Single Member Cabinet Decision

Executive Forward Plan Reference

E2238

Approval of Economic Regeneration Delivery Plans for Bath, Keynsham and Midsomer Norton

Decision makers	Cllr Terry Gazzard, Cabinet Member for Development and Major Projects Cllr Malcolm Hanney, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Resources
The Issue	The B&NES Sustainable Community Strategy identifies the key role that a thriving and resilient economy will play in achieving sustainable growth in B&NES. The Economic Strategy identifies the key barriers to growth as the lack of available employment land and modern business space, the perception that Bath is not seen as a 'regional' office location and the record of slow and under delivery of new office space to date.
	The Economic Regeneration Delivery Plans (ERDPs) set out a framework for delivering one strand of the Economic Strategy within the context of the Council's ambitions to create a more sustainable, productive and resilient economy and support the level of economic growth required to deliver the numbers of new jobs and homes set out in the draft Core Strategy. The ERDPs describe potential sites and outline a series of actions that the Council will take to encourage the development of business premises. They reaffirm to business leaders and developers that 'B&NES is open for business'.
Decision Date	23 March 2011
The Decision	The Cabinet Members agree that
	 The documents formerly referred to as Regeneration Delivery Plans should from now be referred to as Economic Regeneration Delivery Plans
	 The ERDPs be approved as the basis for corporate action to achieve high value added business growth;
	 The ERDPs be used corporately to promote and market B&NES as a business destination.
	 The ERDPs be approved as the basis for assessing the contribution of sites to the delivery of the aims of the Economic Strategy;
	 The Strategic Director for Development and Major Projects is instructed to work with other Council departments to develop an Action Plan to deliver the infrastructure identified in the Local Investment Plan (para. 3.4) B&NES Infrastructure Delivery Programme and ERDPs.
	6. The ERDPs be used to inform the Local Development

	Framework and the Place Making Plan (para. 5.1.5.)7. The ERDPs will be reviewed after a year to ensure they are focussed on the most important issues faced by the district at that time.
Rationale for decision	The ERDPs take forward the actions in one strand of the Economic Strategy and define how the objectives of the Vision for B&NES as further articulated in Treasure and Transform can be taken forward. There is, we believe, strong demand for high quality office and workspace in Bath from current and prospective local employers. This includes particular interest by the knowledge and creative industries as well as by the professional services sector. In Keynsham and Midsomer Norton there is support for creating additional local employment by bringing forward new business locations and strengthening the market town centres.
Financial and budget implications	 The Plans set out in this report will be prioritised within the budgets and resources agreed by the Council in its annual budget. Revenue costs of delivering the ERDPs are built into the Medium Term Service and Resource Plan of Development and Major Projects. Service Plans of other services include workstreams that contribute to the overall objectives of the ERDPs. Additional capital enabling projects including for example, flood mitigation works, which arise as part of the ERDP
	 recommendations will be subject to the Council's established authorisation procedures. The current Local Investment Plan (LIP) agreed with the Homes & Communities Agency and adopted by the four Unitary Authorities in the West of England includes a sum of £45.6m over the period 2010 - 2015 to support the delivery of affordable housing, site related infrastructure, land assembly, strategic flood mitigation and remediation at Bath City Riverside, Keynsham and the Somer Valley. The LIP is being reviewed and reprioritised in the light of national funding restrictions and the new home delivery proposals put forward by the government. B&NES will make every effort to retain funding for our priorities and the ERDPs will emphasise our corporate commitment to regeneration.
Issues considered	Social Inclusion; Sustainability; Property; Young People; Corporate. Members received and took on board comments from 4 respondents during the publicity period. They were from: Bath Preservation Trust Bath Avon River Corridor Group Nash Partnership Hignett Family Trust The issues raised by these respondents have been considered and the council's response is attached at Appendix 1. Some amendments have been made to the ERDP documents as a result and the revised versions are attached at Appendices 2-4.

Consultation undertaken	Ward Councillors; Cabinet colleagues; Parish Councils; Town Councils; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Staff; Other B&NES Services; Service Users; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; Stakeholders/Partners; Other Public Sector Bodies; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer
How consultation was carried out	• The Economic Strategy was the subject of consultation with the business community through partners on the Sustainable Growth Alliance, with key business groups in the Somer valley and Keynsham and with local resident associations.
	• The consultation findings from the Futures Vision, Public Realm & Movement Strategy, Sustainable Community Strategy and Economic Strategy were fed into the development of the ERDPS.
	 A series of workshops were held with community interest groups on the development of the ERDP for Bath.
	 Public exhibitions were held in Keynsham and Midsomer Norton to promote the consultation on the draft Plans, which were also available on the Council's website.
	The documented results of the public engagement exercises are available from Development and Major Projects.
	Cabinet Members, Section 151 Finance Officer, Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer were consulted on this report.
	• The agreed growth scenario and the ERDPs will be subject to formal public consultation through local development framework documents.
	 The Treasure and Transform exhibition in Bath, Keynsham and Somer Valley (Jan – Feb 2011) was visited by approximately 1900 people.
	 The spatial elements of the ERDPs have undergone public consultation through the Core Strategy process
Other options considered	None

Signatures of Decision Makers		
Date of Signature		
Subject to Call-in until 5 Working days have elapsed following publication of the decision		

Issues raised by respondents and Council response

The Council received 4 written submissions on the ERDPs as part of the Single Member Decision process. The overall points raised and the Council's response is set out below.

1. Nash Partnership

Comments

Marketing of the site over a long period and property market advice obtained by Linden, confirms that speculative development of 4,000 sq m of office space on the former Alcan site is not a viable proposition. This aside, such development would in any case be likely to detract from efforts to bring forward the better located sites that have been identified by the Council. For these sites to come forward there is a need to focus energy and resources on their delivery rather than dilute efforts.

Council Response

The B&NES Economic Strategy prioritises the regeneration of the Somer Valley area through the creation of local employment which can contribute towards achieving a more sustainable local economy. The Council's draft Core Strategy sets out to protect land in existing business use and only allow alternative uses where there are compensating benefits including employment.

The ERDP for MSNTC recognises that the Alcan Site is not suitable for large scale replacement employment provision but proposes that the site could bring forward a modest scale of modern office space. It is accepted that if more suitable off-site locations within the Somer Valley can be identified and brought forward this would provide a suitable alternative. It is therefore proposed to amend the description of the Alcan site to read:

The site has the potential to deliver:

• Replacement office based local employment in new modern floorspace either on site or in an agreed alternative location within the Somer Valley.

2. Hignett Family Trust (HFT) and Bath Avon River Corridor Group (BARCG)

Comments - HFT

The Council should not seek to pre-empt the outcome of that policy making process including the public inquiry and subsequent inspectors report by developing a corporate plan and actions, including investment across departments that has so far, not been approved in an adopted Development Plan Document.

Comments - BARCG

We believe there are real dangers in endorsing the ERDP proposal in its present form. Although there is urgency in securing the regeneration of these areas, we believe at present there is not a clear enough conceptual model for how building the economy of the BANES towns and Bath needs best evolve in the interests of securing the reliance and vitality it needs. The ERDP's document reads as a conventional investment led developers charter, likely to deliver the kind of conventional commercial development one sees everywhere – supermarkets, speculative offices, retail warehouses and apartments. Whilst we actually feel the market is not ready to deliver quickly some of the commercial elements of that, we feel there is a real danger that with such a charter the bias towards residential would win out and the economic regeneration we seek will simply not happen.

We believe it will only happen by focussing first on the particular growth patterns and support, the space management and delivery models each of the economy trends needs. It is that structured, purposeful growth of individual businesses that creates a resilient economy. There are far too many examples of purely investment led business parks that do not survive the first wave of occupation because true economic reliance has not been achieved and that is not what a 'City of Ideas' needs.

We would urge that the adoption of the ERDP's be delayed until sufficient work has been done on such a conceptual economic model against which these potential site allocations can be better tested and integrated.

The Vision for Keynsham – At present the plans undervalue and under exploit the river frontage.

Council Response

The ERDPs are a vital step towards defining in more detail the potential major locations and mix of uses which could come forward in and adjoining Bath city centre along the river corridor. They build on actions set out in the B&NES Economic Strategy and the findings of the Business Growth and Employment Land Study (2009) and the Smart Growth Report (2010). These identified the employment sectors where the area has niche strengths, the potential for future employment growth and the need to promote new employment led business quarters in this location in order to facilitate the development of a more productive and resilient local economy. As such they do not set out to cover all the sites in the Core Strategy nor the total quantum of jobs growth.

The Council is working specific sector groups such as Creative Bath with key partners including the universities and with major local employers to ensure their specific needs can be addressed both now and in the longer term. Work is also ongoing with specialist advisors to understand how new investment in Bath can be encouraged.

In Keynsham the Council has undertaken an extensive master planning exercise which has focussed on the revitalisation of the town centre and the Cadbury Somerdale site. These are seen as key to delivering a refreshed identity and reinforced role for Keynsham in the future. The finding of the Masterplanning work have identified the river valley, the park and the Keynsham Hams as key assets where links need to be improved and it is agreed that more emphasis can be placed on the value of the river frontage.

It is therefore proposed that section 5 of the Keynsham ERDP be revised to include reference to 'maximising the benefit of the river frontage' as part of 'extending the park through Somerdale to the Hams'.

It is accepted that the ERDPs have limited "weight" in planning terms but can be used to provide preliminary guidance to potential developers who wish to bring forward proposals prior to completion of the proposed "Placemaking DPD". The ERDP's are not planning policy documents but are options which will be considered in the preparation of the placemaking DPD. As such they are an evidence base and are aligned with emerging policy in the Core Strategy.

3. Bath Preservation Trust

Comments

- No reason is given for the change of name to **Economic** Regeneration Delivery Plans.
- It would be inappropriate for the ERDP to be given significant weight in planning decisions.
- The case for office floor space is not made.
- Design concepts alternatives proposed
- Issues of existing vs future economy Para 3 completely leaves out tourism and yet it is one of the most productive areas of the economy. The strategy mush emphasise continuity and development of existing strengths. Continuing the good work of repositioning Bath's tourism economy as a 'staying' visitor attraction is an important part of strengthening the part of the economic offer.

Council Response

The ERDPs have been developed to take forward the objectives and ambitions set out in the B&NES Economic Strategy and vision documents which were articulated in the recent "Treasure and Transform" exhibitions and presentations. They therefore focus on the economy strand of the area's regeneration needs.

It is accepted that the ERDPs have limited "weight" in planning terms but can be used to provide preliminary guidance to potential developers who wish to bring forward proposals prior to completion of the proposed "Placemaking DPD". These are not intended to pre-empt the DPD but are intended to form part of the information base that will be used to develop the formal guidance.

The Council has carried out strategic studies which identify the need to bring forward modern office space in Bath in order to facilitate the growth knowledge based sector where the city has specific strengths. The B&NES Economic Strategy specifically sets out the need for new employment led business quarters in and on the edge of the city centre and the Council is actively investigating the options for facilitating development. Work is also ongoing to address the key infrastructure constraints affecting Bath city riverside including flood mitigation, car and coach parking strategies and land remediation.

The "Placemaking DPD" will articulate in more detail the design issues on individual sites. Where proposals come forward in advance of the DPD these will be addressed through the planning application process. For this reason it is proposed to delete Section 5 of the Bath ERDP. In addition, in Section 3 of the Bath ERDP it is proposed to insert the following paragraph following the list of target growth sectors:

"Support will continue to be given to ensure that the economic contribution of the tourism and retail sectors to the local economy is maintained and that Bath continues to be regarded as an international tourism destination and regional shopping centre".

Summary

As a result of the submissions the Cabinet Members have agreed the following minor amendments to the ERDPs:

1. Remove Section 5 "Design Concepts" from the Bath ERDP as these issues will be fully addressed in the Placemaking DPD and can be dealt with in any individual planning applications that may come forward prior to its completion.

- 2. In Section 3 of the Bath RDP following the list of target growth sections add the words: "Support will continue to be given to ensure that the economic contribution of the tourism and retail sectors to the local economy is maintained and that Bath continues to be regarded as an international tourism destination and regional shopping centre".
- 3. In section 5 of the Keynsham ERDP, include reference to "Maximising the benefit of the river frontage" as part of "extending the park through Somerdale to the Hams"
- 4. Amend section 6 of the MSNTC ERDP by adjusting the description of the Alcan site to read:

The site has the potential to deliver:

- Replacement office based local employment in new modern floorspace either on site or in an agreed alternative location.
- 5. Monitoring the development of a mechanism for monitoring in association with the wider community will be discussed at the next meeting of the B&NES Economic Partnership (formerly called the Sustainable Growth Alliance).

Bath Economic Regeneration Delivery Plan

1. Introduction - Treasure and Transform

The City of Bath is an important sub regional employment hub situated in one of the most productive sub regions in the UK. However its economy is in relative decline. Its future success is undermined by an over reliance on public sector and tourism related jobs. The result is an economy that is performing relatively poorly in comparison to the rest of the West of England. It is characterised by relatively low wages, low average GVA per employee and a low rate of economic growth.

To create a sustainable economic future, Bath needs a more competitive and productive economy. For this to happen, it needs to be an environment where businesses thrive, where new jobs are created in higher value sectors such as creative industries, ICT and low carbon industries, and where there is a reversal in the out commute of higher value added employees from the district each day.

Our vision is for Bath to be the "**City of Ideas**". It will be a place where world class academia, high tech manufacturing, creative industries and training academies meet to develop new ideas that lead to jobs growth. This will be done by treasuring the City's heritage and transforming it into a more vibrant, economically successful place where people want to live, work and play.

The Economic Strategy for B&NES highlights how important the right office accommodation is to support Bath's sustainable economic growth. It needs an appropriate range of premises and sites which are attractive to the skilled resident population to work from in the city. Modern business space and facilities are also essential if the city is to attract and retain businesses in target sectors and build on its economic strengths.

Delivery of these premises needs to happen without damaging the core values of the City and within a definable timescale to meet occupier, investor and developer needs.

The purpose of this ERDP is to identify sites within the city which could help support Bath's sustainable economic growth and deliver the type of smart growth that will help the City to thrive. Preparation of this ERDP has been completed in the context of the Core Strategy. The Placemaking Plan will take forward the strategic planning approach provided by the Core Strategy and take into consideration the economic objectives of the council outlined here.

2. Bath's economic context

As part of the West of England sub-region, Bath has a good reputation for the quality of life it offers. Bath's standing as one of England's most liveable cities attracts visitors and new residents to the best of urban and rural life.

Bath is well known as an international tourism destination, thanks to its cultural and built heritage, thermal springs and landscape setting, encapsulated in its designation as a World Heritage Site. It has large areas of green space, with an attractive river and canal wrapping around a walkable city centre. Tourism is worth approximately £350m to the local economy and helps to support the city's extensive retail offer and role as a regional retail destination.

Bath is one of the most important places of learning in the South West. In 2008/9 there were just under 21,600 students attending the two Higher Education institutions of the University of Bath and Bath Spa University.

Thanks in large part to the role of the two universities, Bath has long been a place of learning, innovation and creativity, with particular strengths in the creative arts and engineering and technology. Pioneering work and knowledge has often 'spun out' and driven what are now successful and significant employers.

Bath is a principle location for other public sector activities, with high levels of employment in education and public administration. The Ministry of Defence occupies three sites in and around Bath, employing approximately 1,800 people.

Bath lies on the London-West Country mainline railway with frequent services to London, the Midlands and the North of England. The centre of Bath is 9.5 miles from the M4. Bristol International airport is only 18 miles away although direct public transport links have yet to be established.

3. Targets and Trajectories

B&NES ambition for smart growth is to focus on growing Bath's most productive sectors of the economy. This means actively targeting growth in the following sectors:

- Business services
- Financial services
- Creative industries
- ICT
- Environmental Technologies

Support will continue to be given to ensure that the economic contribution of the tourism and retail sectors to the local economy is maintained and that Bath continues to be regarded as an international tourism destination and regional shopping centre.

To deliver sustainable economic growth B&NES needs to create an additional 8,700 jobs of which 5,700 (65.5%) are targeted for the city of Bath. Bath is at the economic heart of the district and needs to be positioned at the centre of the knowledge economy. There is significant demand: businesses are attracted to a location with available and appropriate workspace, a highly skilled workforce, environmental quality and a proactive attitude to innovation and enterprise.

To achieve these ambitions the ERDP sites in Bath should:

- Bring forward choice of development sites in Bath to deliver the scale, form and amount of floor space needed for sustainable economic growth;
- Deliver key employment sites to allow creation of an additional 5,700 jobs;
- Focus growth in key business sectors that can deliver above average GVA growth;
- Promote investment in the infrastructure necessary to ensure that optimum use can be made of key brownfield development sites;
- Demonstrate the ability to respond to changing market conditions swiftly

A sustainable economic future for Bath can only be secured if there is a rebalancing of jobs from the current dependency on the public sector to a more diverse, resilient private sector comprising businesses which are prepared to invest to achieve growth.

4. Achieving the Vision through the Bath City of Ideas

There is a clear vision to deliver the ambitions for Bath. The Council sees the economic future for Bath as a 'City of Ideas'. The creative and knowledge based sectors currently

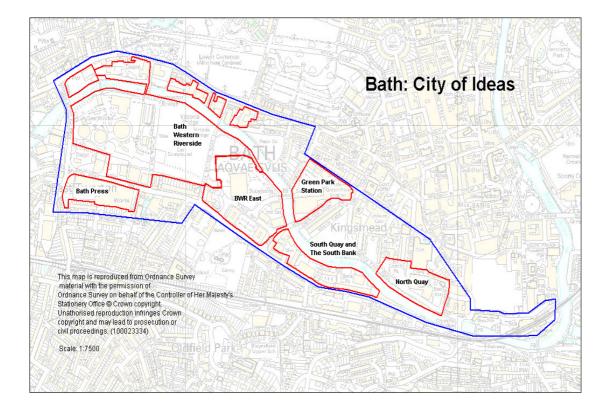
perform a significant role in the local economy and have sub regional and national profiles. Bath also has world class Universities and a skills profile to make the most of these assets.

Bath has a once in a lifetime opportunity to bring these strengths together and build a world class collaborative and interdisciplinary workspace in the centre of Bath. The key components of this could be:

- A venue for Continuing Professional Development in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematical) subjects
- An Innovation centre hosting 100 high tech, high growth companies
- The HQ of an innovation company
- Major high tech publishing industry business HQ
- Knowledge Hub for ICT, microelectronics, smart grid sectors
- Manufacturing skills academy

Delivering the City of Ideas could result in a nationally significant public/private partnership, which creates new ideas, spin outs and high growth companies. There are three key elements that the ERDPs will deliver in making the City of Ideas a reality:

- Securing investment that promotes clustering of key growth sectors delivering modern space alongside academic and training facilities.
- Improving the environment of the River Avon, transforming it into a leisure and vastly improved visual resource.
- Reinforcing the historic core, one of Bath's key strengths, to create spaces where people are encouraged to linger and meet in streets where the cafes and restaurants spill out onto the pavement.



4b. Bath World Heritage Site

The inscription of Bath as a World Heritage Site confirms the city's heritage as being of outstanding global significance. Individual developments, of whatever scale, could have a significant impact upon the universal values of the Site. It is therefore essential to ensure that World Heritage values are properly considered in development proposals. Developments will identify how they will impact upon the Outstanding Universal Values for which the site was inscribed. These values and other considerations are outlined in the WHS Management Plan (2010-2016).

The UNESCO Mission Report (2009) indicated that high quality contemporary architectural styles are a desirable method of creating new buildings in Bath by adding a new layer of quality to complement the existing excellence. The inclusion of contemporary architectural styles in the WHS will require careful treatment to respond to the feeling of relative architectural uniformity created by widespread use of local stone, relative uniformity of building heights and the visual dominance of the Georgian building stock.

5. Issues and Constraints

In delivering our ambitions, we are aware that there are a number of issues and constraints which need to be overcome. We will tackle these alongside bringing forward the key development sites:

• **Transport capacity** - Bath experiences traffic congestion during peak rush hour periods, so the effect of new developments needs to be considered carefully. Traffic demand for trips in the Bath area is expected to increase between 2006 and 2031

An effective transport network is required to ensure business productivity is maintained and improved, communities and workers can move more easily around and air quality is improved. Practically congestion provides a challenge in developing sites; the development capacity of the key sites is restricted by being unable to access them effectively. The Bath Package is a collection of interventions and developments designed to create additional capacity and free up development sites (as well as getting people around in a more cost effective, cleaner, quicker manner that contributes to enhancing the World Heritage Site). Delivering the package will be an essential component of delivering the City of Ideas.

- Office Demand The analysis of the property market, market research and surveys all confirm the need to create an office quarter or quarters in central locations in Bath to meet the demand for office space arising from the growth targets. Most of the sites identified in the ERDPs will be brought forward as mixed use developments.
- Lack of conference facilities To attract the business we want it is important that Bath delivers a 500-seat capacity, flexible conference and events space potentially linked to a hotel.
- Low carbon The Council's Sustainable Community Strategy sets targets for carbon reductions and in the way that the Council supports development in the area. Sites brought forward should contribute to delivering the Council's carbon reduction targets
- **Floodplain development** For future development to be possible in the Bath river corridor a number of recognised sites have to address any potential risk associated with flooding to ensure compliance with national policy and the sustainability of any new development. By enabling a strategic approach to compensatory storage the Council will ensure that individual sites are not left undeveloped because of flood risk and that regeneration

objectives are met by sites adjacent to the River.

- **Public Realm** The Public Realm and Movement Strategy for Bath City Centre entitled 'Creating the Canvas for Public Life in Bath' is our vision to transform Bath's streets, public spaces and riverside into one of the world's most beautiful and attractive urban centres. It aims to make Bath the UK's 'most walkable' city and bring back its 18th century reputation of being a city that has world-class architecture, street layout and design. The council has recognised that improving the public realm for the 21st century will be a key factor in encouraging economic growth, health and well-being.
- **Parking** There is a total capacity of 9,266 publicly available car parking spaces serving Bath city centre. The Parking Strategy proposes the loss of 1,334 city centre spaces and provision of an additional 2,532 additional car parking spaces in the park and ride sites, leading to net increase of 1,198 spaces serving the city centre.

Many of the potential development sites identified in the Bath ERDP are currently surface or multi-storey parking. These sites have a combined capacity of 2,054 spaces. Delivery of the proposed park and ride to the east of Bath and the proposed expansions of Newbridge and Odd Down underpin the Council's ability to release those car park sites for development. It is anticipated that 1,552 of the spaces will be retained (at Charlotte Street or Avon Street) as part of any development proposals.

- Avon Act The Avon Act imposes restrictions on development within specified zones around the centre of Bath to safeguard the hot springs which flow under the city of Bath. The Act will be a consideration for future development in the city. Major development sites will need to be co-ordinated to ensure there is not more than one major risk to the springs at any time. Any delays are likely to have a more significant impact than were the sites to lie outside the Avon Act area if the delay results in an overlap with delivery of another site.
- Existing business uses A number of the sites identified have current business uses already operating on them. A relocations process and timetable will ensure the Council is able to offer sufficient and timely support to businesses which are being relocated to enable new development. This process will include a resource plan considering both revenue implications such as officer time and capital implications such as compensation payments.

6. Development Sites

The Development Sites are divided into two distinct areas: Bath City Riverside and Twerton Riverside.

BATH CITY RIVERSIDE

Bath City Riverside includes a range of development sites totalling over 40ha along the river corridor to the south and west of the existing city centre within the draft Core Strategy Central Area. Realising the development potential of Bath City Riverside is key to achieving a more productive and competitive economy in Bath & North East Somerset and delivering the Vision for Bath as a creative and knowledge-based "City of Ideas".

 Cornmarket/Cattlemarket/Hilton/Podium – (Annex 1) Located at the eastern end of Bath City Riverside adjacent to the main shopping area, the site offers the opportunity to reinforce the existing retail offer in the northern half of the city centre, forging stronger links with Broad Street and Walcot Street.

The site has the potential to provide:

- a net increase of up to 4,000sqm of retail space to consolidate the existing onsite provision.
- approximately 8,000sqm of new and refurbished hotel accommodation creating 120 new bedrooms
- around 250 new jobs
- **Manvers Street** (Annex 2) Situated adjacent to the Bath Spa railway station and bus station, the site is ideally located to create a new business quarter on the edge of the city centre focussed on the development of new "grade A" office space with ancillary retail, restaurant and bar facilities and residential development adjoining the river.

The site has the potential to provide:

- up to 17,000sqm of new office space
- in the order of 2,000sqm of retail, restaurants and bars
- approximately 2,300sqm of residential accommodation
- up to 1,000 new jobs

To realise the site's development potential will require the relocation of the existing Police Station and Post Office Sorting Office. It is anticipated that development will come forward in phases within an overall masterplan.

• **North Quay** (Annex 3) - A key development site on the south west edge of the central area providing the opportunity to connect the city centre to the river through local traffic management and the creation of high quality urban squares.

Convenient access to the railway station and bus station provides the opportunity to create a high quality commercial quarter focussed on an "innovation hub", bringing together business and the city's universities as the principal element of a mixed use scheme containing restaurants, bars, cafes and residential accommodation.

The site has the potential to provide:

- up to 31,000sqm of high quality office and knowledge based employment space
- 3,000sqm of restaurants, bars and cafes
- approximately 7,000sqm of residential accommodation
- in the region of 1800 new jobs

To realise the site's development potential will require the replacement of the existing Avon Street car park through the Bath Car Parking Strategy and relocation of the Coach Park.

• South Quays & The South Bank (Annex 4) - A prominent series of sites on the south bank of the River Avon adjacent to the city centre. Current uses are a low density mix of industrial, office and commercial uses, which, in the main, present an unattractive outlook to the river.

An overall redevelopment scheme could realise a high density mixed use scheme providing an attractive, accessible river frontage and public space incorporating modern offices and creative space, associated bars, restaurants and cultural/creative shared space together with riverside housing.

The site has the potential to provide:

- up to 23,000sqm of modern offices
- approximately 5,500sqm of creative office, workspace and linked facilities
- 1,500sqm of cafes, bars and restaurants
- 9,000sqm of residential accommodation
- around 1,400 new jobs

Capable of being developed in a number of separate phases any scheme would be required to provide a new pedestrian footbridge link to North Quay and the city.

• Green Park Station – (Annex 5) A "gateway" site to an enlarged city centre the site is currently home to the Green Park Market and successful Farmer's Market. It has the potential to become a vibrant new retail and leisure destination, which makes full use of the former Green Park Station and provides a mix of retail and leisure uses, a new hotel and conference facility and residential apartments.

The site has the potential to provide:

- significant retail space
- at least 3,000sqm of bars, restaurants, cafes and health & well being uses
- 20,000sqm of hotel and conference facilities
- approximately 7,500sqm of residential accommodation
- up to 700 jobs
- Bath Western Riverside East (Annex 6) A key longer term development site which can provide a high quality commercially led link between the new Bath Western Riverside residential quarter to the west and Green Park Station and the city centre to the east. The new employment facilities can be complimented by the development of new leisure facilities along the site's river frontage.

The site is capable of accommodation:

- new retail facilities
- up to 47,000sqm of modern office and live/work space
- extensive riverside leisure facilities
- 26,000sqm of residential accommodation
- around 2,800 new jobs

TWERTON RIVERSIDE

Running along the river corridor to the west of the city and Bath Western Riverside, Twerton Riverside is formed by a range of brownfield sites totalling approximately 10ha. The area houses a number of redundant, tired and old-fashioned industrial buildings alongside recently converted office space and student accommodation.

The area requires a comprehensive approach to future development which provides a higher quality environment and street scene on this main route into the city, improves access to and along the river and a balance of uses which complements and supports the regeneration of Bath City Riverside.

• **Bath Press** – (Annex 7) A vacant industrial complex adjoining the main Lower Bristol Road and Lower Oldfield Park residential area. There are extensive outdated industrial buildings requiring clearance and remediation as well as local sensitivity relating to some of the building facades.

The site provides an opportunity to create a mixed use development including retail, significant employment and new housing, delivering:

- out of centre retail space which compliments the existing city centre retail offer
- up to 5,000sqm of office and creative business space
- residential accommodation providing an interface with adjoining housing
- in the region of 220 jobs
- **Stable Yard Area** (Annex 8) A partly vacant industrial area adjoining the river immediately to the west of Bath Western Riverside. A comprehensive approach to the redevelopment of the area would provide an opportunity to deliver a higher quality built environment and more attractive street scene on a busy transport junction as well as an improved river aspect.

The site could deliver:

- out of centre retail space which compliments and reinforces the city's retail offer
- up to 7,000sqm of residential accommodation to compliment the adjoining BWR residential guarter
- approximately 300 jobs

Realisation of the site's potential will require the relocation of a number of existing occupiers.

• **Carrs Mill Area** (Annex 9) - A mixed use area containing refurbished and new build offices together with partly vacant dilapidated industrial buildings and other commercial uses. There is a need to pursue a mixture of refurbishment, consolidation and redevelopment of existing buildings to make optimum use of these constrained sites with the emphasis on reinforcing surrounding office uses and taking advantage of the river frontage and outlook.

Taken together the sites have the potential to deliver:

- up to 14,000sqm of additional office accommodation
- approximately 700 jobs

Keynsham Town Centre Economic Regeneration Plan

1. Introduction

Located between Bath and Bristol, Keynsham is ideally located to play a significant role in supporting sustainable economic growth across the District. It has retained its own identity and is surrounded by countryside, while also having good transport links. Bristol and Bath are both 10 minutes away by train and the A4 connects the town to the M4. It also has good schools and a strong community spirit.

Given these components, Keynsham should therefore be a desirable commercial location. However it suffers from a lack of available modern business space, the High Street has seen little regeneration over the past decade and it has recently seen the closure of the Cadbury Somerdale site.

The town centre is characterised by local independent retailers, some larger nationals and charity shops. The town's dominant employer is the public sector, with the Council having an office there.

Over the next decade, however, Keynsham has a very significant opportunity to revitalise its economy. The Economic Strategy for B&NES highlights the need to bring forward new employment space in the town centre, in particular the redevelopment of the Town Hall site, and at Cadbury Somerdale, increasing the number and diversity of jobs available locally.

Delivery of these schemes needs to build on the strong heritage of the town and make the most of its close proximity to the River Avon.

The preparation of this ERDP complements the strategic objectives for Keynsham set out in the draft Core Strategy. The Placemaking Plan will take forward the strategic planning approach provided by the Core Strategy and take into consideration the economic objectives of the council outlined here.

2. Keynsham's Economic Context

Keynsham has a population of over 16,000, making it one of the largest urban areas in the district, although over half the resident working population travel to work elsewhere (Bath/Bristol).

The town has a limited employment base of about 3,500 full time equivalent jobs (2008) which is dominated by distribution (a reflection of good transport links), public administration and business services. The Cadbury factory accounted for 10% of local employment.

The High Street is one of the most distinctive characteristics of Keynsham. It is a strong linear feature which gives Keynsham centre a market town 'feel'. Although the High Street has very few empty shops, it is characterised by a number of outdated buildings, an unattractive physical environment and traffic congestion.

It is dominated by retail uses but the small size of the shop units makes it difficult to attract higher quality national retailers. It is currently losing retail expenditure to competing retail centres such as Longwell Green. A key objective of the ERDP is to reverse this trend.

The commercial office market for Keynsham is limited and while it has had major employer names in the area (such as Cadburys), due to a lack of critical mass has tended not to attract significant commercial offices to the town.

The town centre environment is compromised by poor quality development, traffic and poor pedestrian links to the car parks and park. As a result, the experience of the town centre tends toward the functional rather than a place to enjoy.

3. Targets and Trajectories

B&NES ambition for smart growth in Keynsham is to focus on those sectors of the economy that make the most of its strategic location and its potential as a hub for the public sector and allied business services. To deliver sustainable growth Keynsham needs to create an additional 1,500 jobs. This means actively targeting growth in the following sectors:

- Business services
- Distribution
- Construction
- Public services

4. Vision

Our ambition is to put Keynsham on the map as a complementary commercial location to Bristol and Bath, with a strong retail offer focused on the High Street, enabling people to live and work in the town, and significantly reducing out commuting.

To achieve this ambition Keynsham needs to:

- Create new jobs the Town Hall, Riverside and Somerdale are major 'town centre' employment destinations that can 'anchor' each end of the High Street and be major footfall generators, with the additional potential to attract office occupiers by creating a local labour pool for prospective employers.
- Improve the shopping experience enhance the quality of shopping by satisfying the demand for new, larger retail footplates to attract higher quality shops and enable existing retailers to expand.
- Improve the Memorial Park the green connection from Dapps Hill to Hams makes an attractive leisure route which will enliven the town centre. A cultural facility overlooking the Park could help strengthen the evening economy to support a growing population and workforce.

5. Opportunities and Constraints

This section sets out how the character of the area presents opportunities and constraints in relation to the council's economic and regeneration ambitions. It details some of the key issues which will need to be addressed as development comes forward.

• Access & Movement - Treatment of the High Street will be critical for the regeneration of Keynsham town centre. Traffic modelling is exploring the potential to re-direct the priority traffic flows through Keynsham, seeking to reduce the level of traffic on the High Street. Recognising the comments received during consultation, pedestrianisation of the High Street is not recommended. However it is important to review the use of alternative routes such as Ashton Way.

Keynsham is positioned on a major public transport corridor between Bath and Bristol. It is relatively well served by buses, although the routes and location of stops can be confusing. It benefits from a railway station linking it to Bath and Bristol, although the frequency of services and access to and from the station, need to be improved to maximise the town's potential to deliver sustainable growth.

- **Parking** It will be critical for the success of new and existing retail uses in the town to maximise the number of short stay spaces in close proximity to the High Street, such as at Ashton Way to support shopping trips. It is also recognised that additional long stay spaces may need to be provided to support the growing employment provision within the town centre.
- **Public Realm** The town centre suffers from poor public realm, with the High Street that is dominated by traffic congestion. The lack of alternative public spaces along the High Street core area limits opportunities for outside eating and drinking. The useable space outside the Town Hall is limited by the level differences and materials. Delivery of environmental improvements to the High Street will help create a more attractive setting for retail activity and investment, but will depend on the potential to reduce the level of traffic flow on the High Street.

Improvements should focus on encouraging pedestrian movement to and from the High Street which include:

- Public realm enhancements to improve arrival and awareness of the Town Centre
- Improve gateway into the northern end of the High Street and setting of St Johns Church
- Quality paving treatment of the High Street Core creating an improved pedestrian environment
- Create a pedestrian bridge across the A4
- Improved pedestrian links from main car parks to the High Street and the park
- Create a new civic space at the top of Bath Hill that can be flexible to serve performance and events
- Extending the Park through Somerdale to the Hams and maximising the benefit of the river frontage.
- 6. Development Sites

There are four significant development opportunities which will contribute significantly to delivering the medium-long term economic aspirations of the Keynsham ERDP.

Development Site 1: Keynsham Town Hall (Annex 1) Development Site 2: Riverside (Annex 2) Development Site 3: High Street Core (Annex 3) Development Site 4: Somerdale (Annex 4) • Keynsham Town Hall - The site is positioned at the gateway to the High Street at the junction of Bath Hill and High Street. It is currently occupied by the Town Hall, the library and a parade of shops that front public open space. The five storey building creates a landmark feature at the southern end of the High Street although the quality of the buildings is very poor and outdated, creating a negative impression of the town and High Street at this important arrival point. The civic space is underutilised and cluttered, making it difficult to successfully adapt as a space for events. The site currently turns its back to the Memorial Park and connections from the park to the High Street through the site are non-existent.

The redevelopment of the Town Hall site provides an opportunity to create a high quality mixed use development in a key location at the heart of the town centre including active frontages to the High Street and the Park; high quality public and civic spaces; improved access between the town centre and the park. The site has the potential to provide:-

- Up to 7000 sq m of modern office accommodation
- Up to 2000 sq m of retail space
- A new library and "one stop shop", with flexible meeting space
- New public space for events such as markets and exhibitions
- Around 750 jobs
- Riverside The Riverside complex is a 1970s development which was originally designed as a hotel, but has always been used as office accommodation. The development presents an imposing structure and is a significant barrier to pedestrian connections between the park area and High Street / Temple Street. There are a number of retail units on the ground floor and Keynsham Leisure Centre is located within the Riverside block on the lower ground floor levels.

The office accommodation is now dated and part has been vacant for an extended period. A comprehensive proposal for the refurbishment of the Riverside block could provide a new mix of uses, retaining the leisure and retail space, which could improve the vitality of the Temple Street area of the town centre. The refurbishment could provide:-

- Up to 3000 sq m of new residential accommodation
- Approximately 3000 sq m of refurbished office space
- Retention of the existing leisure and retail space facilities
- **High Street Core** The "linear" High Street is one of the most distinctive characteristics of Keynsham, but the high level of traffic flows detracts from the shopping environment. The main shopper car park at Ashton Way is situated to the west of the High Street but lacks adequate pedestrian connections and is characterised by poor quality buildings. Overall there is a lack of larger retail floorplates which makes it difficult to attract high quality national retailers.

The western side of the High Street has the potential to be comprehensively redeveloped. Opportunities exist to amalgamate and redevelop existing units to create larger, more regular sized units to attract higher quality retailers. Smaller shops on Ashton Way will provide opportunities for local businesses.

The creation of local offices and apartments at upper levels including 'rear frontages' with appropriate parking and servicing, will bring more life and activity to the town centre.

Better links to the Park will increase the potential for linked trips and viability of cafes, bars, restaurants and cultural facilities. Ashton Way has the potential to take traffic pressure from the High Street to create more space for pedestrians and attract new retailers.

The High Street core has the potential to deliver:

- Approximately 4,500 sq m of additional retail floorspace
- Up to 2,500 sq m of new office accommodation
- 2,500 sq m of residential accommodation
- Around 350 jobs
- **Somerdale** Located to the north of the town centre, adjacent to the railway station, the site contains the now vacant Cadbury Chocolate Factory, the Fry Club and Conference Centre and the Keynsham Hams leading down to the River Avon which marks the northern and western boundaries of the site. It has an estimated developable area of 25ha.

Somerdale presents a major opportunity to provide new, high quality employment led mixed use development including homes, leisure, recreation and community facilities. A priority is to continue Somerdale's important employment role in Keynsham. The main entrance is suitable for offices, being close to the town centre and rail station. Conversion of some of all the factory buildings could create a distinctive location for workshops, studio space and apartments. The rear of the site is large and flexible enough to meet a range of different requirements and there is an opportunity to improve 'green' connections between the Hams, the River Avon, Memorial Park and town centre, giving local people access to a range of leisure facilities.

The site has the potential to provide:

- Around 20,000 sq m of office and creative workspace
- Up to 20,000 sq m of high end light industrial accommodation
- New leisure facilities including a relocated Fry Club and possible hotel
- Up to 600 houses
- Approximately 1500 jobs

Plan

1. Introduction

Midsomer Norton is located approximately 10 miles south west of Bath and 16 miles south east of Bristol in the Mendip Hills. Neighbouring market towns including Wells, Shepton Mallet and Frome are all within 10 miles of the town and present significant competition to Midsomer Norton as a market town destination.

The town is the principal market town for the Somer Valley, serving Radstock and a number of rural settlements including Peasedown St John, Paulton and Farrington Gurney. The town centre provides a range of retail outlets, a library, and leisure facilities and caters for the majority of the local service needs in the Somer Valley area attracting frequent shoppers from its catchment population of over 46,000. Reinforcing the town as the service destination for the rural hinterland is a key priority for this plan.

Historically, housing growth in the wider area has not been matched by increases in local employment and out-commuting has steadily increased and now stands at over 60% of the working age population. Further housing growth will increase the pressure for the redevelopment of brownfield sites surrounding the town centre, including older employment areas. Given there is little existing employment land capacity to generate new jobs there is an urgent need to bring forward a new strategic employment location at Old Mills.

The focus of this ERDP is Midsomer Norton town centre together with the significant development sites at Norton Hill and Old Mills. This has been prepared in the context of the Core Strategy. The Placemaking Plan will take forward the strategic planning approach provided by the Core Strategy and take into consideration the economic objectives of the council expressed in the Economic Strategy and ERDP.

2. Midsomer Norton's Economic Context

With nearly 30% of jobs in manufacturing, limited office-based service-sector employment and a decline in local farming, the economy in the Somer Valley area faces some serious challenges which need to be addressed.

The local economy is vulnerable to global economic change and the area is facing a period of economic restructuring. To counter this and move towards a modern local economy, the need for proactive promotion of the area, the targeting of new economic activity, the realisation of opportunities to bring forward new development sites and enhancing the levels of business support in the area, has become increasingly important.

The town centre is a focus for employment in Midsomer Norton and supports nearly 800 jobs, almost half of which are in retail. Overall the Midsomer Norton and Radstock area rely heavily on manufacturing jobs, which account for a quarter of the local employment and twice as high as the district average. Over half of the residents in the area travel to work elsewhere.

3. Targets and Trajectories

B&NES ambition for smart economic growth in Midsomer Norton is to focus on those sectors which can make it a strong self sustaining economy re-enforcing its position as the principle

market town for the Somer Valley. To deliver sustainable growth Midsomer Norton needs to create an additional 1,000 jobs. This means actively targeting growth in the following sectors:

- Business services
- Construction
- Distribution & Retail

A strong and thriving town centre is crucial to retaining and attracting employers to the Somer Valley area. Research has shown that businesses value good local services centres and quality public realm which their employees can enjoy. The town centre has suffered from a lack of investment, and that which has taken place, with a number of exceptions, has lacked quality and consistency. Whilst job and GVA increases are an important indicator of success, the focus for Midsomer Norton town centre is to strengthen the retail offer, encouraging more support for local shops and services.

4. Vision

The Council's ambition is for the Somer Valley to become a more sustainable self-reliant area with a stronger more diverse economy and for Midsomer Norton to fulfil its role as the market town for the Somer Valley community and position itself as an attractive destination that fights back against the out of town offer. This is the main focus of the ERDP which is aligned with the strategic objectives of the Draft Core Strategy.

To achieve this ambition Midsomer Norton town centre needs to:

- Strengthen the shopping heart provide larger shops in the core area of the High Street to attract national retailers, in particular an anchor food store.
- Create a mixed use centre create the opportunity for redeveloping outdated units to provide a mix of new shops, office and housing.
- Improve local attractions planting and public realm improvements to strengthen the arrival points in the shopping, park and leisure areas.

Surrounding the town centre, we need to maximise the potential of nearby development sites to complement and support the High Street and within the wider town facilitate the development of the allocated employment land at Old Mills.

5. Opportunities and constraints

This section sets out how the character of the area presents opportunities and constraints in relation to the council's economic and regeneration ambitions.

• Access and movement - Key to the success of the strategy is to create a town centre which is highly accessible to all residents and businesses, where facilities and services are available for all.

The strategy aims to encourage more people to walk and cycle through improved connections to the town centre. Encouraging more vehicles to use South Road would help reduce congestion in the southern end of the High Street, whilst improving facilities for public transport is an important consideration.

• **Parking** - Critical to the success of new and existing retail uses in the town will be to retain short stay spaces in close proximity to the High Street. There is potential to improve the appearance of parking areas to create a more welcoming arrival to the town. Long stay spaces will be required to support the growing employment provision.

- **Public Realm** The town centre currently suffers from poor quality public realm, although it has the potential for a strong, distinctive physical environment. Delivery of environmental improvements to the High Street will help create a more attractive setting for retail activity and investment, but will depend on the potential to reduce the level of traffic flow on the High Street. Improvements should emphasise the river as a feature of Midsomer Norton town centre and enhance the setting of key buildings:
 - Public realm enhancements to improve arrival and awareness of the Town Centre at Stones Cross
 - Tree planting to hide gaps in street frontage at top end of the High Street
 - Potential junction realignment at High Street / Excelsior Terrace junction
 - High quality paving treatment of the High Street Core creating an improved pedestrian environment
 - Improved Hollies Gardens to create a flexible space for events
 - Potential junction realignment at High Street / Silver Street to enhance setting of Town Hall
- **Community Facilities** Midsomer Norton benefits from a range of leisure and community facilities in the heart of the town centre. Midsomer Norton County Primary School is currently being extended and will have the potential to become a facility for wider community use.

The faith community are active in the town, with three churches located adjacent to the High Street, and another using the facility of the Town Hall on a regular basis. The local community have been instrumental in reinventing the Town Hall into a focus for community events and activity.

Gullocks Tyning is the focus for leisure offering a range of indoor and outdoor activities including a swimming pool at the Sports Centre. The recently opened Somer Valley Adventure Play Park provides a fantastic facility for a range of ages and is a valuable asset to the town centre.

6. Development Sites

To seek to deliver the ERDP objectives for MSN town centre and the wider Somer valley area five key development opportunities have been identified. Whilst the ERDPs focus on the town centre, they recognise the importance of large sites in the vicinity that will contribute towards the economic wellbeing of the area.

The development opportunities are:

HIGH STREET CORE Development Site 1: Streamside (Annex 1) Development Site 2: South Road (Annex 2) Development Site 3: The Hollies (Annex 3)

Development Site 4: Alcan (Annex 4)

Development Site 5: Old Mills (Annex 5)

 High Street Core - Central to the High Street the core commercial area covers three key sites which together have the potential to create a new 'heart' for the town centre, providing new employment opportunities, improving retail vitality and raising the quality of the public realm.

The **Streamside** area fronts the High Street between the Excelsior Terrace Junction and The Island, bounded to the rear by South Road. The River Somer is an attractive feature, flowing through the middle of High Street. This area is relatively weak in terms of retail as the units are of lower character and the area is dominated by non-retail units such as the library, pubs and takeaways.

This prominent area should be the focus for shopping, eating and drinking with new retail floorspace and an attractive public realm encouraging people to stay longer and support local businesses. Significant potential for redevelopment and renewal exists in the central part of the site, from the former Palladium building through to the Old Brewery and the pedestrian route connecting the High Street to South Road.

This area has the potential to provide:

- Up to 4,500 sq m of new comparison retail space
- Up to 8,500 sq m of new mixed use residential and office accommodation
- Approximately 400 jobs
- South Road Car Park The site is located to the south of the High Street on South Road at the rear of the Streamside area. It is currently a free car park for the town centre (236 spaces), with residential properties and redundant industrial buildings forming the eastern edge. The Midsomer Norton Conservation Area wraps around the car park site to the north, west and east.

There is potential for part of the site to become the location for a modern foodstore to attract more shoppers into the town centre and stimulate higher quality investment from new and existing retailers into the High Street. Part of the site will be required to be maintained as a car park serving the town centre as well as the new food store.

Development of the site would provide:

- A new 3000 sq m convenience retail food store
- A remodelled 300 space public car park with improved pedestrian links to the High Street
- Up to 150 jobs
- The Hollies area The site is dominated by the presence of Sainsburys foodstore which is set back from the High Street with a free car park (195 spaces) to the rear. Vehicular access and egress points to the car park are confusing and cause congestion on the High Street and pedestrian connections from north to south are difficult with lengthy ramps to address the changes in levels. The site is bordered by MSN County Primary School, the MSN Children's Centre and the Hollies office block. Central to the site the south facing Hollies Gardens is a terraced green public space in the centre of town, mainly used for seating and a location for the monthly farmer's market.

A reconfiguration of the site could provide an important mix of uses for the town centre including shops, jobs, community facilities, housing, public parking and green spaces with a strong retail frontage to the High Street and opportunities to spill out on to the improved Hollies Gardens which becomes a more flexible space for markets and events. There should be a mix of uses at upper levels, to meet the requirements for modern business

space and more housing in the town centre. The car park should be allocated for short stay car parking to serve the High Street.

Reconfiguration of the site could provide:

- Up to 2,500 sq m of new and refurbished comparison retail, commercial leisure and hospitality space
- Approximately 3000 sq m of new office space
- 6000 sq m of new residential accommodation
- around 300 jobs
- Alcan A significant vacant former industrial site which is adjacent to and overlooks the town centre. The site was previously occupied by Alcan, the multi-national packaging company, which closed the Midsomer Norton plant in 2006, with a loss of 220 jobs. Due to its location, surrounding residential uses and restricted access, the site is unlikely to be suitable for large scale industrial re-use.

Redevelopment of the site for a mix of uses could contribute towards achieving the regeneration objectives for the Somer Valley by facilitating the provision of new modern business space focused on office based business services & knowledge, employment which can replace the jobs that were lost when the factory closed whilst helping to restructure the local economy.

The site has the potential to deliver:

- Replacement office based local employment in new modern floorspace either on site or in an agreed location
- Up to 4,000 sq m of residential accommodation with improved connectivity to surrounding residential areas and the town centre
- A contribution towards the replacement of the existing community facilities on the site
- Old Mills The site covers 13.5ha and is allocated for employment uses. It is a mainly greenfield site on the north western edge of Midsomer Norton adjoining the existing Old Mills commercial area and has good access to the A37 which connects the Somer Valley to the A303 as well as Bristol and the national motorway network.

The Old Mills site has a key role to play in securing the regeneration and future economic well-being of Midsomer Norton and the Somer Valley area. However infrastructure constraints have prevented the site coming forward for development.

A masterplan and delivery strategy is currently being prepared for Old Mills. The masterplan will include:

- Infrastructure planning
- Transport statements
- Delivery and phasing strategy
- Design guidance
- Clear and robust development plan and planning application guidance

The site has the potential, subject to confirmation under the masterplan, to deliver:

- Up to 38,000 sq m of industrial space and warehousing
- Around 12,000 sq m of office and non-food bulky goods retail space
- Approximately 1,400 jobs