



EXECUTIVE

YOU ARE REQUESTED TO ATTEND A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE TO BE HELD IN THE PRINCIPAL COMMITTEE ROOM, THE DEANE HOUSE, BELVEDERE ROAD, TAUNTON ON TUESDAY 31ST JULY 2007 AT 18:30.

AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Public Question Time
3. Declaration of Interests. To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct
4. Taunton Town Centre Action Plan (attached)

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS ITEM WILL BE CONSIDERED BY THE STRATEGIC PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PANEL AT ITS MEETING IMMEDIATELY PRECEDING THIS MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE. ONCE THE PANEL HAVE AGREED ITS RECOMMENDATIONS THE PANEL WILL ADJOURN. THIS SPECIAL MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE WILL THEN TAKE PLACE. STRATEGIC PLANNING PANEL WILL THEN RECONVENE TO CONSIDER THE REMINDER OF ITS AGENDA.

G P DYKE
Democratic Services Manager
25 July 2007



Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussion. Lift access to the main committee room on the first floor of the building is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available. There is a time set aside at the beginning of the meeting to allow the public to ask questions



An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter. If you require any further information, please contact Greg Dyke on:



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Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan (Submission)

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Introduction 1

- 1.1 Describe briefly what the TCAAP is:
- 1.2 its Vision
- 1.3 its linkages with other documents and proposals
- 1.4 Summary of background work / community involvement
- 1.5 Submission - how to get involved
- 1.6 Next stages

2 Context

Taunton Town Centre

2.1 Taunton is the historic county town of Somerset. "Town on the Tone" was founded by King "Ine" in the 7th century and was a place of considerable importance during in Saxon times. Taunton town centre contains evidence of the town's long and often turbulent history. A former bishop's hall was converted to a castle (now Taunton Castle) between 1107 and 1129. Taunton Castle was the focus of the towns determined anti-royalist stance during the civil war (1642-1652). In addition, following the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion, the assize courts were held here, famously Judge Jeffrey's "bloody assize" of 1685. The eighteenth century Market House at The Parade symbolises the historic dependence of the town on the local agricultural economy. Industry also flourished in the town centre, around the wharves by Tone Bridge and the tributary streams of the navigable River Tone. Over several years, the town traded and manufactured wool, silk, lace and cotton. Goodland Gardens, adjoining the River Tone, was the site of the town's original fulling mill, built in 1219. The gardens are named after the Goodland family who played a major role in the water-borne coal trade locally.

2.2 Taunton now has a population of 63,000. It is the major administrative, economic, cultural and retail centre in the county, as well as being the focus for many other services including health, education and leisure. Taunton has a wide retail catchment population of about 350,000, including much of Somerset and north and east Devon. Taunton is located at the centre of the region astride the strategic road and rail routes, and often hosts regional meetings and major events.

2.3 Taunton town centre is characterised by an extended shopping centre that stretches from the Railway Station to the north, High Street to the south and East Reach to the east. The centre contains a good mix of national retailers and local independent traders. There are a three large supermarkets within or on the edge of the town centre. The town centre is generally very busy with low vacancy rates and good pedestrian footfall. There is a good mix of public houses and cafes and other services such as banks and building societies. However, leisure and arts facilities are limited. This limits the range of evening activity within the town centre.

2.4 Traffic in the town centre can be particularly heavy, especially during the morning and evening peak hour. This can lead to congestion and delay that also impacts on the reliability and speed of local bus services. The town is served by the national rail network, with a station located on the northern fringe of the town centre. Bus and rail services are currently not well connected. Apart from High Street, the town centre has yet to be pedestrianised. In part, this is due to absence of alternative through-routes for vehicular traffic. There are currently several large public car parks (short stay and long stay) within and on the edge of the town centre.

2.5 Employment opportunities within the town centre are currently dominated by the service sector (retail and finance) and the public sector employment. The offices of the Borough and County Councils are on the edge of the town centre. Musgrove Park Hospital is a ten minute walk from the town centre.

2.6 Include short paragraph noting close proximity to open countryside

Context 2

2.7 Include short paragraph on built and natural heritage

2.8 Include short paragraph on Town Centre Management Company / BID proposals

What is an Area Action Plan?

2.9 The Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan is part of the emerging Local Development Framework for Taunton Deane. The Area Action Plan is a formal "Development Plan Document" and sets out the statutory planning policy for Taunton Town Centre.

2.10 Context - Taunton Vision (include short paragraph)

2.11 The Area Action Plan focuses on the delivery of regeneration in Taunton Town Centre. The Area Action Plan sets out:

- how the regeneration of the town centre will be proactively delivered and coordinated by the public and private sectors in partnership; and
- the policy framework against which planning applications will be assessed.

Policy Context

2.12 Include brief summary of the following (detailed to be included within Background Document 1 - "Context and Conformity")

- National
- Regional - RPG / RSS (Taunton, Bridgwater & Wellington corridor / technical studies) - New Growth Point
- Structure Plan
- TDLP - policies that are to be replaced (include in Background document) / Proposals Map. Also, define the area to which the AAP applies
- LDF (conformity / trigger and process for review (when Core Strategy adopted) / Core Strategy (demonstrate consistency)

2.13 Outline and summarise the background to some of the main subject / land use areas and issues, such as employment, retail and residential. Extent to which requirements (established in RPG / RSS) will be met by TDLP, and the role and contribution of the AAP. Majority to be set out in the Background Document 1.

Taunton Vision

2.14 Designation of Taunton as a PUA in 2001 triggered need to undertake a strategic review of the future development of Taunton as a major growth centre.

2.15 Include brief summary of the following (detailed to be included within Background Document 1)

2.16 Taunton Vision Commission

2.17 Partnership (TDBC / SCC / SWERDA / EA) - emphasis strength of partnership (contribution to risk avoidance)

2 Context

2.18 Terence O' Rourke - UDF / Design Code

2.19 Masterplanning has received an RTPPI award

2.20 Bura Award

2.21 Project Taunton

2.22 Major transport scheme funding secured

2.23 RDA funding secured

2.24 Successful museum lottery bid to enhance cultural quarter secured

2.25 Waterlinks bid pending

2.26 Public ownership of land

2.27 Consultation and partnership work with LSP received South West RTPPI commendation

2.28 Planning applications submitted

2.29 Other partnerships: SCAT / LSC / etc

Complementary Projects & Studies

2.30 Detail to be included within Background Document 1, but note main elements as follows:

2.31 BID Proposals

2.32 LTP2 / TTSR2

2.33 Access & Mobility Audit

Parking Study (Atkins & Parsons Brinkerhoff)

Bus Station Study

Sec 106 (Planning Obligations)

Sec 106 (Design) / LDA work on cultural quarter

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Rivers & Weirs Study

Retail Capacity Study

2.34 Note: indicate current status of the above studies (developing / completed etc). Note that AAP needs to be read in conjunction with these

Local Area Agreement / Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy

2.35 Include brief detail of LAA priorities

2.36 Include brief detail of SCS

Context 2

2.37 Joint "Deane wide" vision statement (SCS / LDF) - agreed by TD LSP

2.38 *A Vision for a Sustainable Taunton Deane*

2.39 *By 2026, a regenerated Taunton will be an important sub-regional centre for employment, shopping, leisure, culture and the arts. Wellington will have enhanced its market town identity through the continued development of a thriving and innovative retail and business sector. Rural areas will be revitalised, with stronger rural centres, greater employment opportunities, and better connections to the main urban areas.*

Throughout the Deane, the quality of life will be improved. The natural and built environment will be enhanced and protected. The international commitment to address the impact of climate change will be fully supported through adapting to the effects and addressing its causes. The level of carbon and other harmful emissions will be greatly reduced through higher energy efficiency and the use of renewable forms of energy.

2.40 *There will be equality of access to employment, services and housing. There will be diversified and increased employment choices and a skilled workforce to match a range of better paid jobs. Accessibility will have improved with the availability of a range of convenient transport options. All residents will have convenient access to a range of recreation and leisure facilities. Consumption of local food produce will have risen considerably. Residents will be healthier and have access to affordable and decent housing.*

Residents and agencies will be playing an active role in their communities, fostering a sense of pride and respect that delivers benefits for community cohesion and community safety.

Table 2.1 SCS Priorities relevant to TCAAP

Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Priorities that are relevant to the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan	Relevant Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan Objectives
Addressing low wage levels (with a focus on the disadvantaged areas of North Taunton and Taunton East)	2: A strategic employment location offering a wide choice of jobs
Addressing low skills levels (with a focus on the disadvantaged areas of North Taunton and Taunton East)	2: A strategic employment location offering a wide choice of jobs
Create a shift in travel behaviour to limit the rate of growth of congestion	6: A town centre that is well connected and less congested
Building confidence in safer communities	1: A regenerated town centre that attracts residents from all parts of the Borough, as well as visitors from within the south-west region and beyond

2 Context

Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Priorities that are relevant to the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan	Relevant Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan Objectives
	<p>7: A regional centre of excellence for sustainable design</p> <p>9: A well-managed town centre</p>
A safer night-time economy	<p>1: A regenerated town centre that attracts residents from all parts of the Borough, as well as visitors from within the south-west region and beyond</p> <p>4: A centre of excellence for leisure, culture and the arts</p> <p>8: A town centre that is home to many more people</p> <p>9: A well-managed town centre</p>
Reducing anti-social behaviour	9: A well-managed town centre
Promote and enable healthy lifestyles	<p>4: A centre of excellence for leisure, culture and the arts</p> <p>5: A town centre that maximises the potential of the River Tone</p> <p>6: A town centre that is well connected and less congested</p>

Context 2

Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Priorities that are relevant to the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan	Relevant Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan Objectives
	7: A regional centre of excellence for sustainable design
Address the shortage of affordable housing and focus on decent homes	8: A town centre that is home to many more people
Tackling climate change	6: A town centre that is well connected and less congested 7: A regional centre of excellence for sustainable design
Provision of leisure, arts and cultural opportunities	4: A centre of excellence for leisure, culture and the arts 5: A town centre that maximises the potential of the River Tone

2 Context

Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Priorities that are relevant to the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan	Relevant Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan Objectives
	7: A regional centre of excellence for sustainable design
Making the most of natural assets	5: A town centre that maximises the potential of the River Tone 7: A regional centre of excellence for sustainable design
North Taunton - Improving transport links and accessibility to the town centre	6: A town centre that is well connected and less congested

2.41 Introduce evidence as to how the TCAAP will help deliver on specific "actions" within the SCS. Include reference to supporting documents - SCS spatial assessment (Appendix 1) & TCAAP Spatial Report (Background Document 2)

Development of the Area Action Plan

- Talking Tomorrow's Taunton Deane (Spring 2006) - integrated LDF / SCS consultations
- Preferred Option (Autumn 2006)

Equalities

- Comprehensive and inclusive approach to consultation
- Involvement of Disability Groups

SA

2.42 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the AAP has been undertaken. The SA is a parallel but integral part of the preparation of the AAP and has informed the vision and proposals set out in this document.

2.43 The findings of the SA indicate that overall, the plan's proposals will have a number of positive social, economic and environmental impacts regarding sustainability. Regeneration of the key town centre sites with major mixed use developments, including a strategic employment site, housing, leisure, culture and retail development, will help to meet a number of sustainability objectives. Underused brownfield land will be positively used, with benefits to townscape. Additional jobs for local people will be generated, diversifying the local employment base. The benefits of town centre regeneration will be filtered through to deprived communities. Flooding, a key sustainability issue, will be addressed through major flood alleviation. While further development will generate more traffic, rising traffic congestion will be tackled through promotion and delivery of alternatives to the car and key relief roads.

Context 2

2.44 There would be some negative impacts, such as potential impact on wildlife from development along the riverside, and impact on archaeological remains. However such impacts could be reduced by appropriate mitigation.

2.45 Much will depend on implementation. Strict attention to detail is required to ensure that potential harmful effects are prevented or minimised and positive effects enhanced.

2.46 Sustainable construction techniques and maximisation of energy efficiency, particularly through greater attention to building layout and design, should be incorporated in the new developments.

2.47 The detailed SA is documented in a separate report (the Sustainability Appraisal of the Submission Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan) being advertised alongside the plan itself.

Structure of Document

Site specific policies

General policies

2.48 Delivery

Monitoring arrangements

Next Steps

2.49 Six week consultation period to be followed by:

- Examination - Jun/Jul 08
- Receipt of Inspector's binding Report - Oct 08
- Estimated date for Adoption - Apr 09

3 Vision and Objectives

The Vision for Taunton Town Centre is:

3.1 *By 2026 Taunton town centre will have achieved recognition as a regional centre of excellence for regeneration and design. The thriving town centre will attract investment, events, and visitors from across the region and beyond. The regeneration of the town centre will have realised positive benefits for the community as a whole. These benefits will have cascaded to neighbouring towns and villages*

3.2 *The River Tone will be at the heart of town centre activity, linking the new employment opportunities at Firepool and other sites north of the river, with the historic core of the town to the south, residential areas, and green space extending into the surrounding countryside. Activity on and adjoining the river will have increased dramatically and the riverside environment will be of exceptional design quality*

3.3 *The provision of local employment opportunities will have been enhanced and diversified, and future economic growth will be secure. Creative and knowledge based industries will thrive within an attractive and competitive business environment focused primarily at Firepool. Local skills and wages will have improved significantly. Disadvantaged communities will have benefited from training opportunities and better access to the town centre.*

3.4 *Cultural and leisure facilities will have improved dramatically, with an enhanced theatre and arts centre, a modern county cricket venue, new public swimming pool, enhanced museum facilities and a new library. Public art will be seen throughout the town centre. The retail offer will have expanded significantly to include a new shopping centre and a range of outdoor markets. There will be many more people living within the town centre, taking advantage of all facilities and contributing to a safe and lively night-time environment where the range of evening activities will be diverse and cater for all ages. Existing and new public space will provide excellent opportunities for play and recreation. The town centre will be well managed*

3.5 *The provision of the Inner Relief Road (Third Way) will have enabled the creation of pedestrian priority environments along North Street, East Street and Corporation Street. The Northern Inner Distributor Road will have realised strategic access to the Firepool area and improved vehicular circulation around northern fringe of the town centre. Public transport and cycling facilities will have improved significantly and both will have played an important role in reducing congestion and enabling residents to become less reliant upon the car, with resulting health benefits.*

3.6 *Redevelopment in the town centre will be an exemplar both in terms of sustainability and design quality, having achieved recognition nationally and internationally. All new buildings will have achieved a BREEAM excellent rating with a zero carbon footprint. A large amount of renewable energy will be generated within the town centre. Those whose mobility is impaired shall benefit from easier access around the town, as all new buildings and public spaces shall be designed to be accessible to all.*

3.7 *Residents will feel proud of Taunton town centre.*

3.8 The following eight Strategic Objectives expand upon the vision statement:

Vision and Objectives 3

1. A regenerated town centre that attracts residents from all parts of the Borough, as well as visitors from within the south-west region and beyond

- The regeneration of the town centre will facilitate Taunton achieving status as a Strategically Significant Town, in compliance with the Regional Spatial Strategy
- The town centre will appeal to a wide range of people of different ages, cultures and groups
- The town centre will provide for and attract visitors to the wider area, including Wellington and the rural hinterland

2. A strategic employment location offering a wide choice of jobs

- The town centre will provide 80,000 sq m of new business development that fosters enterprise and skills development and provides enhanced, diversified and better paid employment opportunities
- Training and employment opportunities will be filtered through to disadvantaged communities

3. A strategic retail centre offering a comprehensive shopping experience

- The town centre will be the priority location to accommodate the required additional retail floorspace as identified within the Retail Capacity Study
- The town centre's regional retail ranking will be maintained
- There will be diverse and frequent outdoor markets
- There will be an expansion of specialist niche shopping outlets

4. A centre of excellence for leisure, culture and the arts

- The Brewhouse Theatre will be enhanced and extended
- Taunton Museum will be enhanced and extended
- A new relocated library will be provided
- A new relocated public swimming pool will be provided
- Public art will be provided within major development sites and at Gateway locations
- The redevelopment of the Somerset County Cricket Ground will provide an international standard cricket facility together with a new indoor cricket school, apartments, leisure and conference facilities
- All development sites and areas of public space will provide opportunities for play and recreation

5. A town centre that maximises the potential of the River Tone

- All development adjoining the River Tone and its environs will be of exceptional design quality, befitting the unique opportunities provided by the waterside setting
- Improvements to bankside vegetation and tree cover will be incorporated into the design of development that adjoins the River Tone, in order to maintain and improve biodiversity including the presence of European Protected Species and other important species

3 Vision and Objectives

- The enjoyment of the River Tone will be maximised through improvements to navigation and the creation of adjoining public spaces that provide for play, leisure, and recreation
- There will be provision for better public access to the waterside, together with an improved maintenance regime

6. A town centre that is well connected and less congested

- A comprehensive and integrated footpath and cycleway network will be provided, together with improved signage and cycle parking facilities
- The bus station and other waiting facilities will be enhanced to make them attractive, comfortable and convenient
- Improved bus services that are convenient, frequent, direct and that provide better connectivity with rail services
- Implementation of a car park strategy that reduces the amount of town centre commuter parking whilst maintaining good access for short stay shoppers and visitors
- Delivery of the Inner Relief Road (the Third Way) and Northern Inner Distributor Road
- Implementation of further pedestrian priority within the town centre
- Access from disadvantaged communities to the town centre will be improved

7. A regional centre of excellence for sustainable design

- Sustainable construction techniques will be required for all development proposals
- Greater energy efficiency and on-site renewable energy generation will be required for all new and refurbished buildings to assist in reducing carbon emissions
- Development will be water efficient, designed to minimise flood risk and increase opportunities for biodiversity
- Key entrance locations to the town centre will be developed as attractive gateways, to welcome and encourage visitors
- Open civic space will be provided in the core of the town centre and be useable for community and civic events
- There will be investment in new and existing public green spaces to maximize opportunities for play and recreation
- All development will be of "Universal Design" to create an environment that is accessible to all
- All public realm and new buildings will be of exceptional design quality to create a unique sense of place that will inspire a strong sense of pride and admiration among residents, workers and visitors

8. A town centre that is home to many more people

- At least x new homes will be built in the town centre
- New homes will cater for all sectors of the community, including at least x affordable homes
- Opportunities for new housing will be maximised, consistent with the delivery of other land uses
- Opportunities for mixed use development, in particular making use of upper floors of housing will be maximised

4 Firepool

4.1 The Firepool major site lies on either side of the River Tone, towards the northern end of the town centre. It consists of three separate but related areas. The 'Riverside' area is made up chiefly of the livestock market and surface car park in Priory Bridge Road, together with existing properties between Station Road and Canal Road. The railway station area includes the station itself together with surrounding land on either side of the mainline railway. The proposed Northern Inner Distributor Road (NIDR) forms the boundary between the two areas, and bisects the third - the former East Goods Yard site, now known as Firepool Lock, which has planning permission for residential and employment uses.

Riverside

4.2 The primary role of this allocation will be as a strategic employment site, providing the main focus for future office development in Taunton. It will be the key factor changing market perceptions of Taunton as a place to live and work. This will enable the town to secure more employment in a sustainable way, as it develops in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy. It presents a unique opportunity, providing a major regeneration site next to the main railway station and with other public transport links. Road access is also good from the M5/A358, and the proposed NIDR. The area is also close to areas of deprivation in North Taunton and Taunton East, to which effective links are essential so that people in these areas can benefit.

Policy Fp 1

Riverside - Development Content

The Riverside development should provide:

- a. at least 47,000 sq m (net) office space
- b. 8,000 sq m of class A and D retail and leisure uses
- c. 300-400 residential units, including affordable housing
- d. a 500 space multi-storey car park (screened with flats where it adjoins public space)
- e. a 3- or 4-star hotel with at least 100 bedrooms
- f. a 'boulevard' linking the railway station with the River Tone and Priory Bridge Road
- g. public conveniences close to public parking and the River Tone, to replace the existing facilities at Canal Road and Priory Bridge Road
- h. potential for active street level uses at locations shown on the Proposals Map
- i. a contribution towards public art at 0.3% of construction costs

4.3 Development should be structured around a wide 'boulevard' linking the railway station with River Tone and Priory Bridge Road (and from these points, via other sites, to the existing town centre).

Firepool 4

4.4 The development is likely to require buildings of up to 4-5 storeys, with potential for taller structures (up to 7 storeys) in selected locations. Particular care will be needed to protect views of Taunton's church towers and the Blackdown Hills from key points. Buildings will need to contain active ground level uses on main streets and the riverside, and they should be adaptable to allow future changes of use. They should achieve the BREEAM/EcoHomes 'Excellent' rating, and should incorporate renewable energy generation.

4.5 Retail use will be essential to create activity at street level; however, large retail units with surface parking and servicing would not be compatible with the type of urban environment that is sought.

4.6 A high-quality public realm will be key to a successful development. There is also a real opportunity to provide distinctive buildings that take advantage of the riverside location, and which strengthen Taunton's identity.

4.7 As an important facility to the local community, particularly low income groups, the existing stall market should be relocated elsewhere in the town centre.

4.8 The existing public conveniences in the Priory Bridge Road car park will need to be replaced to an agreed standard elsewhere in the Riverside development. This should be done in parallel with measures for boating, such as water supply and refuse services.

Policy Fp 2

Riverside - Transport Measures

The Riverside development should provide the following transport measures:

- a. travel plans on the basis identified in Policy T3 and agreed with the Highway Authority
- b. car and cycle parking within developments in accordance with the Somerset Parking Strategy
- c. a minimum of 200 public parking spaces during construction and on completion of the development
- d. a priority bus and cycle route from the railway station via the boulevard to Priory Bridge Road, including high-quality provision for waiting passengers
- e. initiatives to encourage rail and bus use by employees and visitors
- f. high-quality pedestrian and cycle routes along each bank of the River Tone
- g. shared pedestrian and cycle bridges across the River Tone
- h. an internal layout that facilitates improved pedestrian and cycle links to North Taunton and Taunton East

4.9 The County Council's 'Smarter Choices' initiative needs to underpin access to the development – maximising walking, cycling and public transport use and involving employers, employees and residents.

4 Firepool

4.10 The proposed boulevard should form part of a priority bus and cycle route from the railway station to Priory Bridge Road and, via other sites, to the existing retail core, and should include high-quality provision for buses and waiting passengers.

4.11 A minimum of 200 public parking spaces will need to be maintained during the construction period until the proposed multi-storey car park is built.

4.12 High-quality pedestrian and cycle routes will be needed alongside and across the River Tone and to other parts of the town, including Taunton East and (by means of a future bridge over the railway line) North Taunton.

Policy Fp 3

Riverside - Planning Obligations

Contributions from developers will be sought towards the following:

- a. flood alleviation measures
- b. highways
- c. sustainable transport
- d. public car parking
- e. affordable housing
- f. recreational open space
- g. built sports facilities
- h. education
- i. training and skills

4.13 Policies in the Taunton Deane Local Plan will apply in respect of affordable housing (H9 and H10), recreational open space (C4) and education (C1).

4.14 The livestock market site and the surface car park at Priory Bridge Road are in the river floodplain, and alleviation measures, involving replacement flood storage, will be essential.

Implementation - Riverside

4.15 The Borough Council is the major owner of Riverside land, and the Project Taunton Delivery Team will lead delivery of the proposals in liaison with developers and other landowners. The proposed multi-storey car park is likely to be the first of five to be built in the town centre, although public car parking will continue to be provided at ground level in the early years of the development.

Firepool 4

Firepool Lock

Policy Fp 4

Firepool Lock

The Firepool Lock development should provide:

- a. A minimum of 400 dwellings
- b. At least 7,000 square metres of office space
- c. Refurbishment of the listed pump house building

4.16 Development should front onto the Northern Inner Distributor Road to create a high-quality street scene on this important main route. Residential properties should be set back from the street and have an appropriate internal layout to reflect the anticipated traffic volumes.

Station Area

4.17 Taunton station is a key gateway to the town and to the wider West Somerset area. In partnership with the rail industry and the County Council, the station area will be developed as a regional 'hub', to which all forms of transport, including pedestrians, will have easy access.

4.18 There is a need to improve the south side of the station, so that it relates better to the new developments at Firepool and the expanding town centre. This suggests a need for environmental enhancements and for giving priority to the more sustainable modes of travel - walking, cycling and public transport - on the south side of the station. Additional car parking is likely to be needed for rail users during the Plan period.

4.19 Station Road is a key route for bus services between north Taunton (including the proposed urban extension) and the town centre. However, conditions for public transport are currently poor. At the same time, Station Road will remain an important route for general traffic.

4.20 There is therefore a need for continuous bus priority measures, at least in the southbound direction, as an extension of the priority measures on the north side of the station. Ultimately, the most appropriate solution may involve routing buses up the south side approach to the station, through the Firepool development via Station Boulevard to Priory Bridge Road, and when the Morrison's site is redeveloped, across Morrison's to connect with Bridge Street.

4.21 The precise extent of improvements will be influenced by developments on the Riverside and adjoining sites. Further studies are needed to establish how footways, cycleways, bus facilities and public spaces can be improved, and how these will relate to adjoining developments and the NIDR.

4 Firepool

Policy Fp 5

South Side Station Approach

The south side station approach and adjoining land should be developed to include:

- a. Commercial development fronting the Northern Inner Distributor Road
- b. Public transport interchange
- c. Pick up /set down and short stay parking
- d. Provision for taxis
- e. Environmental enhancements

4.22 On land between the station and the line of the NIDR, there is scope for around 4,000 square metres of commercial space on 3-5 floors, including active ground floor uses fronting the NIDR and the station approach.

4.23 To improve access to Firepool, the railway station and the proposed urban extension, additional bus services are proposed. This is likely to require additional bus stops on the south side of the railway station, although the ultimate number is not yet known. There may also be a need for some layover space for buses. It is important that land which may be needed for public transport facilities is not used for development or decked car parking although, in the interim, it could continue in use as surface parking.

4.24 The south side station approach will form the primary pedestrian route between the station and the major development at Riverside. It therefore needs to be subject to a comprehensive enhancement scheme, which would also improve the setting of the station and Great Western House, both of which are listed buildings.

4.25 Existing long-stay parking displaced for public transport interchange or environmental improvements will need to be replaced on other sites nearby, so that an adequate supply is maintained to serve the station.

4.26 In view of its role as a major gateway, potential will be explored for significant improvements to the railway station, on the railway as well as the public sides.

Policy Fp 6

West Yard

The West Yard site should be used to provide car parking for rail users with the option of development later in the Plan period.

Firepool 4

4.27 As a short to medium-term measure to release other sites, there is scope to clear the existing derelict structures and make use of the West Yard for surface car parking. The former locomotive lifting shop is of some historical interest and should be dismantled for re-erection.

4.28 In the longer term (probably after 2016), the site could be further developed with car parking being relocated to the proposed multi-storey at Kilkenny. Budget hotel development could be a particular opportunity, as there is currently no modern accommodation near the railway station, and a general lack of town centre accommodation in this sector of the market.

Policy Fp 7

Former Cameron Dixon engineering works

The former Cameron Dixon works should be redeveloped for a mixture of employment and residential uses with a high quality built frontage to the Northern Inner Distributor Road.

4.29 This site is highly visible from the main railway line and will also adjoin the Northern Inner Distributor Road. Part of this site has planning permission for residential development. The remainder should continue in employment use, with future emphasis on higher quality buildings, such as offices, fronting the NIDR. Any redevelopment will need to provide a connected street layout with pedestrian and cycle links between the railway station, Whitehall and Albemarle Road.

Policy Fp 8

North Side Station Approach

An enhancement scheme should be undertaken on the north side station approach to include improved surfaces, street furniture and landscaping.

4.30 Environmental improvements are most likely to be achievable after 2016, in parallel with additional parking provision on the north side of the station.

Policy Fp 9

Kilkenny

The Kilkenny surface car park should be redeveloped for a 600 space multi-storey facility, providing long-stay parking for rail users, with the car park structure being screened by flats.

4 Firepool

4.31 Rail patronage at Taunton has increased substantially in recent years. There are currently around 430 parking spaces for rail users, of which 200 are on land owned by Network Rail and 230 on the Borough Council's land at Kilkenny.

4.32 LTP2 encourages travel to the station by means other than the car, but even so, assuming continued growth in rail patronage, additional parking spaces are likely to be required. Moreover, at least part of the existing car park on the south side of the station will be required to provide land for improved bus interchange and a higher-quality arrival space for visitors to Taunton.

4.33 Incorporation of residential development, screening the car park structure (potentially around 40 dwellings), and possibly other uses, would generate value to help fund the car park, provide housing in an accessible position close to the station, and improve the outlook from Kilkenny Court by creating an urban street setting.

Policy Fp 10

Land north of the railway

Land north of the main railway line should be developed in the longer term for business and light industrial uses (classes B1 and B8).

4.34 There is a demand for light industrial and small business units in a central location. However, most sites in central Taunton are subject either to high development costs or to competition from higher value town centre uses. This site is therefore one of the few that could potentially provide lower cost small business space, although it is only likely to become available in the longer term. Any development should be compatible with the adjoining residential areas. There could also be potential for live-work units.

Policy Fp 11

Station Area - Planning Obligations

Contributions from developers of sites in the station area will be sought as set out in the table below.

Firepool 4

Table 4.1 Developer contributions

Site	Rail and bus facilities	Parking for rail users	Public realm improvements	Affordable housing	Recreational open space	Built sports facilities	Education	Training and skills
South side station approach	✓	✓	✓					✓
West Yard		✓	✓					✓
Former Cameron Dixon works				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kilkenny		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land north of railway								✓

4.35 Policies in the Taunton Deane Local Plan will apply in respect of affordable housing (H9 and H10), recreational open space (C4) and education (C1).

Implementation - Station Area

4.36 Schemes in the station area will be progressed over a number of years. The Borough Council and Network Rail own the Kilkenny car park site. Network Rail own land on the south side of the railway station, the West Yard, and an area on the north side of the railway which is not intended for release at present. Implementation of proposals is likely to take place after 2011 following construction of the NIDR.

4.37 There is the potential for contamination to be present on some of the sites due to their past use as railway land and other commercial purposes. The land adjacent to the railway has been used as sidings, goods yards and engineering works. There were also some coal yards and engineering works on the land by the canal. Therefore, surveys and risk assessments will be required at all locations to investigate the nature and extent of any contamination. If there are any potential risks to future users of the site or to the river and canal, details of remedial measures will be required.

Cricket Club/Coal Orchard/Morrisons 5

5.1 This allocation lies between the major employment site at Firepool and the town centre retail core. It consists of two separate areas. On the south side of the River Tone are the County Cricket Ground and adjoining land at Coal Orchard, including the Brewhouse Theatre, while Morrison's supermarket occupies most of the land on the opposite side of the river.

Somerset County Cricket Club

Policy C 1

County Ground

Development at the County Ground will provide:

- a. improved facilities for cricket, including a new indoor school and provision for international matches
- b. ancillary leisure uses
- c. apartments, including affordable units
- d. associated car parking
- e. appropriate community use of new facilities

An access management plan will be required to manage travel demand arising from major and minor cricket matches and other large non-cricket events.

5.2 Redevelopment of the County Ground should help to strengthen the specialist retail role of nearby St James Street and the Courtyard. The scale and location of new structures erected at the ground will need to take account of views towards and the setting of St James' church and churchyard, which is a Grade 2 * listed building and a County Archaeological Site.

Policy C 2

Coal Orchard Car Park

Redevelopment of the Coal Orchard car park will provide:

- a. retailing
- b. leisure uses, such as restaurants and bars
- c. residential uses on upper floors, including affordable housing
- d. space for small-scale office/business activity, and creative industries
- e. an improved riverside walkway to The Bridge

5 Cricket Club/Coal Orchard/Morrisons

5.3 There is a need for stronger links between the County Ground and the town centre with active ground floor uses fronting public areas. Consultants LDA Design have reviewed the UDF proposals, and one result is an increase in the amount of specialist retail space that is proposed at Coal Orchard.

5.4 This proposal will reinforce North Street as a shopping area, balancing future retail development at High Street, and will better link the Morrison's site with the main shopping area.

5.5 The existing St James Street Pool is proposed for redevelopment as part of this proposal. Prior replacement provision will be required in some form and in a town centre location. The site of the pool is therefore likely to form a later phase of the development.

Policy C 3

Brewhouse Theatre

Land adjoining the Brewhouse Theatre will be safeguarded for its potential expansion. New facilities should be available for appropriate community use.

5.6 An improved theatre is an important part of Project Taunton, and a feasibility study has been commissioned to identify how this can be achieved. As well as an enlarged auditorium, purpose-built gallery space is desired, to link Taunton to the national/international visual arts network.

Policy C 4

Lower Middle Street

Footway and carriageway enhancements will be undertaken in Lower Middle Street to provide an upgraded pedestrian route between Coal Orchard and East Street.

5.7 Lower Middle Street forms part of an important pedestrian link between Coal Orchard, Church Square and East Street. Part of the street was enhanced in the 1990s and it is now proposed to extend the enhanced area to connect with Whirligig Lane.

Cricket Club/Coal Orchard/Morrisons 5

Morrison's

Policy C 5

Morrison's

Future redevelopment at Morrison's should:

- a. be to a density, layout and land use mix appropriate to a town centre location
- b. contribute to Taunton's need for additional large format retail space
- c. provide a direct route between the proposed boulevard in Firepool and Bridge Street for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport

5.8 The Urban Design Framework proposed redevelopment of Morrison's for mixed uses to intensify use of the site. The UDF also showed improved links across the site between the railway station, Firepool and the main retail area, as a southward extension of the 'boulevard' proposed within the Firepool development. This is an important urban design issue, as the lack of a street parallel to Station Road and the River Tone results in a 'block' nearly 200m wide. Creation of a new street through redevelopment would also enable a continuous public transport priority route to be provided between the core retail area, Firepool and the railway station.

5.9 The UDF implied that some 30-40,000 square metres of floorspace could potentially be accommodated on the Morrison's site. This could include some of the extra retail space that Taunton will need later in the LDF period (particularly large format retail units); housing, offices and leisure uses. Continued food retailing in some form need not be precluded.

5.10 Further urban design and viability studies are needed before detailed proposals for much of this area can proceed. Redevelopment is not likely to be feasible before 2016. Most of the sites on the north side of the river are in private ownership, and land assembly may be required.

Policy C 6

Planning Obligations

Contributions from developers will be sought as indicated in the table below.

5 Cricket Club/Coal Orchard/Morrisons

Table 5.1 Developer Contributions

Site	Flood alleviation	Sustainable transport	Public car parking	Affordable housing	Off-site public realm	Recreational open space	Built sports facilities	Education	Training and skills
County Cricket Ground		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Coal Orchard	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

5.11 Policies in the Taunton Deane Local Plan will apply in respect of affordable housing (H9 and H10), recreational open space (C4) and education (C1).

5.12 Contributions from any development on the Morrison's site would be determined with reference to the forthcoming Planning Obligations SPD.

Implementation

5.13 The Borough Council owns most of the land at Coal Orchard. Funding for development at the Cricket Ground will mainly come from private sources and from the residential and commercial development within the scheme. Expansion of the Brewhouse and associated gallery space will need funding from sources such as lottery, charitable fund-raising and direct public investment.

Table 5.2 Cricket Club, Coal Orchard and Morrison's - Delivery on site 2007-2026

	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Cricket Club Phase 1	█																			
Cricket Club Phase 2		█	█	█																
Somerset Square			█	█																
Cricket Club Phase 3				█	█	█	█													
Coal Orchard						█	█	█	█											
Lower Middle Street							█	█	█											
Brewhouse											█	█	█							
Morrison's													█	█	█	█				

Tangier and Tesco 6

Tangier, Tesco and Wood Street

6.1 This allocation consists of several separate sites. On the south bank of the river, it includes land around Castle Street and along the Mill Stream, together with the Tesco store. On the north bank it comprises the existing Lidl and Poundstretcher stores adjoining Wood Street, and the Greenbrook Terrace car park.

6.2 Housing (including affordable housing) will be the most important use across the area, and there is potential for around 500 dwellings. Larger format retail units are also proposed on several sites. The area will also be a hub for leisure, small businesses and the creative industries. The UDF proposals by Terence O'Rourke form the basis of this section of the Action Plan, but those for the Wood Street area have been refined by LDA Design.

Wood Street

6.3 It is essential to identify sites that could accommodate public sector uses that will be displaced by developments elsewhere in the town centre. The Lidl site could potentially accommodate a new swimming pool and/or a replacement public library if this has to be relocated (although other town centre sites may also be possible). Depending on the detailed design solution, housing, additional ground floor retailing and leisure uses could also be accommodated.

6.4 The riverside path needs to be designed to allow access without steps or ramps to ground floor retail, leisure and other public uses. It will need to be widened at its eastern end to create an attractive riverside promenade taking advantage of the southerly aspect, and to allow shared use by pedestrians and cyclists. It should also be wide enough to allow potential for customers to sit outside cafes and restaurants.

Policy Tg 1

Wood Street sites

Sites bounded by Wood Street, Greenbrook Terrace and the River Tone should be redeveloped on the basis set out in the table below, to include:

- a. Public sector uses
- b. Retail and leisure uses
- c. Flats, including affordable units
- d. Potential for active frontages at ground level as shown on the Proposals Map
- e. A redesigned riverside path for shared pedestrian and cycle use
- f. Landscaped open space between the Third Way and the River Tone
- g. A revised slipway facing downstream

6 Tangier and Tesco

Tg1	Site	Residential (units)	Other uses	Other elements	Storeys
1	Lidl	40	Swimming pool and/or library	Improved riverside path	3-4
2	Poundstretcher	20	Retail/leisure 500 sq m	8m wide riverside path	3-4
3	Land at Greenbrook Terrace	20		Relocation of sweepers compound	2-3
4	Land between the Third Way and River Tone	0	Landscaped open space	Slipway facing downstream Improved riverside path Noise attenuation for Goodland Gardens	

Picture 6.1 Tangier Tg1

Tangier and Tesco 6



6.5 Developers will be required to enter into planning obligations in accordance with Policy Tg6.

Tangier

6.6 On sites in Tangier, there is potential for over 400 dwellings. Also, a key objective is to deliver large format retail units, to help meet the need identified in the 2005 Retail Capacity Study. Sites north of Mill Stream facing Castle Street are considered to have scope for around 3,000 square metres of this type of space, with residential accommodation on upper floors.

6 Tangier and Tesco

Policy Tg 2

Tangier sites

Land fronting the River Tone and bounded by Castle Street and Tangier should be developed on the basis set out in the table below, to include:

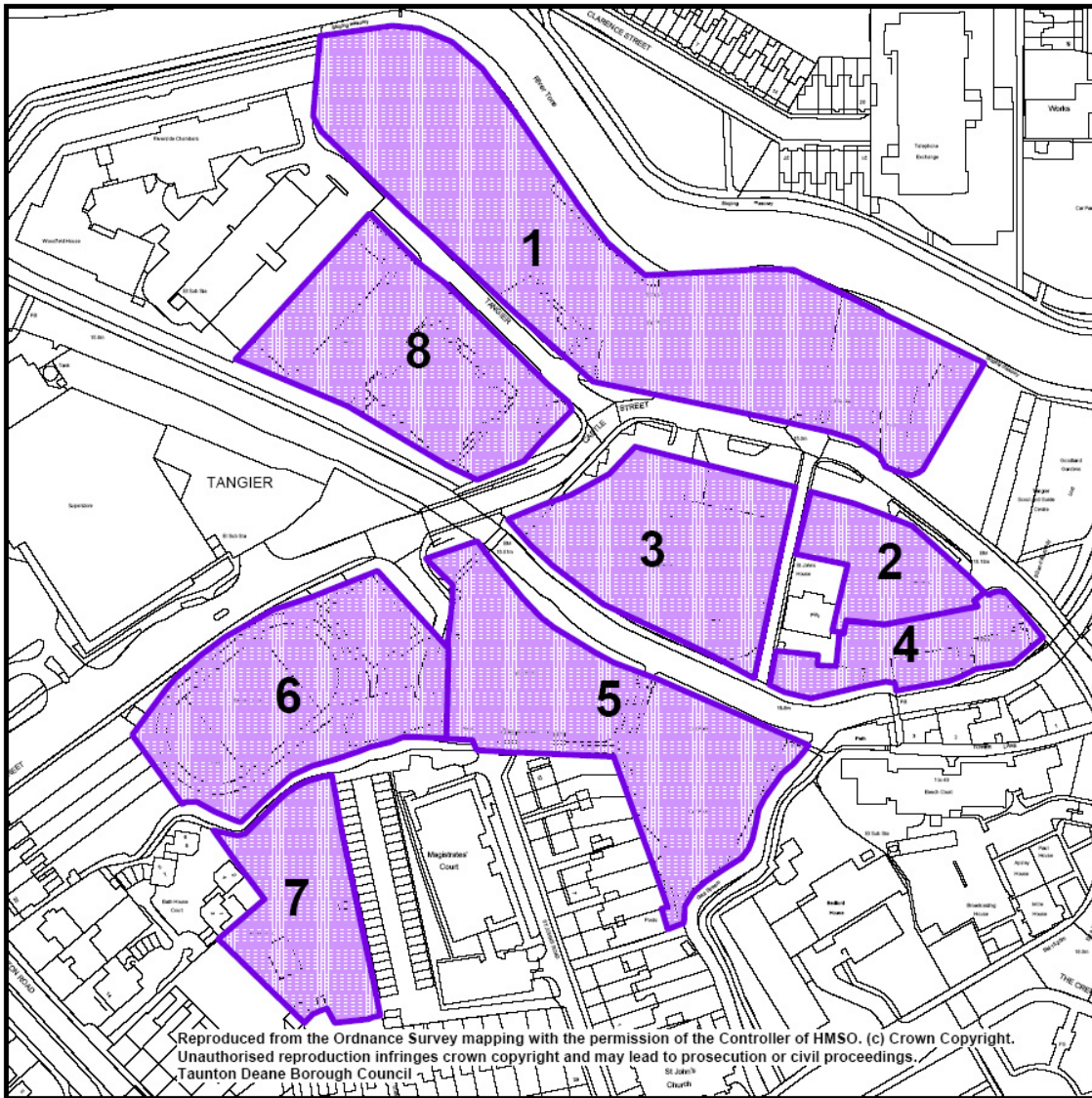
- a. Residential and large format retail development
- b. Affordable housing
- c. Perimeter block forms and active frontages as shown on the Proposals Map
- d. Completion of riverside paths and footbridges as shown on the Proposals Map

Tangier and Tesco 6

Tg2	Site	Residential (units)	Retail (sq m)	Other elements	Storey heights
1	Land fronting River Tone (former gas works)	220	0	New riverside path and bridge across River Tone	4
2	Enfield Car Park	50	1000 large format		3-4
3	Castle Street Car Park	60	1000 large format	Improved path alongside Mill Stream	3-4
4	Land next to Mill Stream	20	0	Improved path alongside Mill Stream	3
5	Tangier Car Parks	40	0	New pathway alongside Mill Stream	2-3
6	Former TYCC	50	1000 large format	Access to Parkhaven	3
7	Parkhaven	10	0		2
8	Hickley Valtone	50	1300 large format		3-4

Map 6.1 Tangier Tg2

6 Tangier and Tesco



Tangier and Tesco 6

Policy Tg 3

Tesco

The existing Tesco site should be redeveloped to provide:

- a. A new food store primarily on the existing car park
- b. Vehicular access from Castle Street
- c. Parking provision not exceeding 1 space per 14 square metres
- d. Servicing on the northern side of the development
- e. A bus lay-by in Castle Street close to the store entrance
- f. Continuous active frontages on Castle Street and at the junction with Wellington Road
- g. Student accommodation or housing, including affordable dwellings, along the western boundary fronting Marshalsea Walk, on the Wellington Road frontage and on upper levels of the store
- h. Non-food retail space limited to the proportion contained in the existing store
- i. Landscaped surface parking between the new store and Mill Stream
- j. A landscaped surface car park north of Steps Water
- k. Continuous public access along the Mill Stream frontage
- l. Improvements to Marshalsea Walk along the northern site boundary and the footbridge over Mill Stream
- m. Provision for new pedestrian and cycle routes from Marshalsea Walk and French Weir to SCAT

6.7 There has been interest in a redevelopment of the existing Tesco store to provide additional floorspace. Any scheme should reflect the conclusions of the 2005 retail capacity study in terms of scale and timing. A high quality built frontage should be provided to Marshalsea Walk, Castle Street and Wellington Road. This is an important issue in view of the proposed extension of the Park Street Conservation Area to include properties adjoining Tesco in Wellington Road.

6.8 The developer will be required to enter into planning obligations in accordance with Policy Tg6.

Transport and Streets

Policy Tg 4

Third Way

The Third Way is programmed for construction in the period 2006-11. Developers of sites fronting the route of the road will be expected to contribute towards the cost of the scheme.

6 Tangier and Tesco

6.9 The Third Way has been included in the Government's programme of major schemes for 2006-2011. The existing carriageway by Lidl will be extended across the Greenbrook Terrace car park, and over the River Tone by an iconic new bridge. Continuity of the existing riverside path and cycleway will be maintained. A new bridge will also be provided over the Mill Stream. Not all of the necessary land is in public ownership and some acquisition will be needed, including 17 Bridge Street, an area adjoining the Scout headquarters, and land owned by Hickley Valtone.

Policy Tg 5

Pedestrian and Cycle Network

Additional off-road footpaths and cycleways will be provided as shown on the Proposals Map.

6.10 Required measures will include: completion of south side riverbank path; widening of the existing north bank path between the Third Way bridge and the existing Lidl site, and an additional bridge over the River Tone at French Weir Park.

Planning Obligations

Policy Tg 6

Planning Obligations

Planning obligations from developers will be sought on the basis set out in the table below.

Tangier and Tesco 6

Table 6.1 Planning Obligations

Site	Flood alleviation	Third Way	Sustainable transport	Public car parking	Affordable housing	Off-site public realm	Recreational open space	Built sports facilities	Education	Training and skills
Port Street	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lidl			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Geoback Terrace	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land fronting River Tone	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Enfield Car Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Castle Street Car Park	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Land adjoining Mill Stream	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
TYCC	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tangier Car Parks	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Parkaven	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hickley Valtone	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tesco	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

6.11 Most of the Tangier and Wood Street areas lie within the floodplain, and contributions from developers towards alleviation measures will be required. The works are likely to involve an offsite dam and provision of replacement flood storage capacity.

6.12 Developers will also be required to contribute to the cost of the Third Way, which passes through the Tangier and Wood Street areas.

Goodlands Gardens and Castle Green 7

Castle Green

7.1 Taunton has a rich cultural and archaeological heritage. The Castle Green area is the historic core of the town. It is bounded on all sides by listed buildings, including the Grade I Castle. However, the quality of the existing space is poor, largely consisting of public car park and highway. Also, although centrally located between existing retail and the Tangier regeneration areas, the lack of 'active' uses and the quality of the pedestrian access into and through the site means that this historic area is poorly utilised.

7.2 As part of Project Taunton's regeneration proposals, it is important to enhance the quality of this public space, improving its attractiveness to visitors and enhancing the setting of the surrounding listed buildings.

7.3 Proposals for this site include the removal of the public car parking and the creation of a civic space capable of hosting public events such as markets and performances. All works must use and landscaping appropriate to the historic environment of "The Green" and have due regard to the archaeological significance of this site due to its historic associations.

7.4 Cafes and restaurants will be encouraged within the public space and the physical (pedestrian and cycle) and visual connections between Castle Green and the rest of the town centre will be strengthened. The setting of the historic buildings will be improved through improving sightlines to the Castle as the local feature fronting the public space. This will require the removal of outbuildings from the front of the Castle Hotel, for which listed building consent would be required. It is proposed to relocate the Registrars Office to the Grade II* Old Municipal Buildings and create a green and tranquil setting for weddings to the rear of this building which frames part of this site.

7.5 Pedestrian access will be improved, including a clearly expressed north-south desire line linking Castle Green to Goodland Gardens. This must be designed to improve visibility between the two sites. Although Castle Green must be designed to give priority to pedestrians, a designated vehicle route will also be required for emergency/service vehicles as well as for clear access to the Castle Hotel.

7 Goodlands Gardens and Castle Green

Policy G 1

Castle Green

Proposals for enhancing the Castle Green area shall include:

- a. the removal of public parking
- b. enhancement of pedestrian and cycle links into the site and pedestrian priority in design for within the site
- c. improved settings for the entrances to the Castle and Castle Hotel, including the removal of outbuildings fronting the hotel
- d. use of appropriate hard and soft landscaping materials to reflect and enhance the quality of the setting of Castle Green and provision of semi private area for uses associated with the Old Municipal Buildings
- e. design of the Civic space to be suitable for use as open air cafes, performance space and markets
- f. designated routes within the pedestrian priority area for vehicle access to Castle hotel and servicing and emergency vehicles

Goodland Gardens

7.6 Goodland Gardens is the largest public greenspace within the town centre. It is centrally located between the river, the listed grade I Castle and close to the heart of the towns retail core. As Castle Green, it is also underutilised, partly due to the lack of connectivity with the rest of the centre, with limited and poorly located access and little active frontage within adjoining buildings.

7.7 The green character of the Gardens and retention of the flexible green space at the centre are important to retain. Clarifying the circulation around the Gardens and clearly expressing the east-west and north-south pedestrian routes through the site will improve this. The physical and visual continuity of the waterfront promenade and cycleway will also be improved, reflecting the design of the riverside walk elsewhere in the centre and creating a consistent and clear identity along the riverside.

7.8 Accessibility (including service vehicles) will also be enhanced by simplifying existing ground levels, especially around the mill stream and bridges, taking account of the Environment Agency's advice on flood levels. Two new pedestrian/cycle bridges will be required across the River Tone, including the replacement of the existing pedestrian bridge. These will be designed to be DDA compliant and will assist connectivity across the north-south desire line through the town centre.

7.9 To strengthen the physical connections into the park a new northern entrance will be provided into the museum and on to Castle Green. Improved visibility of the castle elevation will be required through sympathetic tree management and replanting to assist its setting. A site to the rear of the present Debenhams department store is also available to construct a low extension/pavilion up to two storeys in height and to a maximum total floorspace of 7,000 sq.ft. This should be designed to create an active frontage along the

Goodlands Gardens and Castle Green 7

promenade and improve natural surveillance to the Gardens. To increase opportunities for use, the provision of appropriate informal play facilities will be promoted within the Gardens. All enhancements to the Gardens must be sensitively undertaken to ensure that its use by Daubenton's and Pipestrelle bats, 'European Protected Species', is not compromised.

Policy G 2

Goodland Gardens

Proposals for the enhancement of Goodland Gardens shall include:

- a. enhancement of pedestrian and cycle links into and within the site, including the provision of a new north-south link into the Castle/Museum, linking through into Castle Green
- b. improvements to the riverside promenade, linking in to and reflecting the design of other parts of this route within the town centre
- c. changes to site levels for ease of access and to assist in flood prevention
- d. the provision of two new pedestrian/cycle bridges across the River Tone
- e. an agreed landscape management regime to include measures for the visual enhancement of the castle

7.10 The Town Centre Design Code SPD articulates the requirements for both Castle Green and Goodland Gardens sites in further detail and will be used in assessing the suitability of any enhancement proposals.

7.11 Castle Green and much of Goodland Gardens are owned by the Borough Council. A small part of the Gardens are leased to the Council from Somerset Archaeology and Natural History Society. Funding for feasibility and design work for Castle Green will be provided by Project Taunton. Any future redesigning of Goodland Gardens and funding for actual enhancement works for both sites will need to be provided by the Borough Council through receipts obtained from other town centre sites.

Bus Station

7.12 The existing bus station is more than fifty years old and in need of improvement. Relocation has been considered to allow development of the site but no suitable alternative is currently available. Studies by Atkins have established that an approximately similar number of bus stands and layover spaces will be required throughout the period of the Action Plan.

7 Goodlands Gardens and Castle Green

Policy G 3

The Bus Station

The existing bus station will be remodelled to provide better facilities for passengers and an improved appearance.

Corporation Street

7.13 Once the Third Way has been completed, Corporation Street will be less important as a traffic route. This will enable more priority to be given to buses, cyclists and pedestrians and there will be scope for environmental improvements. Links from the Crescent, Bath Place and High Street, across Corporation Street to the riverside, will also be improved.

Policy G 4

Corporation Street

Environmental enhancements will be carried out in Corporation Street and provision for buses, cyclists, pedestrians and taxis will be revised.

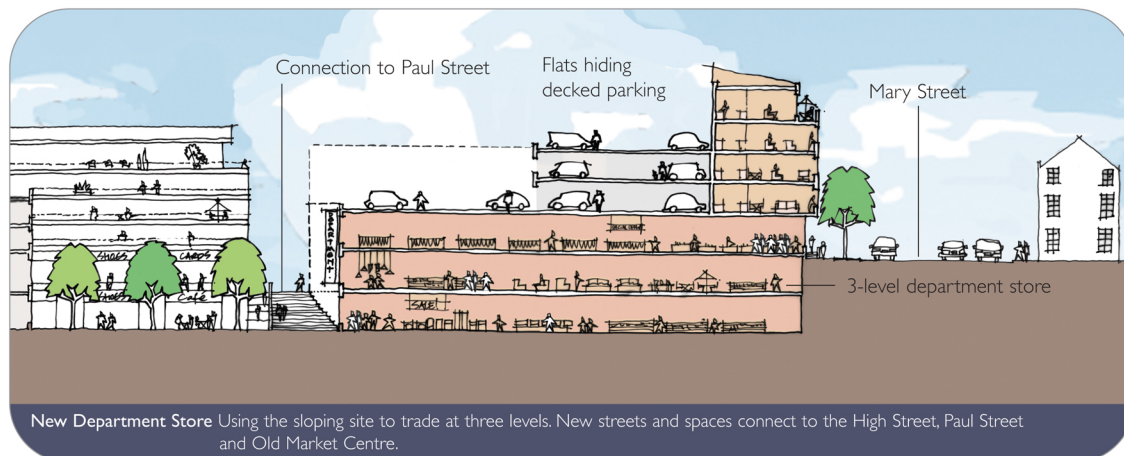
High Street and East Street 8

8.1 The High Street allocation at the southern end of the town centre consists of two sites, providing the main opportunity for developing more shopping space within the town centre.

8.2 The Council's Vitality and Viability Study (2006) recognised the limited range of leisure and entertainment facilities currently offered in the town centre. Although predominantly retail orientated, this allocation provides the opportunity to broaden the range of activities available in the centre, providing a mixed use development including evening uses such as bars and restaurants, increasing the attractiveness of the centre as a place to visit beyond traditional shopping hours.

8.3 The larger part of the allocation, The Old Market Centre, can be extended to the east of the High Street, creating around 20,000 sq metres of extra retail space. The Crescent Car Park to the west of High Street is able to supply around 3,700 sq. metres of additional retail floorspace. Part of this floorspace could alternatively be utilised for leisure/cultural uses such as the library which would need to relocate as part of the Old Market Centre proposals and which would require around 3100 sq. metres maximum 'like for like' replacement floorspace. A range of unit sizes are required within the allocation, including large format 'anchor stores'. This could extend onto three floors on the Old Market Centre site.

Picture 8.1 New Department Store



8.4 In addition, the Old Market Centre site shall provide a minimum of 120 residential units, public realm areas, around 440 multistorey parking spaces and public toilets, including toilets and changing facilities for the disabled. The Crescent site should provide a minimum of 90 residential units and around 570 public parking spaces. On both sites the parking should be 'skinned' on public frontages by residential or other uses.

8.5 Implementation of the proposals will require the demolition of Quantock House and the multi-storey car park on Paul Street. Maintaining an adequate amount of shopper car parking during redevelopment is a key requirement for town centre business. A flexible approach will be required. This is currently being addressed through the town centre Parking Strategy currently being undertaken on behalf of Project Taunton.

8 High Street and East Street

Policy H 1

The High Street development shall include

- a. a minimum of 20,000 sq.m. of retail space east of the High Street (Old Market Centre), and public toilets including disabled facilities and a minimum of 3,700 sq.m. of retail or retail/cultural space to the west of High Street (The Crescent Car Park)
- b. a minimum of 120 residential units east of the High Street and a minimum of 90 residential units to the west of High Street
- c. a minimum of 440 public parking spaces to the east of High Street and 570 public parking spaces to the west of High Street.

8.6 Permeability through both sites is essential to anchor and integrate the development into the town centre. The land around the Old Market Centre slopes up to the south enabling the development to be built into the slope. This will enable pedestrian access into and through the development from all adjoining streets at different levels. This would allow development on up to seven levels within part of the site and up to five above-ground at the higher end of the site, towards Mary Street. Retail provision should be made on three floor levels, including ground floor frontages to Paul and Mary Street, with a third floor entrance for the anchor store(s) at the lower ground floor East Street/High Street level.

8.7 The Crescent Car Park site has no existing frontage. Improved integration into the town centre is needed through pedestrian improvements to Crown Walk and an added route, on to High Street towards the southern end of the site. Existing routes into Bath Place and The Crescent should be kept and improved to strengthen pedestrian linkages within and through the site. Buildings of between four and six (4-6) storeys will be needed to create a suitable sense of enclosure and to reflect the scale of adjoining buildings. Retail or cultural activities should be provided on all ground floors fronting public routes through the site to assist vitality. Although not within the allocation, redevelopment of Brendon House provides an added opportunity to extend the development with a mix of offices, residential and/or retail uses.

8.8 Improvements to the Paul Street and High Street public realm area will be required as part of the development proposals as will the creation of a new public square within the Old Market Centre site. Improved pedestrian and cycle access across Upper High Street into Vivary Park will also be required. Although the proposals do not require redevelopment of properties fronting High Street and within Crown Walk, the Council will actively encourage any physical improvements to the design of the buildings themselves, which could include redevelopment where suitable.

8.9 Land at the northern end of High Street (where it connects to Fore Street) will be a focus for public transport improvements. To facilitate the creation of a two hub public transport network (refer to Chapter 3 - Transport & Mobility) land in this general area will

High Street and East Street 8

be needed to facilitate additional bus stops and movements. Parts of the existing Old Market House could usefully be given over to the creation of passenger information and waiting facilities.

Policy H 2

The design of the High Street redevelopment proposals should adhere to the following principles and be informed by and consistent with the principles of the Design Code SPD

- a. buildings to a maximum of 5-7 storeys to the east of High Street and 4-6 storeys to the west of High Street
- b. permeability into both sites from all adjoining streets, with linkages through both sites
- c. active frontages, including retail or cultural uses at all ground level
- d. skinning of all parking areas with residential or other (uses?)
- e. a new public square within the Old Market Centre development and public realm improvements to High Street, Upper High Street, Mary Street, Paul Street and Fore Street
- f. provision of a public transport hub at Fore Street

8.10 The Borough Council is the major landowner within this allocation, owning the public parking areas and The Old Market House. Project Taunton will lead delivery of the proposals in liaison with developers and other landowners. A phasing scheme will need to be prepared and agreed to cover elements such as the library relocation and alternative parking provision in order to ensure that sufficient parking spaces are available for town centre shoppers in other accessible locations whilst existing on-site parking provision is temporarily disrupted through redevelopment. Due to work already undertaken it is anticipated that the proposal will begin within five years, with private developer funding.

8.11 During the past ten years there has been a steady shift of the retail core from Fore Street to East Street. This was prompted by the redevelopment of the County Hotel (East Street) to include premises for large 'multiple' retailers such as Marks and Spencer. Other major retailers soon followed in seeking a presence in East Street. The Town Centre Enhancement Scheme (1996) significantly improved conditions for pedestrians in the town centre, with the main works occurring in North Street and Fore Street. Unfortunately, the scheme did not extend as far as East Street.

8.12 East Street is now regarded to be at the heart of the retail core. However, the environment is dominated by narrow pavements and vehicular traffic.

8.13 The recent Taunton Town Centre Access & Mobility Audit (2007) identified the following problems:

- Narrow pavements with heavy pedestrian flows (this problem is particularly acute on the north side)

8 High Street and East Street

- Heavy pedestrian flows results in pedestrians often being forced to walk in the vehicular carriageway
- The narrow pavements present particular difficulties to those whose mobility is impaired
- Lack of pedestrian crossing facilities
- Parked vehicles (20 minute short stay parking bays)
- Pedestrians crossing between parked vehicles
- Loading bay (south side) which is dangerous to pedestrians as it is used as a drop off point by cars, taxis and buses

8.14 In addition to the above, there is a history of accidents here, mainly involving collisions between pedestrians and vehicles

8.15 This situation needs to be resolved by a pedestrian priority scheme that will seek the removal of the short-stay parking bays, and the introduction of both pavement widening and appropriate crossing facilities. Achieving a quality environment must be a priority for this scheme. The scheme must be regarded as an extension of the previous town centre enhancement works and as part of a wider town centre enhancement scheme delivering greater pedestrian priority at other locations such as Corporation Street, Church Square and Hammet Street (in part prompted by the completion of the Third Way – ref policy x). The Town Centre Design Code SPD (ref para x) is an important background document.

8.16 The details of an enhancement scheme for East Street need to be developed and assessed for funding. It is anticipated that LTP and New Growth Point funding will be forthcoming, although this has yet to be formally tested. In addition, any development that results in a significant pedestrian flow along East Street will be expected to make financial contributions. This is likely to include the redevelopment of High Street (policy x). Delivery is anticipated within the period 2009 to 2011.

Policy H 3

Environmental enhancement to East Street will be required. Any scheme should include the following measures and be informed by and consistent with the principles in the design code SPD:

- a. pavement widening
- b. additional pedestrian crossing facilities
- c. removal of short stay parking facilities

8.17 Whirligig Lane, Hammet Street and Church Square form an important pedestrian route from the Coal Orchard and Brewhouse areas to East Street and The Parade. The importance of this route will increase as AAP proposals are implemented. Hard and soft landscape improvements will be required to enhance this link for town centre users and these works should be extended along Magdalene Street to enhance the setting of the listed Magdalene Church and Magdalene House which lie within a conservation area. Funding for these enhancement works will be provided by the Borough Council through receipts from the sale of town centre sites within its control.

High Street and East Street 8

Policy H 4

Footway and carriageway enhancements will be undertaken in Whirligig Lane, Hammet Street, Church Square and Magdalene Street to provide an upgraded pedestrian route between Coal Orchard and East Street.

9 Transport and Mobility

9.1 Taunton is at the crossroads of strategic road and rail networks. The Ministerial decision to dual the A358 between the M5 and the A303, and its subsequent recommendation as a regional investment priority in the draft RSS reinforces Taunton's position at the centre of the South West region.

9.2 Although the Borough Council is not the statutory transport authority, it will work in partnership with the County Council and other transport providers to deliver accessibility improvements. Transport initiatives in Taunton town centre need to take forward the policies in Somerset Local Transport Plan 2006-11 (LTP2) and the Taunton Transport Strategy Review.

9.3 As development takes place in the town centre, the modal share of each form of transport needs to change so that there is more travel on foot, by bicycle and on public transport (including park and ride), with a smaller proportion of journeys being made by car. Journeys to and from Taunton town centre offer more scope for such a mode shift than those in smaller towns or rural locations. Initiatives such as the County Council's 'Slinkybus' service will play a growing part in linking less accessible areas to Taunton town centre.

Public Car Parking

9.4 The Plan aims to strike a balance between providing sufficient spaces to support growth of the town centre, while not encouraging unnecessary use of the private car. This will be done by restricting the level of car parking within new developments to the standards set out in Appendix 2, and providing public parking mainly to serve shoppers rather than commuters. Furthermore, public parking will increasingly take the form of park and ride provision rather than spaces within the town centre itself.

9.5 The Taunton Parking Strategy Review, carried out by Parsons Brinckerhoff in May 2007, shows that the total number of parking spaces in the town centre is likely to fall from 5700 to 3900 over the Plan period. However, this reduction will be offset by the provision of 2000 spaces in park and ride sites at Silk Mills and near Junction 25 of the M5.

Policy T 1

New multi-storey car parks will be provided at Kilkenny, Priory Bridge Road, The Crescent and High Street, with an overall total of 2000 spaces.

Many of the existing surface car parks are proposed for redevelopment. The Taunton Parking Strategy proposes to replace these with a series of new multi-storey car parks, skinned with other development on prominent frontages. Parking charges will discourage use of the car for non-essential purposes, and encourage Park and Ride and other modes of transport, while not penalising the town centre economy. Particular attention is given to the relationship between the provision of MSCPs and the phasing of redevelopment on the major sites.

Transport and Mobility 9

9.6 It is expected that the proposed multi-storey car parks at The Crescent, High Street and Priory Bridge Road will be provided by developers. The Borough Council will lead the delivery of Kilkenny.

Parking in new development

Policy T 2

Within Taunton Town Centre, the parking standards in Appendix 2 will be applied.

9.7 Parking restraint in new development is an important means of tackling congestion and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Taunton town centre has a relatively high level of accessibility by public transport, walking and cycling, and the parking standards reflect this.

9.8 The standards are derived from the LTP2 County-wide Parking Strategy published in March 2006, and are summarised in Appendix 2, both for motor vehicles and for bicycles. Within Taunton town centre, they supersede those contained in Policies M2 and M4 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan.

Smarter Choices

Policy T 3

Developers and occupiers will be expected to adopt travel behaviour change measures that manage the demand for car use, and maximise walking, cycling and use of public transport.

9.9 'Smarter Choices' is the Department for Transport umbrella name for local programmes to promote sustainable travel choices; encourage school, workplace and individualised travel planning; improve public transport information; promote car sharing schemes; and encourage homeworking/teleworking and teleconferencing. The County Council promotes these measures locally under the 'Moving Forward' brand.

9.10 The range of measures will include:

- a. Workplace and residential travel plans, including 'account management' approaches to maximise mode shift
- b. Participation in travel plan networks
- c. Personalised travel planning
- d. Car sharing, such as the Somerset Car Sharing Scheme
- e. Web-based travel information
- f. Cycling initiatives such as Repair & Ride, Bike2Work days and other cycling events
- g. Tele-working / tele-conferencing / home working
- h. Discounted purchase of bus and rail tickets

9 Transport and Mobility

Travel Plans

Policy T 4

Where a travel plan is required, necessary measures will include:

- a. Appointment of a travel plan co-ordinator
- b. Modal split targets (car/employee ratio) for non-residential developments
- c. Monitoring and review procedures
- d. Contributions in the event that agreed targets are not met
- e. Provisions in relation to speculative development, multi-occupation and future occupiers
- f. Measures to manage travel generated by visitors to a site
- g. Agreed time periods for contributions to scheme start-up costs
- h. In phased developments, trigger points for introduction of transport measures

9.11 Travel plans will be required for all developments that fulfil the requirements for a Transport Assessment. They may also be required for smaller developments which would increase the overall floor space to above the normal threshold, or where the threshold has already been exceeded.

9.12 An interim or preliminary travel plan will normally be required before a planning application is determined. This should specify all measures to be implemented before development and occupation, and should include a framework and timetable for the final travel plan. The final travel plan will then be agreed with the initial occupier of the development and will come into effect upon occupation.

Car Sharing

Policy T 5

Developers will be required to explore the potential for car sharing schemes or car clubs in new residential developments.

9.13 Limiting the number of cars residents can own may appear to reduce the attractiveness of a development to potential purchasers/tenants. However, low-car housing or mixed-use development can result in designs that have wide appeal to the market by providing a higher quality environment with particular appeal to families. The availability of vehicles through a car club can be key to attracting people to the development, by assuring them that their mobility needs will be met.

Transport and Mobility 9

Developer contributions to transport

Policy T 6

Contributions from developers will be sought towards the following transport measures:

- a. Travel behaviour change
- b. Improvements to bus and rail infrastructure
- c. Renewal of the town services bus fleet
- d. Public transport revenue support
- e. The Third Way and Northern Inner Distributor Road
- f. Improvements to the pedestrian and cycle networks identified in the Taunton Access and Mobility Audit
- g. Public car parking, including park and ride

9.14 In some cases, developers will need to contribute to the cost of transport measures. More specific information is contained in the area statements and the proposals for planning obligations. In addition, the use of travel plans will mean that occupiers, as well as developers, share responsibility for achieving more sustainable travel patterns. Personal travel planning, aiming to change individual travel behaviour, will form a growing part of this work.

Highway schemes

Policy T 7

The following schemes are programmed for construction between 2006 and 2011:

- a. The 'Third Way' (Inner Relief Road)
- b. Northern Inner Distributor Road

9.15 A key objective is to remove as much traffic as possible from the main streets south of the river, so conditions can be improved in the middle of the day between peak hours for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and other emergency vehicles. The Third Way major scheme is fundamental to this and facilitates the regeneration of Tangier. The Northern Inner Distributor Road (NIDR) major scheme provides strategic access to the Firepool redevelopment and additional east-west capacity for Taunton. Both major schemes have been included in the Government's programme for the 2006-2011 period.

9 Transport and Mobility

Policy T 8

The layout of North Street and The Parade will be revised to include additional bus stops, changes to footway and carriageway areas and improved provision for cyclists.

9.16 Once the Third Way is open, it will be possible to improve conditions for bus operation on The Parade and North Street, including additional or improved kerbside stops. The problems experienced by cyclists, who currently have to negotiate sett-paved areas, will also be addressed.

Public transport

9.17 Bus services from locations south of Taunton need to be extended northwards across the town centre to serve the strategic employment site at Firepool. To deliver a more integrated public transport system, they also need to serve the railway station. At the same time, buses from the north need to continue past the station area to serve the retail core. A high-quality bus/rail interchange is therefore needed at the railway station, together with a terminus for bus services close to the main shopping area.

Bus station

Policy T 9

The bus station should be redeveloped with an improved layout, passenger facilities and environment.

9.18 Studies carried out by Atkins for Somerset County Council have shown that to accommodate forecast growth in bus services to 2026, there is a continuing need for a bus station close to the retail core. Atkins have established that an approximately similar number of bus stands and layover spaces will be required throughout the Action Plan period.

9.19 The existing bus station in Tower Street is seen as the most attractive location in operational terms. Any change in this situation would require suitable alternatives to be put in place; at present, none are available.

Transport and Mobility 9

Bus Priority

Policy T 10

Measures to assist bus operation will be introduced in East Street, The Parade, North Street, Bridge Street and Corporation Street. Future development should make provision for bus priority between The Bridge and Taunton railway station.

9.20 Operating conditions for buses in the town centre are often poor, with congestion a significant problem. The Third Way will help by allowing buses to be given more priority in Corporation Street and North Street. However, priority measures also need to be extended on the core section from North Street to Firepool and the railway station. This is likely to involve a mix of improvements to existing streets, and in the longer term there is potential for a new bus priority routes through the Morrisons site when it is redeveloped, and through the new Station Boulevard. In this way, near-continuous bus priority could be provided between the railway station, the major developments and the town centre shopping area. This corridor is especially important because it serves deprived wards in North Taunton and will also carry buses serving future urban extensions.

Park and Ride

9.21 Following the success of Silk Mills Park and Ride, continued expansion of park and ride services is important to Taunton town centre. LTP2 includes £4.427M funding for the proposed Park and Ride site near Junction 25 of the M5, which will have 1000 spaces, and associated bus priority measures including East Reach Clearway.

Walking and Cycling

9.22 Existing levels of cycling in Taunton are high by national standards, but there is scope for further increase, given that many journeys are less than 2 miles long. Some parts of the town centre have poor cycle access. To improve this, the Action Plan aims to fill in missing links in the cycle network - for example, by tackling 'difficult' road junctions and completing the riverside paths in Tangier and Firepool. A new bridge across the railway, linking Firepool to North Taunton, is essential to connect deprived areas with employment and other opportunities in the town centre. There is also a shortage of cycle parking in many parts of the town centre.

9.23 An Access and Mobility Audit was carried out in Taunton town centre in early 2006. The results of this audit will guide improvements for pedestrians and cyclists. A key principle will be 'access for all' (including the mobility impaired) to buildings and sites, and in connecting sites to other parts of the town centre. The Third Way will allow significant improvements for pedestrians in Corporation Street, North Street and The Bridge. As a key shopping street in the retail core, East Street needs to be improved with wider footways, new pedestrian crossings and removal of on street car parking bays (Policy Hx). Other pedestrian improvements will be possible in Hammet Street and Church Square, an outstanding Conservation Area.

9 Transport and Mobility

Policy T 11

The following cycle schemes will be undertaken:

- a. Completion and upgrading of the north bank riverside path for shared use by pedestrians and cyclists
- b. Creation of cycle route between Vivary Park and Fore Street via Guildford Place and/or High Street
- c. Construction of cycle/pedestrian bridge across the railway east of Taunton station

Policy T 12

Additional cycle parking will be provided at suitable locations throughout the town centre.

Policy T 13

A comprehensive signing scheme will be introduced in the town centre to assist pedestrians and cyclists.

Transport and Mobility 9

Table 9.1 Transport and Mobility - Delivery on site 2007-2026

	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Third Way			█	█																
NIDR			█	█	█															
Signing scheme			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█									
Additional cycle parking			█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█									
Corporation Street				█	█	█														
North Street/Parade					█	█	█													
East Street					█	█	█													
North bank cycle path					█	█	█													
Vivary Park - Fore Street cycle route					█	█	█													
Cycle/pedestrian bridge over railway east of station					█	█	█													
Bus/rail interchange						█	█													
High Street MSCP							█	█	█	█										
The Crescent MSCP								█	█	█	█									
Bus station enhancements									█	█	█									
Priory Bridge Road MSCP										█	█	█								
Kilkenny MSCP											█	█	█							

10 Waterways and Flooding

Flooding

10.1 The River Tone passes through the centre of Taunton. Significant parts of central Taunton are at risk of flooding, and these include three of the four major sites for regeneration. The extent of the floodplain (1 in 100 year event plus climate change) is shown on the map of the town centre.

10.2 In response Project Taunton commissioned Black & Veatch to do a Flood Risk Management Statement for Taunton. This has identified solutions, involving a combination of off-site flood storage facilities and the on-site raising of ground levels, which will enable the town centre sites to be redeveloped. The flood storage facilities must be completed before the regeneration sites are developed. Land at Long Run Farm has been purchased to provide flood storage for Firepool, the Third Way scheme and part of Tangier.

10.3 There is potential in Goodland Gardens to set back the flood defences behind the Mill Stream to create a clear view down to the river from the gardens and introduce a stepped access down to the river.

10.4 Forward funding essential infrastructure is an important issue and imposes an additional burden on sites that are already costly to develop. Black and Veatch have been commissioned to do a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the whole of Taunton Deane as part of the baseline work that underpins the Local Development Framework. All development proposals must comply with the requirements of PPS25.

Policy F 1

All developments within the floodplain will be required to agree measures to mitigate loss of flood storage before development is commenced and implement them before the development is occupied.

The River Tone At The Heart Of The Town Centre

10.5 The river, canal and other waterways in the town centre present an opportunity to enhance the attractiveness of the town centre regeneration. In the past developments have turned their back on waterways, but one of Project Taunton's aims is to put the river at the heart of the town. The BIG Lottery Living Landmark bid for Somerset Waterlinks will help to deliver the Taunton Vision. Black and Veatch are preparing a River Tone Enhancement and Weirs Study.

10.6 The river, canal and other waterways are important wildlife habitats, mostly designated as County Wildlife Sites, harbouring notable species, including some European Protected Species. Development should be very sensitively designed and carried out to minimise impact on biodiversity. There are opportunities to improve tree cover and bankside vegetation throughout the river corridor by using soft engineering options to enhance biodiversity.

Waterways and Flooding 10

10.7 The existing weirs at Firepool and French Weir need to be replaced. Engineering options are the refurbishment of the French Weir structures or to remove the weir, construct a new channel for the River Tone upstream, a new sluice gate for the Mill Stream and a new lock to enable navigation in the existing river channel upstream. There is potential for a marina of between 50 and 100 berths upstream of French Weir in the green wedge. Vehicle access is necessary for maintenance of the river banks, weirs and structures.

10.8 The height of the replacement weir at Firepool could lower water levels by 200mm to improve the headroom under the town bridge and assist navigation. The Taunton/ Bridgwater Canal has been restored to navigation. Engineering options are to refurbish or to reconstruct Firepool weir on a new alignment, possibly incorporating hydro power generation. Improved weir design and reduced channel width could reduce the amount of silt that accumulates and enable debris to be flushed through at times of high flow. There is potential to improve navigation including a lock from the canal to the downstream channel of the River and new moorings through Taunton with better pedestrian access and less steep channel sides.

10.9 Engineering options for the Mill Stream are to refurbish the existing Mill Stream outlet structures or to remove the outlet structures altogether or to shorten the Mill Stream to divert it back into the River Tone before it flows into Goodland Gardens, keeping the lower section as an ornamental body of water in front of Taunton Castle.

10.10 The existing slipway alongside Lidl should be reoriented to prevent silt from being deposited on the ramp. The canoe club building at Firepool and the canoe store at Tangier Scout and Guide Centre are likely to be affected by redevelopment proposals and the Third Way respectively. Replacement slipways and canoe facilities need to be provided. There is potential to construct a white water canoe chute at Firepool to provide access to the downstream River Tone channel. Weir structures need to include new fish passes for coarse and salmonid fish species. The provision of angling areas, including provision for disabled angling stations is desirable in appropriate locations. Two public conveniences at Goodland Gardens and at Firepool may also require to be replaced.

10.11 The river banks must be designed to provide for wildlife use through a mix of hard surfacing such as wharves and soft landscaped areas, with an appropriate buffer maintained between the water and any hard surfacing. Sensitive recreational use of the river and riverbanks will be important. The existing footbridge and pedestrian facilities at Goodland Gardens do not provide wheelchair access. New footbridges will be required at French Weir, Goodland Gardens and Firepool. Pedestrian and cycleway opportunities along the south bank of the river require improvement. In some areas building out the walkway over the waterfront with a boardwalk could be considered.

Policy F 2

Contributions will be sought from developments in Taunton towards the enhancement of the river corridor and implementation of schemes to manage the flow and enhance navigation, environmental, public access and public safety opportunities identified in the River Tone Enhancement and Weirs Study.

11 Excellent Development

11.1 The Borough Council strives to be an 'exemplar authority', creating a built environment for living, working and recreation at the forefront of design and sustainability. This is a theme of Project Taunton and is in keeping with the towns status as a major growth area and hub for the region.

11.2 The scale of development opportunities identified in this AAP requires a high-quality approach to all aspects of the overall design, including height, scale, massing, materials, frontage treatment servicing arrangements and future adaptability as integral elements of the design process. In some areas an innovative approach to building design will be encouraged whilst in others it will be more important to reflect the existing historic character. Public spaces between buildings and streets are also important to provide an attractive sense of place and designed to maximise the opportunities to reduce crime. The policies and text in the AAP set out the basic design requirements for town centre redevelopment opportunities. These are amplified in the Borough Councils Design Code SPD which focuses on the key principles of sustainable place making set out in CABI's 'By Design' publication: Character, Continuity and Enclosure, Quality of the Public Realm, Ease of Movement, Legibility, Adaptability, Diversity, Urban Structure and Grain, Landscape, Density and Mix, Scale/Height/Massing and Appearance/Details/Materials. The SPD should be used in the formulation of development proposals and will be a key tool in the Councils assessment of the acceptability of any submitted scheme.

Policy ED 1

Design

New development should be designed to be appropriate and sensitive to its context, with decisions informed by relevant policies and text in the AAP and the adopted Town Centre Design Code Supplementary Planning Document.

11.3 The Borough Council promotes and supports excellence in public art as an integral element of the design of buildings and development and enhancement of the public realm. The Council will seek to ensure that developers commission an experienced public artist to deliver a work of public art to a brief agreed with the Borough Council within sites and locations identified in the Design Code SPD. If this is not achieved or the site has not been identified in the SPD, one percentage of development costs will be secured towards the provision of public art and enhancement of the public realm on all residential schemes over 15 units or commercial development (retail, leisure or employment) in excess of 2500 square metres gross. Provision shall also be made for community consultation and maintenance.

Excellent Development 11

Policy ED 2

Public Art

All developments in excess of 15 residential units or 2500 square metres (gross) of commercial floorspace will be required to commission and integrate public art into the design of buildings and the public realm.

11.4 Within these design principles stated above, the town centre will be characterised by a mix of uses, not by large areas of "mono-use" or single activities. The range of uses will accommodate the needs of a variety of people from the elderly and disabled to families and youth. It is important to encourage a mix of uses that support activity by day and night. Active ground floor uses in key areas and frontages will be required, for example shops, cafes, bars and similar activities, to encourage movement through the street and add to the vitality and viability of the area. This will require the coordination of planning and other services such as Environmental Health, Licensing and the Police to ensure that any proposed mix of uses do not unreasonably impact on the amenity of other occupiers and users.

Policy ED 3

Mixed Use

The major regeneration sites identified in the AAP shall all be required to incorporate a mix of uses. Individual proposals forming part of a larger site must make provision for active ground floor frontages along major routes and street corners, as indicated on the Proposals Map. These will be informed by the Design Code SPD.

In meeting the challenge of climate change the Borough Council will require that buildings themselves are also designed and constructed in a sustainable manner. Applicants will need to demonstrate their commitment to reducing the ecological footprint of their development by adopting a range of measures, including sustainable construction techniques, recycling and waste reduction opportunities, water and energy efficiency and management, use of renewable energy and adaptability to climate change. In order to achieve this the Council will as a minimum, apply policies G and RE5 of the Regional Spatial Strategy in the determination of development proposals.

11.5 On sites controlled by the Borough Council there is an expectation that the requirements of policy X will be exceeded and carbon neutrality sought.

11 Excellent Development

Policy ED 4

Combating Climate Change through new development

The Borough Council will apply the principles and requirements of policies G and RE5 of the Regional Spatial Strategy in the consideration and determination of proposals for development of new/refurbished buildings.

If the developer is unable to meet these requirements due to financial viability, the developer will be required to submit full details of costing's to the Borough Council and pay for independent verification of these figures.

Training and Skills 12

Introduction

12.1 The Town Centre Area Action Plan has an important role to play in helping to deliver on a range of local employment priorities. These include:

- Providing a broader range of jobs, and particularly jobs within creative industries and the knowledge sector so helping to improve local pay (refer to policies xyz)
- Provision of training and generally helping to improve the range of local skills
- Helping deprived communities with access to employment and training

Training & Skills

12.2 Improving skills for those in work and reducing worklessness is a priority within the Somerset Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA identifies deprived communities as being a particular area of focus for action. At the local level, the Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) prioritises the need to address low wage levels and low skills levels.

12.3 These priorities are consistent with the draft Taunton Deane Economic Development Strategy (EDS). Both the SCS and EDS note that particular focus should be given to North Taunton and Taunton East, both of which demonstrate levels of multiple deprivation within the top 25% in England. This deprivation is exacerbated by the low wage / low skills character of local economy.

12.4 The priorities within the SCS are to be addressed by specific actions. These actions seek to:

- maximise the potential to create high wage, high skills jobs (within the private sector and especially creative industries / environmental technologies based industries)
- ensuring joined up working between public, private and voluntary sectors to maximise the benefits for local people of major projects and developments (e.g. Project Taunton); and
- bring about a greater proportion of local people employed within the construction phase of major projects in the Borough receiving work-based skills training.

12.5 Both the SCS and the EDS identify a need to work with Project Taunton to develop a Local Work & Skills Project to ensure that work opportunities and training is provided to local residents and particularly those from North Taunton and Taunton East. The target is to achieve 5% of build phase workforce on Project Taunton sites to be recruited from the local labour force, and to develop a skills training and development programme that seeks to achieve progress to certificated learning and skills training in construction trades for a minimum of 50% of those recruited locally throughout the build-phase of each major project.

12.6 There is significant evidence from the Construction Industry Training Board (South West) that low skills and training levels in the recent past have left the construction and allied trades sector short of suitably qualified and experienced labour. This is replicated within Taunton Deane.

12 Training and Skills

Policy TS 1

Training and Skills

The Borough Council and its partner organisations will address low wages and low skills levels by working with developers and employers to jointly improve local skills by undertaking the following:

- a. All developers and partners will be required to invest in apprenticeship training schemes on construction projects in excess of (x ha) or (y sq m) for construction related skills with a target of ensuring that a minimum of 5% of all construction jobs are sourced from the local area
- b. All developers and partners will be required to invest in relevant apprenticeship training schemes for construction and/or allied trades skills and learning that provides for individual workers to achieve certificated improvements. These figures will be drawn from the 5% of workforce indicated at A) above, of which a minimum of 50% of the workforce number will achieve certificated progress

12.7 Policy TS1 is applicable to all allocated sites (employment, retail, housing) with a size that is greater than (x ha) or (y sq m). Its delivery will be secured through a Section 106 agreement that shall be agreed between the developer, Taunton Deane Borough Council, Somerset College of Arts and Technology (SCAT) and the local Learning and Skills Council.

12.8 The Section 106 agreement shall require the developer and partners to prepare and agree the content of the following prior to commencement on site:

1. A workforce skills assessment (WSA) and a workforce training plan, which shall be prepared in consultation with TDBC, SCAT, LSC, Taunton East Development Trust and North Taunton Partnership
2. Developers and partners shall be required to invest in construction related training and ensure that a minimum of 5% of all construction related jobs are sourced from the local area (Taunton Deane post codes) with particular focus on North Taunton and Taunton East
3. Each plan (see 1. above) will identify the targeted skills and seek to achieve certificated progress for a minimum of 50% of those local workers included within the 5% figure indicated at 2. above.
4. Training Providers and training plans, will need to gain the approval of the local CITB "centre" and the Somerset LSC
5. Such approval will need to be documented and gained prior to commencement on site.

12.9 It will be a central feature of this policy that local Community Development organisations should be both a potential deliverer of "base level" work readiness training where this appropriate, as well as the provider of services to developers to attract and recruit a potential workforce pool for consideration by site developers.

Training and Skills 12

12.10 Still being negotiated:

12.11 Role of partners: SCAT / LSC. Detail to be included in final Submission document

12.12 SCAT and the LSC shall contribute towards the cost of providing the training. Construction related training will be provided on site, and provide opportunities to develop skills from basic through to advanced. Delivering training and skills to residents of North Taunton and Taunton East needs to be considered alongside the need to improve access between these areas and the town centre (refer to Chapter x).

13 Phasing

13.1 The Action Plan proposes major developments across the town centre and includes complex transport schemes as well as land development projects. The Plan covers the period 2006-2026 and its proposals will be phased within this time-frame.

13.2 Although the precise timing of some events is uncertain, there is usually a clear sequence of actions. For example, on sites in the floodplain, no development can happen until alleviation measures are in place. Another example is the High Street retail development, which relies on existing occupiers, such as the public library, first being relocated.

13.3 Key infrastructure projects, notably the Third Way and Northern Inner Distributor Road, will be short-term priorities because other actions depend on them. 'Short-term' is likely to mean in the first five years of the AAP (to 2011). For example, once the Third Way has been opened, improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and buses can be introduced on the main town centre streets. Some developments already have planning permission, such as the housing and employment uses at Firepool Lock, and housing in Tangier on the former gas works. Other proposals, such as development at the Cricket Club and the Riverside area at Firepool, are also actively progressing, and are expected to start before 2011.

13.4 In terms of development, early priorities are the strategic employment site at Firepool and the High Street retail scheme. The new employment and retail space, which these sites can provide in sustainable locations, are key to regenerating the town centre and meeting the needs of Taunton's growing population over the LDF period.

13.5 Multi-storey car parks are going to be needed sooner in areas where the existing surface car parks are about to be developed. The MSCPs at Firepool, and High Street therefore likely to be needed in the short to medium term. Other development schemes are less dependent on provision of new MSCPs, although alternative transport measures, such as travel plans, park and ride, cycling or public transport, may still be necessary before they can proceed.

13.6 Sites in private ownership on the north bank of the river are likely to be developed after those at Firepool and High Street. This implies some time after 2011, although action to start the process, such as further work on urban design and commercial feasibility studies, is likely before then. Relocating existing occupiers is an issue in some cases, but the sites are important, both to provide extra floorspace that will be needed later in the LDF period, and potentially to relocate occupiers displaced from elsewhere .

13.7 The timing of projects, especially for public space, leisure and culture, will depend on resources. Flexibility is needed to respond to funding opportunities and to allow time to put together funding packages. Phasing is not meant to be a rigid blueprint, and the Borough Council will adopt a positive approach where developers wish to progress schemes earlier than anticipated.

Phasing 13

13.8 The table below is a summary of the major proposals for development, transport and the public realm, expected timescales and issues needing to be addressed.

Firepool

Policy FP1

Table 13.1 FP1 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Riverside	Project Taunton	Private Developer Housing Corporation	TDBC
Year			
Late 2007	Livestock market to relocate		
2008	Closure of Priory Bridge Road car park		
2008-9	Relocate Produce Market		
2008-9	Development to commence		
2009-10	Assemble land to complete Boulevard link to railway station, using CPO if required		
2010-16	Phased development of site		

Policy FP4

Table 13.2 FP4 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Firepool Lock	Private Developer	Private Sector investment	Private developer
Year			
2007	Detailed planning application for development		
2009-12	Development in parallel with and following construction of Northern Inner Distributer Road		

13 Phasing

Policy FP5

Table 13.3 FP5 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
South Side station approach, including bus/rail interchange	Project Taunton	Rail Industry New Growth Point Other public funding Planning obligations	Network Rail
Year			
2008-9	Agree with Network Rail the overall arrangement for station access and servicing		
2012-3	Relocate all or some long-stay rail user car parking to the West Yard to enable release of area needed for enhanced link to Firepool, bus interchange and associated development		
2012-3	Commercial development of frontage land to NIDR and station approach, including active uses at ground floor level		
2013-4	Carry out overall enhancement scheme for area bounded by the station buildings, Great Western House, and the proposed new development adjacent to the NIDR, including enhanced bus interchange		
2014 onwards	If required, provide additional bus stops and layover space for buses		

Phasing 13

Policy FP6

Table 13.4 FP6 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
West Yard	Network Rail	Rail Industry New Growth Point Planning obligations	Network Rail
Year			
2007-8	Agree with Network rail the area to be retained for operational railway use		
2011	Access available from the Northern Inner Distributor road (to be constructed 2009-2011)		
2012-3	Lay out plateau area of site for rail user car parking		
2016-7	Transfer rail user parking to proposed Kilkenny MSCP		
2017 onwards	Remove Station Road retaining wall, regard frontage and landscape		
2017 onwards	Market and develop site for travel related uses including a potential budget hotel		

Policy FP7

Table 13.5 FP7 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Former Cameron Dixon engineering works	Private Developer	Private developer	Private owner
Year			
2011	Completion of NIDR providing site with a primary street frontage		
2016 onwards	Phased redevelopment of site		

13 Phasing

Policy FP8

Table 13.6 FP8 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
North Side station approach	Network Rail	Rail industry Other public funding	Network Rail
Year			
2016-7	Repave and enhance carriageway and parking areas between Station Road and Clifton Terrace		

Policy FP9

Table 13.7 FP9 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Kilkenny	TDBC	Private developer Housing Corporation New Growth Point TDBC Rail Industry New Growth Point	Network Rail
Year			
2011 onwards	Agree joint development of the existing surface car park with Network Rail		
2016 onwards	Seek private development partner to construct the car park and associated residential development		
2017 onwards	Construction		

Phasing 13

Policy FP10

Table 13.8 FP10 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Land north of railway	Network Rail	Private developer	Network Rail
Year			
	Redevelopment depends on existing rail-related uses ceasing, on which there is no current information		

Cricket Club/Coal Orchard/Morrisons

Policy C1

Table 13.9 C1 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
County Cricket Ground	Somerset County Cricket Club	Private sector investment Housing Corporation	Somerset County Cricket Club
Year			
Summer 2007	Planning permission for Phases 1 and 2 of ground redevelopment		
Autumn 2007 onwards	Phase 1 development (west side of ground)		
2008-9	Enhancement of 'Somerset Square' between ground and Brewhouse Theatre		
2008-9	Phase 2 development (St. James Street/Priory Avenue)		
After 2011	Phase 3 development - requires acquisition and redevelopment of commercial properties in St. Augustine Street		

13 Phasing

Policy C2

Table 13.10 C2 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Coal Orchard	Project Taunton	Private developer Housing Corporation	TDBC
Year			
2008	Market site		
2009 onwards	Progressively close existing surface car park to enable development to take place		
From 2011	Development of existing car park area to commence		
After 2011	Close St James Pool when replacement town centre pool is available and incorporate site in redevelopment proposal		

Policy C3

Table 13.11 C3 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Brewhouse Theatre	Project Taunton	Lottery Charitable fund raising Other public funding Planning Obligations	TDBC
Year			
To be completed by end of 2007	Feasibility study into enlarged and improved theatre		

Phasing 13

Policy C4

Table 13.12 C4 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Lower Middle Street enhancements	Project Taunton	Public funding New Growth Point	Highway Land
Year			
2010	Public consultation on design options		
2011-3	Following completion of the Third Way, enhance footway and carriageway surfaces between the existing block paved area in Middle Street and Church Square.		

Policy C5

Table 13.13 C5 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Morrison's	Project Taunton	Private sector investment Housing Corporation	Private owners
Year			
2008-9	Commission feasibility studies of redevelopment potential		
	Identify private development partner		
	Assemble land needed to resolve access and other issues		
	Possible compulsory purchase of land if no agreement with owners		
2016 onwards	Commence development		

13 Phasing

Tangier

Policy Tg1 Lidl

Table 13.14 Tg1/1 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Lidl - redevelopment of existing store	Project Taunton	Private sector investment Housing Corporation	Private - to be acquired by TDBC
Year			
Autumn 2007	Planning application to relocate. Borough Council to acquire the site		
2008-9	Lidl store relocated		
2010-1	Redevelopment of site to commence		

Policy Tg1 Poundstretcher

Table 13.15 Tg1/2 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Poundstretcher	Project Taunton	Private sector investment Housing Corporation	Private owner
Year			
2012 onwards	Redevelopment of site		

Phasing 13

Policy Tg1 Land at Greenbrook Terrace

Table 13.16 Tg1/3 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Land at Greenbrook Terrace	TDBC	Private sector investment Housing Corporation	TDBC
Year			
2008	Close existing public car park to allow construction of the Third Way		
2008-9	Construct Third Way		
2009	Relocate existing depot for street sweepers		
2010-1	Relocate existing business occupying north west corner of the site		
2011-2	Market site for housing development		
2012-3	Redevelopment of site		

Policy Tg1 Land between Third Way and River Tone

Table 13.17 Tg1/4 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Land between Third Way and River Tone	TDBC	LTP3 Other public funding Planning obligations	TDBC
Year			
2009	Completion of Third Way		
2011-2	Landscape area between Third Way and existing riverside path		
2011-2	Widen and upgrade existing riverside path		
After 2012	Construct replacement slipway facing downstream		

13 Phasing

Policy Tg2 Land fronting River Tone (Area 1)

Table 13.18 Tg2 Area 1 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Land fronting River Tone (former Gas Works)	Private developer (Midas Homes)	Private sector investment	Private owner
Year			
2007-8	Planning permission for redevelopment		
2008-10	Development of site for housing		

Policy Tg2 (Areas 2,3,4,5,7 and 8)

Table 13.19 Tg2 Areas 2,3,4,5,7 and 8 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Enfield car park	TDBC	Private sector investment	TDBC
Castle Street car park	Private owners	Housing Corporation	TDBC

Phasing 13

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Tangier car park Land next to Mill Stream Parkhaven Hickley Valtone			Private owners
Year			
2007	Design Code SPD to address how sites can physically be developed for mixed uses, including large format retail space		
2009	Completion of Third Way allows long-term access to the sites		
2009	Market publicly owned sites for development		
2009-11	Development of Tangier car park for housing		
2011-3	Development of Castle street and Enfield car parks for mixed housing/retail		
2012-4	Redevelopment of Hickley Valtone site for mixed housing/retail		
2013-4	Redevelopment of privately-owned land alongside the Mill Stream for housing		
2016 onwards	Redevelopment of Parkhaven for housing		

13 Phasing

Policy Tg2 Area 6

Table 13.20 Tg2 Area 6 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Former TYCC	Project Taunton	Private sector investment Housing Corporation	TDBC (60%) SCC (40%) TYCC trustees
Year			
Autumn 2007	Planning application for redevelopment		
2009-10	Construction of new buildings		
2009 onwards	Receipts from development used to provide new youth facilities elsewhere in the town centre		

Policy Tg3

Table 13.21 Tg3 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Tesco	Tesco	Private sector investment Housing Corporation	Tesco TDBC
Year			
Summer 2007	Planning policy for development to be included in submission version of Action Plan		
2012-4	Develop enlarged food store in line with need identified in Retail Capacity, together with associated car parking and residential development		

Phasing 13

Policy Tg4 and T5

Table 13.22 Tg4, T5 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Transport Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Third Way	SCC	LTP2 Planning obligations	TDBC SCC Private owners
Year			
August-November 2007	Planning application for construction of road		
2008-9	Construction of road		

Goodland Gardens and Castle Green

Policy G1, G2

Table 13.23 G1, G2 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Public Realm Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Goodland Gardens and Castle Green	Project Taunton	Lottery TDBC New Growth Point Other public funding	TDBC
Year			
February 2010	Remodelled Goodland Gardens completed		
2010	Existing Castle Green car park to close		
2010-11	Creation of enhanced Castle Green public space		
2012-3	Relocate Castle way bus stops		

13 Phasing

Policy G3

Table 13.24 G3 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Bus Station	Project Taunton	Private sector investment Public funding	First Group TDBC
Year			

Policy G4

Table 13.25 G4 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Public Realm Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Corporation Street	SCC	LTP3 New Growth Points Other public funding	Highway land
Year			
2010	Public consultation on design options		
2010-11	Following completion of Third Way, widen footways and enhance paved surfaces. Remodel junction between Corporation Street and Tower Street to create 'gateway'		

Phasing 13

High Street and East Street

Policy H1 (Land east of High Street)

Table 13.26 H1 East of High Street Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Land east of High Street	Private developer	Private sector investment	TDBC Dawnay Day
Yearlication			
2010	Earliest likely date for submission of planning application		
2011	Earliest likely date for commencement of development		
2014	Earliest likely date for completion of development		

Policy H1 (Land west of High Street)

Table 13.27 H1 West of High Street Site Delivery 2007-2026

Development Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Land east of High Street	Private developer	Private sector investment	TDBC Standard Life
Year			
2010	Earliest likely date for submission of planning application		
2012	Earliest likely date for commencement of development		
2014	Earliest likely date for completion of development		

13 Phasing

Policy H2

Table 13.28 H2 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Public Realm Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
High Street	Project Taunton	Public funding Planning obligations	Highway land
Year			
2011	Public consultation on design options		
2011	Evaluate options for cycle route between Vivary Park and Fore Steet, via Guildford Place/and/or High Street		
2012-3	Provide enhanced pedestrian crossing of Upper High Street, linking High Street and Vivary Park		
2012-3	Remodelling of existing pedestrianised High Street area		
2012-3	Provide cycle route between Vivary Park and Fore Street, via Guildford Place and/or High Street		

Policy H3

Table 13.29 H3 East Street Site Delivery 2007-2026

Public Realm Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
East Street	SCC	LTP3 New Growth Point Other public funding	Highway land
Year			
2010	Public consultation on design options		
2011-2	Following completion of Third way, widen footways, enhance paved surfaces and introduce landscaping Remodel junction between East Reach and Hurdle Way		

Phasing 13

Policy H4

Table 13.30 H4 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Public Realm Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Hammet Street/Church Square/Magdalene Street/Whirligig Lane enforcements	Project Taunton	Public funding New Growth Point	Highway land
Year			
2010	Public consultation on design options		
2011-3	Following completion of Third way, enhance footway and carriageway surfaces		

Policy H5

Table 13.31 H5 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Transport Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Paul Street - junction with Mary Street and Billetfield	Project Taunton	LTP3 Planning obligations	Highway land
Year			
2013-4	Revise junction layout and introduce pedestrian phases in accordance with recommendations in Taunton Access and Mobility Audit. Works timed to coincide with completion of the High Street retail scheme.		

13 Phasing

Transport and Mobility

Policy T7

Table 13.32 T7 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Transport Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Northern Inner Distributor Road	SCC	LTP2 Planning obligations	Network Rail Abbey Manor
Year			
April - July 2008	Planning application for construction of road		
Mid-2009	Start on road construction		

Policy T8

Table 13.33 T8 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Transport Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
North Street/Parade	SCC	LTP3 New Growth Point Other public funding	Highway land
Year			
2010	Public consultation on design options		
2011-2	Amend kerblines and bus stop provision following completion of Third Way, in parallel with enhanced interchange at the railway station, and to permit revision to bus services to increase number of services to Firepool and railway station		

Phasing 13

Policy T11

Table 13.34 T11 Site Delivery 2007-2026

Transport Proposal	Lead Agency	Funding Agency	Landowner
Cycle Schemes	SCC	LTP2, LTP3 New Growth Point Other public funding Planning obligatins	Private owners
Year			
2011-2	Completion and upgrading of the north bank riverside path for shared use by pedestrians and cyclists		
2012-3	Provision of cycle route(s) between Vivary Park and Fore Street via Guildford Place and/or High Street		
2012-3	Construction of cycle/pedestrian bridge across railway east of Taunton station		

14 Delivery/Section 106 Strategy

14.1 A range of actions must be taken to deliver the development and transport schemes proposed for Taunton Town Centre. The lead role is being taken by Project Taunton, which includes representatives from the Borough Council and the Regional Development Agency (SWRDA). The County Council and Environment Agency are equal partners and other service providers are represented within the Taunton Deane Local Strategic Partnership.

Feasibility Studies

14.2 Further urban design and development feasibility studies will be commissioned as necessary to help bring forward sites for development.

Land Assembly

14.3 Although the Borough Council owns much of the land needed in the town centre, some key sites are in private ownership, and the Council may sometimes need to use compulsory powers to assemble sites. In addition, SWRDA is funding the Council's purchase of land for the Firepool development, with negotiations carried out by Project Taunton.

Planning Obligations

14.4 'Planning Obligations' from developers under S106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by S12 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991) will be needed to deliver the proposals in the TCAAP. Planning obligations made under S106 comprise both obligations and unilateral undertakings.

14.5 A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Planning Obligations is currently being prepared. The TCAAP sets out the general policy that will apply in respect of planning obligations on sites within Taunton Town Centre.

14.6 Government advice on the use of S106 is contained within Circular 5/05 'Planning Obligations' (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, July 2005). Circular 05/2005 states the following:

14.7 Planning obligations must be:

- Relevant to planning
- Necessary from a planning policy context
- Directly related to the proposed development
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development
- Reasonable in all other respects.

14.8 Planning obligations can be used generally to secure development which is acceptable in terms of planning policy through prescription of set standards, e.g. affordable housing targets. They can also be used to mitigate the impact of development, especially in relation to the need for infrastructure. Planning obligations can also be used to compensate for the loss of an existing resource and as commuted sums towards the cost of maintaining defined facilities.

Delivery/Section 106 Strategy 14

14.9 In the event of Planning Gain Supplement (PGS) being introduced, with a corresponding scaling back of the scope of planning obligations, revenue from PGS will be used to deliver the measures for Taunton town centre identified in this Action Plan.

Overall approach

14.10 The approach adopted towards Planning obligations will follow the detailed service based policy, described in Circular 05/05. The basis of the approach is to develop detailed Supplementary Planning Guidance (now Supplementary Planning Documents). Contributions will be based on formulae and standard charges that will vary according to the type of development and its location. The Planning Obligations SPD for Taunton Deane is expected to be adopted in April 2009.

14.11 Affordable housing, and contributions towards flood alleviation and off-site public realm, are matters to be negotiated individually on each site.

14.12 Priorities for developer funding in Taunton town centre (not listed in any particular order) are:

- a. Flood alleviation
- b. Highways
- c. Sustainable transport
- d. Off-site public realm
- e. Public car parking
- f. Affordable housing
- g. Recreational open space
- h. Built sports facilities
- i. Education
- j. Training & skills

14.13 Where development is sufficiently profitable, contributions to other elements, such as education, sport and cultural facilities, will also be sought. Venues such as theatres, art galleries and swimming pools, all increase the 'offer' that Taunton can provide and increase its attraction as a place to live and work.

14.14 Many development sites contain existing public conveniences. Where relocation of these is required, they should normally be designed as an integral part of any new development and provided at a cost to the developer.

Residential Development

14.15 Residential development in Taunton Town Centre will normally have to provide affordable housing, and contribute in proportion to the need for education, play areas and open space, and travel demand management.

14.16 Affordable housing will be sought on the basis set down in Policies H9 and H10 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan. However, a minimum size threshold of 15 dwellings will be applied (rather than the 25 referred to in the Local Plan), with a target of 25% of the dwellings on each site being affordable.

14 Delivery/Section 106 Strategy

14.17 Delivery of affordable units will be through Registered Social Landlords, normally the Council's partnering RSLs, for social rented and shared ownership/equity properties. Discounted market housing (at prices meeting the Council's affordability criteria) might be sold directly by developers to qualifying households. Funding from the Housing Corporation would be expected to part-subsidise the social rented and shared ownership/equity properties.

14.18 Contributions to open space will be sought from residential developments in line with the relevant strategies. Where provision cannot be made on site, contributions will be spent at the nearest site to the development that can accommodate additional provision and usage. These will normally be within 300m of the development for small children's play, and 1200m for teenage provision.

Delivery/Section 106 Strategy 14

Table 14.1 Residential development - types of planning obligation

	Should form part of the scheme	Needed for proper planning of the area	Measures to be secured through S106
Flood alleviation			✓
Travel demand management			✓
On-site highways and parking	✓		
Off-site highway infrastructure			✓
Education			✓
Affordable housing		✓	
Public transport revenue and capital			✓
Recreational open space			✓
Built sports facilities			✓
Training and skills			✓
On-site public realm	✓		
Off-site public realm			✓

Commercial Development

14.19 Employment and leisure developments in Taunton are not usually profitable enough to fund extensive off-site works. Town centre retail development is often more profitable, but can also face high on-site costs. For example, a major retail development in the High Street area will need to provide multi-storey car parking and relocate displaced occupiers. For these reasons, planning obligations for commercial uses will normally relate directly to the physical development of a particular site.

14 Delivery/Section 106 Strategy

Table 14.2 Commercial development - types of planning obligation

	Should form part of the scheme	Needed for proper planning of the area	Measures to be secured through S106
Flood alleviation			✓
Travel demand management			✓
On-site highways and parking	✓		
Public transport revenue and capital			✓
Training and skills			✓
On-site public realm	✓		
Public art			✓

Approach to Viability

14.20 The Borough Council recognises that development cannot always afford the full range of benefits sought by the community. It will take account of development viability, but will expect an 'open book' approach from developers. Where viability is a constraint, priority will be given to funding those measures needed to make development physically possible.

Pooling of contributions

14.21 Planning authorities can pool contributions from individual developers either to help finance future provision or to offset the costs of infrastructure provided by the local authority in order to provide the needed capacity for subsequent developments to proceed. In both cases, contributions need to be directly related to the development and fair and reasonable.

The need for the joint supporting infrastructure, and the likelihood that contributions will be required, will be set out in advance. A clear audit trail will be demonstrated between the contribution made and the infrastructure provided.

Forward Funding

14.22 Opportunities will be explored for forward funding of infrastructure. It is not practical to seek substantial sums from developers in advance of development because of the strain that this puts on their cashflows, but there is often a need for substantial expenditure, most typically on highways, before development can proceed. SWRDA has made a joint

Delivery/Section 106 Strategy 14

approach with SEEDA to the Government to set up a Regional Infrastructure Fund (RIF) with could undertake the role of 'banker', with funding being clawed back from subsequent developments. A decision is not expected before the Comprehensive Spending Review decision in the autumn of 2007, but if it proceeds the Borough Council will look for opportunities to use this approach in Taunton Town Centre.

14.23 The Borough Council will also aim to secure funding from the New Growth Points scheme for projects which cannot be funded from development or from other sources.

14.24 Contributions from developments outside the Action Plan

14.25 Creating an attractive higher order service centre is part of the quality of life package required for major growth to be successful. Taunton town centre provides services for the whole of Taunton Deane and beyond. Where there is a functional or geographical link, development elsewhere in the Borough will also be expected to contribute to the costs of town centre infrastructure and services.

15 Monitoring Framework

Introduction

15.1 To monitor the implementation of the Area Action Plan, a series of indicators have been derived. These seek to measure the effectiveness of the policies within the Area Action Plan. The indicators have therefore been derived to monitor performance in relation to the eight Area Action Plan objectives, as described in Section x of this document and repeated below.

15.2 Where possible the indicators selected correspond with those specified by Government as Local Development Framework Core Output Indicators and will therefore already be collected for the whole Borough by the Council (these are indicated by an asterisk *).

Plan Objectives and Output Indicators

Plan Objective 1

A regenerated town centre that attracts residents from all parts of the Borough, as well as visitors from within the south-west region and beyond

- The regeneration of the town centre will facilitate Taunton achieving status as a Strategically Significant Town, in compliance with the Regional Spatial Strategy
- The town centre will appeal to a wide range of people of different ages, cultures and groups
- The town centre will provide for and attract visitors to the wider area, including Wellington and the rural hinterland

Table 15.1 Plan Objective 1 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets

Monitoring Framework 15

Plan Objective 2

A strategic employment location offering a wide choice of jobs

- The town centre will provide 80,000 sq m of new business development that fosters enterprise and skills development and provides enhanced, diversified and better paid employment opportunities
- Training and employment opportunities will be filtered through to disadvantaged communities

Table 15.2 Plan Objective 2 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets

Plan Objective 3

A strategic retail centre offering a comprehensive shopping experience

- The town centre will be the priority location to accommodate the required additional floorspace as identified in the Retail Capacity Study
- The town centre's regional retail ranking will be maintained
- There will be diverse and frequent outdoor markets
- There will be an expansion of specialist niche shopping outlets

15 Monitoring Framework

Table 15.3 Plan Objective 3 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets
Footfall	Increase of 5% by x (figs collected by Town Centre Company)

Plan Objective 4

A centre of excellence for leisure, culture and the arts

- The Brewhouse Theatre will be enhanced and extended
- Taunton Museum will be enhanced and extended
- A new relocated library will be provided
- A new relocated public swimming pool will be provided
- Public art will be provided within major development sites at Gateway locations
- The redevelopment of the Somerset County Cricket Ground will provide an international standard cricket facility together with a new indoor cricket school, apartments, leisure and conference facilities
- All development sites and areas of public space will provide opportunities for play and recreation

Monitoring Framework 15

Table 15.4 Plan Objective 4 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets

Plan Objective 5

A town centre that maximises the potential of the River Tone

- All development adjoining the River Tone and its environs will be of exceptional design quality, befitting the unique opportunities provided by the waterside setting
- Improvements to bankside vegetation and tree cover will be incorporated into the design of development that adjoins the River Tone, in order to maintain and improve biodiversity including the presence of European Protected Species and other important species
- The enjoyment of the River Tone will be maximised through improvements to navigation and the creation of adjoining public spaces that provide for play, leisure, and recreation
- There will be provision for better public access to the waterside, together with an improved maintenance regime

15 Monitoring Framework

Table 15.5 Plan Objective 5 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets
Number of Daubenton's bats using the River Tone	Maintain and enhance the existing population of Daubenton's Bat within the environment of the River Tone
Presence of otters within the environment of the River Tone	Maintain presence of otters within the environment of the River Tone

Plan Objective 6

A town centre that is well connected and less congested

- A comprehensive and integrated footpath and cycleway network will be provided, together with improved signage and cycle parking facilities
- The bus station and other waiting facilities will be enhanced to make them attractive, comfortable and convenient
- Improved bus services that are convenient, frequent, direct and that provide better connectivity with rail services
- Implementation of a car park strategy that reduces the amount of town centre commuter parking whilst maintaining good access for short stay shoppers and visitors
- Delivery of the Inner Relief Road (the Third Way) and the Northern Inner Distributor Road
- Implementation of further pedestrian priority within the town centre
- Access from disadvantaged communities to the town centre will be improved

Monitoring Framework 15

Table 15.6 Plan Objective 6 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets
Improved pedestrian and cycle signage	Review of signage to be complete by x. Improvements to commence by x

Plan Objective 7

A regional centre of excellence for sustainable design

- Sustainable construction techniques will be required for all development proposals
- Greater energy efficiency and on-site renewable techniques will be required for all new and refurbished buildings to assist in reducing carbon emissions
- Development will be water efficient, designed to minimise flood risk and increase opportunities for biodiversity
- Key entrance locations to the town centre will be developed as attractive gateways, to welcome and encourage visitors
- Open civic space will be provided in the core of the town centre and be useable for community and civic events
- There will be investment in new and existing public green spaces to maximise opportunities for play and recreation
- All development will be of "Universal Design" to create an environment that is accessible to all
- All public realm and new buildings will be of exceptional design quality to create a unique sense of place that will inspire a strong sense of pride and admiration among residents, workers and visitors

15 Monitoring Framework

Table 15.7 Plan Objective 7 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets
Net additional dwellings per year*	
Percentage of dwellings completed at: Between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare Above 50 dwellings per hectare*	
Number of affordable housing completions*	

Plan Objective 8

A town centre that is home to many more people

- At least x new homes will be built in the town centre
- New homes will cater for all sectors of the community, including at least x affordable homes
- Opportunities for new housing will be maximised, consistent with the delivery of other land uses
- Opportunities for mixed use development, in particular making use of upper floors of housing will be maximised

Table 15.8 Plan Objective 8 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets

Monitoring Framework 15

Plan Objective 9

A well-managed town centre

- The town centre will be well managed, cleaned and maintained
- There will be a holistic and coordinated approach to town centre management, licensing and policing to ensure that the town centre is safe and welcoming to all
- New development and partner agencies will contribute to the regeneration of Taunton Town Centre, including the provision of infrastructure

Table 15.9 Plan Objective 9 Indicators and Targets

Indicators	Targets
Town centre crime statistics (currently provided by Police to Town Centre Company)	?
Perceptions survey (to be carried out by Town centre Company)	Business and visitors perceptions to have improved by 2012.
Street cleaning	Provision of street cleaning equipment / recycling bins by x (Town Centre Company to advise)
Information Points	New electronic information points to be provided by x (Town Centre Company to advise)

1 Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Spatial Assessment

The table below identifies:

- the themes and priorities within the Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - "Tomorrow's Taunton Deane" (2007)
- the spatial issues arising within each theme / priority
- the relevant LDF document that will consider the identified spatial issues

1.1 Themes, Priorities and Spatial Issues

Table 1.1 Learning and Working

Priority	Learning and Working	Sites	Spatial Issues	Link to Relevant LDF Document
1	Reducing rural isolation and increasing rural employment opportunities	Applies generally	Farm diversification, rural business development, transport linkages, tourism, community facilities, focus on Wellington and rural centres	CS/ALL
2	Addressing Low Wage Levels	Applies generally	High wage / high skills jobs, creative industries, sustainable employment, expand the private employment sector, available land and premises	CS/TCAAP/ALL
3	Addressing low-skill levels	Applies generally	Maximise benefits of major projects such as Project Taunton, link employment development to skills training	CS/TCAAP/ALL

Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Spatial Assessment 1

Table 1.2 Getting About

Priority	Learning and Working	Sites	Spatial Issues	Link to Relevant LDF Document
4	Create a shift in travel behaviour to limit the rate of growth of congestion	Applies generally	Park and Ride, alternative travel, expand cycle and walkways, location of development	CSTCAAP/ALL
5	Improving rural transport	Various (rural)	Seek contributions in support of the development of community transport, cycleways	CS/ALL

Table 1.3 Safer Places, Safer Communities

Priority	Safer Places, Safer Communities	Sites	Spatial Issues	Link to Relevant LDF Document
6	Building confidence in safer communities	Applies generally	Design of places,	CSTCAAP/ALL/DC
7	A safer night-time economy	Taunton Town Centre	Provision of culture, arts, restaurants (and diversity of provision)	CSTCAAP/DC
8	Reducing anti-social behaviour	Applies generally	Provision of youth diversionary activities (youth shelters, skate parks etc)	CSTCAAP/ALL/DC

1 Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Spatial Assessment

Table 1.4 Your Health and Your Home

Priority	Your Health and Your Home	Sites	Spatial Issues	Link to Relevant LDF Document
9	Promote and enable healthy lifestyles	Applies generally	New and improved sports facilities, access to open spaces, access to the countryside, improve cultural offer	CS/TCAP/ALDC
10	Address the shortage of affordable housing and focus on decent homes	Applies generally	Delivery of a diverse range of affordable homes, ensure that housing demand is met, increase levels of mixed development	CS/TCAP/ALL

Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Spatial Assessment 1

Table 1.5 Where you Live , Work and Play

Priority	Where you Live, Work & Play	Sites	Spatial Issues	Link to Relevant LDF Document
11	Tackling climate change	Applies generally	Reduce CO2 emissions (renewable energy / energy efficient buildings / reduce carbon levels), use of sustainable construction materials, all development to be of sustainable build and high design quality, recycling provision, increase tree planting, promote and increase the use of alternative travel	CSTCAAP/DCAL
12	Provision of leisure, arts and cultural opportunities	Applies generally	Improved and enhanced community facilities for all residents (e.g. play provision for children and youth), increase the level of arts provision (e.g. Cultural Quarter), develop music / concert venue	CSTCAAP/ALL
13	Equality and diversity	Applies generally	Ensuring equal access to services	SCI/DC
14	Making the most of natural assets	Applies generally	Protecting natural assets (built and natural) reduce biodiversity loss	CSTCAAP/ALDC

1 Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Spatial Assessment

Table 1.6 Taunton North

Priority	Taunton North	Sites	Spatial Issues	Link to Relevant LDF Document
15	Addressing low wage and low skill levels	North Taunton Taunton Town Centre	Ensure joined up working in order to maximise the benefits of major projects and development e.g. Project Taunton	CS/TCAAP
16	Improving transport links and accessibility to the town centre	North Taunton Taunton Town Centre	Improved and expand cycle and walkways, improve bus connectivity	CS/TCAAP/ALL
17	Tackling crime and anti social behaviour	North Taunton	Expand and improve youth diversionary activities, increase levels of arts and culture provision	ALL/DC
18	Promote and enable healthy lifestyles and address the shortage of affordable housing / focus on decent homes	North Taunton	Deliver a range of affordable housing, increase the levels of mixed use development	ALL

Taunton Deane Sustainable Community Strategy - Spatial Assessment 1

Table 1.7 Taunton East

Priority	Taunton East	Sites	Spatial Issues	Link to Relevant LDF Document
19	Addressing low wage and low skills levels	Taunton East/Taunton Town Centre	Ensure joined up working in order to maximise the benefits of major projects and development e.g. Project Taunton, improved transport links to employment and training	CS/TCAAP/ALL
20	Tackling crime and anti social behaviour	Taunton East	Expand and improve youth diversionary activities, increase levels of arts and culture provision	ALL/DC
21	Promote and enable healthy lifestyles and address the shortage of affordable housing / focus on decent homes	Taunton East	Deliver a range of affordable housing, increase the levels of mixed use development	ALL

KEY

ALL: Allocations Document

CS: Core Strategy

DC: Development Control Policies

SCI: Statement of Community Involvement

TCAAP: Town Centre Area Action Plan

2 Parking Standards

Objective

Appendix 2

Within Taunton town centre, these standards supersede those contained in Policies M2 and M4 of the Taunton Deane Local Plan.

Car Parking (maximum provision)

- Offices B1(a): 1 space per 100 sq m
- Retail stores < 1000 sq m: provision for servicing only
- Non Food Retail stores > 1000 sq m: 1 per 40 sq m
- Food Retail stores >1000 sq m: 1 per 28 sq m
- Dwellings: maximum 1 space per unit for flats

Car-free housing development will be encouraged when accompanied by measures to manage travel demand

Cycle Parking (minimum provision)

- Offices (B1a): 1 space per 80 sq m
- Other B1 uses, B2 – B7: 1 space per 130 sq m
- Retail stores >1000 sq m: 1 space per 80 sq m
- Retail stores <1000 sq m: 1 space per 70 sq m
- General warehouses and distribution (class B8): 1 space per 250 sq m
- Houses: 1 space per bedroom
- Flats: 1.5 spaces per unit

All spaces to be under cover

Motorcycle parking (minimum provision)

- To be provided at 50% of the County-wide minimum standard for cycling

Parking for people with disabilities (minimum provision)

- Development with 24 or fewer parking spaces: 2 spaces
- Development with 25 or more parking spaces: 5% of total capacity, plus 2 spaces