

Question 27

Councillor Ackroyd to ask the leader of the council the following question:

“The council successfully bid for £3.2m from the Government through the Towns Fund scheme to redevelop Hay Hill.

Two years after the work started Hay Hill remains unfinished and closed off by metal barriers.

For such a focal point in the city centre to be left as a building site for this length of time has caused much dismay and comment, not only on the length of time taken for this relatively straightforward redevelopment but also the costs incurred.

Several residents in my ward of Eaton have asked questions about Hay Hill on a range of topics including, the time taken, the additional works and communication with the public on how the money is being spent. In short, they are asking has this project delivered value for money and whether it will be seen as a huge disappointment in terms of improvements on what was there before?”

Councillor Stonard, the leader's response:

“The works started on Hay Hill 17 months ago in April 23, and although programmed to be completed in Spring 2024, have unfortunately extended past this predicted end date due to unforeseen circumstances. Norwich City Council officers are working with the contractor to resolve those issues and finalise some outstanding Health and Safety works prior to completing handover, and but as is evident from the site these works are nearing completion.

Hay Hill is one of the few remaining large city centre spaces in Norwich, however reports of trips and falls, and general deterioration in the fabric since the last remodel in the 1980s, had resulted in the space looking tired and not being used effectively.

The project has created a reimagined, vibrant and accessible open space within the city centre. The space has been transformed so that it can be used for events and cultural activities for the people of Norwich and visitors, and the outcomes of this project justify the delivery costs.

The improved walking links between Norwich Market, Millennium Plain, Gentleman’s Walk and Chantry Place, will enhance the accessibility within the city centre, attract investment and boost the visitor economy by improving the quality and look of the area as a whole.

Whilst the area is currently fenced off to the public, we are sure that your constituents can see that the significant remodelling works have renewed the area and improved the environment for the people of Norwich substantially, both through the extensive accessibility improvements throughout the site, and the ambiance of the environment that has been created.”