

## **REPORT OF COUNCILLOR CAVILL – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PROPERTY AND TOURISM**

### **Norton Fitzwarren Trading estate**

With redevelopment of this area there is a need to relocate some of the existing businesses in order to accommodate the new bridge line and to allow space for the planned new building of units. The present facilities are generally low cost per sq ft.

Many of the businesses currently located in this area employ a considerable number of people, and in some cases are essential service providers. There is at present a shortage of readily available accommodation of the sort required.

Rob Jackson, who is our SAAS officer, has been contacting all rural areas looking for facilities that would fit the bill. Some of the businesses will relocate within the existing site, others won't. This is an ongoing concern as the development of the St Modwen site progresses.

### **Lyons report**

Sir Michael Lyons has been charged with a project to assess the feasibility of the relocation of some 20000 people, who are currently employed in the Civil Service and public sector organisations in London and the SE. His report is with the Treasury Dept at the moment. I believe that it is of a positive nature regarding ourselves and that Taunton would be reasonably well placed. We have made a written presentation to Sir Michael also, SWRA and SWRDA have suggested that major relocations should be into PUAs. A substantial relocation of this type to Taunton would be an important catalyst to our urban renewal programme. The benefits of relocating a public sector activity to us will not be confined to the additional jobs and their multiplier effect, but will be a significant boost to investor confidence and strengthen our urban regeneration programme.

When this report is issued, it will give us a time scale for our redevelopment work, in order to accommodate relocations. The time scale is unlikely to be drawn out.

### **Market relocation**

Land has now been secured, in the vicinity of Jct 26, by Taunton Market Auctioneers. At the same time TMA have continued to draw up and cost plans for a new market, in order to progress the next move which would be a full planning application. Taunton Deane valuers have commissioned an independent valuation of our Firepool site, bearing in mind the Terence O'Rourke proposals. In conjunction with the RDA, this valuation will enable us to plan our schedule for redevelopment at the Firepool site.

NB recent stock sales through Taunton Market on a Saturday are at such high levels that the market was rated third highest market in the country for total through-put. This of course translates to very substantial banking by the Auctioneers in Taunton, with all attendant economic

benefits.

**Norman P Cavill**