

REPORT TO:	Environmental and Development Services	AGENDA ITEM: 9
DATE OF MEETING:	10 November 2005	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	Deputy Chief Executive	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	Ian Bowen (01283) 595821	DOC:
SUBJECT:	Swadlincote Town Centre Vision & Strategy – Five Years On	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Swadlincote	TERMS OF REFERENCE: EDS03

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### 1.0 Recommendations

That Members:

- 1.1 endorse the content of the Swadlincote Town Centre Vision & Strategy Monitoring Report attached as Annex 1;
- 1.2 note the findings of the Swadlincote Town Centre Retail and Leisure Study; and
- 1.3 acknowledge that further feasibility work will be necessary in order to plan for the redevelopment of identified sites for which there will be financial implications and which will be the subject of future reports.

### 2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 To inform Members of the progress made to date on implementing the Swadlincote Town Centre Vision & Strategy, the content of the recent consultant's report and the need for further work.

### 3.0 Detail

- 3.1 In February 2001 the District Council, in collaboration with the Civic Trust Regeneration Unit and in consultation with a wide range of groups and individuals, agreed the 'Swadlincote Town Centre - a Vision and Strategy' (the 'Vision and Strategy').
- 3.2 The aim of the document was to set out an agreed framework for raising the profile of the town as a centre for retailing, service and leisure and guiding future work to enhance its vitality, viability and heritage. In doing so it set out a number of short, medium and long term actions many of which have now been implemented. It also identified a number of sites which would benefit from redevelopment – one of which is now being redeveloped for Morrisons. [The other sites were at Midland Road (including the library/market hall and PO

sorting office), a block of retail units on West Street facing onto the Delph, land to the rear of Sharpe's pottery (off Alexandra Road) and land at Belmont Street].

- 3.3 As it is now approaching five years since the document was published, a Monitoring Report has been prepared to document changes in the economic and national policy context relating generally to retailing and town centres, review progress on the ground in Swadlincote and maintain momentum in taking forward change in the town centre. (See Annex 1). It is proposed that this document be made available to act as a single point of reference for the Council, its partners and other stakeholders in the town centre.
- 3.4 Most recently, and of particular interest, the Council commissioned Donaldsons to advise on the capacity of the town centre to support further retail and leisure floorspace. The key objectives of the Study were to examine existing patterns of retail and leisure expenditure flows in and around Swadlincote, and to establish the potential of the town to accommodate new floorspace for those uses. Broad initial advice was also offered on the town centre sites previously identified for redevelopment referred to above. The main conclusions and recommendations are set out in pages 9-10 of the attached report and a copy of the full Study Report has been placed in the Members room. However, the headline findings are that Swadlincote provides a pleasant and accessible shopping environment for a catchment of approximately 45,000 residents. There is estimated to be a need for an additional 4,645 m<sup>2</sup> of 'High Street' floorspace' and 4,180m<sup>2</sup> of 'bulky goods' floorspace by 2011 assuming a realistic increase in market share. In relation to the development sites, Donaldsons recommend that a property-led multi-disciplinary team is commissioned to consider the feasibility of the redevelopment of the town centre sites in greater detail.
- 3.5 In line with this advice, the attached Monitoring Report indicates that the next obvious stage for the regeneration of the town would be the implementation of the major improvement works such as re-paving and promotion of the redevelopment of the identified sites.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Further investigation of sites to support future policies in new local development documents will require specialist input for which there would be a considerable cost implication. Indicative costs are not available at present and when known may be met by future Planning Delivery Grants or service development bids subject to the usual financial procedures.
- 4.2 The Council has various interests in land within the town centre and should it wish to investigate the feasibility of redeveloping its own land holding, a separate report would need to be presented to a future meeting of Finance and Management Committee.

## **5.0 Corporate Implications**

- 5.1 The promotion of a healthy, vibrant and high quality town centre is of corporate interest to the Authority involving economic development, environmental health, leisure, property and crime and disorder

## **6.0 Community Implications**

- 6.1 The regeneration of Swadlincote town centre will ensure a wider range of shopping, leisure and services in a location accessible to all and support the preservation and enhancement of the town's special character and heritage.

## **7.0 Conclusions**

- 7.1 Much progress has been made in implementing those actions identified in the Swadlincote Vision & Strategy in 2001, and other initiatives and developments have come on stream. The Monitoring Report provides a useful update of progress '5 years on' and also identifies where future work will be required. The document therefore serves as a single point of reference for the Council, its partners and other stakeholders in taking work forward in the future and should be made available for general publication.

- 7.2 In due course, when resources allow and outstanding information is available, it is likely that an Area Action Plan for the town centre as a whole or supplementary planning documents in the form of development briefs for individual sites may be required. The timescale for these must be set out in the Local Development Scheme in accordance with the requirements of the new planning system.

## **8.0 Background Papers**

- 8.1 None other than those referred to in this report.

