

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Paul Roper, Cabinet Member for Economic and Cultural Sustainable Development	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	On or after 13 th December 2025	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E3658
TITLE:	Imagine Midsomer Norton Town Centre Masterplan	
WARD:	Midsomer Norton, North & Redfield	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appendix A: IMAGINE Midsomer Norton – Town Centre Masterplan (final draft)• Appendix B: Full Consultation Report• Appendix C: Schedule of Amendments to the draft Town Centre Masterplan following joint B&NES and Midsomer Norton Town Council consultation		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The *Imagine Midsomer Norton Town Centre Masterplan* has been developed in partnership with Midsomer Norton Town Council, informed by extensive community engagement and consultation, including with landowners. It sets out a long-term vision for the regeneration of Midsomer Norton town centre, identifying priority projects and opportunities for investment, and will inform the emerging Local Plan and support the delivery of the West of England Growth Strategy ambitions for the Somer Valley.
- 1.2 The Masterplan builds on the successfully completed Midsomer Norton High Street Heritage Action Zone project (2020–2024) which catalysed and has delivered £3.7m investment in the Town Centre. The Masterplan aligns with the Council's Corporate Strategy, Economic Strategy, Green Infrastructure Framework, and Transport Strategies and it has been developed in a joint project with Midsomer Norton Town Council.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is asked;

To endorse the Imagine Midsomer Norton Town Centre Masterplan (Appendix A) as a basis for decision making and funding bids in order to

seek to deliver the priority projects, working with Midsomer Norton Town Council.

3 THE REPORT

3.1 Midsomer Norton town centre is a designated town centre in the B&NES Local Plan. The Imagine Midsomer Norton Masterplan is guided by the existing Local Plan and will feed into the development of new planning policy via the Local Plan reset.

3.2 The Imagine Midsomer Norton Town Centre Masterplan has been developed, as a joint project with Midsomer Norton Town Council, to respond to community priorities and create a shared vision for the future of the town. Since September 2024 the team has worked on three rounds of development:

- a) Discover Phase – September 2024 to February 2025: Gathering evidence and engaging the community to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the town centre.
- b) Develop Phase – March 2025 to May 2025: Creating a shared vision for the town centre with 5 place priorities that were aligned with community feedback in the ‘Discover’ phase. Developing a spatial framework identifying key opportunities for change that would deliver on those place priorities and hosting an open studio with the community to gather feedback.
- c) Design Phase – June 2025 – October 2025: Refining the proposals across key sites, in response to the ‘Develop’ phase round of engagement, to demonstrate how projects could deliver on each of the place priorities. Culminating in a public consultation on the draft plan running from 2nd – 30th October 2025.

3.3 The Imagine Midsomer Norton Masterplan is a response to multiple rounds of community and stakeholder engagement, including landowner engagement. It is not intended as a blueprint for each site sets as an overarching strategy to curate multiple development opportunities and investments across multiple ownerships. The Masterplan has also been approved by Midsomer Norton Town Council.

3.4 Future housing and employment growth planned for Midsomer Norton and the Somer Valley means that there will be increasing reliance on the town centre for facilities, services, employment and entertainment by an increasing population. The ambitions for growth are outlined in the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority’s recent Growth Strategy (2025), outlines the potential of the Somer Valley to “showcase rural innovation and sustainable industry... evolving from its industrial past into a modern, green productivity zone”. These ambitions set the basis for the Local Plan reset, which is consulting on significant housing and industrial growth within area, which will be served by Midsomer Norton’s as the primary town centre. Opportunities to realise investment in the town centre to deliver on this Masterplan will be more readily realised now that there is ambitions plan and a clear vision.

3.5 Similarly, strategic transport interventions and future development present opportunities for reducing through traffic in the town centre improving public transport and active travel connectivity. Throughout the Masterplan development

teams have worked closely to align with key transport projects. The delivery of the Town Square and the mobility hub from the Somer Valley Links project, were also combined into one project to facilitate delivery ahead of schedule for the mobility hub.

3.6 The priority projects ideas identified in the Masterplan (**Appendix A**) include:

- (1) A regeneration framework for the mixed-use redevelopment of the Old Brewery site – a long-term site allocation in the Local Plan in multiple ownerships and including public sector landholding.
- (2) Development concept proposals and frameworks for other sites including the Old Gas Works, the B&NES staff car park, Excelsior Terrace sites, Eastern High Street sites and South Road infill sites;
- (3) Public realm improvement opportunities identified at Excelsior Terrace, Hollies Gardens and within car parks at South Road and Sainsburys to introduce more trees and greening and improve pedestrian routes;

3.7 A further stage of the project will see the completion of a Regeneration Action Plan for Midsomer Norton which will identify a wider range of project aspirations for the town which are less focused on development and regeneration sites but more holistic in nature. The development of this Action Plan will follow in January 2026, and will capture broader feedback as part of consultations to date.

4. STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The Councils **Corporate Strategy 2023 – 2027** – The overriding purpose of the Strategy is to improve people's lives and the two core policies that shape everything that the Council does are tackling the climate and ecological emergency and giving people a bigger say. Improvements to Midsomer Norton Town Centre will improve the economy, enhance the environment and improve people's lives.

4.2 The **Local Plan 2011-2029** comprises two separate Development Plan Documents: the Core Strategy (adopted July 2014) and the Place-making Plan (adopted July 2017) and puts in place a framework to guide development. The Local Plan Partial Update (LPPU) was adopted on 19th January 2023, which builds on the earlier Local Plan, taking greater consideration to factors such as the climate and ecological emergencies. The Local Plan reset will set out the spatial strategy for Midsomer Norton, and can now be informed by the Masterplan.

4.3 The **Economic Strategy for Bath and North East Somerset 2024-2034** supports the fair, green, creative and connected Bath with North East Somerset. There are opportunities for businesses in Midsomer Norton through the developments proposed within the Local Plan: there will be increased office, industrial and warehousing & logistics floorspace, proposed new transport improvements to ease congestion and increase connectivity with both Bath and Bristol. This should both support existing businesses longevity and growth and also enable new businesses to be created.

4.4 The **Greener Places -Green Infrastructure Framework for Bath and North East Somerset 2025-2028** supports and was developed alongside the

Masterplan shaping a GI strategy for the town. Data including the Local Nature Recovery Strategy will be used to help identify and prioritise future investment to meet the climate and nature targets that the council has committed to.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.2 The full cost to the Council to prepare and design the Town Centre Masterplan, including officer time, technical work and community engagement will be recovered from the West of England Mayoral Combined Authority HREF regeneration grant.
- 5.3 Further funding will be sought from a range of sources and grants to further develop and deliver the projects which have been identified.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision-making risk management guidance.

7. EQUALITIES

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken to inform the engagement and the design process and will continue to inform the process as and when projects are developed and delivered.

8. CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 The projects proposed support adaptation and mitigation of climate change and promote nature recovery. For example, improvements for active travel, incorporating more greening and trees into the town centre, improvements to de-culvert the river or improve green spaces will benefit people and nature, refurbishment of existing buildings is also sought wherever possible.

9. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 Not producing the Imagine Midsomer Norton Town Centre Masterplan would mean returning the grant secured and not reaching agreement or clarity on projects that the community would like to see in future, and would put the Council on the backfoot when applying for funding. This is particularly important given that there is future growth anticipated in around the town and therefore continued investment in infrastructure is required.

10. CONSULTATION

- 10.1 A full report on the consultation undertaken to inform the Midsomer Norton Town Centre Masterplan is included in **Appendix B**. A schedule of amendments made as a result of the consultation is included in **Appendix C**.
- 10.2 The key engagement and consultation phases were as follows:
 - (1) The DISCOVER phase took place between September and December 2024. This included an online map, six community drop-ins and focus groups with seldom heard groups. We asked people what they loved about their town, and what they would like to see in future. Over 300 comments were received in

total, and these comments contributed to the creation of a Place Vision and five Place Priorities.

- (2) The DEVELOP phase took place between April and July 2025. A public Open Studio was held at the Hollies Chamber in May 2025; the exhibition, attended by 155 people over three days, allowed members of the public to feedback on masterplanning work-in-progress. This was complemented by an online survey, a project with 60 children at St John's Primary School, and art residencies which produced creative responses to the project in collaboration with 500 local people, aged 3-96.
 - (3) The DESIGN phase took place from 2-30 October 2025. The consultation on the draft masterplan was hosted on www.bathnesplaces.co.uk, and was complemented by a two-day consultation event at The Island. 527 responses were received across the 10 proposed projects, indicating widespread community support for the proposals, particularly the flagship Old Brewery and Gasworks developments. Responses to the Excelsior Terrace, South Road Frontages and High Street East projects were more mixed, and comments were used to inform and revise the proposals as far as possible.
- 10.3 On 1st December, Midsomer Norton Town Council resolved to endorse the Masterplan as a basis for decision making and to underpin future funding bids.

Contact person(s)	<p>Cleo Newcombe-Jones, Sustainable Places & Regeneration Service Manager</p> <p>Nick Springthorpe – Development Officer, Somer Valley Place Team</p>
Background papers	<p>Project webpage: https://bathnesplaces.co.uk/regen/index.php?contentid=11</p> <p>Imagine Midsomer Norton Town Centre Masterplan – Early Stage Engagement Report (Dec 2024): https://bathnesplaces.co.uk/regen/files/engagementreport.pdf</p> <p>Imagine Midsomer Norton Town Centre DRAFT Masterplan (Oct 2025): https://bathnesplaces.co.uk/regen/index.php?contentid=62</p>
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