

Thetford's Town Delivery Plan



Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places



HATCH

We
Made
That

Contents

Foreword	3
Thetford's Town Delivery Plan	6
Thetford's Story: The Case for Action	12
Thetford's Future: The Next Ten Years	32
Thetford's Game Changers: Enabling Transformative Change	50
Game Changing Interventions	50
Long-Term Endorsements	72
Financial Summary	73
Thetford's Quick Wins: Short-Term Tactical Interventions	76
Delivering the Plan	80

Foreword

Thetford is a bustling market town with a long historical pedigree. Its range of heritage buildings and natural assets, like Thetford Forest, make it a unique place to live and visit. It is also a town going through an exciting period of change. The Thetford Sustainable Urban Extension will extend the footprint of the town, increase available housing, community facilities and provide new employment land that will unlock new jobs.

This draft Town Delivery Plan sets out an ambitious programme to build on Thetford's strengths and address some of its long-standing challenges. It has been designed following extensive engagement with the residents, businesses, community leaders and voluntary organisations that make up the fabric of Thetford today.

It has been developed to strengthen the town's position as a service and community hub for the Breckland area, while also ensuring it meets the future needs of the town's residents (current and future) and those in surrounding rural communities. Challenges range from the physical condition of the train station, the need to better realise connections with the natural environment and river, new and improved employment space and better walking and cycling infrastructure.

These challenges will be tackled by delivering five complementary interventions designed to encourage transformative economic, social and environmental change. These are Thetford's investment priorities for the next decade. These interventions do not represent everything that could be done but have been assessed as the most viable and impactful activities to focus precious resources on.

We believe that this plan reflects the many views put forward during consultation with Thetford's residents, stakeholders and businesses. However, as successful delivery of the interventions will be reliant on support of all delivery partners, we will now take time to listen to feedback on the plans in their draft form.

All comments are welcome and can be submitted to tdps@breckland.gov.uk.

Future Breckland Project Team

The background image shows a perspective view of a town street. On the left, there are multi-story brick buildings. One building has a ground-floor cafe with a sign that says 'Full Orders'. Outside the cafe, there is a small patio area with a green table and red chairs. Two people are sitting at the table. A large black awning extends over the patio. The street continues into the distance, lined with more buildings and trees. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

01

Thetford's Town Delivery Plan

Thetford's Town Delivery Plan

This document sets out our Town Delivery Plan for Thetford. ‘We’ are the residents, businesses, organisations and public bodies that have a stake in the town and have been involved in the creation of this plan.

Collective Ambitions for Thetford

Our collective ambition for Thetford, which is based on our local aspirations and robust evidence, is to:

Improve the look, feel and function of our town centre and riverside, so that Thetford becomes one of the most attractive, desirable and visited towns in the county and overcomes outdated perceptions of place.

Celebrate Thetford's rich heritage, natural assets and its manufacturing legacy to drive positive change and raise aspirations.

Better connect our communities to our heritage, leisure and natural assets and better leverage the visitor economy opportunities linked to those assets.

Capitalise on our strategic location in the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor to attract investors and businesses and enhance economic resilience and create more opportunities for residents.

Unlock underused assets and sites for use by community, cultural and public services to diversify our town's offer and enhance support available for our more deprived residents.

We also want Thetford to become a true 21st century market town that embraces the opportunities presented by a post-COVID and post-Brexit world.

King Street

Source: Breckland District Council, 2021

6

Ambition Realised

This ambition will be realised through five game changing interventions which are our investment priorities:

1. Riverside Regeneration: Enhancing our town centre and realising the river's fullest potential.

2. Gateway Thetford: Boosting our local economy.

3. Connected Thetford: Better connecting Thetford's town centre with all community assets.

4. Innovative Thetford: Providing new and integrated assets to support young people and entrepreneurial capacity.

5. Brand Thetford: Promoting and capitalising on our rich and heritage and diverse communities.

These will be complemented by (a) the delivery of some **tactical short-term interventions** that will deliver highly visual improvements and through, (b) the endorsement of **long-term high-impact proposals**.

This document and these interventions represent our agreed plan for the next ten years. The work is built upon robust evidence¹, in-depth local consultation and existing plans for the town (e.g. the Thetford Area Action Plan).

Public, private and third sector partners will work collaboratively to bring this plan forward over the next decade. The purpose of the document is to guide our collective action and to show that we have a clear and agreed plan to external funders.

Our plan has been developed in line with Government guidance for developing town action plans to ensure that Thetford is in the strongest position possible to secure future public sector investment. While Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council, Thetford Town Council and partners will directly invest their resources into the priorities identified in this plan, there is limited local funding available so securing wider public and private sector funding will be essential to realise our ambition.

1. The main messages from the evidence are summarised later in this document and a comprehensive evidence base has been produced to sit alongside this work.

7

Future Breckland

Thriving People and Places

This Town Delivery Plan fits within Breckland Council's Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places programme. This initiative sets out a clear blueprint for the future of the district and aims to deliver significant economic, social and environmental improvements through investment in the district's five market towns and their rural hinterlands.

This blueprint is captured in the forthcoming Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places Prospectus. The Prospectus sets out five objectives for the district, which are:

- **Town Centre Regeneration:** Regenerating Breckland's town centres to help them realise their potential, adapt to changing economic conditions in the regional area and attract people and businesses looking to move away from major urban centres.
- **Inclusion and Skills:** Improving education and skills provision to tackle Breckland's entrenched education, skills and training deprivation, particularly in deprived areas which will be prioritised for community-focused investment.
- **Physical and Digital Infrastructure:** Enhancing physical and digital connectivity to make it much easier for Breckland's residents, visitors and workers to move, connect and do business sustainably.
- **Business and Enterprise:** Providing high quality flexible business space and support to increase the size, value and diversity of Breckland's foundational economy.

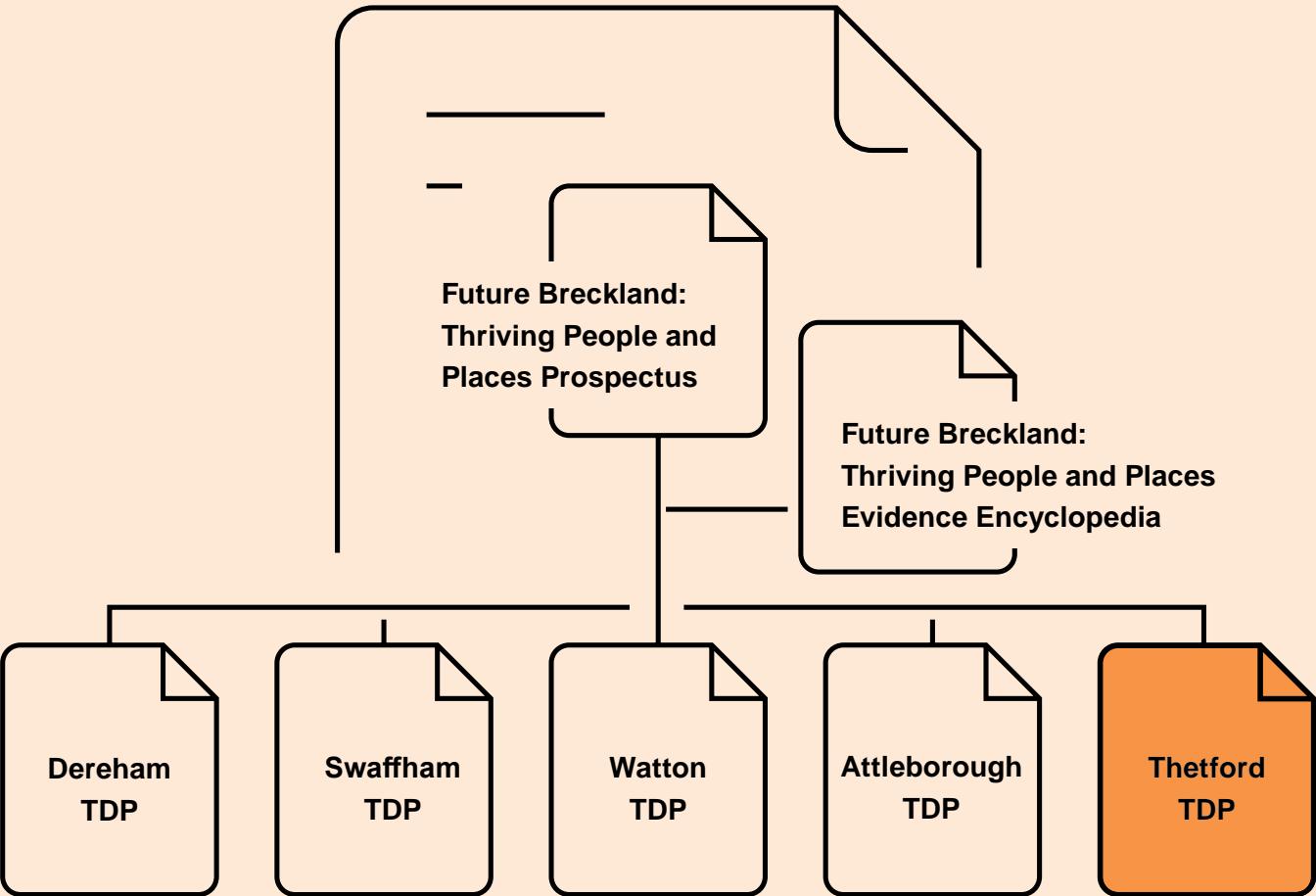
- **Culture and Heritage:** Enhancing, restoring and adding to Breckland's rich culture, heritage and leisure assets to meet the demands of a rapidly growing population to help increase the district's status as a tourism destination.
- **Sustainability and Environment:** Mitigating the environmental impacts of growth and economic activity and enhancing access to Breckland's world-class green space.

The Thetford Town Delivery Plan, and those for Swaffham, Dereham, Attleborough and Watton, sit below the Prospectus and include actions that will deliver against both the district-wide and town-specific ambitions.

While the five Town Delivery Plans will drive most change it is recognised that some district-wide challenges need to be addressed through strategic investments at the district rather than town level (e.g. related to skills, business support or public transport). A series of district interventions for these areas, which will positively impact Thetford and its wider hinterland, are set out in the forthcoming Prospectus.

All these documents are informed by robust evidence and data which is available in the Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places Evidence Encyclopaedia.

Our Guiding Documents



The background image shows a modern, multi-story building with 'Travelodge' signs on its facade. In the foreground, a person in a dark uniform and cap stands with their back to the camera, looking towards the building. The scene is set in a landscaped area with a paved path, grass, and some outdoor furniture like picnic tables. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent orange filter.

02

Thetford's Story: The Case for Action

Thetford's Story

The Case for Action

Thetford's Economic History

Thetford is one of the oldest towns in England and has a varied economic history. The town has been a settlement since the Iron Age serving as a market for regional trade. Thetford was transformed by the development of industry in the 19th century. Local companies manufactured

everything from traction engines to paper products and the area became renowned for its breweries. Thetford's industrious families used the proceeds to commission grand houses and civic halls, many of which still mark the townscape today.

Becoming a Proud Market Town



Thetford became one of the most important late Saxon Towns in East Anglia, eventually growing into its sixth largest town. The town has survived many invasions and was established as an important religious centre in the medieval period. The dissolution of English monasteries during the 16th century, precipitated an economic and population downturn. During 18th and 19th centuries there was a revival of the town's industrial significance when it became a manufacturing centre for steam engines until the late 1920s.

Urban Extension to Transform the Town



In March 2019, Breckland District Council voted unanimously to approve the Thetford Sustainable Urban Extension project. The project will see the town grow significantly, including:

- 5,000 homes
- 22ha of new employment land
- 3 x new primary schools
- 5ha of allotments
- Walking and cycling routes
- Community amenities such as sports playing fields, a community centre, health facilities and place of worship
- 22ha of publicly accessible recreational open space

A Town Transformed by the Industrial Revolution



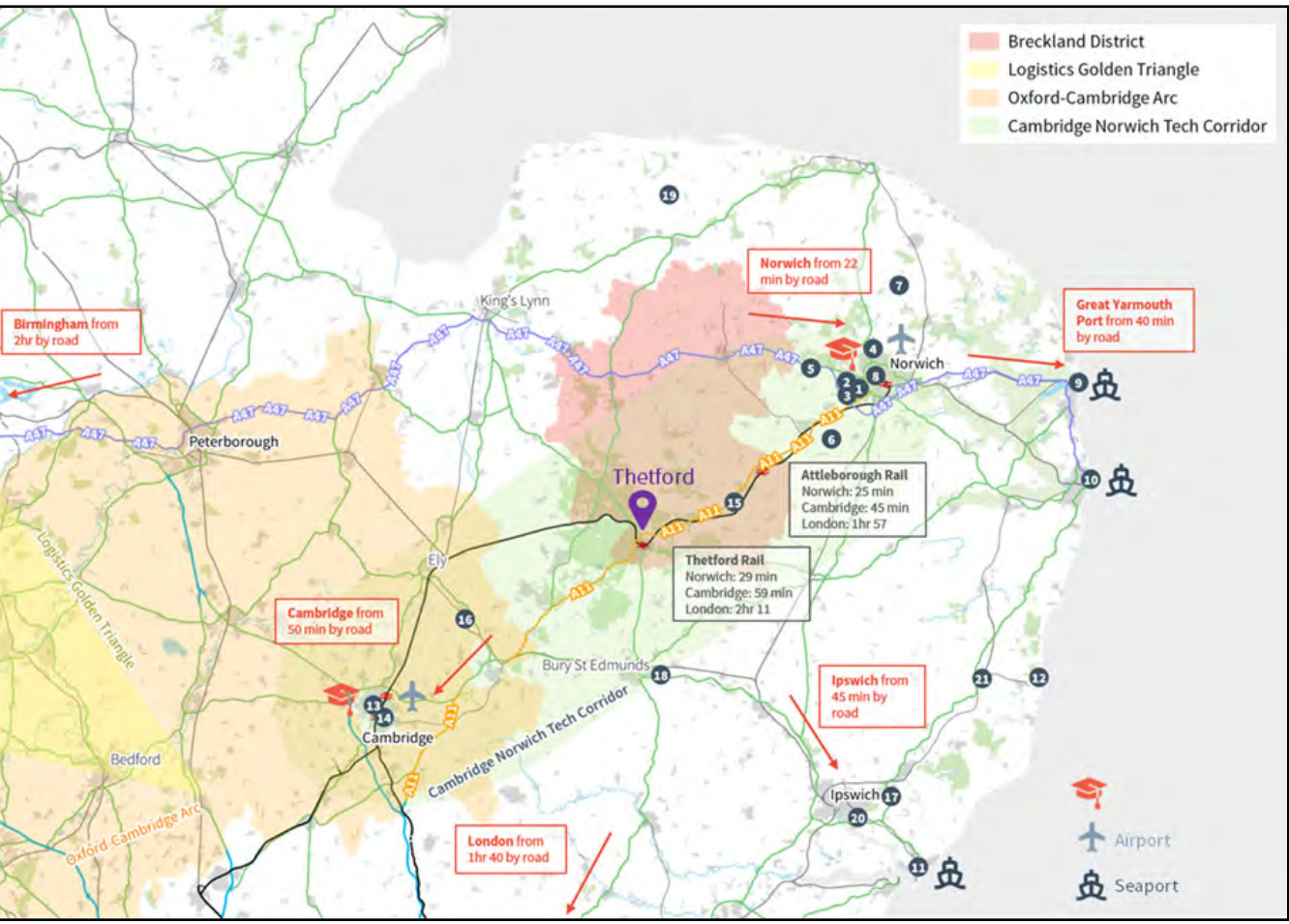
Victorian Thetford was transformed by the industrial revolution and became a leader in the manufacturing of agricultural machinery and equipment. The founders of traction engines and crop science were from Thetford and companies, such as Bidwells, chose to locate in the town.

Rapid Population Growth



Following World War II, Thetford grew at a faster rate than any other English town, as residents were relocated from London. The local population increased fourfold between 1958 and 1980 and this influx created a mixed identity that is more cosmopolitan than the surrounding areas of Breckland.

Figure 1 Thetford's Strategic Location



Source: Hatch, 2021

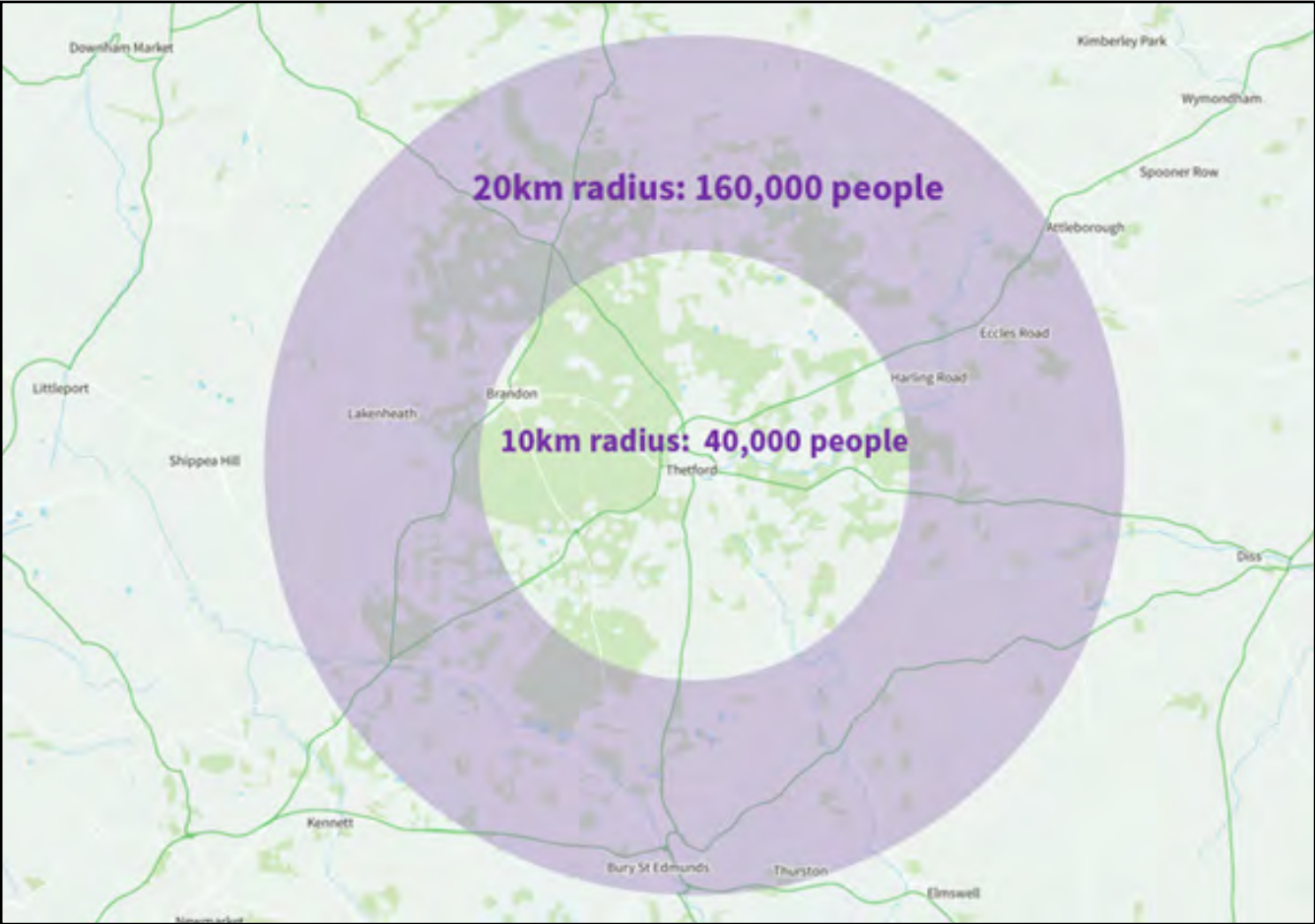
After World War II there was an acute housing shortage in London caused by widespread bombing and Thetford was designated an overspill community. Large scale social housing estates were developed throughout the 1950s to 1970s to house the new residents and are home today to many of Thetford's communities.

In more recent decades, our town's economic development has mirrored that of the rest of the country and is dominated by retail, manufacturing (specifically food and higher tech manufacturing), public administration, health and education sectors. As of 2020, we have a population of 27,010 people, which represents an increase of around 25% since the turn of the century.

Thetford's Economic Geography

Today Thetford is Norfolk's fourth largest town. We are strategically located along the A11 with direct road links to Norwich in the north-east and Cambridge in the south-west. The A1066 also cuts through the town which links the A134 northwards and A143 southwards to other parts of the county and the North Norfolk coast. Thetford also benefits from being connected to the national rail network, with regular services to Norwich, Cambridge and beyond to London, the Midlands and the north of England.

Figure 2 Thetford's Catchment



Source: Hatch, 2022; Annual Population Survey, 2021

Our town has several defining characteristics, which represent good 'ingredients' for a successful market town:

- **Strong community and leisure assets:** Our town is particularly family-friendly with a waterpark, municipal leisure centre and community centres. We also have a strong and empowered multicultural community with events and festivities to celebrate a range of heritages. The support provided during the COVID pandemic demonstrated the strength of our community.
- **Unique natural landscape:** The town benefits from a unique natural landscape setting in the valleys of the Little Ouse and
- **Central location on the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor:** Thetford is at the midpoint of the 'Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor'. The Tech Corridor offers 100km of opportunity from Cambridge in the west and Norwich in the east and brings together an ecosystem of businesses and networks. Thetford is identified by the Corridor as a cluster for advanced engineering, manufacturing and materials.

Thet. It is on the edge of Thetford Forest, a major visitor attraction as the largest manmade lowland forest in Britain.

Thetford Riverside



Source: We Made That 2022

- **Impressive riverside opportunities:** Thetford has grown around and benefits from having not one, but two rivers that converge in our town centre and create an attractive riverfront. This is a unique feature of several market towns in the East Anglia.
- **Proximity to popular visitor attractions:** The town has a rich built heritage and distinctive townscape marked by the use of flint and chalk. These natural and built heritage assets combine to make the town an important destination for tourism and recreation with popular visitor attractions including the Thetford Priory, Castle Mound, High Lodge, Charles Burrell Museum, Dad's Army Museum and others.
- **Wide catchment and influence:** The town shops, schools and amenities serve a wide rural hinterland. Approximately 200,000 people live within 20km of Thetford. Nearby assets also attract a much wider catchment of visitors, with 650,000 visitors to Thetford Forest annually.

Figure 3 Thetford's Culture, Community and Leisure Assets

Culture, Community and Leisure Assets

The map clearly shows Thetford's impressive number of school close to the town centre. It also demonstrates the clustering of community and cultural uses around the old market square. Thetford has a good set of cultural uses for a town of its size, including a cinema and three museums.



- Culture**

 - C1. Railway Tavern Pub
 - C2. Charles Burrell Museum
 - C3. Ancient House Museum
 - C4. The Bell Hotel Pub
 - C5. The Light Cinema
 - C6. Carnegie
 - C7. Dad's Army Museum
 - C8. Red Lion Pub
 - C9. Green Dragon Pub
 - C10. The Black Horse Pub
 - C11. The Albion Pub
- Health and Leisure**

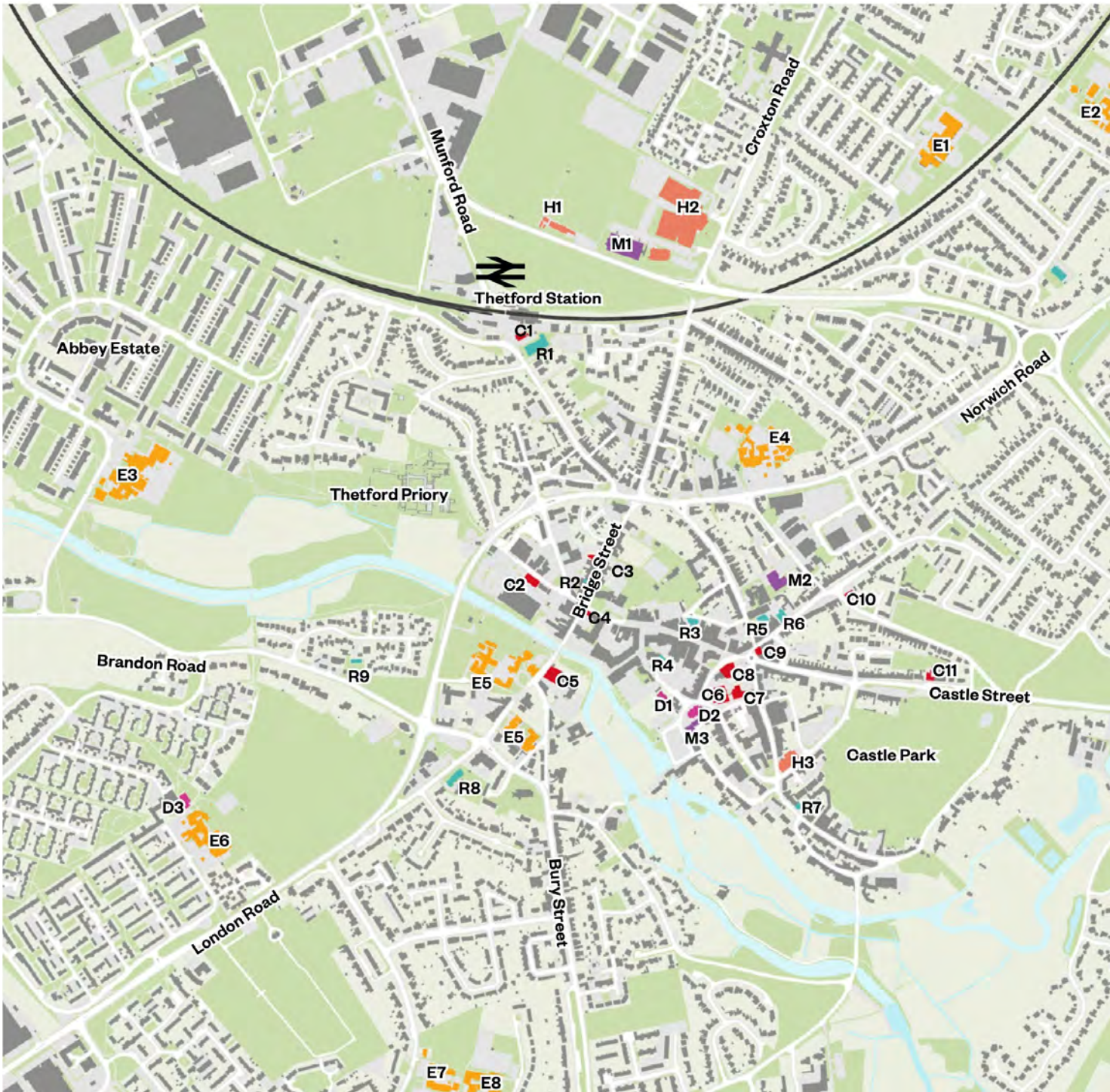
 - H1. Thetford Town Football Club and Cricket Club
 - H2. Breckland Leisure Centre and Waterworld
 - H3. Winners Bingo
- Education**

 - E1. Thetford Drake Primary School and Nursery
 - E2. Admirals Academy
 - E3. The Bishops CE Primary Academy
 - E4. Norwich Road Academy
 - E5. Thetford Grammar School
 - E6. Radcastle Family School
 - E7. Queensway Infant Academy and Nursery
 - E8. Diamond Academy
- Community Space**

 - D1. The Crossing (Access Community Trust)
 - D2. Thetford Library
 - D3. Redcastle Furze Community Centre
- Religious**

 - R1. Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints
 - R2. St Peter's Church
 - R3. King's Street Baptist Church
 - R4. Thetford Methodist Church
 - R5. Thetford United Reformed Church
 - R6. Salvation Army
 - R7. Chapel of Rest
 - R8. St Mary's Catholic Church
 - R9. Church of the Holy Sepulchre
- Medical and Care Services**

 - M1. Anglia Community Eye Care
 - M2. Grove Surgery
 - M3. School Lane Surgery



Source: We Made That, 2022

Thetford's Public Realm



Source: Breckland District Council, 2021

Thetford's Weaknesses and Threats

Our town centre needs investment to drive footfall, increase leisure activities and support our local businesses...

Our town centre boasts impressive Georgian architecture and heritage assets and has a wealth of listed buildings, which make it extremely attractive. It is bisected by a riverside at the centre of town and there is an attractive marketplace. However, more can be done to leverage these strengths and bring them into daily use by residents and visitors. We also believe the look and feel of some parts of town can be improved.

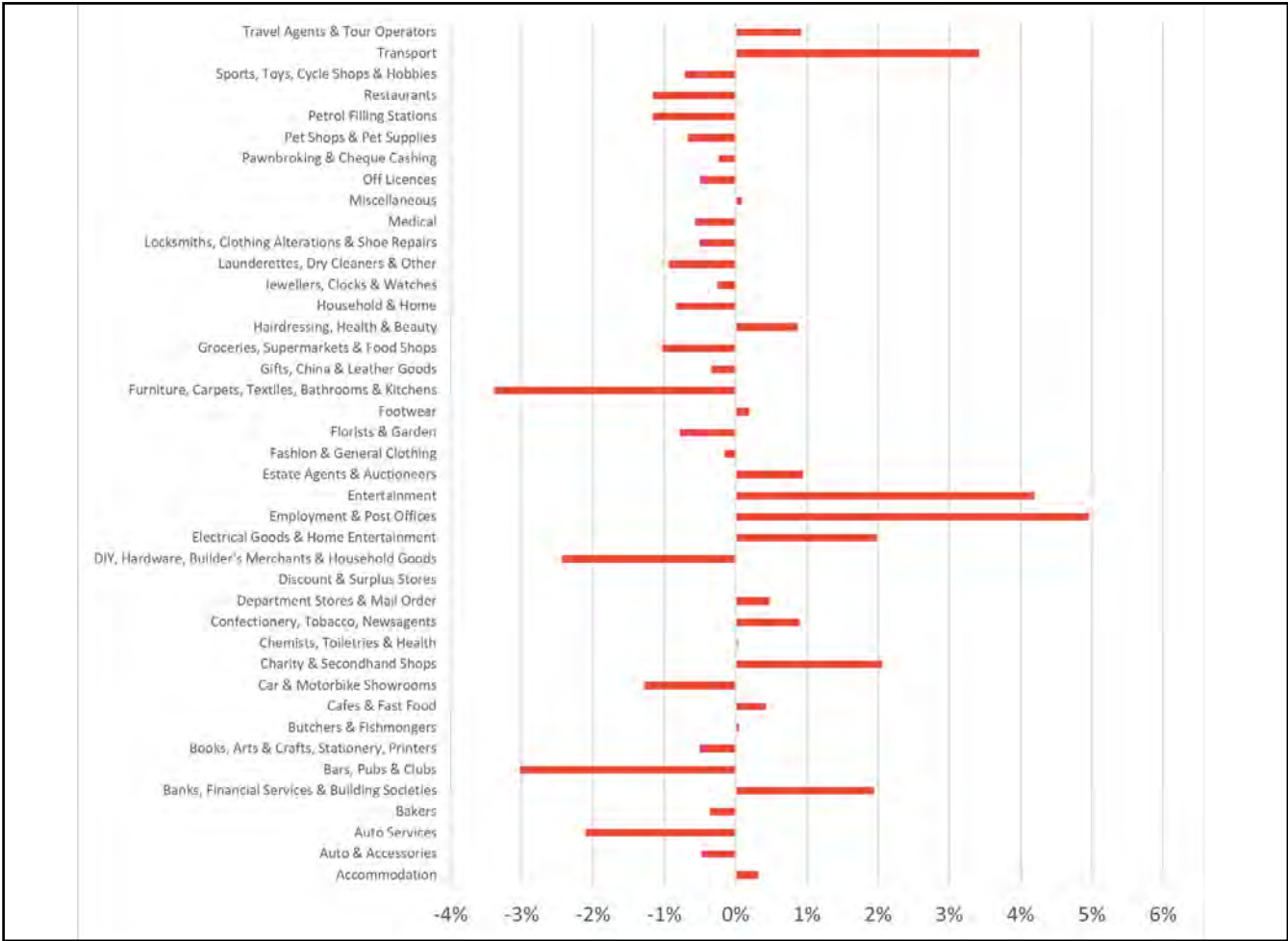
As people change the way they shop and continue to transact more online, leisure rather than retail is becoming an important feature of town centres and town economies. The creation of spaces where people can come together, interact and transact will become ever-more important. More leisure assets and facilities are required in the town centre. For example, there

is a high concentration of charity shops but we lack restaurants. Perceptions of Thetford are unfairly poor and reinforced by decades of underinvestment and historical reputation of the town. Investment is required to improve the look, feel and function of our town centre and to encourage the creation of spaces where people can come together and socialise and meet (e.g. cafes, restaurants, bars).

Observational analysis undertaken by We Made That highlights that several factors are impacting town centre vitality:

- Thetford does not currently have a reputation as a destination location. People use the town centre to transact and shop, but do not use the town for leisure or socialising. There are few facilities or venues that draw people into the town centre to spend leisure time or money. More can be done with the wealth of natural assets such as the riverside and marketplace to bring them into continual use with cafes and activities.

Figure 4 Thetford's High Street Retail Units by Category vs Great Britain Average



Source: Local Data Company, 2021²

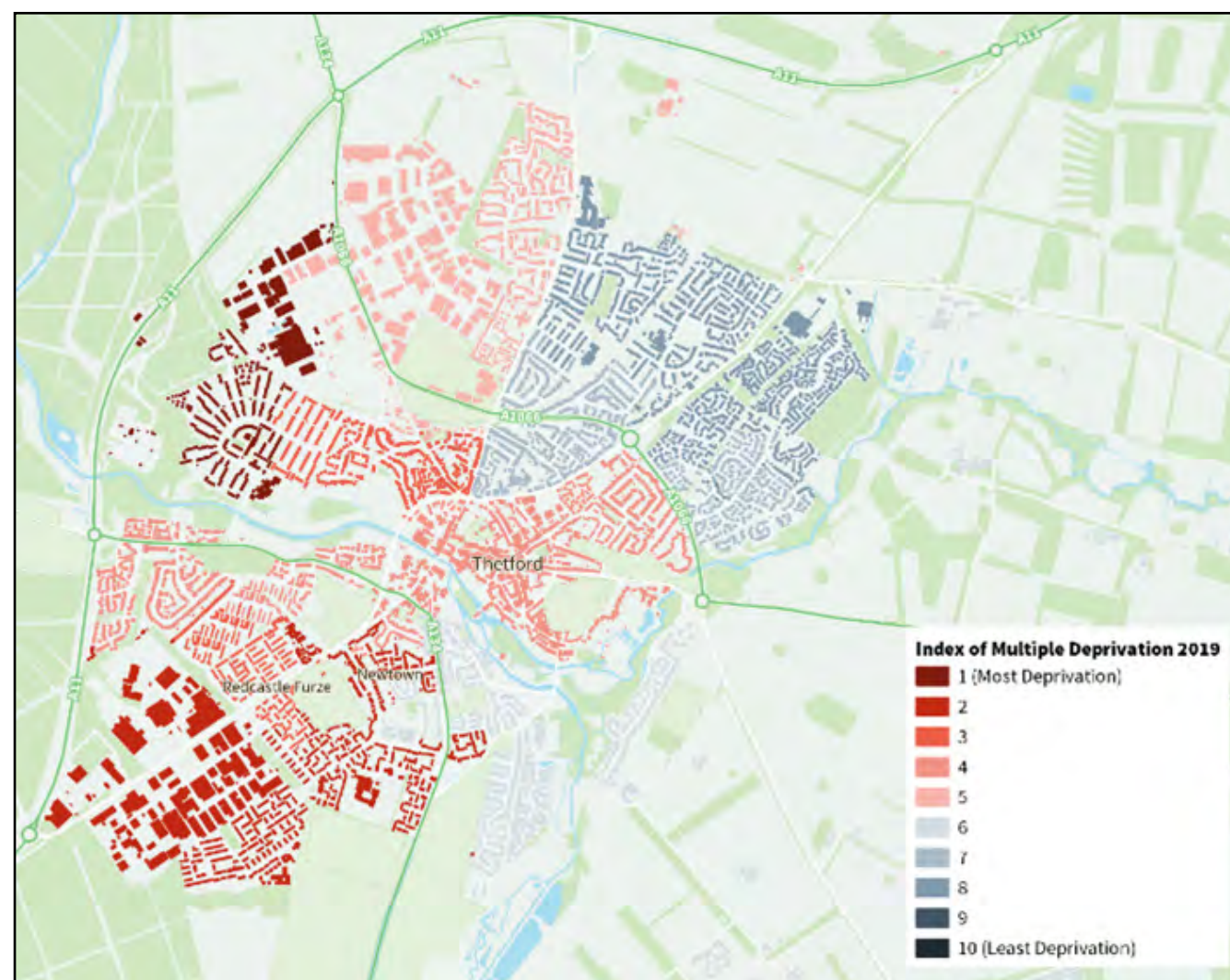
- The spatial barriers in the town created by roadways and railway lines make the town centre difficult to access for some residents. This has created both physical and social divides that damage community cohesion and contribute to ongoing deprivation. It also contributes to the safety concerns that were raised during consultations.
- There is a great disconnect between Thetford Town and Thetford Forest with few residents making use of the green space and on the flip side, few external visitors to Thetford Forest visiting and spending in the town.

This is a missed opportunity both for the wellbeing of Thetford's residents and also to the economy of the town.

- There is a perception that Thetford's housing estates function as islands with limited interaction with the town. This creates a perception that investment in the town centre will not benefit the entirety of the town's population. However, the creation of a more vibrant town centre will create jobs as well as more opportunity for interaction between the Thetford community.

2. A figure of +4%, as an example, indicates that Thetford's town centre has 4% more retail units of a particular category than the average town centre in Great Britain. A figure of -4% means that it has 4% fewer retail units of a particular category than an average town centre in Great Britain.

Figure 5 Index of Multiple Deprivation



Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019

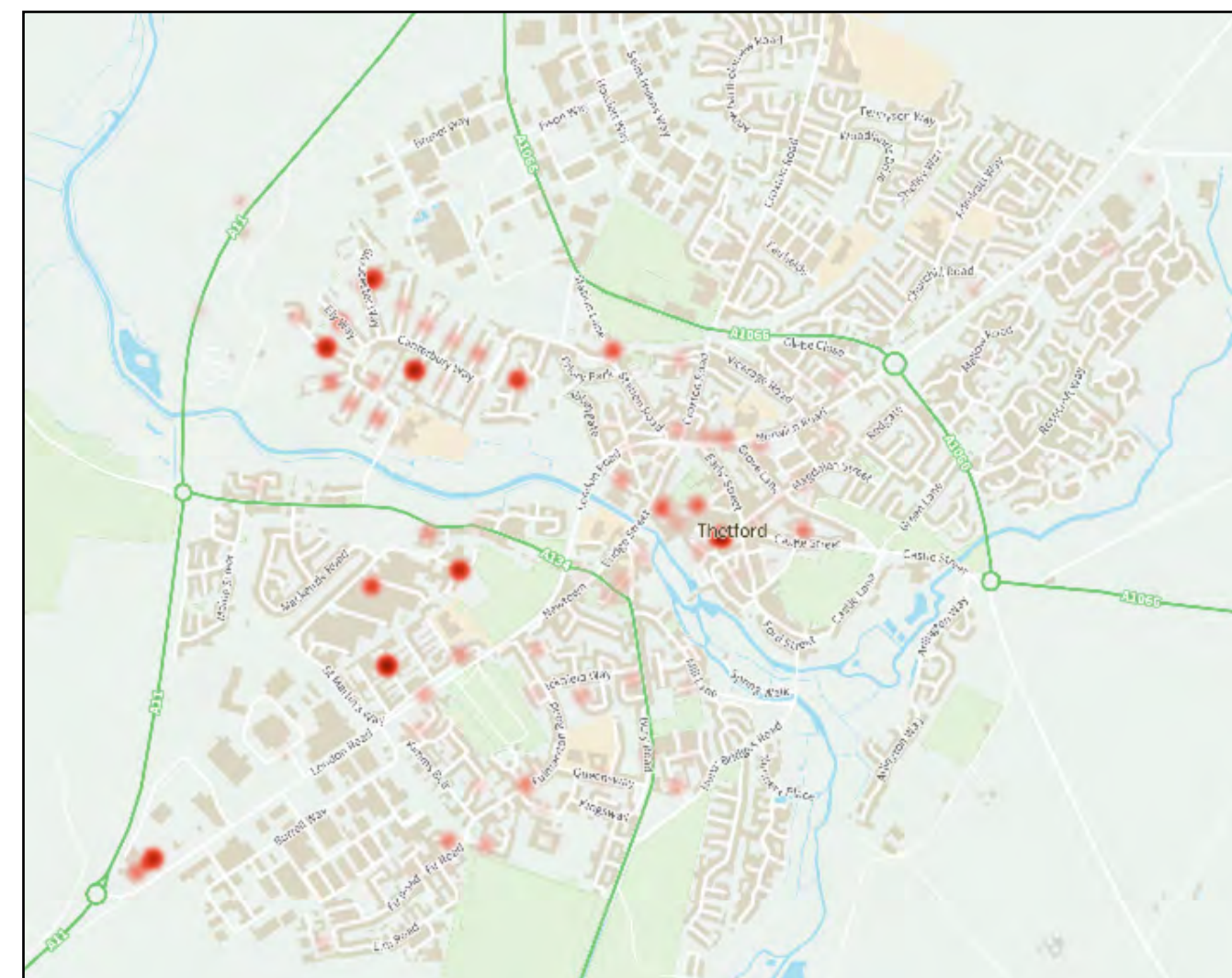
Deprivation is an ongoing challenge that needs to be addressed as well as a higher crime rate than observed across the rest of Breckland...

Thetford is one of the most deprived areas of Norfolk with high levels of deprivation concentrated in the town centre and west of the town. The issue is well known but remains difficult to tackle. The lack of suitable jobs remains a barrier. In particular the loss of skilled trade jobs has been exacerbated by the closure of production facilities by Thermos (2000), meat processor Danepak and furniture manufacturer Multiyork in 2017. Establishing the

next generation of skilled trade and technical jobs remains an integral priority, which requires finding ways to encourage production facilities to locate in Breckland.

Crime affects our residents' ability to enjoy our town and facilities. During consultations we heard from many that fear of crime is deterring residents from spending time in the town. Between February 2020 and January 2021, 3,100 criminal offences were recorded in Thetford. This accounted for 31% of all incidents across Breckland and 46% of all incidents within the district's five market towns.

Figure 6 Thetford Crime Hotspots



Source: data.police.uk, 2020

The Abbey Estate is the most deprived area of Thetford and is one of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country – falling within the top 10% most deprived localities nationally. Moreover, the estate is a localized crime hotspot. The high crime rate correlates with high levels of deprivation, as is the case in other Thetford estates including Barnham Cross and Red Castle.

Abbey Estate



Source: Flagship Group, 2022

Abbey Estate Regeneration

The Abbey Estate was built in the late 1960s and early 1970s as part of a major expansion of Thetford and relocation of communities from London. The former Council Houses were transferred to a private housing association in the 1990s, and currently circa 60% of the properties on the estate are owned by Flagship Group.

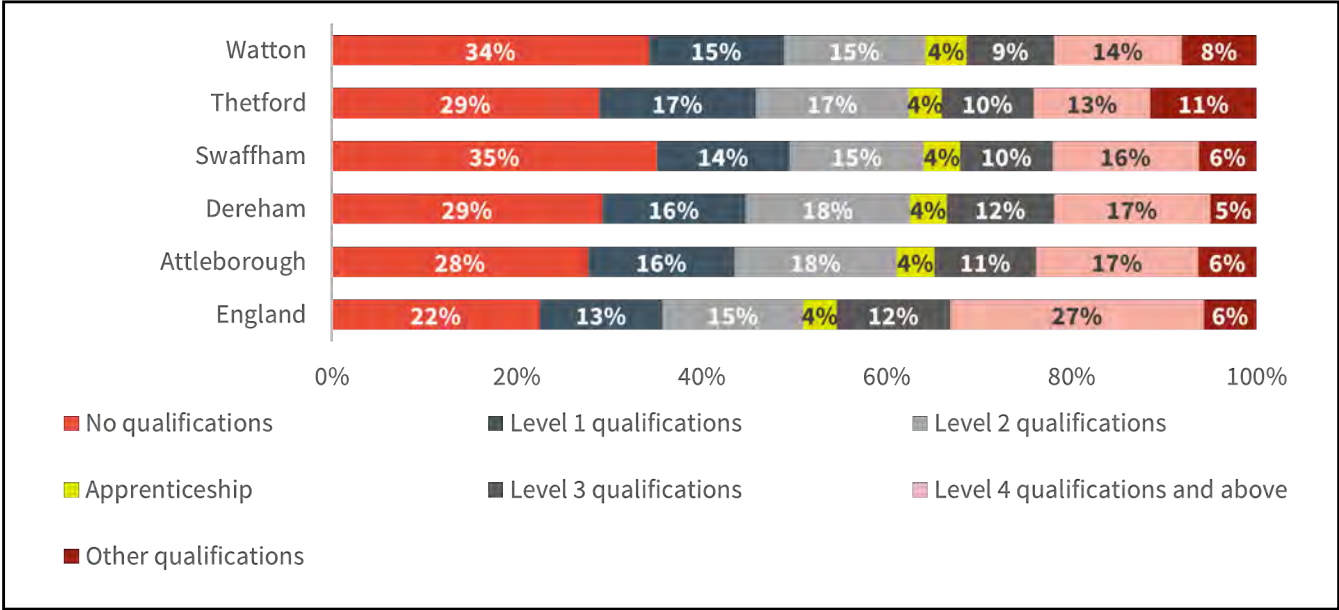
Flagship Group have been engaging with residents of the Abbey since 2019, listening to concerns, seeking solutions to challenges raised and promoting options for transformation. Flagship Group are currently working in partnership with Breckland Council and Norfolk County Council to deliver this vision. A series of consultations have been undertaken with local residents, with a further round of engagement undertaken later in 2022 to finalise a plan – one which brings meaningful and sustainable change, benefiting residents of today and tomorrow.

Abbey Estate



Source: Flagship Group, 2022

Figure 7 Qualification Profile Across Breckland's Market Towns



Source: Census, 2011

Our residents have limited opportunities and social mobility is low...

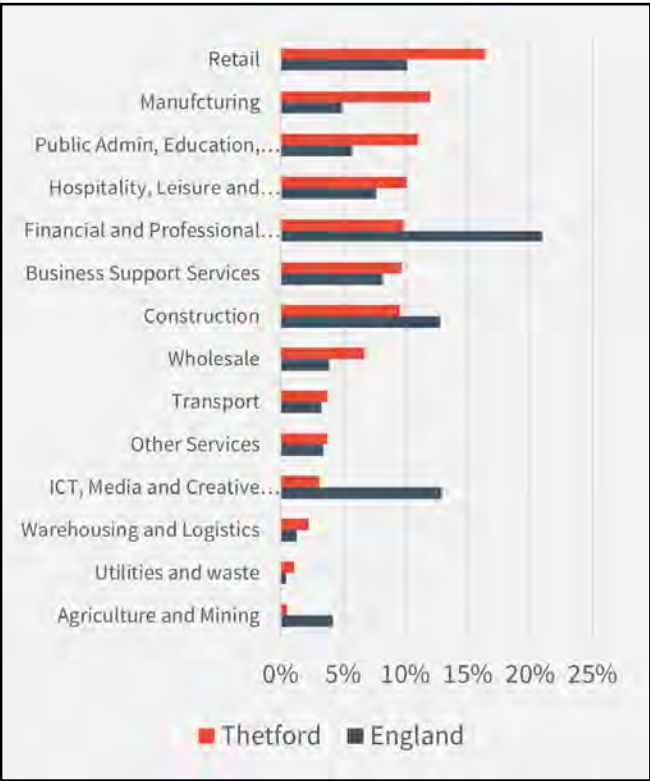
Social mobility across Breckland is low and residents are less well qualified than the national average. This problem is particularly acute in Thetford. Only 13% of our residents have a degree level qualification, which is well below the national average of 27% and almost 30% have no qualifications at all.

Our primary schools are rated as 'requires improvement' or having 'serious weaknesses' by Ofsted, which is concerning for our young people. It also prevents young families from relocating into the area. Our secondary school is rated as 'Good', however we have few further education options, particularly for those with interests in more technical fields.

This, alongside other factors, means that our higher education participation rate is low. Only 17.6% of our young population go to university, which is the lowest rate of all of Breckland's five market towns and almost half of the national average (27%). Our low-wage economy and the associated lack of higher-wage roles also influences young peoples' decisions, limiting their aspirations and as a result foregoing further education.

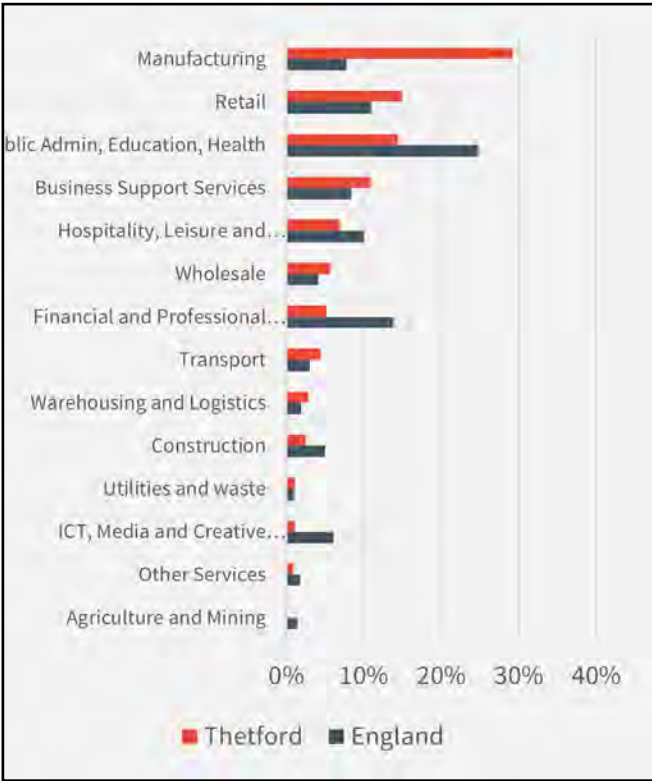
Engagement with the youth community highlighted a need for more social spaces for young people to mix and connect. Several also cited a need to bring Thetford's diverse communities together. Whilst some facilities exist, there are few within the town centre.

Figure 8 Proportion of Thetford's Businesses by Sector



Source: IDBR; BRES and UK Business Count, 2021

Figure 9 Proportion of Thetford's Employment by Sector



Source: IDBR; BRES and UK Business Count, 2021

Thetford's economy is sizable but constrained by a lack of available employment land and resident skills...

Our town has a comparatively large economy for a rural market town. It is home to around 740 businesses that support 11,200 jobs, which compares to 680 businesses and 9,100 jobs in Dereham, 410 businesses and 5,000 jobs in Attleborough and 280 businesses and 2,600 jobs in Swaffham. The number of jobs has remained stagnant in recent years, despite a growth in population.

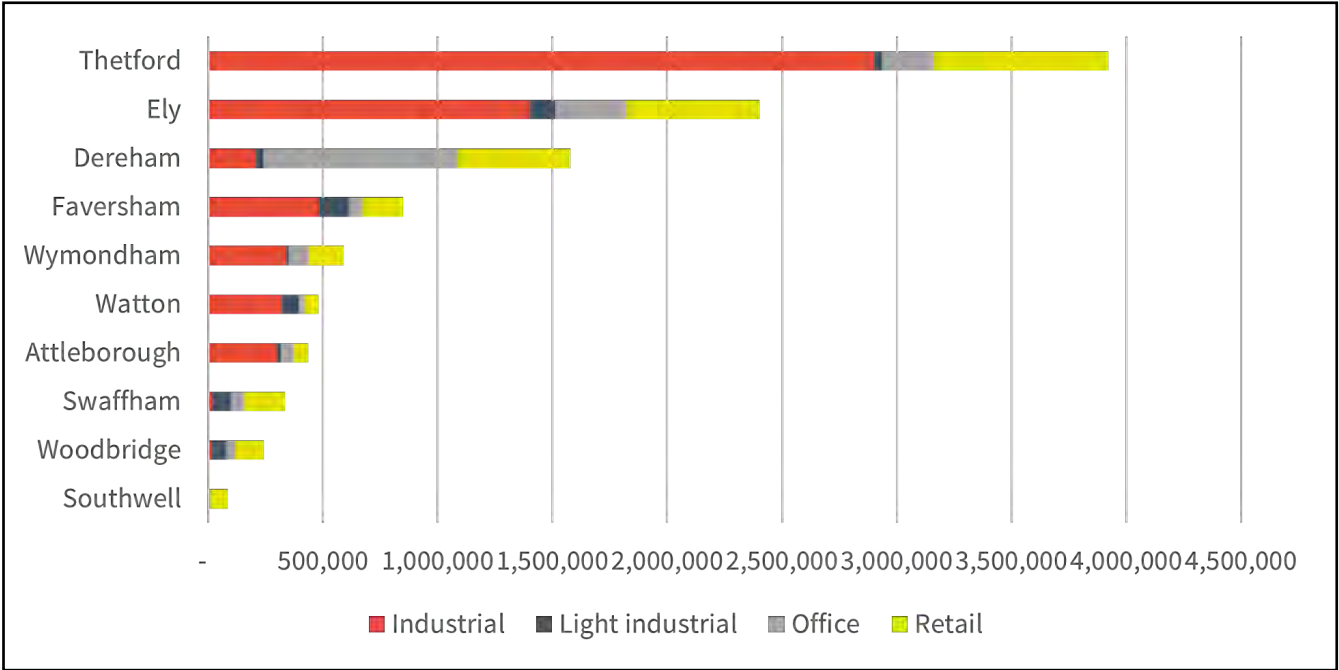
The majority of total jobs are in service industries that tend to provide lower-wage and lower-productivity roles - our top three employment sectors are manufacturing (29% of all jobs), retail (15%) and public administration, education and health (14%).

This sector profile directly corresponds with our biggest employers, which are 2 Sisters Food Group, Baxter Healthcare, Tesco, Easy Cleaning Solutions, Recroot, Sainburys and Contracts Support Services.

While our strength in manufacturing has helped our economy withstand some of the short-term economic impacts of COVID-19, the reliance on retail and hospitality leaves us vulnerable to future shifts in these sectors.

The size and value of our economy, which directly impacts livelihoods, income and wellbeing, is being held back by a range of factors discussed throughout this chapter – namely a constrained and poor-quality commercial property market and low skill levels.

Figure 10 Commercial Floorspace by Town



Source: Co-Star, 2021

Digital connectivity also presents a challenge to Thetford and is another constraint on opportunity. Whilst connectivity to superfast (30Mbit/s download) is relatively high compared to Breckland as a whole, the proportion of premises connected to ultrafast speeds is lower than those in nearby towns such as Attleborough (50%) and nationally (61%). As such, our digital connectivity needs to be stronger across the town to ensure it can best meet business requirements, and better harness opportunities arising from higher value sectors and the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor.

Our commercial property market is constrained with high occupancy rates despite the fact many units require investment and there is limited space available for offices...

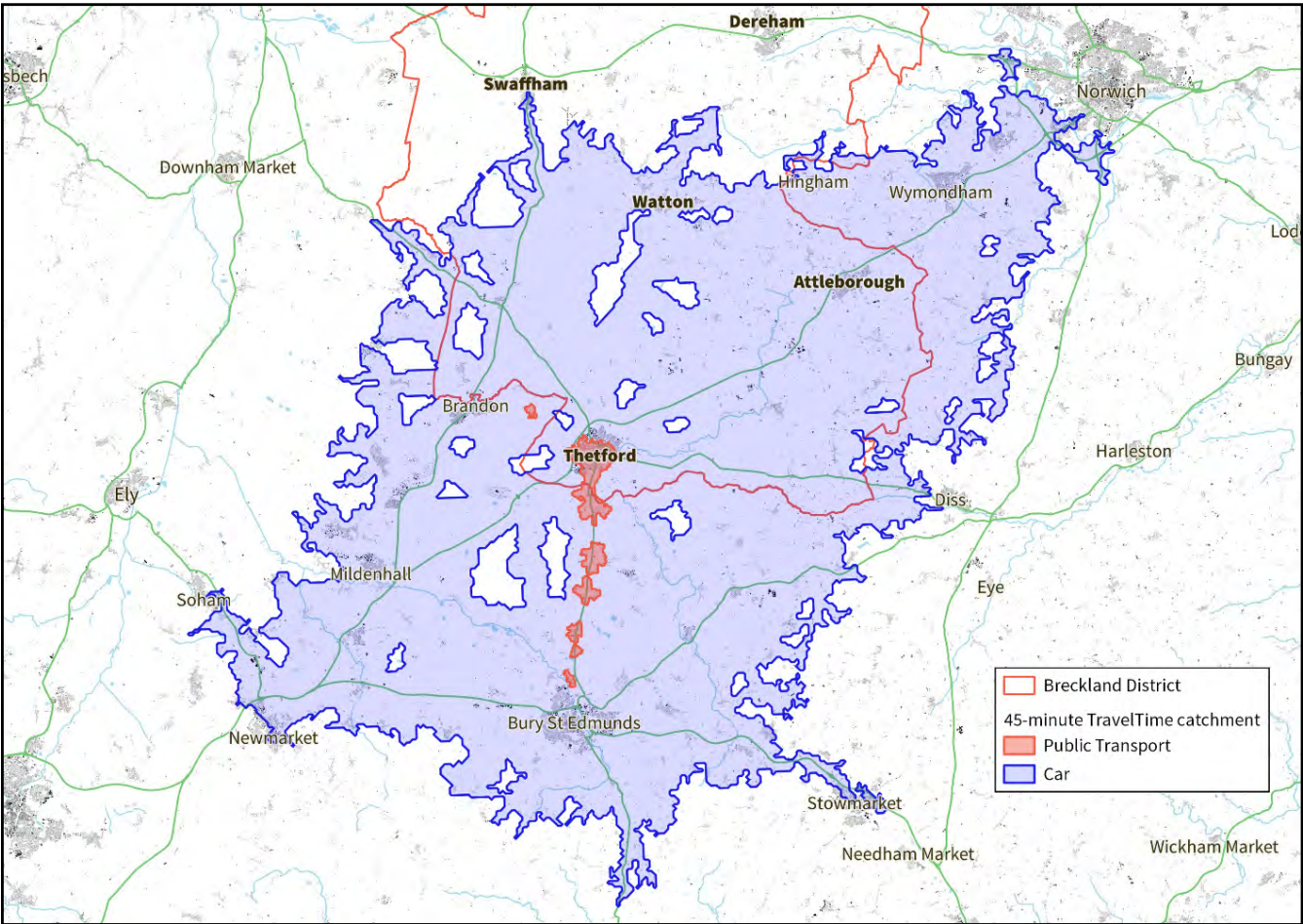
We have around 4 million sqm of commercial property in total, which is by far the largest amount across the district's market towns and other major centres closeby such as Ely. This is broken down by:

- **Industrial:** 2,900,000 sqm.
- **Retail:** 760,000 sqm.
- **Office:** 225,000 sqm.
- **Light Industrial:** 35,000 sqm.

There is high demand for employment space within Thetford. We have almost 100% occupancy rates in our existing commercial units, which indicates that our commercial property market is constrained and is preventing a healthy churn of businesses and prevents new enterprises moving to the area.

The employment space that does exist is generally poor quality, there is also a lack of flexible office and industrial space to support small and innovative enterprises. This type of space is in high demand across the country as it allows entrepreneurs to start businesses, grow enterprises and test new ideas in low-risk environments.

Figure 11 Thetford's Public and Private Transport Catchment



Source: iGeolise, 2021

New employment space is planned in Thetford – namely, Thetford Enterprise Park (TEP). However, despite market interest and investment from the Homes and Community Agency to improve road access and electricity supply, the site has yet to come forward. Therefore, there is a need to identify alternative sites available for commercial development quickly. Thetford's has some of the highest retail vacancy rates across the district, 7% of which are classified as long-term vacant. This illustrates the impact of changes in consumer shopping habits, the limitations of the current retail offer and the tightening of consumer expenditure.

Addressing the limited availability of commercial property will be an important pillar of growing Thetford's economy.

Limited public transportation and active travel links make it difficult for residents and businesses to connect without cars...

Thetford benefits from a train station with regular services to both Cambridge and Norwich. Despite having the greatest number of annual users within Breckland, the station environment is poor and suffers from several accessibility problems. Access across the tracks is limited to a footbridge with no lifts, and there is very limited vehicle access to the north of the station.

Minstergate



Source: We Made That, 2022

While our town has regular bus services, accessibility between Thetford and the rest of the district remains poor, and significantly there is no direct bus service to Norwich. This limits job and education opportunities for Thetford's residents. As a place of high deprivation, many Thetford residents do not have access to a car and this combined with the lack of public transportation leads directly to economic and social exclusion.

The active travel infrastructure within our town is poor. Despite being on a National Cycle Route there are no dedicated cycle lanes within town, and the walking and cycling network requires improvements. This means that of all vehicle

movements through down in a day, only 0.4% are made by bicycle.

There was a plan to create a set of circular cycle loops within and around the town called the Thetford Loops, however funding has not been secured to deliver them.

Thetford's Strengths and Opportunities

Our town has many strengths and opportunities that we can build on:

- **A young and growing population:** The urban extension provides a significant opportunity for Thetford. The construction of 5,000 new homes will attract a new cohort of residents who will visit and use existing and new facilities in the town centre. The extension will be accompanied by high-grade employment space to attract new business. Our population has a younger age profile and this also creates opportunity; 21% of our residents are aged under 16 compared to an average of 17% in Breckland and 19% nationally.
- **A strong civic society:** Thetford has a strong community and benefits from important community focused organisations, such as the Charles Burrell Centre and the Keystone Development Trust. There is also wealth of cultural assets and community spaces clustered around the Market Place.
- **A rich heritage:** Thetford has a rich history dating as far back as the Iron Age and possesses a range of heritage assets which tell the story of its rich historical past – including artifacts from the Viking, Norman and Medieval eras. This is reflected in the concentration of listed buildings and the conservation area designation, and unique heritage assets such as the Castle Mound.
- **A beautiful riverside and natural environment:** The river is one of our unique features and presents an opportunity to make greater use of it as people seek more leisure and recreational activities. As well as being an attraction for water-based recreation, it also has an important role in protecting the natural environment.
- **Proximity to major visitor attractions:** Thetford benefits from close proximity to a number of major visitor attractions including Thetford Forest, Elveden Estate and Centre Parcs. Several events and festivals are held close by in Brandon. Thetford is not harnessing this opportunity with few external visitors to these attractions making the time to visit Thetford town centre.
- **Strategic location:** Thetford's location along the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor makes our town an ideal and cost-effective location for business. We understand there is a demand from start-ups on the Norwich Research Park that require grow-on space for small-batch production and manufacturing in close proximity.
- **Significant development underway:** 5,000 new homes and 22 hectares of employment land is being delivered as part of our Sustainable Urban Extension. There are also a number of additional development sites to the north west of our town which will provide much needed housing and employment space to attract residents and businesses to Thetford.

These, like the town's challenges and weaknesses, provide the impetus for action and have been used to shape our vision and Town Delivery Plan.

Charles Burrell Centre Case Study

The Charles Burrell Centre was established on the site of a former secondary school that closed in 2013. The Centre was established in 2015 with a mission to 'improve quality of life for people in Thetford, make services more accessible, reduce rural disadvantage, raise aspirations, increase community pride and provide more opportunities for the local community.'

The Centre is today a thriving community and business centre home to over 50 organisations and businesses and a venue for over 80 community activities weekly. Demand for space by business to consumer and business to business companies is buoyant with a waiting list for space currently in place. The local MP, Liz Truss, maintains a constituency office within the Centre.

Charles Burrell Centre



Source: Charles Burrell Centre, 2022



03

Thetford's Future: The Next Ten Years

Thetford's Future


The Next Ten Years

This Town Delivery Plan capitalises on Thetford's strengths and addresses its challenges. It will enhance our position as a community and service hub and ensure the town meets the future needs of residents, businesses, visitors and community groups as well as those in surrounding rural communities.


Aspiration for Thetford

This is captured in our ten-year aspiration for Thetford, which is to:


Improve the look, feel and function of our town centre and riverside, so that Thetford becomes one of the most attractive and visited towns in the county and overcomes outdated perceptions of place.



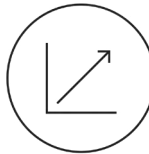
Celebrate Thetford's rich history and natural features by better connecting and bringing natural assets into use, while also reorienting the town centre for greater leisure use to encourage greater footfall by all Thetford residents.




Build on, improve and better connect our communities through improved active transport and direct transport links to encourage greater circulation throughout the town and incorporate the urban extension.



Capitalise on our strategic location and opportunity at the midpoint of the Cambridge-Norwich Tech Corridor to attract investors and businesses to start up, relocate and expand here to enhance economic resilience and create more opportunities for residents.



Unlock underused buildings and sites to create a wider variety of community and leisure facilities to serve our town and rural catchment populations, with a focus on our deprived areas.



View of St Peter's Church, King Street



Source: Breckland District Council, 2021

Aspiration Realised

This aspiration will be realised through:

1. Actively pursuing and prioritising five **high-impact game changing interventions**.
2. Supporting and endorsing a series of **long-term high-impact proposals**.
3. Delivering **tactical short-term interventions** that rapidly deliver highly visual improvements.

We also want Thetford to become a true **21st century market town** that embraces the opportunities presented by a post-COVID and post-Brexit world. The game changing interventions set out in this report have therefore been selected and designed in line with the 21st century market town principles detailed overleaf.

Riverside Walk



Source: We Made That, 2022

Becoming a 21st Century Market Town

Market towns were founded on exchange, business and trade. To do this, they have always needed to function on a human scale – where people can cycle or walk to shop and work, where businesses are embedded in the community, where people can buy local produce and where countryside and town are open to all.

A market town of the 21st century needs to be this and more. It needs to be friendly, compact and self-contained, but large enough to provide for daily needs. It needs to reflect current economic, social and ecological trends. Modern business is as much about knowledge and people, as it is about goods and transportation. In the 21st century the distance between places will matter less and the place that people are located in will matter more.

21st century market towns will be places where people congregate and interact, providing goods and services to meet each others needs. They will need to be able to evolve and meet the changing needs of the communities that they serve, including their rural hinterlands. Businesses will benefit from loyalty, distinctiveness and reputation, and people will take pride in the community and its townscape.

21st century market towns are needed now, and Thetford and Breckland's other towns can become models for other areas. This includes evolving the local offer in response to the trends associated with COVID-19, but also ensuring that it adapts to wider shifts relating to the future of the high street and local economies.

The most successful market towns of the future will be proactive and have a relentless focus on meeting the needs of current and future generations. Among other things, they will provide:

1

Spaces for hybrid working

Employees are likely to be travelling to workplaces less frequently in the future but may not want to work from home due to space constraints and distractions. Market towns with flexible workspace close to where people live are likely to be popular and in demand.

2

Homes for different groups

Market towns are attractive places to live but many lack a ready supply of homes, particularly for young people and families. Market towns of the future will provide a range of housing types that cater for young people, families and older people which will ensure diverse and vibrant local populations.

3

First class digital infrastructure

High speed digital connectivity is the backbone of many high-value high-growth industries, particularly businesses in the ICT, Digital and Creative sectors. Markets towns with good digital infrastructure will be well-placed to attract businesses and hybrid workers in these fields which will bring wider economic benefits.

4

Strategic active travel networks

People are increasingly cycling and walking due to the environmental, health and financial benefits it provides versus driving and using public transport. Market towns that enable easy and safe active travel are likely to be highly appealing to businesses and workers, particularly where this enables people to access all their work, leisure and service needs within a short period of time.

5

Easy access to major employment centres

The most competitive market towns of the future will offer efficient transport links to major employment clusters and urban centres. While remote working makes distance less of an issue than in the past, employees will still want to be able to access workplaces easily and quickly when not working remotely.

6

A full service offer within easy reach of homes

The concept of the '15 Minute City' is gaining traction in policy and strategy – this is broadly accepted to be an ideal geography where most needs are met within a walking and cycling distance of 15 minutes. Many market towns already fit this definition (they are '15 Minute Towns') and the most successful will look to provide a full range of services locally that meet future needs of residents and businesses.

7

Diverse and experiential centres

Changing consumer expectations and the rapid rise of online shopping means that consumers are spending less in shops on high streets. The most resilient future town centres will be those that have a diverse offering that meets a wide range of needs in order to drive footfall. They will have places to work (e.g. [Sevenoaks Studios](#)), visit (e.g. [Turner Contemporary Margate](#)), meet (e.g. [Macknade Food Hall Faversham](#)), dwell (e.g. [Bancroft Gardens Stratford-upon-Avon](#)), participate (e.g. [Anerley Town Hall](#)) and live (e.g. [Queen's Walk East Grinstead](#)).

8

Strong and resilient local economies

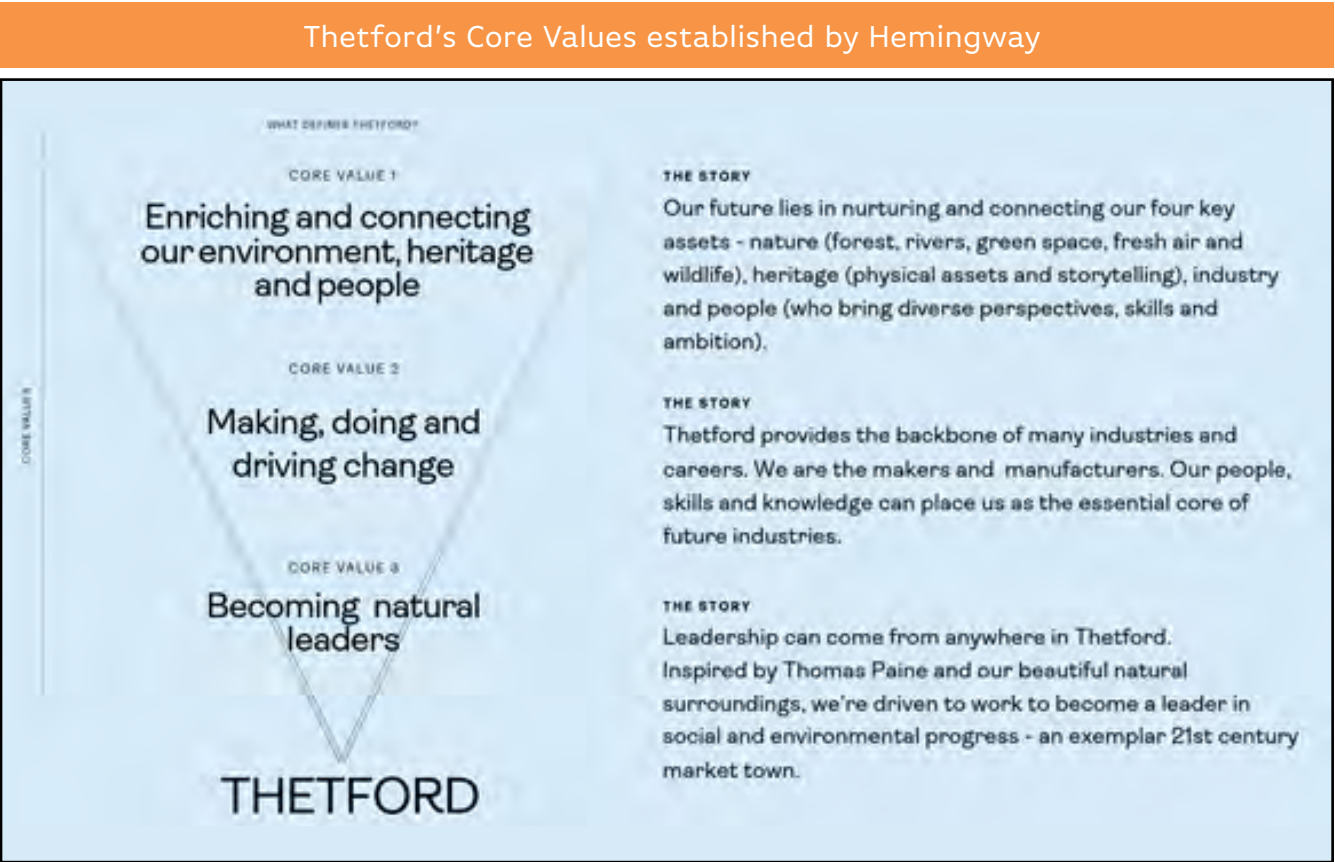
Many market town economies are dominated by low-growth sectors that are at risk from wider economic shifts and automation (e.g. Retail, Hospitality, Manufacturing and the Public Sector). The most resilient market towns will diversify their local economies to ensure a more balanced mix of more traditional industries and higher-growth and higher-value sectors.

The interventions set out in this document embrace these principles. They will help Thetford become a true 21st century market town that is home to a diverse range of people and businesses. People who live in our town will have easy reach to neighbouring towns and cities, but will choose to work, relax, shop, learn, volunteer, socialise, exercise and meet locally. They will:

- Use the diversified town centre more often to eat, drink, meet, unwind and socialise with other people.
- Travel more sustainably within the town and to out of town assets using enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure.
- Use enhanced leisure, cultural and arts facilities to socialise, have fun and live more healthy lives.
- Work in new employment spaces located at the station, in the town centre and along the riverside.
- Have more choice about where and how to live within the town.

These shifts will make Thetford more vibrant, interesting and modern and it will genuinely reflect current economic, social and environmental trends. We will become even more proud of our town over the next ten years and will become its biggest and loudest advocates.





Source: HemingwayDesign and CT Consults, 2021

Building the Plan

This Town Delivery Plan is underpinned by the latest available evidence and extensive local engagement. Its production has been co-ordinated by Breckland Council with Hatch and We Made That, but it has been developed by and is owned by 'us' – the residents, businesses, organisations and public bodies with a stake in Thetford.

Our evidence base for Thetford was augmented by the recently completed work on Thetford Place Brand Project, led by HemingwayDesign and CTConsults. The Brand Project was commissioned to assess local and regional perceptions of Thetford through comprehensive engagement with the community. Through workshops, a set of Core Values for Thetford were developed, as set out below. Consultation evidence from this commission was used to develop the Thetford Town Plan, and the community engagement forums established were used to test the interventions.

Touchpoints	
A number of touchpoints were organised during the development of the plan:	
1. 'Tell Us About Your Town' workshop: An online meeting was held with residents to introduce them to the consultant team and Breckland Council's Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places programme. Attendees were given an opportunity to ask questions, share their aspirations for Thetford, collectively give their views on the consultant team's research findings and an initial long list of potential project, as well as discuss any priorities for the town.	2. 'Meet the Team' event: An in-person market stall was held at the Saturday Thetford Market to introduce local people to the team and project, and gain insights into their thoughts about the town and identify priorities from long list of projects, and identify any other project ideas.
3. One -to-one consultations: In-depth consultations were held with local stakeholders. These conversations explored a wide range of topics, including stakeholders' views on Thetford's strengths and weaknesses, their aspirations for the future and potential interventions that could deliver transformative impacts.	4. Online survey: A website was set up to provide information to the public about the Town Delivery Plan process and the opportunities available to engage. A short survey was included for people to express their views on the future of the town.
5. Walking workshop: A walking workshop was held with consultants, stakeholders, Thetford Town Council and Breckland Council officers. This allowed stakeholders and officers to share their views about different parts of the town and the types of interventions needed. Observational analysis was also undertaken by the consultant team.	6. 'Future Thetford: Your Priorities' workshop: An in-person workshop was held to discuss an emerging shortlist of projects. This was an open discussion and members of the public and stakeholders could contribute thoughts and ideas, as well as giving the consultant team views on which proposals should be prioritised. The findings directly informed the final short list of interventions.
7. Youth Workshops: In-person workshops were held with youth groups to understand our young population's experiences of living in Thetford and learn of their aspirations for the future.	8. Online draft report: The draft Town Delivery Plan has been published online for public comment. The report will be amended in response to these before being finalised.

Around 200 people have been actively engaged in the Town Plan development process from a wide range of different groups³. Key stakeholders engaged include representatives from Thetford Town Council, Thetford Business Forum, Charles Burrell Centre, Euston Estate, Elveden Estate, Shadwell Estate, Centre Parcs, Flagship Housing, Breckland Council, Forestry England and Greater Anglia. Residents, businesses, charities and third sector organisations were also involved in the development of this document.

It is also estimated that around 250,000 people will have heard about the plan through radio interviews, press articles, social media posts and direct website hits on the Thetford page of the Future Breckland website.

In-Person Intervention Workshop



Source: Breckland Council 2022

3. A 'Person Engaged' is defined as someone who has: (a) attended an interactive session, (b) participated in a relevant meeting, (c) been involved in a 1-1 conversation, (d) responded to the survey or, (e) been in receipt of substantial programme information that they have had the opportunity to comment on.

Walking Workshop



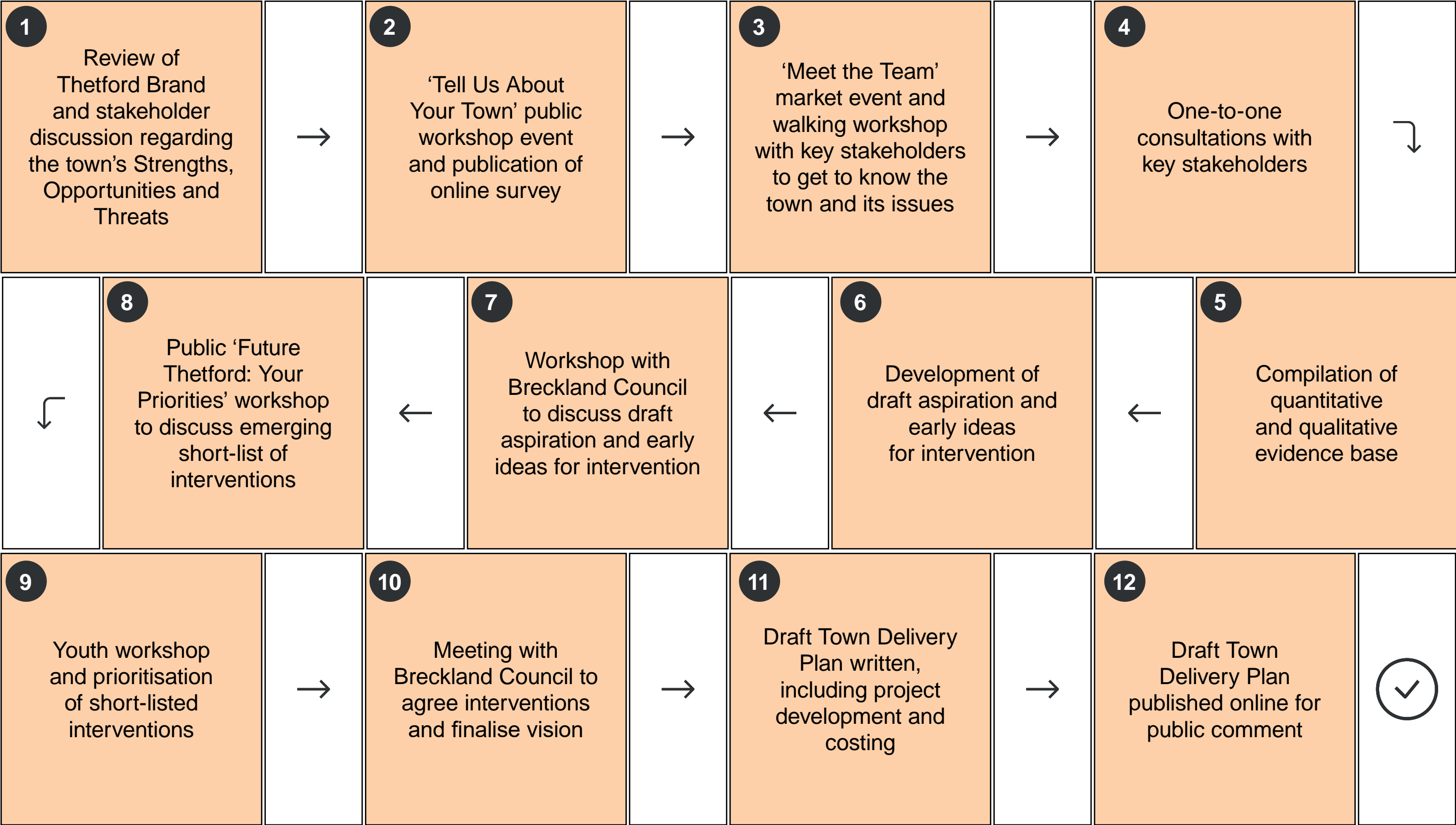
Source: We Made That 2022

Market Stall Event



Source: We Made That 2022

Figure 12 Building Thetford's Town Delivery Plan



Source: Hatch, 2021

Selecting the Game Changing Interventions

Five game changing interventions have been selected to transform Thetford. These are:

- 1. **Riverside Regeneration:** Enhancing our town centre
- 2. **Gateway Thetford:** Boosting our Local Economy
- 3. **Connected Thetford:** Better connecting Thetford's town centre with its assets
- 4. **Innovative Thetford:** Providing a new youth and business hub
- 5. **Brand Thetford:** Promoting and capitalising on our rich heritage

More detail is provided on these later in this report. Together these interventions form a clear investment package that will:

- Help to deliver our aspiration for Thetford.
- Contribute to Breckland Council's overarching Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places objectives (See Thetford's Town Area Action Plan).
- Align with the themes of major Government regeneration funding pots (e.g. town centre regeneration, cultural investment and active travel).
- Complement existing activity and policy aspirations for Thetford from different partners.
- Align with Breckland Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2023.
- Complement and integrate with one another to deliver positive change.

These interventions were selected using a robust prioritisation process that aligns with Government methodology for developing place-based plans and securing public sector investment. This involved scoring a long list of around 20 potential interventions that emerged through the engagement process against five 'success factors':

- 1. **Impact:** Will the intervention have a transformative impact on the town?
- 2. **Ownership:** How complex is the ownership structure?
- 3. **Dependencies:** How many dependencies need to be resolved to bring the intervention forward?
- 4. **Need:** Does the evidence collated indicate that this intervention is needed?
- 5. **Timescales:** Can the intervention be delivered in under ten years?

Each intervention was given a score for each 'success factor' by the independent consultant team. The highest scoring interventions were added to a shortlist but given the focus on delivering transformational change only those with a high score for 'impact' were eligible for this list.

The consultant team also used their professional judgment and qualitative insights to ensure that the shortlist of game changing interventions selected (a) address the town's primary issues and challenges, (b) integrate and complement one another, and (c) can collectively deliver a step change for the town.

This prioritisation process is important because, while all the interventions on the long list have merit, it is not feasible or realistic for partners to deliver all of them given the current funding climate. This process enables our town's limited resources to be directed to projects that will deliver the biggest impact for Thetford.

Creating a short list also ensures that our plan is practical, action-oriented and relentlessly focused on delivery – it avoids creating a document with aspirations that are unrealistic to deliver over the next ten years.

Some interventions have not made the short list but are still considered as important by partners and our community. The game changers will therefore be complemented by (a) the delivery of some **tactical short-term interventions** from the long list that will rapidly deliver highly visual improvements and, (b) through the provision of support for a series of **long-term high-impact proposals**.

Table 1 Contribution of Game Changing Interventions to the Thetford Ambition

Interventions	Thetford's Ambition				
	1	2	3	4	5
Riverside Regeneration					
Gateway Thetford					
Connected Thetford					
Innovative Thetford					
Brand Thetford					
Key	<div><div><div>1. Improve the look, feel and function of our town centre and riverside</div><div>2. Celebrate Thetford's rich heritage, natural assets and its manufacturing legacy</div><div>3. Build on, improve and better connect our communities to heritage, leisure and natural assets</div></div><div><div>4. Capitalise on our strategic position to attract investors</div><div>5. Unlock assets and sites that will enhance provision for deprived groups</div></div></div>				
<p>High level cost estimates related to each game changing intervention are provided later in this report. The costs quoted are not estimates of the required public sector spending. In some cases these scheme may be able to be delivered through a combination of public and private sector finance. In other cases public sector investment may unlock further private sector investment.</p>					

Catalysing Positive Change

Public sector investment is required to unlock our opportunities and kickstart catalytic change. This is because several market failures are holding the town back:

Viability Gap: Commercial rents are comparatively low making most investments unviable without public sector support. Similarly, Housing is more profitable than commercial space so is prioritised by developers over employment space.	Abnormal Costs: Our town centre has some historic properties that are difficult and expensive to develop deterring investors	Public Goods: Access to green space, air quality, exercise provision, for example, provide wider societal benefits that the private market is unlikely to address. Public realm, transport infrastructure and some commercial properties are the responsibility of public bodies or third sector organisations and therefore require active intervention.
Equity Failure: Ensuring all groups have equal access to outcomes and removing barriers that exclude certain groups requires public sector intervention.	Co-ordination Failure: There is a need to pull together the aspirations and work of different partners to ensure alignment and deliver genuine transformative change together.	

Logic Model

A logic model is a graphic that reflects the theory of how interventions lead to positive outcomes. It represents, in a simplified way, a hypothesis about how interventions work together to deliver positive change.

Contributing to Breckland-Wide Objectives

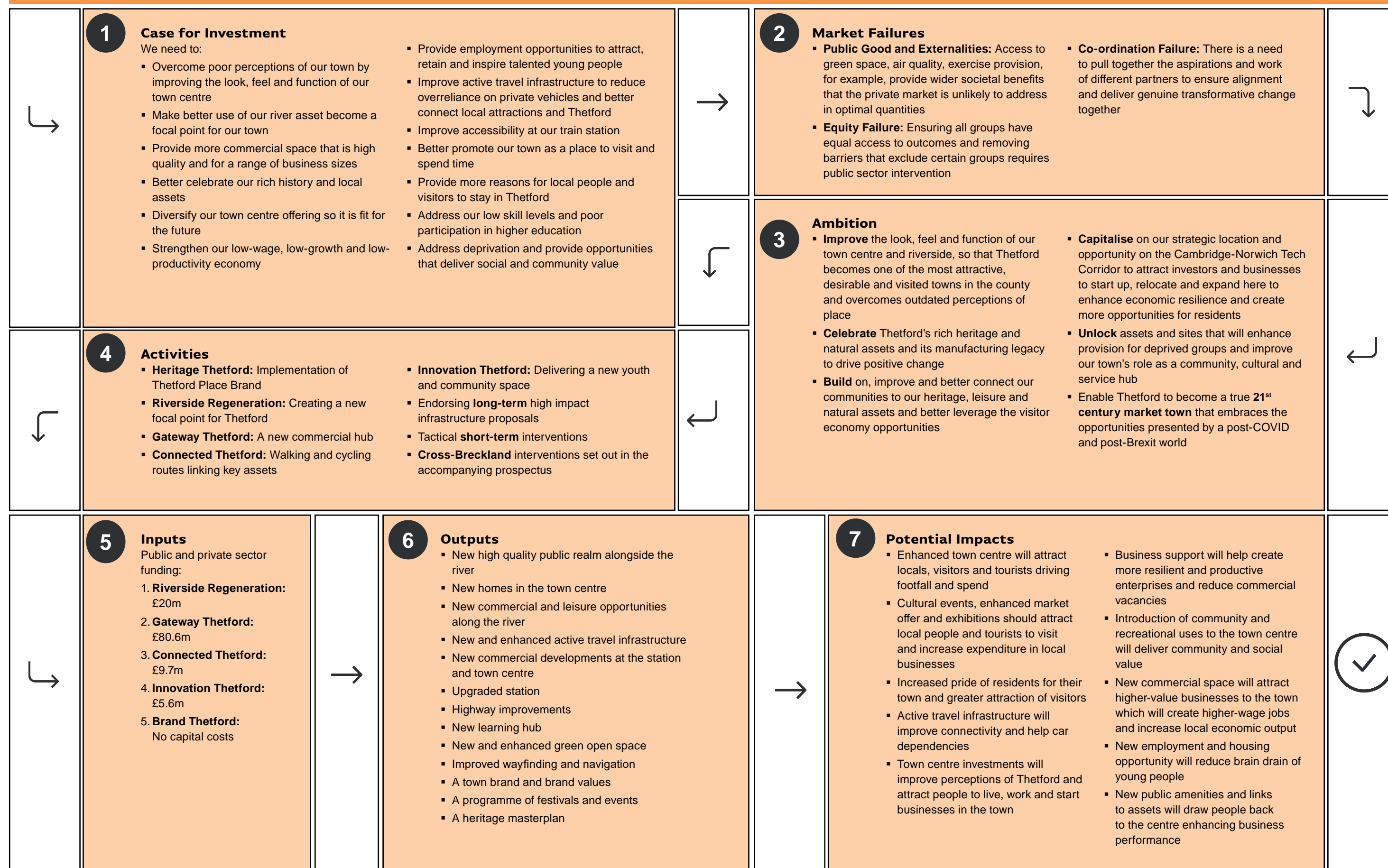
As well as delivering against the Thetford ambition, these game changing interventions will contribute to six Breckland-wide objectives that have been developed in response to the district's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats as set out earlier in this document (See Chapter 1: Introduction). Together with the plans for Swaffham, Dereham, Attleborough and Watton, they will deliver district-wide economic, social and environmental benefits.

Investment in the interventions set out in this document will address these market failures and deliver positive change. This is summarised in our Logic Model overleaf – this captures the rationale for the interventions and illustrates how they will deliver positive impacts for both Thetford and Breckland.

It is important to note that this work will complement and add to existing aspirations for the town, district and region. For example, the Town Delivery Plan aligns with:

- **Thetford Area Action Plan (2019+):** This sets out Breckland Council's aspiration for the town to become a well-connected and flourishing market town with a range of high quality homes, employment opportunities, public services and appropriate infrastructure.
- **Breckland's Local Plan (2019-2036):** This summarises Breckland District Council's ambition to deliver 15,000 new homes and 64 Hectares of employment land across the district by 2036. Thetford is expected to contribute over 5,000 homes and 22 hectares of employment land through the Thetford SUE.
- **Norfolk's Strategic Planning Framework (2019+):** This details a collective spatial vision for Norfolk that reflects the aspirations of all the county's Local Planning Authorities. The vision focuses on strengthening the regional economy, increasing resilience to climate change, regenerating settlements, meeting housing need and building excellent physical and digital connectivity.
- **Norfolk's Together, For Norfolk Plan (2019-2025):** This is Norfolk County Council's plan for the future of the county and it sets out a commitment to invest in Norfolk's growth and prosperity by: (1) focusing on inclusive growth and improved social mobility; (2) encouraging housing, infrastructure, jobs and business growth; (3) developing the workforce to meet the needs of local businesses; and, (4) reducing the impact of economic activity on the environment.
- **Norfolk's Draft Transport Strategy (2021-2036):** This sets out Norfolk County Council's aspiration to improve the county's transport system by embracing the future, prioritising sustainable travel, improving connectivity and increasing accessibility.
- **Norfolk's Rural Strategy (2017-2020):** This sets out Norfolk County Council's vision for rural Norfolk which is focused around exploiting future growth opportunities by embracing technology-led growth, creating a world-class environment to live, work and visit and delivering a competitive land-based industry.
- **Draft Norfolk's Cycling and Walking Action Plan (2016):** This sets out Norfolk's County Council's vision for walking and cycling. It focuses on encouraging more people to walk and cycle to places of work, education and leisure and making walking and cycling normal activities for most people most of the time.

Figure 13 Logic Model





04

Thetford's
Game Changers:
Enabling
Transformative
Change

Thetford's Game Changers

Enabling Transformational Change

Figure 14 Overview of Interventions

Overview of Interventions

1. Riverside Regeneration

A series of complimentary investments to deliver transformational change along the river:

- 1.1 Improved cycle and pedestrian links along the river edge and landscaping improvements
- 1.2 Investment and enhancement in existing green infrastructure, including Abbey Meadows
- 1.3 Improved access to the river for recreation and leisure, including supporting infrastructure e.g changing facilities, storage, decking.
- 1.4 Enabling new mixed-use developments alongside the river (Riversdale and Minstergate)

2. Gateway Thetford

Creating a new commercial hub around the railway station:

- 2.1 Repurpose and develop land around the station to bring forward new commercial space + additional car parking
- 2.2 Improve accessibility through and across the railway station
- 2.3 Repurpose the existing building to support business start ups and business activity
- 2.4 Improve existing links between the station and the existing business parks
- 2.5 Improve visual appearance of station forecourt and entrance

3. Connecting Thetford

- 3.1 Deliver a series of active travel interventions

4. Innovative Thetford

- 4.1 New learning hub - Breckland House and former Cosy Carpets site offer potential opportunities
- 4.2 Enhancements to the Charles Burrell Centre

5. Brand Thetford

- 5.1 Opportunities for place branding and art murals

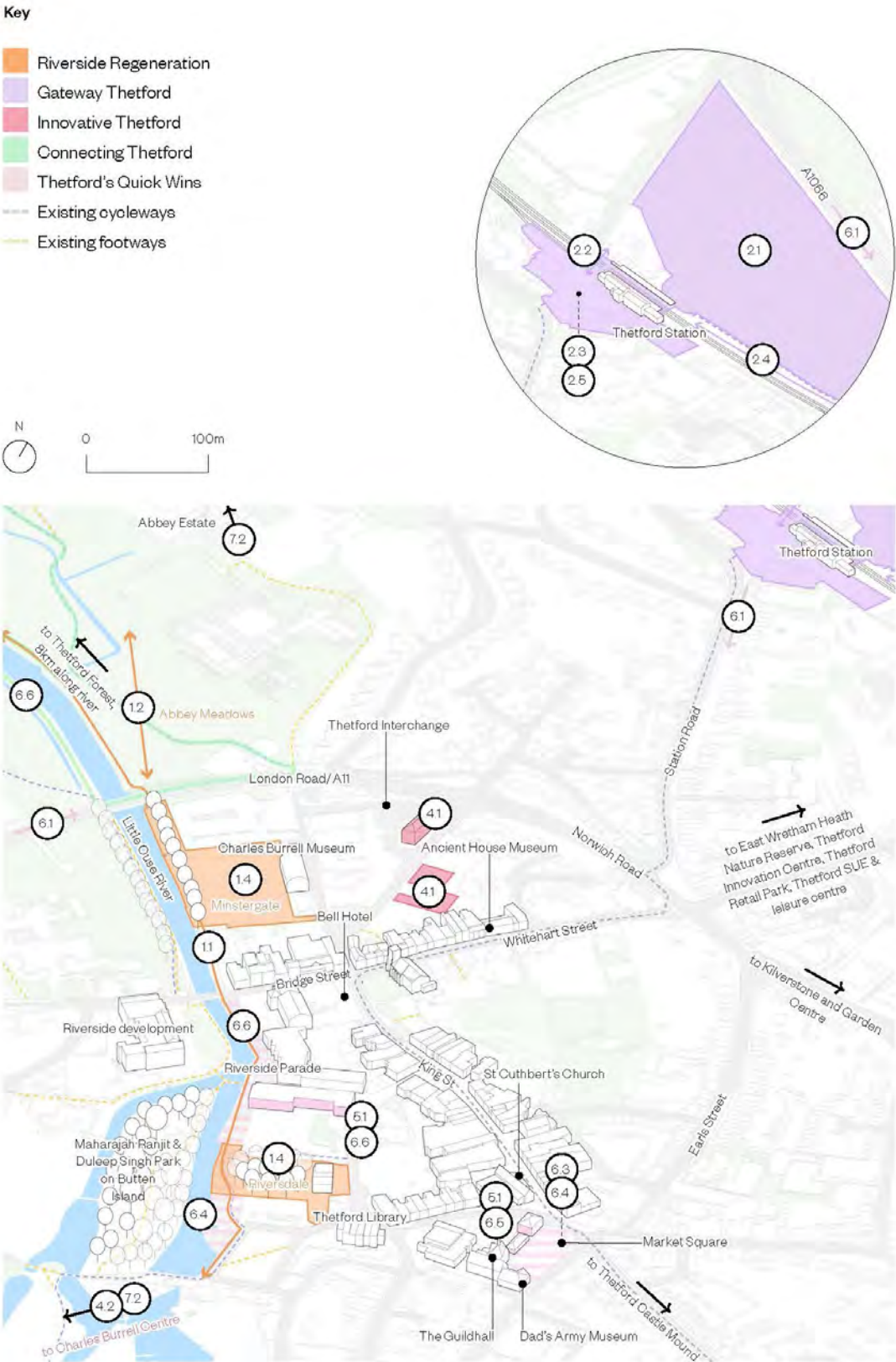
6. Thetford's Quick Wins: Short-Term Tactical Interventions

- 6.1 Wayfinding Improvements:
Install wayfinding and signage on key routes to the town, particularly the A11, A134 and A1066.
Installation of new maps and signage to aid with navigation and locating places of interest.
- 6.2 Heritage Conservation:
Development of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan covering heritage assets.
- 6.3 Market Place Improvements:
Redevelopment of marketplace including removal of the existing car parking to create a permanent civic centre.
Installation of electrical charging points for market events.
Improvements to the war memorial at Market Place.
- 6.4 Place Activation:
A programme of meanwhile uses and events throughout the year into the high street and market square.
New events to activate new public spaces following redevelopment.
- 6.5 Public Amenity Improvements:
Provide electric vehicle charging points in the town centre.
Install bike storage and parking facilities.
- 6.6 Public Realm Improvements:
Work with local artists to produce new murals and branding artwork promoting Thetford's diverse heritage.
Work with local artists to produce public art installations along trails.
Additional seating and visual improvements along riverside.
Improve, restore and repair shopfronts in the town centre

Refer to section 5 for the full list of quick wins







7. Long-term, high impact proposals

- 7.1 Abbey Estate
- 7.2 Charles Burrell Centre Re-development



Source: We Made That, 2022

1. Riverside Regeneration

<h3>Project Description</h3> <p>One of Thetford's unique features is the river Thet which runs through the town centre. The riverside provides a pleasant environment for people to walk and congregate but is today underused. During consultations many of Thetford's residents, both young and old, mentioned a lack of leisure activities or things to do in Thetford town centre, including places to meet friends and socialise. The riverfront could become a form of outdoor park with amenities that enable residents to use the area all through the year.</p> <p>This project aims to leverage Thetford's riverside and to develop it as the main feature of the town by developing riverside amenities and leisure activities to run alongside. With targeted support and investment, a series of new features will be put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Cycle and pedestrian links along the river edge to encourage leisure alongside landscaping investment▪ Introduction of recreational and leisure activities along the riverfront including canoeing and wild swimming with changing facilities, storage and decking.▪ New pop-up concessions to provide food and drink▪ New mixed-use developments at key river front locations, including Minstergate and Riversdale. <p>To help address the issue of Thetford's neighbourhood interconnectivity, it is envisioned that the improved riverside walkway would connect the town centre to Thetford Forest, thus drawing hikers and walkers into town. The improved riverside walkway would also connect the town centre to the Abbey Estate, providing residents with a more direct to the shops, socialising and jobs. This intervention complements and acts as an early win to the longer-term aspirations to regenerate the Abbey Estate.</p>			
<h3>Existing Site Photographs</h3> <table><tr><td><h4>Little Ouse River (Eastward)</h4><p>Source: We Made That, 2022</p></td><td><h4>Little Ouse River (Westwards)</h4><p>Source: We Made That, 2022</p></td></tr></table>		<h4>Little Ouse River (Eastward)</h4>  <p>Source: We Made That, 2022</p>	<h4>Little Ouse River (Westwards)</h4>  <p>Source: We Made That, 2022</p>
<h4>Little Ouse River (Eastward)</h4>  <p>Source: We Made That, 2022</p>	<h4>Little Ouse River (Westwards)</h4>  <p>Source: We Made That, 2022</p>		
<h3>Delivery Partners</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Norfolk County Council, Breckland District Council, Thetford Town Council, businesses, and landowners			
<h3>Project Rationale</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The riverside is underused and if leveraged well could provide a greater role in the town centre, which would give the town a unique and compelling feature▪ Current riverside walking routes are available but underused by people, not helped by a higher relative crime rate around Abbey Meadows▪ Several buildings on the front of the river are vacant or underused▪ Few public spaces or leisure activities for residents to meet and socialise in the town centre▪ Limited direct routes into town, or amenities targeted at walkers and hikers visiting Thetford Forest			

<div>Proposed Actions</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Demand studies on potential uses for Minstergate and Riversdale buildings following on from the masterplanEstablish pop-up concessions on the riverfront, to complement the programme of events to run from summer 2022Refresh Waterspace Study to determine watersports that would be feasible and infrastructure required.Improvement to riverside walkway linking Abbey Meadow and Thetford Forest</div>	
<div>Strategic Alignment</div> <div><div>Thetford Ambition:</div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Will improve the look, feel and function of our town centre by providing recreational and family-friendly activities and supporting community cohesionWill support perception change of Thetford by residents and visitors by providing new and exciting spaces to spend time inWill capitalise on our assets by attracting visitors and businesses to the townWill drive footfall and spend strengthening our economy<div>Breckland Objectives:</div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Will contribute to town centre regeneration through the delivery of a unique, active and diverse destination that will drive footfall and local spendWill support business and enterprise by providing space that will strengthen and diversify the local economyWill support inclusion by improving access to town for the most deprived communities<div>Government Ambitions:</div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Aligns with Government ambitions related to town centre regeneration as set out in the prospectuses for the Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund</div>	
<div>Estimated Costs</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Total: £20,030,000Building Cost: £13,910,000Risk on Construction / Contingency (20%): £2,782,000Professional Fees / Surveys (20%): £3,338,000</div>	
<div>Potential Funding Mechanisms</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund); Developer contributions (e.g. s106); Private sector investment ; Local public bodies (e.g. Breckland Council, Thetford Town Council and Norfolk County Council capital funds)</div>	
<div>Next Steps</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Review existing masterplan and produce full business case to cover all project aspects including required feasibility studies.</div>	
<div>Indicative Timescales</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Short-Term (0-2 Years): Full feasibility and initial enhancements to Abbey MeadowsMedium-Term (2-5 Years): Delivery of public realm, full Abbey Meadow improvements and redevelopment of buildings</div>	
<div>Potential Outputs</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">100-200 sqm new jetty alongside the river10 sqm changing facilitiesNew commercial floorspace (around 1,700 sqm of ground floor commercial uses to be refined and tested with design work)Enhanced managed green spaces around 9.5ha at Abbey MeadowsNew residential units (an estimated 32 dwellings to be refined and tested with design work)450m of new / enhanced active travel routes delivered</div>	

1. Riverside Regeneration...continued

Potential Impacts

- Increased expenditure in our town centre from regular users and visitors from outside the town, estimated at between £6 and £9 per visitor.⁴
- Health and wellbeing improvements for our residents through enhanced amenities and more accessible green and blue space⁵
- Enhanced public realm should attract locals and visitors to the town centre, increasing expenditure in local businesses⁶
- Investment in good quality public realm, green and blue spaces should increase local land values making wider regeneration more viable⁷
- Enhanced town centre appearance as a place to live, work and open a new business and act as an attraction for visitors to Thetford
- Reduced deprivation in the Abbey estate and reduction in crime
- Improved offer will attract younger and working age people to live in the town
- Accessible leisure will support community cohesion and help build social capital

Project Examples

- Beckenham Place Park:** Beckenham Place Park is a former golf course that was converted into the London Borough of Lewisham's largest public park in 2017. Paid for by Heritage Lottery Funding, it offers 96 hectares of green space and includes a wide range of facilities, including café, ball court, football pitches, tennis court and sensory garden. One of the most popular elements of the park is its lake, which is London's first purpose-built swimming lake. It is 285m long, reaches depths of up to 3.4m and is used for a range of water-based activities (e.g., paddleboarding, swimming, canoeing etc). It is operated by PTP Coaching and users pay a small fee to use the facility.
- Cambridge Riverfront:** The regeneration of Cambridge's historic Old Press/Mill Lane area included public open space, on the riverfront, retail and leisure facilities. The project would see the transformation of an important quarter of the city and draw residents, students and visitors to the area. The rejuvenated historic buildings would provide centrally located student rooms.

Beckenham Place Park, South East London



Source: Beckenham Place Park, 2021

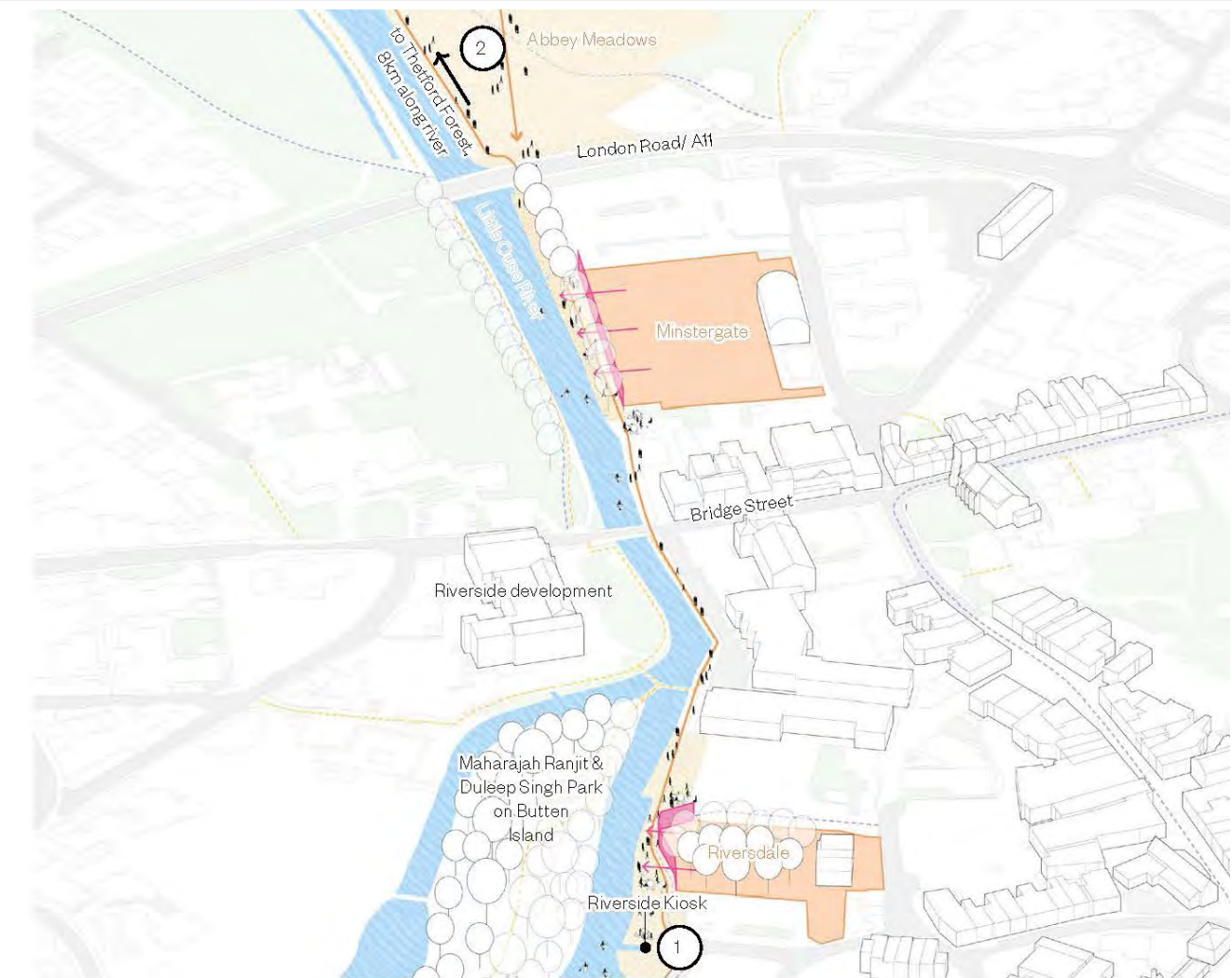
Cambridge Riverfront



Source: Cambridge Independent, 2018

- Taken from Natural England's Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment report (2017) sets out that users of the natural environment spend between £6 and £9 on average in local businesses per trip
- Improving access to greenspace: A new review for 2020, Public Health England (2020)
The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence report that people who exercise regularly take 27% fewer sick days than their colleagues
- An evaluation of public realm improvements in Bristol shows a 25% increase in footfall on Saturday, The Pedestrian Pound: The Business Case for Better Street and Public Spaces, Just Economics (2016)
Improved public space and green space in Sheffield City Centre increased footfall by 35% and led to a £4.2m net increase in spending within local businesses, The Pedestrian Pound, Living Streets (2018)
- A study by the Northwest Regional Development Agency found that good urban design can lead to an increase of up to 20% in capital value and accelerate lettings and sales rates
Public realm investments in Sheffield contributed to an increase in property rental value of £1.60-£2.40 / sq. ft. and a 1-1.5% yield improvement

Figure 15 Riverside Regeneration



Exploratory diagram

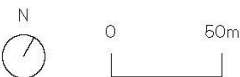
Key

- Enabling new mixed-use developments alongside the river
- Active frontages
- Improved cycle and pedestrian links along the river edge
- Create new and enhance existing public realm and green space
- Improved access to the river for recreation and leisure
- Existing cycleways
- Existing footways

- Potential changing facilities
- Improve pedestrian and cycle link across Abbey Meadows

Proposed areas

- Minstergate development site 5000 sqm
- Riversdale development site 3600 sqm



Source: We Made That, 2022

2. Gateway Thetford

<div><div><div>Project Description</div><div><p>The rail station is another underused Thetford asset. Having a direct link railway line is an important differentiator for Thetford, particularly given it is at the midpoint of the Cambridge to Norwich railway line. However, today the station sits as an island, somewhat separated from the town centre. The station and surrounds are not particularly welcoming when people disembark. And more critically the out-dated station infrastructure means that it poses accessibility issues to many as there is no step-free access between platforms.</p><p>An issue that was raised through consultation was the lack of commercial space, particularly office space. This reflects growth in Thetford's native businesses as well interest by companies seeking a footprint in Thetford. Since the advent of COVID-19, many people have left larger cities (and jobs) for Breckland and seek to set up new small businesses. As a consequence, there is a lack of supply of flexible commercial space, particularly small, high-quality office units for use by small businesses and flexible office space for use by residents.</p><p>This project aims to tackle both of these challenges by improving accessibility to the station to encourage more visitors and users of rail, and to develop the immediate surrounds of the station to develop flexible commercial space.</p></div></div><div><div>The project will introduce:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Ways to bring the land around the station into better use. This includes the station forecourt and feasibility study to investigate the potential move of the allotments to an alternative location and use the site to develop commercial premises as well as expand station facilities on the north side of the railway. Any plans that remove allotment space will need to meet the relevant planning requirements for reprovion. Reprovion could occur over several sites and an approved decanting strategy would need to be in place prior to removal.Improvements in station accessibility including better access across the tracks which today are limited to a footbridge with no lifts and very limited vehicle access to the north.Better connections between the station and town centre; better and more welcoming access to the adjacent business parkReconfiguration of the existing station buildings to create commercial space for use by small businesses and start-ups.Highway upgrades to Station Lane to ensure better access from the north of the station.</div></div></div>	
<div>Existing Site Photographs</div> <div><div><div>Thetford Train Station</div><div></div><div>Source: We Made That 2022</div></div><div><div>Route to Industrial Park</div><div></div><div>Source: We Made That 2022</div></div></div>	
<div>Delivery Partners</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Thetford Town Council, Breckland District Council, Norfolk County Council, Greater Anglia, Network Rail, Department for Transport, landowners</div>	

Project Rationale	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Thetford's station environment exacerbates poor perceptions of placeAccessibility to and from the station is poor and there is no step free accessStrong demand, but lack of good quality commercial space within Thetford	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Underused station buildings and land surroundingPoor integration with the business parkHigh dependency on car usage but low car ownershipStrategic Urban Extension will drive demand for better sustainable transport
Proposed Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Station accessibility and appearance: update station accessibility to enable usage by people with mobility issues. Improve the look and feel within the station and the station surroundsStation connectivity: create better links between the station and the town centre with clear signage and directions and make the walk to the business park more welcoming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Feasibility study for the relocation of the allotments and reconfiguration of station buildings to enable the development of flexible commercial space
Strategic Alignment	
Thetford Ambition: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Will improve the sense of arrival into Thetford and attract visitors and businesses and encourage modal shiftWill support the growth and regeneration framework, Policy TH7 Thetford Railway StationWill increase the size of our economy by unlocking and enhancing a key site in our town, providing prime commercial space and creating attractive business environment, attracting businesses and skilled people keen to locate along the Cambridge Norwich Tech CorridorWill enhance our economic resilience by creating more economic opportunities for our residents	Breckland Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Will contribute to town centre regeneration as new flexible workspace offer should drive footfall and local spendWill support business and enterprise by providing space that will strengthen and diversify the local economyWill support inclusion and skills if some space is provided at affordable rates and if operators provide a business support offer
National Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Aligns with broader policies including the Transport Decarbonisation Plan, Breckland Council's Corporate Plan and Breckland Council's Core Strategy, national and regional industrial strategies as well as priority investment areas identified as part of Government's recent regeneration funding pots (i.e. Future High Street Fund, Stronger Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund)	
Estimated Costs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Total: £80,597,000Building Cost: £55,970,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Risk on Construction / Contingency (20%): £11,194,000Professional Fees / Surveys (20%): £13,433,000
Potential Funding Mechanisms	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund, Shared Prosperity Fund, Department for Transport funds); Developer contributions (e.g. s106); Private sector investment (e.g. Municipal Bond Agency); Local public bodies (e.g. Breckland Council, Thetford Town Council and Norfolk County Council capital funds)	
Next Steps	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Produce full feasibility studies; produce detailed designs; develop full business cases; secure planning permission; deliver project	

2. Gateway Thetford...continued

Indicative Timescales

- Short-Term (0-1 Years): Improved access to existing industrial site, station gateway feasibility, business plan and design work
- Medium-Term (1-3 Years): relocation of allotments and site preparation
- Long-Term (3-10 years): construction works at station and new business park

Potential Outputs

- New commercial development (up to 23,300 sqm)
- Public realm improvements (2,000 sqm)
- 230m highways improvements and resurfacing vehicular/cycle access between the new development site, the station and Mundford Road

- New parking spaces
- Equality Act 2010 compliant railway station

Potential Impacts

- Fit for purpose station with capacity to support existing and future population, and encourage modal shift
- Enhanced public realm and station environment should increase land values and encourage local regeneration and business investment
- Highway upgrades will ensure better access to the station and business park

- Will drive changes in perception of Thetford as a modern and vibrant market town.
- Support business innovation and business enterprise
- New commercial space will attract high-wage employers and support employment and economic growth.
- 815 gross permanent jobs FTE supported on-site

Project Examples

- Eastern Gateway, Ipswich: Major new logistics, warehousing and business park to the west of Ipswich which is to become home to Amazon, La Doria and other similar businesses. The site is strategically located adjacent to the A47 and is close to the Port of Felixstowe and A12 to London. New employers will bring hundreds of new 'good' jobs to the town across a range of logistics, warehousing and office-based businesses. This reflects the type of offer that could be developed behind Elizabeth House once the A47 dualling commences.
- Re-Imagining Railway Stations: A competition to identify new approaches to shape the future of small to medium-sized station provision across the UK National Rail network saw the submission of 200 entries from designers based in 34 countries. Entrants were to reimagine how small to medium sized stations can improve the travel experience of the millions of passengers using our railways.

Eastern Gateway, Ipswich



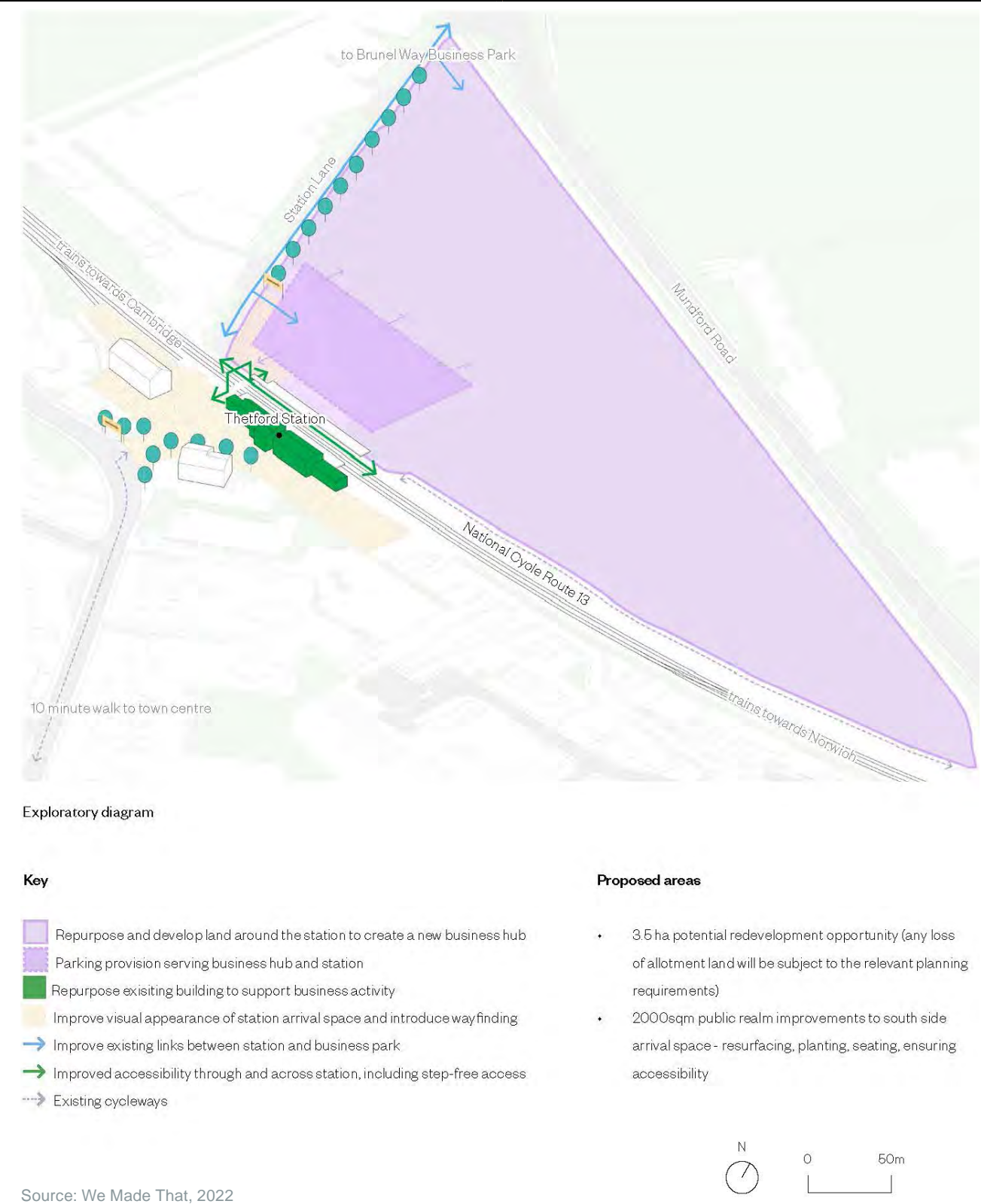
Source: ©Zoopla Limited, 2021

Re Imagining Railway Stations



Source: Architects Journal

Figure 16 Station Gateway



3. Connected Thetford

<div><div><div>Project Description</div><div><p>Thetford has a range of facilities and neighbourhoods within the town centre that are difficult to travel to by foot or bicycle due to lack of dedicated active travel infrastructure. As a result, there is an overreliance on cars to move about the town, which contributes to congestion</p><p>This is a missed opportunity as Thetford faces a number of health inequalities. It also misses an opportunity to connect visitors to Thetford Forest with the town centre by walking and cycling routes. It has been found that encouraging walking and cycling supports healthy lifestyles and in turn can narrow health inequalities.</p><p>This project aims to improve the walking and cycling network within Thetford and create convenient and attractive paths for pedestrians and cyclists to move around the town. Particular consideration should be given to connecting Thetford's public services with residential areas, and residential areas with employment areas. The routes should also improve access for Thetford's residents to the surrounding countryside.</p></div></div><div><div>The project will capture current planned schemes (including Thetford Loops), schemes identified by the forthcoming Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan (LCWIP), as well as new routes identified by stakeholders.</div><div>The project should drive local demand for cycling and walking by making more routes available, provide health and wellbeing benefits, improve access to services and leisure/heritage assets for all residents and make Thetford a vanguard of active travel in the region.</div></div></div>	
<div><div>Existing Site Photographs</div><div><div><div>Key Route between Town and Industrial Estate</div><div></div><div>Source: We Made That 2022</div></div><div><div>Abbey Meadows</div><div></div><div>Source: We Made That 2022</div></div></div></div>	

<div><div>Delivery Partners</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Norfolk County Council, Breckland District Council; Thetford Town Council, National Highways, Sustrans, Active Norfolk</div></div>	
<div><div>Project Rationale</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Comparatively low proportion of trips are made by bicycle or footOverreliance on private vehicles is creating traffic and congestionMissed opportunity from large number of visitors at neighbouring attractions, e.g. High Lodge, Thetford Garden Centre and Center Parcs.Lack of dedicated well-lit active travel infrastructure acts as a barrier to walking and cycling and leads to fear of crime</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Opportunity to better integrate with national routesSeverance caused by the A11 and the riverPlanned housing growth will place more pressure on road network without investment in active travel infrastructureFuture infrastructure investment from Government will require dedicated cycling routes to be provided</div></div>	
<div><div>Strategic Alignment</div><div><div><div>Thetford Ambition:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Will improve the feel and function of the town by providing linkages to the town centre and assets for residents and visitors which should drive footfall and spend in local businessesWill capitalise on opportunities to attract visitors of out-of-town places of interest by improving access to the town centreWill improve our town's role as a community and leisure hub by providing walking and cycling routes of varying lengths to attract our residents to partake in regular activity</div></div><div><div>Breckland Objectives:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Will support town centre regeneration by attracting new people and groups to the townWill support inclusion through the creation of a new safe and accessible cycle route between two important nodesWill enhance physical infrastructure making it easier for residents, visitors and works to move around and meetWill improve sustainability by providing a green and low carbon alternative to driving</div></div><div><div>Government Ambition:</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Aligns with broader policies including the UK Net Zero Target 2050, Government's Gear Change: A Bold New Vision for Cycling and Walking, UK Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, Government's focus on Active Travel, particularly the new 'Gear Change' policy which sets out a plan to deliver a step change in walking and cycling provision</div></div></div></div>	
<div><div>Estimated Costs</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Total: £9,734,000Building Cost: £6,760,000Risk on Construction / Contingency (20%): £1,352,000Professional Fees / Surveys (20%): £1,622,000</div></div>	
<div><div>Potential Funding Mechanisms</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund and Active Travel Grants); Developer contributions (e.g. s106); Public sector finance (e.g. National Infrastructure Bank and Public Works Loan Board); Local public bodies</div></div>	
<div><div>Next Steps</div><div><ul style="list-style-type: none">To continue engagement with and work collaboratively with Norfolk County in the production of the Local Cycle Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).Finalise with LCWIP, undertake full feasibility studies and prioritise areas of investment, produce detailed scheme drawings, development business cases , secure planning permission and funding</div></div>	

3. Connected Thetford...continued

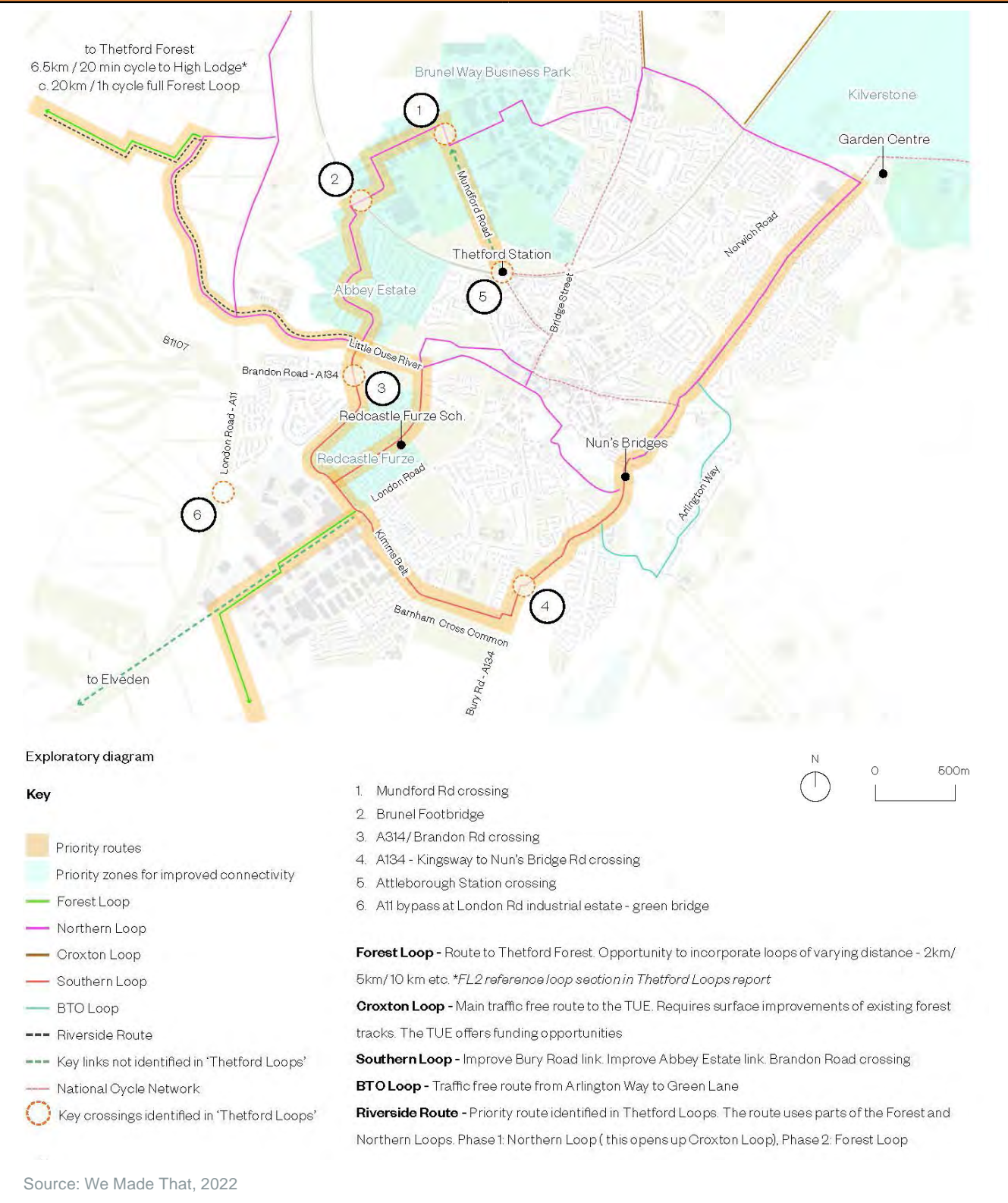
Proposed Actions	
Produce full business cases, including identification of routes, procurement approach, contractors and non-financial benefits for the following schemes:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Forest Loop. Route to Thetford Forest. There is an opportunity to incorporate loops of varying distance - 2km/ 5km/ 10 km etc to appeal to a great variety of usersCroxton Loop. Main traffic-free route to the SUE. Requires surface improvements of existing forest tracks and will encourage sustainable travel from the SUE into the town.Southern Loop. Improve Bury Road link. Improve Abbey Estate link and Brandon Road crossing to encourage safer travel.BTO Loop. Traffic free route from Arlington Way to Green LaneRiverside Route, Priority route identified in Thetford Loops. The route uses parts of the Forest and Northern Loops. Phase 1: Northern Loop (this opens up Croxton Loop), Phase 2: Forest Loop	
Indicative Timescales	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Short-term (0-1 Years): Full feasibility study and route planningMedium-term (2-10 Years): Full scheme delivered	
Potential Outputs	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Up to 50.4 km of improved pedestrian and cycle ways	
Potential Impacts	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increased proportion of trips made by cycle/walking versus private vehicleIncreased footfall and spend in Thetford town centres, heritage assets and natural assets⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Improved health and wellbeing of residents which has implications for employers and productivity⁹Improved perceptions of Thetford for inward investment¹⁰
Project Examples	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><u>Sandwich Way Cycle Route</u>: Connects Sandwich, Dover and Deal to the Discovery Park Science Park which is a major high-value employment cluster in East Kent<u>Tonbridge to Tunbridge Wells Cycle Route</u>: Connects the neighbouring towns of Tonbridge and Tunbridge Wells via Tunbridge Wells hospital allowing people to commute between the two locations for work, school and leisure	

8. Natural England's Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment report (2017) sets out that users of the natural environment spend between £6 and £9 on average in local businesses per trip. Transport for London report that walking and cycling investments can increase retail spend by up to 30%. Research from the University of Birmingham shows that cycle parking delivers 5x more retail spend per sqm than the same area of car parking The opening of the Vennbahn Cycle Path in Germany contributed to a 20% increase in accommodation occupancy

9. The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence report that people who exercise regularly take 27% fewer sick days than their colleagues. The Department for Transport report that walking and cycling projects deliver £13 of economic value for every £1 invested

10. 74% of Business Improve Districts in London report that walking and cycling are important for attracting and retaining businesses and employees

Figure 17 Connected Thetford: Indicative Routes



4. Innovative Thetford

Project Description

Thetford has a young population, yet we have very low proportions of young people moving into further education and attending university and our educational attainment rates in Breckland are significantly lower than national average. Whilst we have strong areas of sectoral strength in manufacturing, engineering and low carbon – many employers face significant challenges in recruiting new staff. Our ongoing challenge with educational attainment is a concern both for our young people who will have limited job options and a concern for our businesses who require skilled labour to survive.

This project is designed to help overcome this by developing an innovative new learning Hub in Thetford. The Hub will focus on providing sector-specific skills development and training for young people, including provision of higher-level training, whilst bringing together additional employment and enterprise support services for adults and young people into a single offer.

The Hub will:

- Provide modern learning and education facilities at a high-quality, fit-for-purpose. The facility will include lecture and seminar rooms alongside social spaces and student resources.

- Work with local employers, particularly those in sectors along the Tech Corridor (including manufacturing, engineering, digital technology and renewable energy sectors), to ensure that the training provided is relevant and in demand. This will allow our youth to gain relevant skills to gain employment and thrive within the local area.
- Bring together within a single site, or series of sites, offers from different providers in the skills, enterprise and innovation spaces to create a Hub of associated offers and a 'one stop shop' for support with skills in Thetford
- Provide new community ancillary space for other youth-related services and social and cultural activities.
- Work to integrate with and complement existing provision, such as the services delivered out of the Charles Burrell Centre

Whilst there are already some established and successful youth facilities within Thetford, these are located within individual estates. There is not currently provision for space within the town centre, where young people can be encouraged to come together and interact with other communities.

Existing Site Photographs

Potential site: Breckland House



Source: We Made That 2022

Delivery Partners

- Breckland District Council, Thetford Town Council, Thetford Business Forum, Further Education providers, third sector partners

Project Rationale

- Existing youth facilities are limited, and there are none located in a central town centre location. There is limited areas in the town centre to encourage youth people to spend time.
- Aspirations in young people is low
- Social mobility is poor
- Deprivation is high and skills levels are low. Higher education participation is limited
- Limited modern or flexible workspace available
- Unused buildings within the town centre lead to negative perceptions of place
- Startup and small businesses require better support and access to resources to aid development

Strategic Alignment

Thetford Ambition:

- Will support inclusion and skills through the provision of enhanced community services for our young population and entrepreneurs
- Will support the growth of our town by providing support to our entrepreneurs enabling them to establish sustainable and successful businesses.
- Will improve the feel and function of our town by supporting youth into work, thus raising aspirations and supporting social mobility

Breckland Objectives:

- Will support town centre regeneration by bringing central buildings back into use
- Will support inclusion and skills through the provision of enhanced community services
- Will support business and enterprise by providing vital business support to entrepreneurs

Government Ambition:

- Aligns with broader policies including the UK Industrial Strategy, New Anglia's Draft Local Industrial Strategy and support communities and local regeneration as set out in the prospectuses for the Towns Fund and Community Renewal Fund

Estimated Costs

- Total: £5,645,000
- Building Cost: £3,920,000
- Risk on Construction / Contingency (20%): £784,000
- Professional Fees / Surveys (20%): £941,000

Potential Funding Mechanisms

- Local bodies (e.g. Thetford Town Council, Breckland District Council and Norfolk County Council capital funds); Develop contributions (s106); Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund, Shared Prosperity Fund and Stronger Towns Fund)

Next Steps

- Detailed review of current education and skills provision for young people to identify gaps in current provision; assess viability of the operations, assess feasibility and design options and determine best site for the centre.

4. Innovative Thetford...continued

<p>Proposed Actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Undertake detailed feasibility study and detailed design work▪ Engagement with existing youth groups and the Charles Burrell Centre▪ Purchase and repurpose selected building▪ Engage with businesses on young people support programme: procurement of an expert business support or youth support services expert to provide intensive 1-1 support for local entrepreneurs and businesses
<p>Indicative Timescales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Short-Term (0-2 years): feasibility and design works▪ Medium-Term (2-5 years): Building refurbishment
<p>Potential Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ New youth facilities in a town centre location▪ New learning space (floorspace dependent on location)▪ Young people supported into employment

<p>Potential Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Increased access to education, training and skills development opportunities▪ Providing local youth population with a greater sense of identity and heightened aspiration – made to feel part of a wider Thetford community▪ New activities and opportunities likely to bring communities together enhancing community cohesion▪ New flexible commercial floorspace for local businesses
<p>Project Examples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ <u>London Construction Academy</u>: An academy providing free training to help hard to reach people who are not in employment, education or training into achieving transferable skills for the construction sector. Courses are designed to motivate people and cover a comprehensive range of skills, procedures and practices - making participants realise there are apprenticeship and work experience opportunities within the sector.▪ <u>Inspire Lewisham</u>: A tailored programme, which offers a number of different routes directing young people aged 16+ toward better and more creative opportunities. Participants get: bespoke plans to help develop skills through training, advice and guidance; information about the opportunities available within the industry and skills required for success; paid work experience; guidance from experts working in the industry; and support in finding places to study, work or even start their own businesses.▪ <u>SBC Training</u>: Delivering high quality training programmes and apprenticeships in Shrewsbury, the Apprentice and Skills Hub provides a range of services including: careers advice and planning; foundation courses in construction, engineering and business for school leavers; return to work workshops in a range of skills (such as digital skills, welding, construction skills, maths and English); apprenticeship programmes referrals.

5. Brand Thetford

Project Description <p>When done well, place branding is a powerful tool that can build civic pride and help to draw in visitors and tourists. Despite being one of the oldest English towns and in close proximity to several major visitor destinations, Thetford as a place remains relatively unknown to the majority of people. Of those that have heard of Thetford, many have a poor perception.</p> <p>HemingwayDesign was commissioned to help tackle this by shaping a new identity for Thetford to build resident pride and help tackle unfair perception issues and help establish Thetford as a visitor destination. The team in conjunction with CTConsults undertook a comprehensive consultation exercise with residents, businesses and stakeholders to develop three core values for Thetford:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Enrich and connect our environment, heritage and people▪ Make, do and drive change▪ Be natural leaders <p>These core values underpin a new aspirational narrative for the town and a new visual identity. This intervention supports the roll-out and implementation of the work through a programme of related activity including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Local ownership of the brand and brand values, and ability to incorporate them into all major new activity taking place in the Town▪ A new programme of high-quality events for visitors and residents, including festival activity to celebrate key natural and historic assets like the river▪ Promotion and marketing campaigns around the Town's industrial heritage and manufacturing strength, to support recruitment and growth in the sectors▪ Celebration of the Heritage of the Town, and work with partners to enhance and celebrate key heritage assets▪ Shared approach to developing the future of the Town, particularly around key themes through the environment and change around being an exemplar in Net Zero	
Delivery Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Thetford Town Council; Breckland Council; Norfolk County Council, Non-Departmental Government Bodies (Historic England, Env. Agency, Forestry England etc), Heritage Lottery Fund, Visit East of England, Local Businesses and Partnerships, Education	
Project Rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Poor perceptions of place are limiting opportunity within Thetford▪ A number of large visitor attractions are located in Thetford and nearby, but the town centre does not currently incentivise visitors▪ Thetford's rich heritage and natural assets are not being recognised and celebrated by residents and visitors, and are at risk of deterioration if not appropriately preserved▪ Poor offer for visitor needs	
Strategic Alignment <p>Thetford Ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Will capitalise on the town's unique selling points (i.e. heritage and natural assets) to attract more visitors to spend time and money within the town centre▪ Will improve the function and performance of the town centre making it more attractive to visit▪ Will strengthen our awareness and pride in our town's history, heritage and culture <p>Government Ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Aligns with Government ambitions related to town centre regeneration as set out in the prospectuses for the Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund <p>Breckland Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Will kickstart town centre regeneration allowing our town to realise its potential▪ Will support inclusion by revitalising and activating our public spaces for all▪ Will enhance, restore and improve our town's culture and heritage offer	

Proposed Actions <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide updated signage and logo for Thetford▪ Establish and run a trial events programme for Thetford▪ Develop externally focused marketing material on Thetford	
Estimated Costs <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ No capital costs anticipated. Revenue costs to cover design, marketing support and events coordination	
Potential Funding Mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Local government (e.g. Breckland Council, Thetford Town Council and Norfolk County Council), central government grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund, Arts Council England) Lottery Funding, private sector partnerships/funding awards.	
Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Implement new brand identity and roll out▪ Launch town branding campaign▪ Establish programme of trial events for summer 2022	
Indicative Timescales <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Summer 2022 – Trial events programme▪ 1-3 Years – Development of a self-sustaining programme of events▪ 2-5 years – Establish a destination marketing organisation to promote 'brand Thetford'▪ 5-10 years – Quantifiable change in perception through inward investment, visitor economy growth etc	
Potential Outputs <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A compelling new narrative for the town, underpinned by brand values that locals can be proud of▪ A programme of annual / seasonal festivals and activities/events along the river corridor and around the town▪ Comprehensive adoption of brand values and use by broad range of partners in their day-to-day business▪ Widespread adoption and use of visual identity across sectors and local geography▪ Self-sustaining Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO), Business Improvement District (BID) or Community Improvement District (CID)▪ A developed Heritage Masterplan	
Potential Impacts <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ A Thetford brand that helps to better create a sense of place and purpose for Thetford▪ Improved perception of Thetford that in turn drives and increase in visitor numbers and residents▪ Increased investment from the private sector▪ Investment from central government in response to Thetford's improved story of ambition and clarity on the town's priorities and aspirations.▪ Increased footfall and spend in the town centre and river corridor▪ Programme of festivals and events to attract visitors and celebrate local heritage▪ Stronger sense of community from resident and businesses	

5. Brand Thetford...continued

Project Examples

- Culture Weston, Weston-super-Mare: Culture Weston is a partnership-led initiative that places culture at the heart of Weston-super-Mares daily life and future growth. It is led by North Somerset arts organisation Theatre Orchard, in collaboration with the local community and funded by Arts Council England. It helps to highlight the strengths of Weston and offer advice, support, develop partnerships and collaborations and instigate new initiatives that help to forge an optimistic, people powered future for the town. To date they have worked with a number of local artists, musicians and independent businesses to promote the cultural fabric of Weston. Culture Weston helped to illuminate and develop all that makes Weston 'super' by offering advice and support and developing partnerships.
- Southend Place Branding, Essex: The council has been working with Hemmingway Design to develop a new place branding. This has been designed in a way of attracting visitors and investment and has been successfully implemented across the city in 2021. Based on genuine community engagement the brand sought to capture local strengths in culture, its seaside location and rich heritage.
- Aldeburgh Food and Drink Festival, Suffolk: An annual food festival held at Snape Maltings in Suffolk every September. Over 100 local food and drink producers come together to sell a wide range of products for people to try and buy. It is sponsored by Adnams and Aspalls, both major local producers and brands.

Southend Place Branding



Source: Hemingway Design

Heritage and Culture led Regeneration,
Weston super Mare



Source: Visit Weston-super-Mare

Long-Term Endorsements

There were several important proposals on the intervention long list that could make a significant impact to Thetford and its surrounding communities but did not make the short list of game changing interventions. This is because there is a need to manage the number of priority projects, but also because many of these are highly complex, have several dependencies, need further work and/or are being led exclusively by external parties.

Given their transformative potential, however, they are highlighted as further projects for our partners to support over the long-term. Breckland Council will not directly intervene in these projects but will support their development over time through activities like lobbying, feasibility working and developing supporting policies. These proposals are set out below.

Charles Burrell Centre Re-Development

The former school was vacated in 2013 and in 2015 the Charles Burrell Centre was formally established. The Centre is a thriving community and business centre which is home to over 50 organisations, the venue for over 80 weekly activities and a hub for a wide range of services to support Thetford's residents. Demand for spaces is strong with a waiting list for spaces.

The site faces several challenges given its previous use as a school, particularly in relation to build quality and energy efficiency. There is long term potential for the centre to make better use of the land and examine redevelopment opportunities that could bring new uses to the site (e.g. residential) that could fund the provision of new and improved facilities for community and business uses, which respond more flexibly to future needs; whilst still retaining existing uses. Any feasibility work will need to ensure disruption to existing uses on site are minimised and meet planning requirements due to proximity to SSSI.

Delivery Lead(s): Norfolk County Council and Breckland Council

Support Required: Planning decision and guidance, Options assessment, impact assessments including environmental, feasibility studies, detailed design, and advocacy

1

Abbey Estate

The Abbey Estate was built in the late 1960s and early 1970s as part of a major expansion of Thetford and relocation of communities from London. The former Council Houses were transferred to private housing association in the 1990s, and currently circa 60% of the properties on the estate are owned by Flagship Group.

Flagship Group have been engaging with residents of the Abbey since 2019, listening to concerns, seeking solutions to challenges raised and promoting options for transformation. Flagship are currently working in partnership with Breckland Council and Norfolk County Council to deliver this vision. A series of consultations have been undertaken with local residents, with a further round of engagement undertaken later in 2022 to finalise a plan - one which brings meaningful and sustainable change, benefiting residents of today and tomorrow.

Delivery Lead(s): Flagship Group, Norfolk County Council, Breckland Council

Support Required: Preferred option, planning decision and delivery

2

Financial Summary

The costs stated for each intervention have been prepared to establish a realistic cost limit for the proposed works. They are an approximation and do not represent the precise cost of works at this early stage. They are based on an assessment of similar schemes, recently received cost data and current market feedback.

All costs have been calculated to Q2 2022. This was done to make it easier to understand and because we cannot be sure when the works will commence due to uncertainties around funding. The costs include a 20% "risk on construction / contingency" and a 20% allowance for professional fees and surveys.

It is important to note that project costs for all projects are estimates and include estimated contingency and professional fees. Moreover, they do not represent public sector spending in all instances. In some cases, these schemes may be able to be delivered wholly by the private sector finance, in other cases viability gaps may have to be filled by some form of gap funding agreement or joint venture arrangements.

To take this forward delivery mechanisms will need to be explored for all such schemes and subjected to usual value for money tests. This will include undertaking feasibility studies, design work, business cases, viability appraisals, market engagement etc. This information will assist in determining more accurate and site-specific cost figures.

A summary of the total costs by intervention is provided below:

Summary of the Total Costs by Intervention		
No Capital Costs 1. Brand Thetford	£20,030,00 2. Riverside Regeneration	£80,597,000 3. Gateway Thetford
£9,734,000 4. Connected Thetford	£5,645,000 5. Innovative Thetford	

While Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council, Thetford Town Council and partners will directly invest resources into the priorities identified in this plan, there is limited local funding available. Securing wider public and private sector funding will therefore be essential to realise the ambitions for Thetford. The overarching Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places Prospectus goes into more detail on this and sets out an approach to securing funding for Thetford and the district more broadly.





05

Thetford's
Quick Wins:
Short-Term
Tactical
Interventions

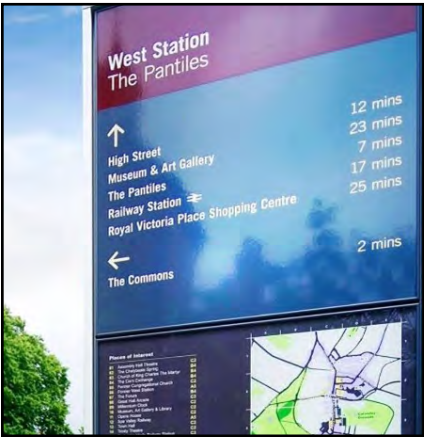
Thetford's Quick Wins

Short-Term Tactical Interventions

There are several funding pots available to support small-scale interventions across Breckland's market towns. These currently include Breckland Council's Market Town Initiative, as well as pots held by Norfolk County Council and the Town Council in addition to small scale external funding sources.

These funding streams will change and evolve over time, but there is likely to be some small-scale funding sources available over the next five to ten years. With this in mind a series of tactical short-term investment areas have been identified to complement the game changing interventions as set out in the table below.

Wayfinding Monoliths, Tunbridge Wells



Source: Rea Designs

Market square improvements, Kingston upon Thames



Source: Royal Borough of Kingston Upon Thames

Lamp Post Banners, Herne Hill



Source: Place in Print

Public Art, Folkestone



Source: Folkestone Artworks

Secure Bike Parking, Brighton



Source: Bikehanger and Brighton University

EV Charging, Maidenhead



Source: Speak EV

Investment in these areas will deliver highly visual improvements and ensure that small but important changes are catalysed by this plan. It is hoped that early intervention will encourage wider investment from businesses, residents, developers and investors as the other more transformational projects come forward.

The investment areas identified are general to reflect uncertainty around the timing and nature of future local funding pots. They also represent priority investment areas, in line with the rest of this document, which respond to our most pressing needs as identified through evidence and consultations.

Table 2 Tactical Short-Term Investments

Investment Area	Potential Interventions	Timescales
Wayfinding Improvements	Install wayfinding and signage on key routes to the town, particularly the A11, A134 and A1066, communicating the local visitor offer to people passing by or visiting out of town centre attractions	0-2 years
	Installation of new/improved maps and signage to help visitors navigate to and within the town as well as locate all places of interest	0-2 years
Heritage Conservation	Development of a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan covering Thetford's heritage assets	0-2 years
Market Place Improvements	Redevelopment and repurposing of marketplace including removal of the existing car park to create a permanent civic centre and town focal point. Improvements will including new stone paving, lighting, planters and seating.	0-3 years
	Installation of electrical charging points for market events	1-3 years
	Improvements to the war memorial at the market place	0-3 years
Place Activation	A programme of meanwhile uses and events throughout the year into the high street and market square	0-2 years
	New events to activate new public spaces following redevelopment	
Public Amenity improvements	Provide electric vehicle charging points in the town centre	1-3 years
	Installation of new and secure bicycle parking facilities	1-3 years
Public Realm Enhancements	Work with local artists to produce new murals and branding artwork promoting Thetford's diverse heritage	1-3 years
	Work with local artists to produce public art installations along trails	
	Additional seating and visual improvements along riverside	0-3 years
	Improve, restore, and repair shop fronts in the town centre	1-3 years



06

Delivering the Plan







Delivering the Plan

Principles of Delivery

This Town Delivery Plan marks a step change for our town and will bring partners towards closer collaboration and the delivery of tangible change. It provides a clear roadmap that partners can get behind and progress at pace.

It does, however, come at a challenging time. The public sector has fewer resources than ever before and the economic impacts following COVID-19 and Brexit are having fundamental impacts on the town's businesses and residents.

Partners therefore will need to be innovative in approaching delivery as the principles set out below highlight:

New Practices and Support Delivery		
Collaboration and Partnership: Making the most of opportunities to work collaboratively to share resources and accelerate, shape and refine delivery. 	Positivity and Problem Solving: Approaching delivery positively and having a 'can do attitude' to solving problems and overcoming barriers. 	Commitment and Focus: A shared long-term commitment to responding to the challenges and opportunities identified and driving forward delivery. 
Town and District: Striving to address district-wide issues while also addressing town-specific challenges and opportunities. 	Innovation and Creativity: Experimenting with innovative project ideas and exploring innovative approaches to leverage funding. 	Agility and Pace: Working rapidly together to deliver change and continuously reviewing projects to ensure they respond to changing needs. 

Timescales for Delivery

A mix of short-, medium- and long-term interventions have been set out in this document. This has been done intentionally to ensure that positive change can be delivered incrementally over time. It is hoped that early interventions will catalyse wider investment from businesses, residents, developers and investors as the other projects come forward. This is summarised in the indicative timetable overleaf, although it is important to note that these timescales will vary due to the nature of funding opportunities.

Whilst this report will not be fully finalised and adopted until Summer 2023, it is intended that work will begin on identified priorities – short and long-term – as soon as there is clear consensus through engagement. The next step for each game changing intervention will be to progress them towards becoming 'shovel ready' so that all the information and arrangements are in place for delivery once funding is secured. This will involve developing Full Business Cases and undertaking additional work where required.

Table 3 Indicative Timescales

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Tactical Interventions										
Riverside Regeneration					Delivered					
Gateway Thetford										Delivered
Connected Thetford										Delivered
Innovative Thetford					Delivered					
Brand Thetford					Delivered					

Management of Delivery

Breckland Council has acknowledged responsibility for supporting the delivery of this plan by commissioning and overseeing this work. However, given no project is within the sole gift of one delivery partner it is clear that successful delivery will require a wide range of local organisations.

The exact governance structures for bringing forward this Town Delivery Plan and the overarching Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places programme will be developed as the work on the four other towns progresses over the next year. Before setting out a preferred approach, further engagement with our stakeholders will be undertaken to understand what they think will work best and to learn more about existing partnerships.

Following further consultation, a paper will be published with recommendations related to management and governance. Once a clear consensus has been reached this document will be updated with the agreed way forward.



HATCH

**We
Made
That**