

1 Introduction and background

Thank you for taking the time to attend our exhibition which will focus on ideas for the regeneration of Andover Town Centre.

The purpose of this exhibition is to share our emerging vision for the potential development of land adjacent to the town centre in Andover.

It is an opportunity for you to get involved in the planning and development process and let us have your comments and ideas on the site.

The display boards describe the background to the proposals and the process and key issues which will affect the potential for development on the site.

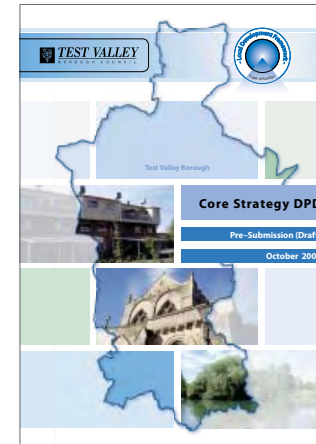
Please feel free to ask questions and discuss the issues with our representatives from the Council and let us have your comments on the feedback form. A copy of the display boards will also be available to view on the Test Valley Borough Council website.



The Test Valley Development Plan

The Local Development Framework (LDF) is presently being taken forward by Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC). The LDF will replace the present Local Plan to become the plan for the Borough to 2026. The 'Pre Submission' Draft Core Strategy (October 2008) is presently available for public consultation. This is the overall strategic planning document for the Borough.

Proposed Core Strategy policy 'ACSP9 Andover Retail Provision' outlines that approximately 10,000 sq m of retail, offices, housing and leisure be allocated at George Yard-Back Swan Yard Potential Retail Development. This is partly based on the regional housing requirement and a retail study undertaken in 2007 by Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners (NLP).



In 2007 Nathaniel Litchfield and Partners (NLP) prepared a retail capacity study for the Test Valley Borough.

In summary, the key findings and of relevance to Andover Town centre, were:-

- The Borough has a good selection of large food stores, supported by a range of smaller supermarkets and convenience stores.
- A significant amount of comparison goods expenditure within the Test Valley Borough is spent at centres outside of the area, e.g. Basingstoke, Southampton and Winchester.
- Major retail development within the Borough could change existing shopping patterns and could reduce comparison expenditure leakage.

Current perceptions of Andover

Andover town centre is classified in the draft South East Plan as a Secondary Regional Centre, suitable for major retail development.

Based on a number of Key Performance Indicators, Andover is ranked 41 within the South East Region. Data is only available for the top 50 locations. Within the top 50 Southampton is ranked 1, Basingstoke 7 and Winchester 24.

Andover compares favourably with similar sized towns, ranked just behind Aldershot and Eastleigh who are ranked 38 and 39 respectively.

Our vision for the site and town centre can be described by the following key objectives.

Enhance the visitor experience and the length of stay

A key objective will be to make Andover a more vibrant place with a mix of uses and activities to not only meet the needs of the existing population but encourage further inward investment, and visits to the town.

Support existing uses and activities

It is recognised that there are a number of key activities and uses within the town centre that assist in creating the distinctiveness of Andover as a place. Any new development will need to work with these uses and provide complementary retail and leisure opportunities.

Enhance circulation within the Town Centre

Through redevelopment, an environment can be created where pedestrian movement is encouraged. The proposals for the site should ensure that other areas of the town centre are not abandoned by shoppers, as has been the case in other town centres.

Respect and respond to the context

Andover has a town centre rich in character and architectural quality. At present this quality has been diluted somewhat by some more recent poorer quality development, public realm, signage, lighting, etc. This existing character provides an excellent opportunity to build upon and use as a reference to deliver a stronger sense of place to the town centre again.

Provide a framework for quality development

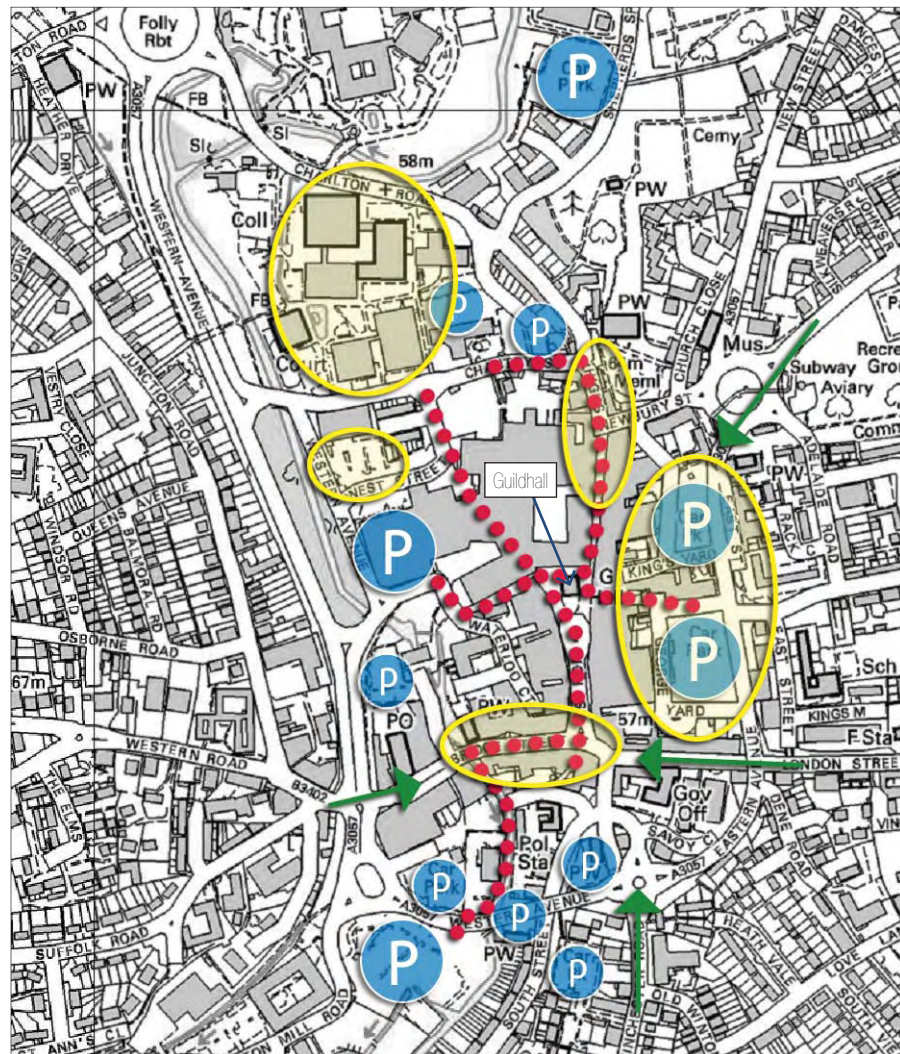
The key element of any masterplan for the site will be the ability to create buildings and spaces which can adapt and respond to the needs and demands of their users. The masterplan will need to highlight the key characteristics of the site and demonstrate how these will be dealt with.






Reinforce Andover's distinctiveness

The key objective of the masterplan for Andover Town Centre will be to reinforce the character and distinction of Andover. This will ensure that Andover retains its inherent quality for the long term and exploits existing assets rather than attempting to provide a quick fix, vogue solution to the town centre issues arising.

The site and context

The potential redevelopment of the Black Swan Yard, George Yard and Union Street is one of a number of key regeneration initiatives taking place in Andover Town Centre.



-  Regeneration initiatives
-  Key pedestrian connections
-  Key vehicular access
-  Principal car parking areas
-  Secondary car parking area

This project is aimed to provide guidance for the future development of the land to rear of Upper and Lower High Street, Andover. This encompasses the broad area of Black Swan Yard, and George Yard car parks; and Union Street.

George Yard and Black Swan Yard are located within the Andover Ring Road. The car parks are rectangular in shape and area sandwiched between the High Street and East Street from the west to east, and Newbury Street and London Street from the north to south (see aerial photograph right). The car parks are bisected by Union Street a historic thoroughfare which now consists of 1960s buildings. The site slopes downwards from north to south.

The site is within the Andover Conservation Area and lies in close proximity to many listed buildings as well as neighbouring historic buildings. The Andover Conservation Area was extended in 1984 to include the area of the George Yard and Black Swan car park.

The site is encompassed by 25 listed buildings and 24 buildings of historic interest. These buildings are orientated principally towards the lower half of the High Street, with a larger number of modern buildings towards the top of the High Street.

Surviving historic features such as the old street pattern has been preserved, particularly the market areas and the High Street however the former burgage plots behind those buildings fronting the High Street have largely been lost.

While convenient car parking in close proximity to the town centre is essential for shoppers and visitors of Andover, the provision of these facilities has resulted in the amalgamation of a considerable number of parcels of back land which included, in some cases, the rear portion of the former medieval burgage plots.

The narrow historic route ways, such as Union Street, Black Swan Yard and George Yard, which lead via an archway from the High Street to East Street, have been maintained; but very little remains of the historic layout of this area.

The rear elevations of houses along the High Street and London Street, which would have previously been concealed by long gardens and other buildings, now face directly onto the car parks and are extremely prominent. A number of them are listed. The rears of these buildings were never meant to be exposed in this way.

Many of the buildings now house shops and offices and unfortunately, little attention has been given to the architectural form to the rear elevations, therefore the appearance of these areas is unsightly with uncoordinated signing and lack of proper storage for refuse containers.

