

Appendix 1

Stevenage Old Town (High Street)

1. The High Street is within a conservation area, is heavily used by pedestrians and vehicles, and plays a key role in the area's tourism offer. It is important that the Council manages the build-up of street trading activity so that it does not gradually undermine the character, function, or amenity of the area.
2. Street trading applications covering this area will normally be refused unless the applicant can clearly show exceptional circumstances. In considering this, the Council will take into account, alongside other relevant factors, whether:
 - a) the proposal adds something distinctive to the character, heritage or cultural life of the High Street that can't reasonably be provided elsewhere, including through the Farmer's Market or Old Town Live (or any successor events);
 - b) it complements existing businesses and trading opportunities rather than repeats what is already on offer;
 - c) it can operate safely without unacceptable impacts on public safety, traffic, pedestrian movement or local amenity;
 - d) it is appropriate within the conservation area;
 - e) it would not create an unacceptable cumulative impact from street trading in the area.
3. The Council recognises the Old Town's established tradition of markets and events, including the Farmers' Market, Old Town Live, the Charter Fair, Christmas events and other community activities.

What types of events could be considered

4. Street trading on the High Street would normally be expected to be directly associated with an organised event, celebration, festival, market or other special occasion taking place in, or benefiting, the Old Town. This could include:
 - Seasonal and Christmas events;
 - Specialist or themed markets;
 - Cultural, community or heritage events;
 - Charitable events;
 - Arts, music or entertainment events;
 - Civic occasions and commemorations;
 - Family or children's events; and
 - Events celebrating the Old Town, Stevenage or local businesses.

5. Association with an event, market or other organised activity will not, in itself, give rise to an automatic entitlement for street trading consent. Conversely, the granting of a street trading consent does not authorise or constitute permission to hold, organise or operate an event or other activity. Applicants and event organisers remain responsible for obtaining any other permissions, licences or consents required in connection with the proposed activity.
6. Each application will be considered on its individual merits and assessed against the relevant criteria set out in this policy. This approach is intended to provide a clear, consistent and proportionate framework for determining applications, supporting appropriate markets and events while protecting the character, accessibility, amenity and vitality of the High Street.