

REPORT NO 2

**REPORT TO THE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL
MEETING OF 15 JANUARY 2020**

Status: For Discussion
Title: Lutterworth Town Centre Masterplan
Report of : Rebecca Lees, Economic Development Manager
Portfolio Holder: Cllr King, Economic Development
Where from: Economic Development Service
Where to next: Cabinet

Objective: To seek the view of the Scrutiny Panel on the proposed Lutterworth Town Centre Masterplan to enable it to progress through to the Cabinet.

1 Outcome sought from the Panel

1.1 The Panel considers the Lutterworth Town Centre Masterplan and refers any comments to Cabinet as part of its consideration of the Masterplan.

2 Background

2.1 Harborough District Council has committed to producing Masterplans for its two Market Towns as part of adopting the Economic Development Strategy 2018-2023. This is to ensure that the viability and vitality of the town centre and secure its role as a local destination for retail, leisure and hosting community network events. The Lutterworth Town Centre Masterplan process has been undertaken through gathering policy, access, place and market intelligence whilst gaining a range of stakeholder views to inform the preparation of the document. The production of this plan will form the evidence base to inform the implementation of the relevant policies of the Harborough Local Plan (2019 - 2031).

2.2 Lutterworth has historical provenance dating back to 1068. In 1214 Lutterworth was given the rights to hold markets. Part of the town centre's key buildings for example the Shambles Inn and parts of St Mary's Church date back to the 13th Century. In the 18th and 19th century the town became the posting station for the stagecoaches on the Leicester to Chester turnpike with many of the hotels from that period still in place such as the Greyhound, Denbigh and Hind. The Victorian era and the arrival of rail created a way to access the town linked into

High Street. Significant expansion in Lutterworth occurred in the 20th century, the closure of the railway station in 1962 has seen development extending to the former railway line.

- 2.3 In the 21st century due to its location, on the A426 Leicester–Rugby road and adjacent to the M1 motorway at Junction 20, Lutterworth is expanding with industrial developments and has grown beyond its initial boundaries. Located within a few miles of the M6 motorway and A5 trunk road it is an attractive locality for the logistics industry. Lutterworth also has good access to the large shopping centres in Rugby and Leicester. Large retail makes up both 50% of the available lettable town centre space and available car parking. The town centre has a very low vacancy rate, however most demand for retail space comes from local small businesses. The southern bypass, the A4303, was opened in 1999, for traffic from the M1 progressing towards the A5, as an alternate route to travelling through Lutterworth town centre. However, this has not been as successful as was hoped. Heavy and light vehicles, as well as domestic cars continue to use Market Street to traverse across the town centre. This has become a challenging matter for the local community, particularly as the area is now an Air Quality Management Area. Walking and crossing in some areas of the street can be dangerous, disrupting the linkages across the town centre.
- 2.4 The Masterplan includes a 5 to 10-year public realm framework strategy that has been developed for the town centre through the masterplan preparation process. This aims to enable greater access to the town centre, putting people access first. The Masterplan's framework aims to make the town centre more attractive, by strengthening its market town character. The frameworks will include high quality design, street hierarchy and public realm initiatives using a mix of public art, street furniture and soft and hard landscaping; in ways that integrate with the historic conservation area. Linking the town centre to its surrounding areas is vital to make this a place that local people will choose to visit.
- 2.5 The Masterplan is designed to ensure that Lutterworth town centre is an active destination. The Plan considers the means of getting to the town centre, living in the town centre and ensuring accessibility for all ages and abilities. Moreover, in alignment with the recently reviewed Economic Development Strategy (2018 – 2023, as revised in 2019) the master plan aims to ensure that the town centre is open and accessible for business. The Council's advisor, The Environment Partnership (TEP), will be available, along with officers to attend this meeting to assist the Scrutiny Panel.

3 Points for discussion

3.1 Points for discussion include:

- Does the Masterplan make it clear why the Council is looking to deliver the proposals identified in the plan?
- Are the proposals realistic for the town centre?
- Are the proposals appropriate for the Lutterworth town centre?
- Are there any proposals which should be added to the master plan?

4 Impact on Communities

- 4.1 A key aim of the Lutterworth Town Centre Masterplan is to ensure that the town centre is inclusive and accessible as a local destination for retail, leisure and for hosting community network events.

5 Legal Issues

- 5.1 In order to be able to implement the provisions of the Masterplan, it will be necessary to engage with third party property ownership which will be engaged with as implementation of the plan proceeds. Permissions will be potentially be required from Lutterworth Town Council, as well as licensing from Leicestershire County Council. Permissions will also be needed from the County Highway Authority, the District Local Planning Authority and Conservation Authority.

6 Resource Issues

- 6.1 The document provides preliminary costs for projects that could be undertaken to deliver the masterplan (See Appendix I). Further work will be undertaken to consider firm costs, priorities and funding opportunities to ensure that the projects are deliverable and achievable. This programme will be part of the Council's Capital ambition projects within the Council's February 2020-2021 Budget report. Once firm proposals are developed reports will be provided to Council for approval to proceed.

7 Equality Analysis Implications/Outcomes

- 7.1 Detailed in Appendix G attached to this report.

8. Risk Management Implications

8.1 Detailed in Appendix H attached to this report.

Background papers:

- Harborough Economic Development Strategy 2018-2023 (revised 2019); Harborough Retail Studies (2013 and 2017);
- Tourism Strategy for Leicester & Leicestershire;
- The Harborough Blueprint for Tourism (2013-2018);
- The Harborough District 2016 update to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment;
- The Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031;
- Lutterworth Town Plan (2013).

Previous report(s):

Appendices:

Lutterworth Town Centre Masterplan
Appendix A Policy review
Appendix B Lutterworth Market Report
Appendix C Lutterworth Lanes Proposals
Appendix D Access and Movement
Appendix E Roadshow consultation
Appendix F Future high street research
Appendix G Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix H Risk Management Implications
Appendix I Lutterworth Town Centre Masterplan