a highway area in a square setting like Chilham's – covered by Kent County Council)		
		Advance (Commutated) Payment to KCC A	CPC Ongoing Maintenance Budget B	Annual Band D Property Parish Precept Increase (Approximate) To Cover Both A. and B.
1	£20,000 - £25,000	£0 - £1,200	£0 - £2,000	£0.00 - £0.15
2	£75,000 - £115,000	£12,000 - £24,000	£5,000 - £8,000	£0.75 - £1.40
3	£95,000 - £175,000	£25,000 - £50,000	£6,000 - £10,000	£1.40 - £2.70

Notes:

1. Lower amounts reflect least necessary to effect each option.
2. Upper amounts, especially in the case of Options 2 and 3, reflect a relatively modest approach to improving the Square that befits its character.
3. Option 1 indicative costs awaiting confirmation of final proposal.