

Swaffham's Town Delivery Plan



Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places

Swaffham's Town Delivery Plan
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Thriving People and Places



HATCH

**We
Made
That**

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Foreword

Swaffham is a beautiful town which boasts impressive architecture, rich heritage and a unique high street. Its Saturday market is one of the most lively in the district and draws people from across the area. It is a fantastic place to live due to its amenities, location and sense of community.

The town is not, however, meeting its potential and needs investment. It faces several challenges that need to be addressed and these have been made clear through the extensive engagement we have undertaken to produce this document. Challenges range from the physical condition of the town centre and its dilapidated heritage buildings to the need for better leisure facilities, more employment space and better walking and cycling infrastructure.

This Town Delivery Plan sets out an ambitious programme to build on Swaffham's strengths and address its major challenges. It has been designed to strengthen the town's position as a service and community hub while also ensuring it meets the future needs of the town's residents and those in surrounding rural communities.

These ambitions will be met by delivering five complementary interventions which will enable transformative economic, social and environmental change. These are Swaffham's investment priorities for the next decade. These interventions do not represent everything that could be done, but are the most viable and impactful activities that partners can focus precious resources on.

We believe that this plan reflects all the lessons we have learned during our engagement with Swaffham's residents, stakeholders and businesses. The successful delivery of this plan will rely on the strengths of the partnership behind it.

Future Breckland Project Team

01

Swaffham's Town Delivery Plan



Swaffham's Town Delivery Plan

This document sets out our Town Delivery Plan for Swaffham. '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. This plan sets out how we will 'level up' our town and build a bright future.

Collective Ambitions for Swaffham

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

<p>Improve the look, feel and function of our historic centre so that Swaffham becomes one of the most attractive, desirable and visited towns in the county.</p> 	<p>Capitalise on our strategic position, heritage, assets and opportunities to attract more tourists to spend time and money here.</p> 	<p>Support our market and events calendar to become even stronger so our town becomes one of the most well-known and visited in the region.</p> 
<p>Unlock assets and sites that will enhance provision for deprived groups and improve our town's role as a community, leisure, cultural and service hub.</p> 	<p>Grow the size of the economy and diversify the sector mix to enhance economic resilience and create more opportunities for our residents.</p> 	

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

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|---|---|---|
| <p>1. Timeless Swaffham:
Enhancing our Town Centre.</p> | <p>2. Vibrant Swaffham:
Reinvigorating our Market Place.</p> | <p>3. Healthy Swaffham:
Building a New Leisure Centre.</p> |
| <p>4. Cultured Swaffham:
Providing a New Culture and Arts Hub.</p> | <p>5. Connected Swaffham:
Re-connecting Swaffham and Watton.</p> | |

Historic England deliver a £95m High Street Heritage Action Zone programme across the country. Its objective is to unlock the potential of historic high streets and fuel economic, social and cultural recovery. Projects that enhance and/or transform disused and dilapidated buildings into homes, shops, work places and community spaces are prioritised.



Source: We Made That, 2021

Swaffham town centre has been selected to become one of 60 High Street Heritage Action Zones. This is because it has many heritage assets, but most are in a state of disrepair and the historic centre needs investment to improve its look, feel and function. It has also been identified as being too 'car dominated' which distracts from the wealth of historic buildings surrounding the historic Market Place.

The goal of the Swaffham High Street Heritage Action Zone, which was launched in early 2021, is to improve, repair and restore the historic buildings and shopfronts surrounding the Market Place. Other key projects include a forthcoming town centre masterplan, improved pedestrian access, boundary treatments to parking and improved wayfinding and signage.

This Town Delivery Plan aligns with the objectives of the Swaffham High Street Heritage Action Zone and captures some of its main activities. It also provides principles and ideas to inform the programme and the forthcoming town centre masterplan. More detail is provided throughout this document.

These will be complemented by (a) the delivery of some tactical short-term interventions that will deliver highly visual improvements and, (b) through the endorsement of a series 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 Neighbourhood Plan). It also aligns with the objectives of Historic England and Breckland Council's Swaffham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme as set out in the box below.

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's methodology for developing town action plans to ensure that Swaffham is in the strongest position possible to secure future public sector investment. While Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council, Swaffham 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.

Future Breckland

Thriving People and Places

This Town Delivery Plan fits within Breckland Council's ambitious 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:

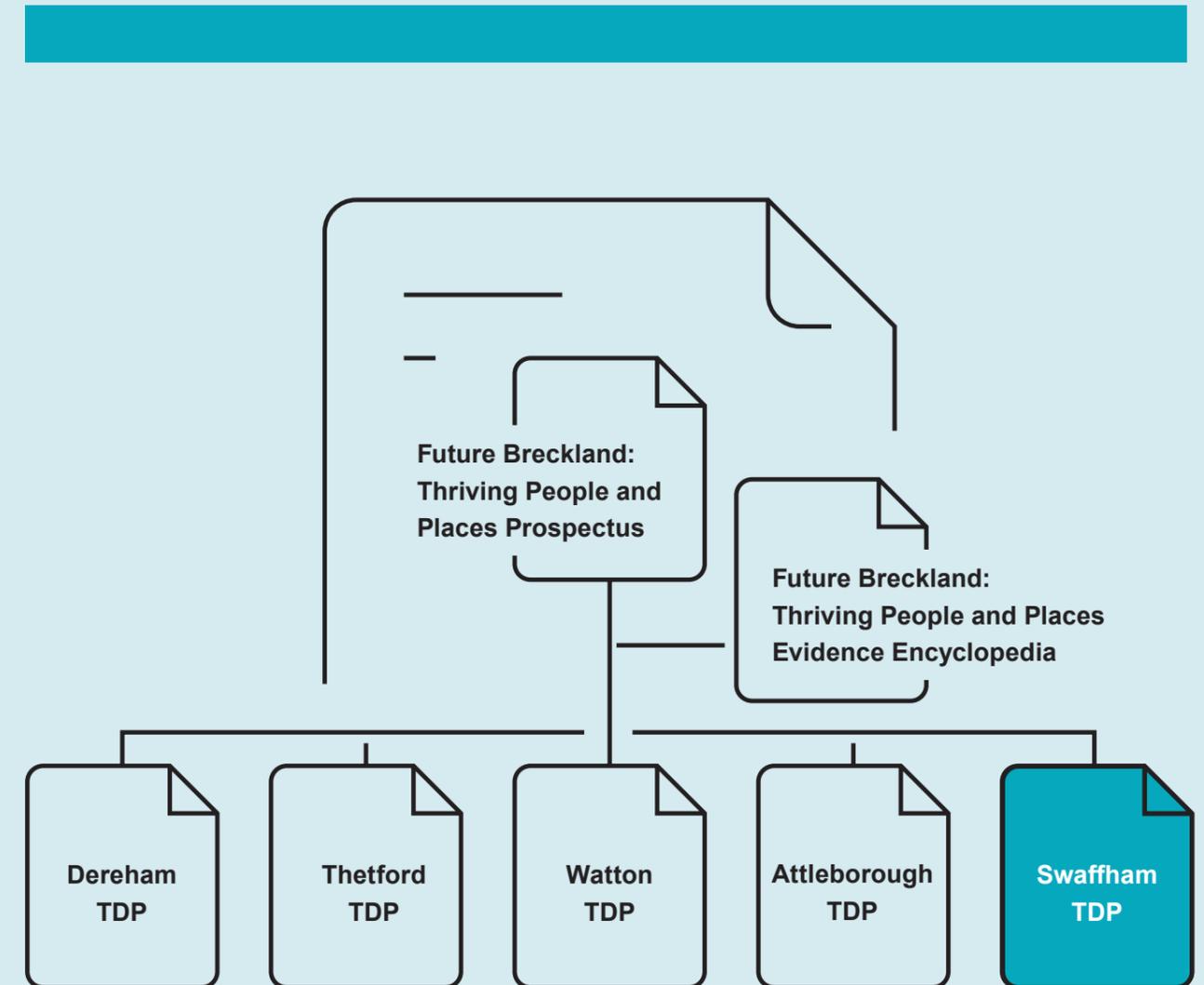
- ③ **Town Centre Regeneration:** Regenerating Breckland's town centres to help them adapt to changing conditions, and attract people and businesses.
- ③ **Skills and Education:** Supporting our residents to train and pursue further education and continual education to increase employment opportunities and meet ongoing employment needs.
- ③ **Investing in Housing and Infrastructure:** Targeted investment in housing, public transport and active travel to improve quality of life.
- ③ **Growing our Business and Enterprise Base:** Encouraging new businesses, expansion and relocations by improving the availability of business services and premises.

- ③ **Culture and Heritage:** Building on Breckland's rich heritage and culture, while enhancing tourism opportunities and bringing our local communities together.
- ③ **Improving Sustainability:** Delivering net zero commitment while enabling our business and residents to reduce their carbon footprint.

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

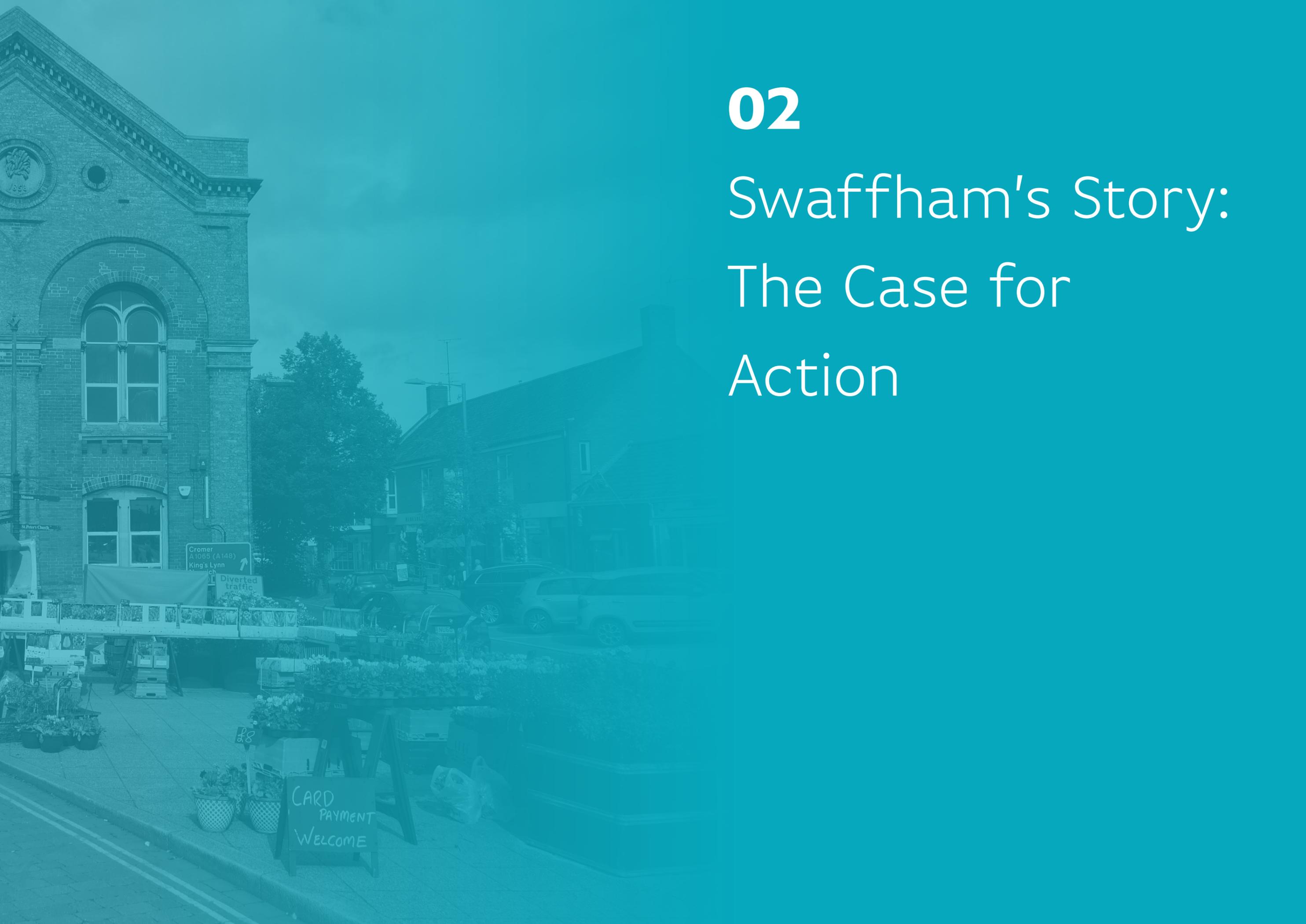
While the five Town Delivery Plans will drive most change it is recognised that some district-wide challenges need to be addressed through strategic investments at the district rather than town level (e.g. related to skills, business support, public transport and business parks). A series of game changing interventions for these areas, which will positively impact Swaffham 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 Encyclopedia**.



02

Swaffham's Story: The Case for Action



Swaffham's Story

The case for Action - Levelling up Swaffham.

Swaffham's Economic History

Swaffham, which is thought to come from the Old English for Swæfahām² ("the homestead of the Swabians"¹), has a rich history centred around its wool industry and Market Place. The town has had a Saturday market since the early 13th century, originally linked with being part of the Honour of Richmond, and sheep farming has been an important part of the local economy for hundreds of years.

In recent decades our town has evolved into a modern place with an important service economy dominated by Retail, Public Administration, Hospitality and Professional Services. As of 2020, we have a population of 8,333 people, which represents an increase of around +20% since the turn of the millennium.³

Becoming a Proud Market Town



Swaffham has held a Saturday market since 1215 which was enabled by being part of the Honor of Richmond which offered trading privileges. The Buttercross at the tip of the Market Place, which is one of the most prominent features in the town, was gifted by George Walpole, Earl of Orford in 1783 to hold a Butter Market.

Finding Prosperity in Sheep and Wool Industries



The opening of the Thetford In the 14th and 15th centuries Swaffham had a burgeoning sheep and wool industry. The town became famous for this over time and sheep fairs became a common feature in the 19th century. This industry drove prosperity and growth within the town.

Evolving Architecture and Market Place



Much of our town centre was re-modeled in Georgian style in the late 18th Century at a time when the town was renowned for its horse racing, cock fighting, theatre and entertainment scene. It was around this time that Howard Carter, the famous archaeologist and Egyptologist, spent time growing up in the town.



Transitioning to a Modern Market Town

Over the last century our town has changed to become a modern market town. The local economy is now dominated by service industries with most jobs in retail, hospitality and public administration. Some significant investments have been made in recent decades to support the town's socio-economic development – these include:

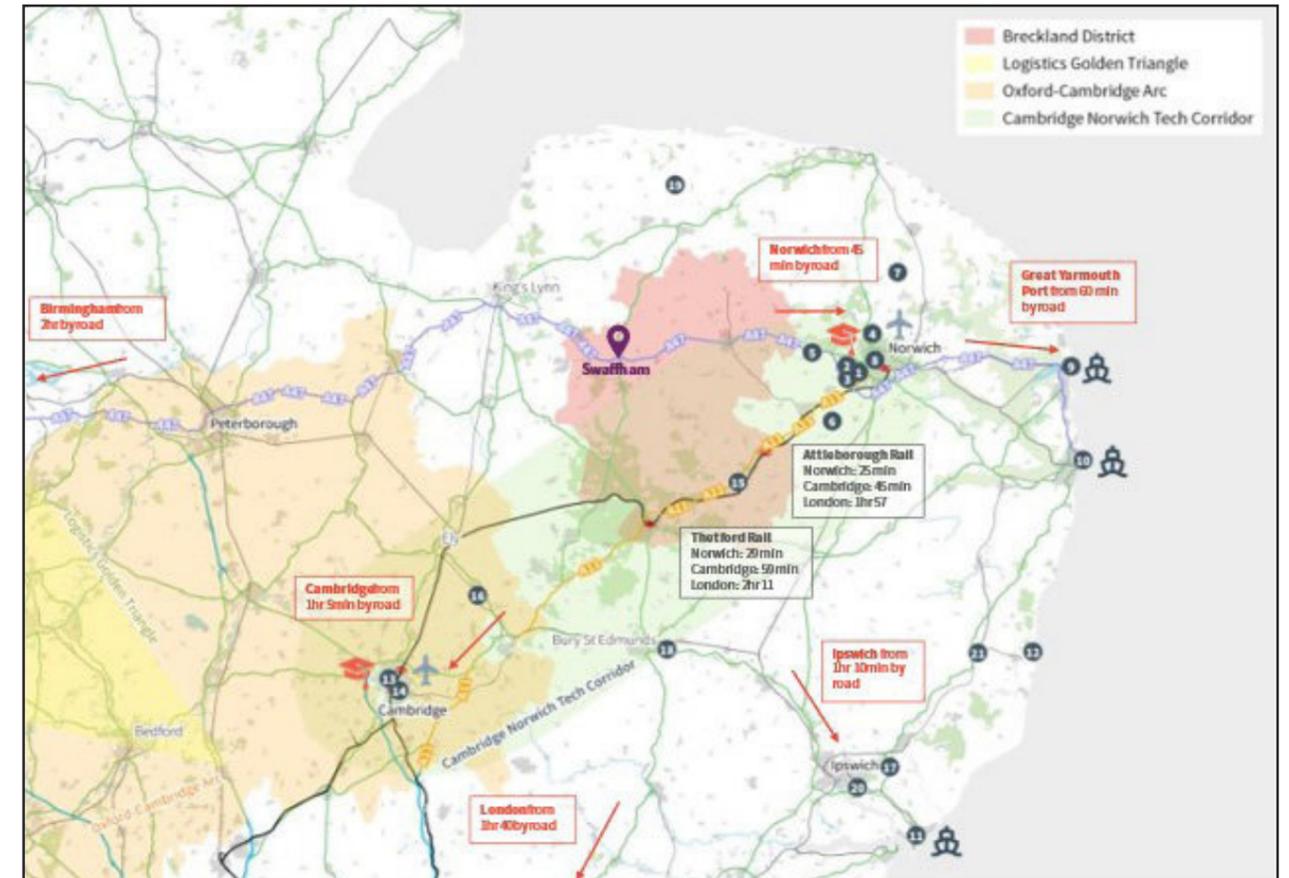
- ③ Building the Swaffham Community Centre and establishing the Icenis Partnership;
- ③ Re-furbishing the Swaffham Assembly Rooms to house an indoor market, private functions and community groups;
- ③ Building the Eco-Tech Green Britain Centre; and,
- ③ Introducing two onshore Enercon E-66 wind turbines which generate more than three megawatts of renewable energy.

These were funded by EU, Norfolk County Council, Breckland Council and Swaffham Town Council.

2. Swabia is a cultural, historic and linguistic region in southwestern Germany (Visit East of England, 2021)

3. Census data

Figure 1 Swaffham's Strategic Location

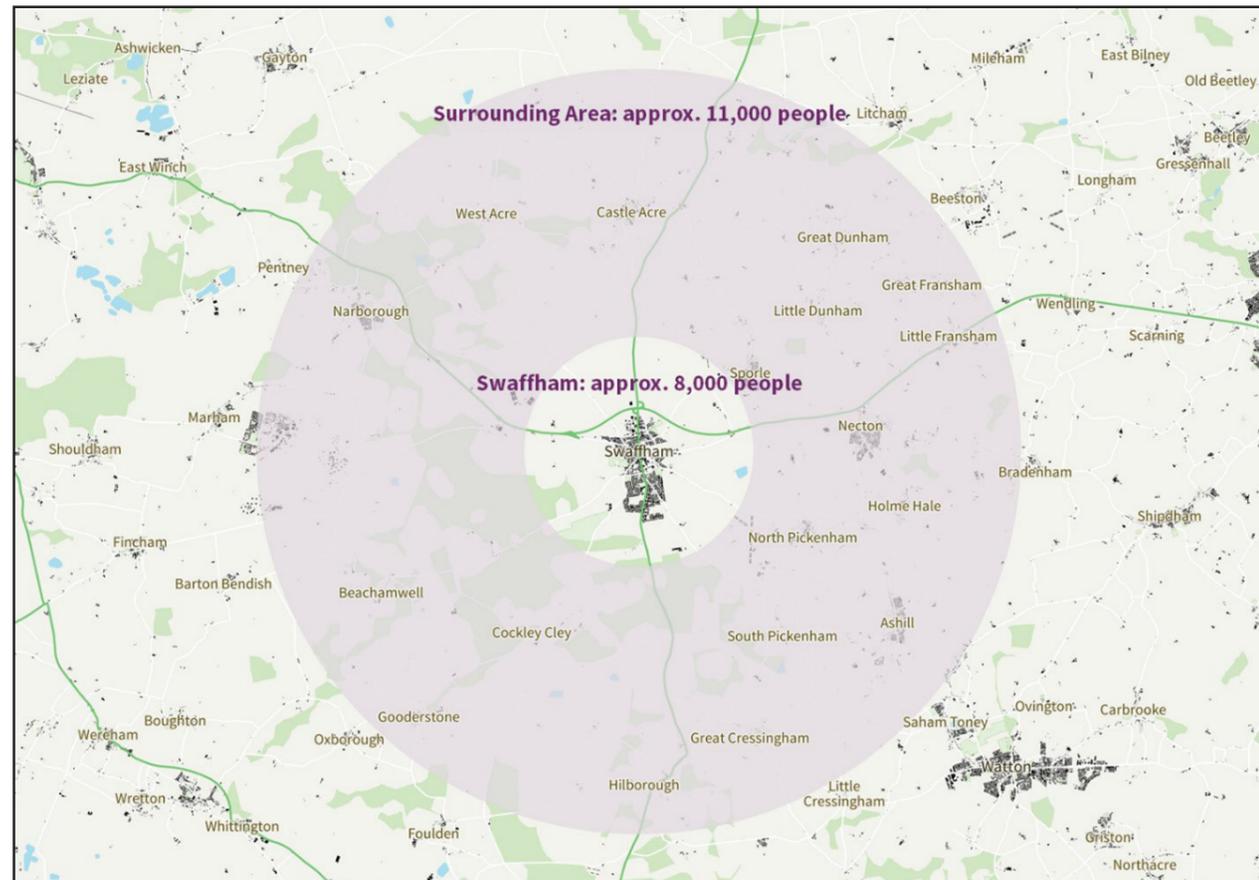


Swaffham's Economic Geography

Swaffham is strategically located in the centre of our county and on the A47 which provides direct connectivity to Norwich and Great Yarmouth in the east and Peterborough and King's Lynn to the west. The A1065 also cuts through the centre of the town which links the A11 and other parts of the county with the North Norfolk coast. Swaffham is sometimes referred to as the 'crossroads of Norfolk' as these two arterial roads meet in our town.

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

Figure 2 Swaffham's Catchment



Source: Hatch, 2021; Annual Population Survey, 2021

- ③ **Impressive Georgian architecture:** Our town is colloquially known as the 'Jewel in Breckland's Crown' due to its impressive architecture, unique layout and important heritage assets.
- ③ **Popular Saturday market and auction:** Our market is lively, varied and interesting. It is the strongest market in the district and, alongside the auction, attracts people from across Breckland every week.
- ③ **Independent town centre offer:** Swaffham has a range of independent shops and a good mix of services which cater for both locals and visitors. It is not a 'clone town' dominated by chain retailers.
- ③ **Important community, cultural and leisure assets:** Swaffham Community Centre, Swaffham Museum, Swaffham Town Football Club, Swaffham Community Hospital, Campingland and the Assembly Rooms are, among others, valuable assets for residents and visitors.

Swaffham Market



Source: We Made That, 2021

- ③ **Proximity to popular visitor attractions:** Our town is within easy reach of Swaffham Heath, Gooderstone Water Gardens, Sandringham, Oxburgh Hall, the North Norfolk coast and other important attractions.
- ③ **Position on main route to the North Norfolk coast:** The A1065 is the main route from London and parts of the South East to the popular North Norfolk coast, meaning holidaymakers, day trippers and second homeowners regularly travel through the town.
- ③ **Wide catchment and influence:** The town's shops, schools, hospitals, health centres and leisure amenities serve a wide rural hinterland. Around 24,000 people live within 20 minutes' drive of the town.

Figure 3 Swaffham's Culture, Community and Leisure Assets

KEY

- **Culture**
 - C1 Horse and Groom pub
 - C2 Kings Arms pub
 - C3 Red Lion pub
 - C4 Greyhound pub
 - C5 White Hart pub
 - C6 Hayes Gallery
 - C7 Swaffham Auction (Saturday)
 - C8 Swaffham Market
 - C9 Strattons Hotel
 - C10 Plowright Place (shopping mews)
 - C11 Museum (Town Hall)

- **Health & leisure**
 - L1 Community Allotments and Orchard
 - L2 Swaffham Cricket Club
 - L3 Swaffham Town Football Club
 - L4 Swaffham Rugby Club
 - L5 Recreation Ground, MUGA and Skate park
 - L6 Swaffham Leisure Centre
 - L7 Orford Road play area
 - L8 (Former) Eco building and turbine
 - L9-11 Open play area

- **Education**
 - E1 Sacred Heart Catholic VA Primary School
 - E2 Swaffham CE VC Infant School
 - E3 The Nicholas Hamond Academy
 - E4 Swaffham CE Junior Academy
 - E5 Swaffham Focus School

- **Community Spaces**
 - D1 Merle Boddy Day Centre (mental health services)
 - D2 Swaffham Post Office
 - D3 Public Loos
 - D4 The Shambles
 - D5 Assembly Rooms
 - D6 Swaffham Town Hall
 - D7 Swaffham Library
 - D8 Swaffham Community Centre (Iceni)
 - D9 Shouldham Lane Allotments

- **Religious**
 - R1 St Peter and St Paul Church
 - R2 Swaffham Methodist Church
 - R3 The Baptist Church
 - R4 Catholic Church of our Lady of Pity
 - R5 Oasis Centre

- **Medical, Care & Other Services**
 - M1 Swaffham Community Hospital
 - M2 Manor Farm Medical Centre
 - M3 Campingland Surgery
 - M4 Plowright Medical Centre; vaccination centre
 - M5 Iceni House Care Home
 - M6 Westfields
 - M7 Holmwood House
 - M8 The Maltings
 - M9 Meadow House
 - M10 The Paddocks



Source: We Made That, 2021

East side on street parking



Source: We Made That, 2021

Swaffham's Weaknesses and Threats

Our town centre needs investment to fulfil its potential...

We have an attractive town centre that boasts appealing Georgian architecture, unique independent shops and a distinctive layout. The potential of our centre is not, however, being realised due to issues related to its look, feel and function.

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

- ③ It is dominated by a cluttered and inefficient road network.
- ③ The two arms of the centre contribute to an excess of tarmac and roadway.

- ③ There is a lack of greenery and quiet space to relax, dwell and socialise.
- ③ There is a lot of parking which is taking up valuable public space.
- ③ Gridlock can be a significant issue, particularly at peak times.
- ③ Heavy traffic and noise pollution diminish the quality of the public realm, heritage assets and visitor experience.
- ③ A lack of formal crossing points creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians.
- ③ Several prominent historical buildings and shopfronts are in a state of disrepair.

Plowright Place, Swaffham



Source: We Made That, 2021

The analysis also indicates that different parts of the town are poorly connected for walkers and cyclists. This is visible:

- ③ Between the Theatre Street Car Park and town centre.
- ③ Between the Eco Tech Employment Area and town centre.
- ③ Between the town centre and local cycling networks.
- ③ Between Plowright Place and the town centre.
- ③ Between the town centre, St Peter and St Paul Church and Campingland.
- ③ Within the town centre itself, particularly via the Shambles.

This contributes to a poorly functioning centre because, among other things, it encourages people to drive within the town, discourages people from visiting some places, encourages people to park right in the centre and it means some places remain hidden and underutilised.

There is some evidence of some businesses leaving Swaffham, including the local bank due to close in May 2022.

Our town centre offer could also better meet the needs of a broader demographic. While we have a reasonable mix of services (e.g. hairdressers, chemists), cafes and shops/stalls selling fresh produce, we have a significant underrepresentation of quality places for people to meet, relax, unwind, socialise (i.e. restaurants, bars, pubs, theatres, cinemas etc). This contributes to a weak evening economy and there is little for people to see and do after 6pm.

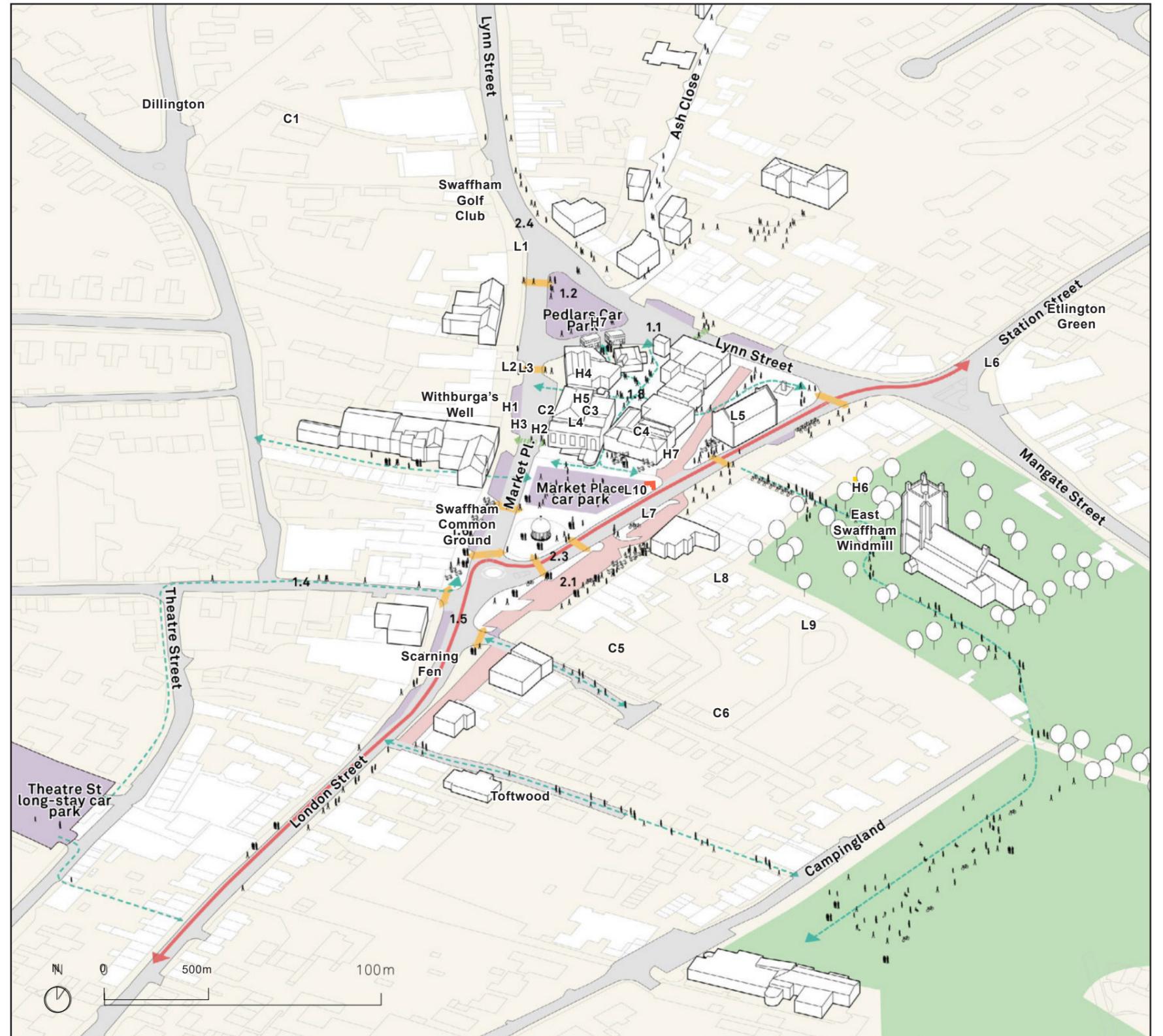
All of these limitations mean that we are not currently attracting as many local people as we could to visit regularly and we are not capitalising on the tourism opportunity our strategic location offers. People from London and parts of the South East drive through our town on a regular basis to reach the North Norfolk coast, but investment in the look, feel, function and mix of the town centre is needed to encourage more to stop and dwell en route and/or return during their visit.

Figure 4 Swaffham's Public Realm

- 1.1 The town centre is dominated by an inefficient road network, with expanses of roadway
- 1.2 Excessive parking utilises valuable space in the town centre. On non-market days, the market-place is used for parking
- 1.3 As the last market town before the North Norfolk Coast, Swaffham experiences a steady flow of traffic and is often gridlocked on Fridays and Sundays with north-south traffic
- 1.4 Lack of signage hampers the legibility of Theatre Street's long-stay car park and interferes with its servicing of the town centre. This limits its use and encourages people to park closer to the centre
- 1.5 Heavy traffic and noise pollution considerably diminish the quality of the public realm
- 1.6 The pandemic has seen an increase in the use of spillout spaces in front of cafes and pubs, but heavy traffic and noise pollution can be disruptive
- 1.7 Swaffham's roads carry a steady flow of heavy-goods vehicles
- 1.8 The Shambles, a popular cut-through between Market Place and A1065, is inaccessible to those with prams or on mobility scooters
- 2.1 Newly paved shared surface is not legible and thus contested by pedestrians and vehicles
- 2.2 Lack of formal crossing points in Market Place central creates an unsafe environment
- 2.3 Cycle storage provision
- 2.4 The 2 arms to Swaffham's road network contribute to an excess of roadway and tarmac

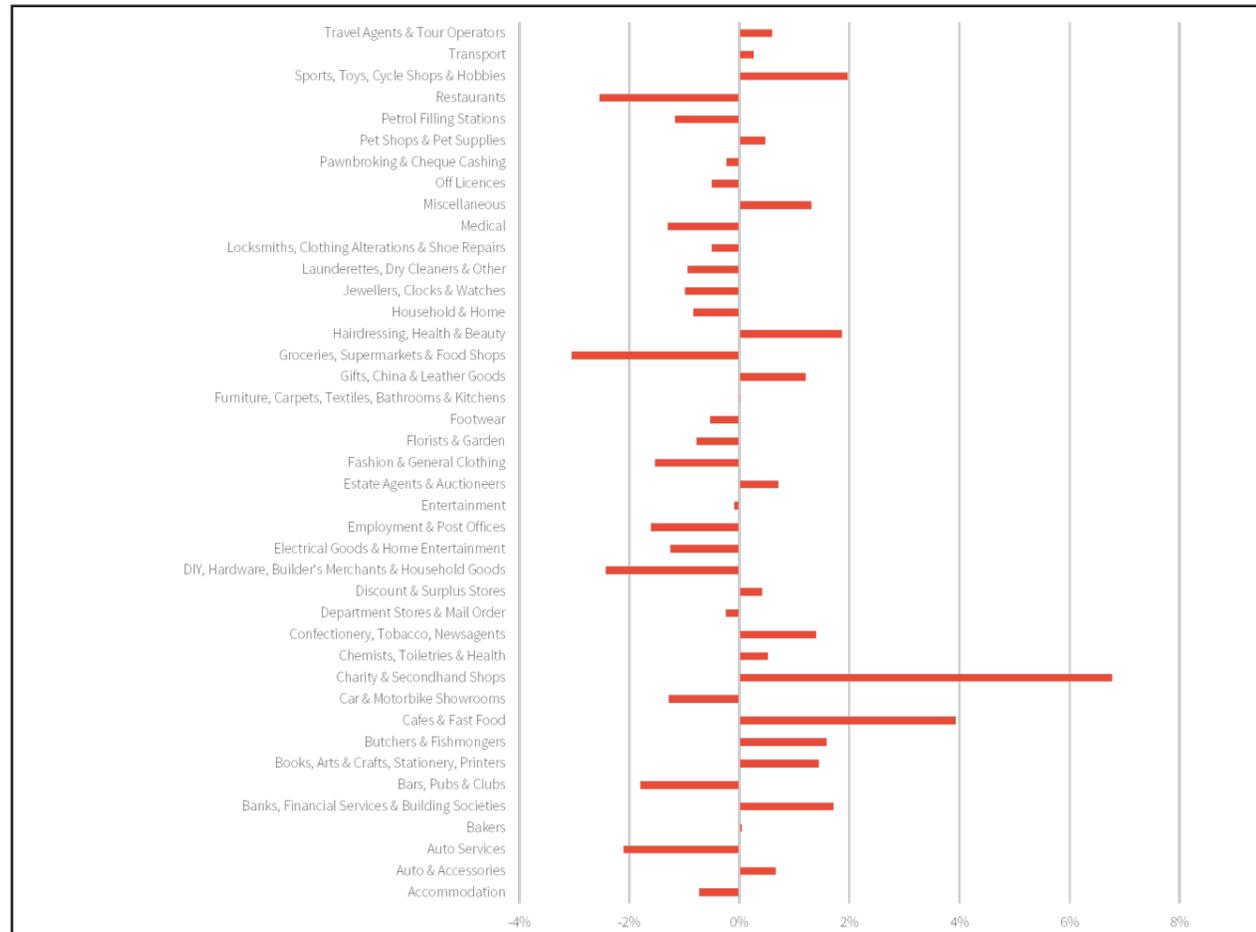
KEY

-  Pedestrian routes and cut-throughs
-  Formal crossings
-  Informal crossings
-  North-south vehicular traffic
-  Vehicular roadways
-  Access only/ shared surface
-  Parking



Source: We Made That, 2021

Figure 5 Swaffham's High Street Retail Units by Category vs Great Britain Average



Source: Local Data Company, 2021⁴

Our economy is small and low value...

Our town has a comparatively small economy, even for a rural market town. It is home to around 280 businesses that employ 2,600 people, which broadly aligns with Watton which is home to 230 businesses and 2,600 jobs. Compared to; 680 businesses and 9,100 jobs in Dereham, 410 businesses and 5,000 jobs in Attleborough and 740 businesses and 11,200 jobs in Thetford.

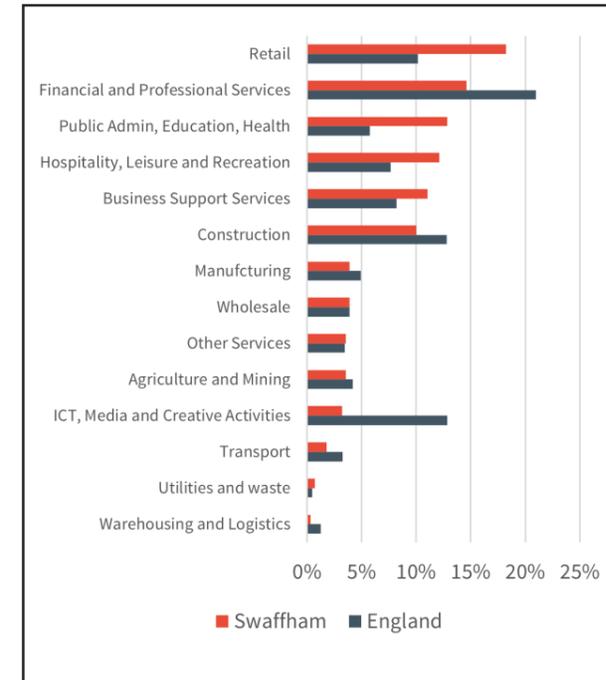
Most of our jobs are in service industries that tend

to provide lower-wage and lower-productivity roles - our top three employment sectors are Public Administration, Education and Health (930 jobs), Retail (600 jobs) and Hospitality, Leisure and Recreation (257 jobs).

This sector profile directly corresponds with our biggest employers, which are Waitrose, Tesco, National Services for Health Improvement Ltd, The Nicholas Hammond Academy, Meadow House and Norfolk Community Health & Care NHS.

4. A figure of +4%, as an example, indicates that Swaffham'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 6 Proportion of Swaffham's Businesses by Sector



Source: IDBR; BRES and UK Business Count, 2021

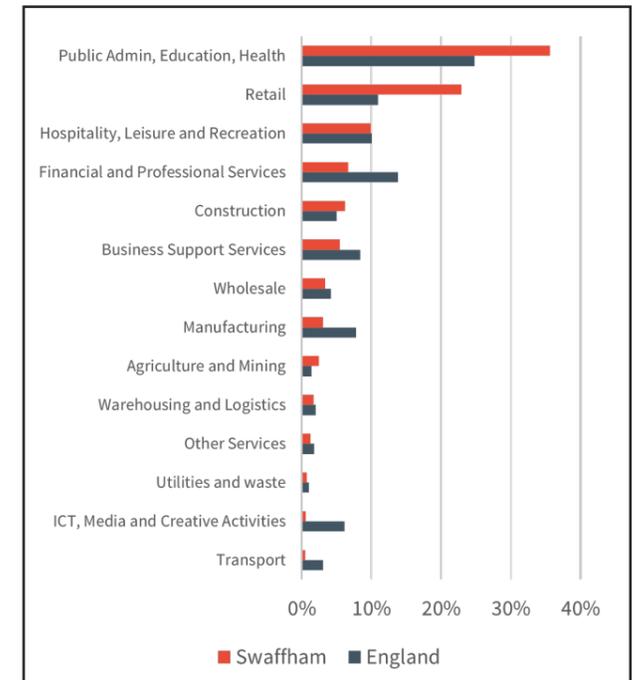
While our strong Public Administration, Education and Health sector has helped our economy withstand some of the short-term economic impacts of COVID-19, the reliance on Retail and Hospitality, Leisure and Recreation leaves us vulnerable to future shifts in these sectors.

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 commercial property market, limited connectivity and low skill levels.

Our physical and digital connectivity is limited which is impacting economic performance...

Swaffham has good road access due to the A47 and A1065, which provide connectivity to the A11 and places like Norwich, Thetford, King's Lynn and Peterborough. Several planned investments

Figure 7 Proportion of Swaffham's Employment by Sector



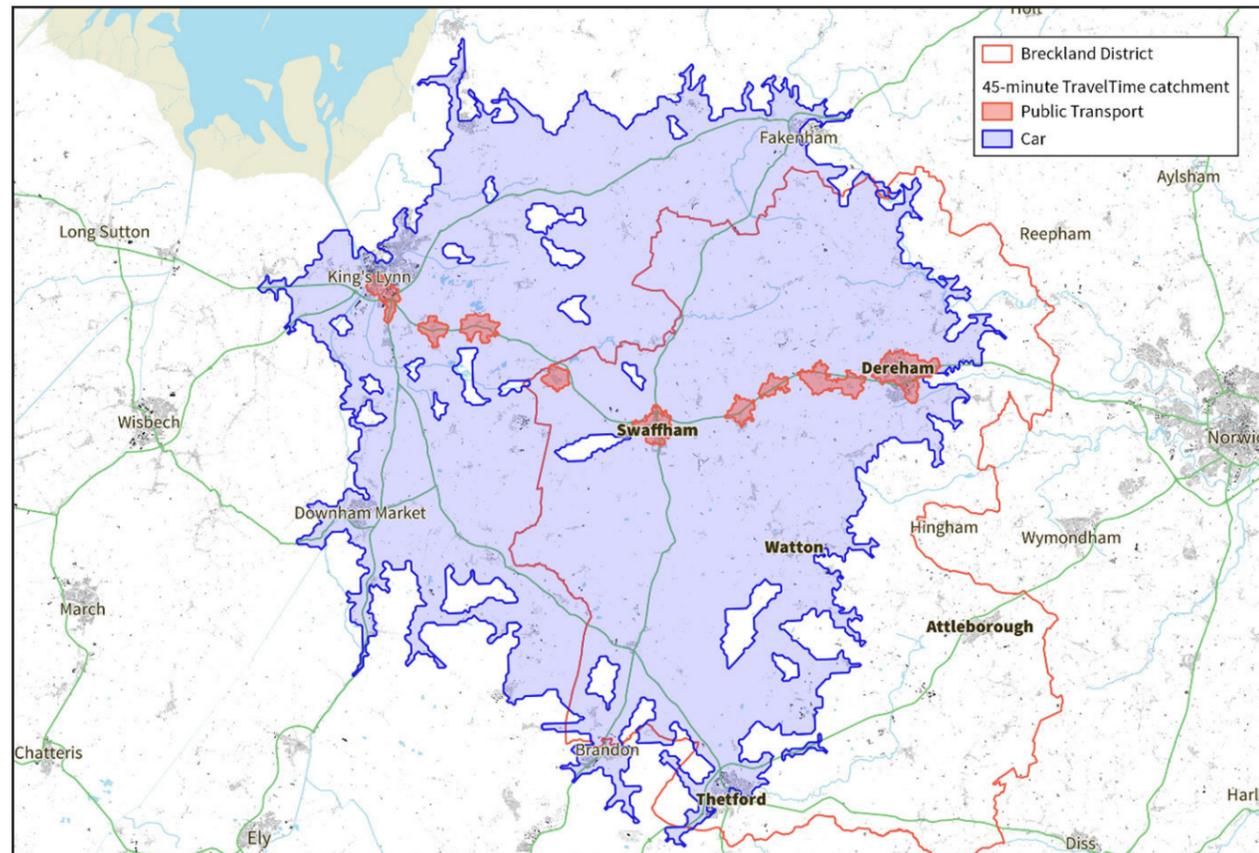
Source: IDBR; BRES and UK Business Count, 2021

for these routes will improve access and journey times when they come forward.

While our town benefits from good bus services to Norwich, King's Lynn and Dereham, accessibility to surrounding rural areas is poor. Public transport catchment maps show that only people living on and around the A47 can get into town by public transport within 45 minutes. There is also limited connectivity to other important market towns and employment centres that do not sit along the A47 (e.g. Fakenham, Downham Market and Thetford).

This is a major issue for communities surrounding Swaffham. Not having access to a car in these locations can result in serious economic and social exclusion as it limits access to employment, training, education and leisure opportunities. It is also causing issues for local employers who struggle to access the talent they need to support their business aspirations.

Figure 8 Swaffham's Public and Private Transport Catchment



Source: iGeolise, 2021

There is also a lack of active travel infrastructure in and around our town. There are no dedicated cycle lanes within the town and few cycle routes into and out of Swaffham. This means that only around 0.3% of vehicle movements through the town are made on average by bicycle each day.

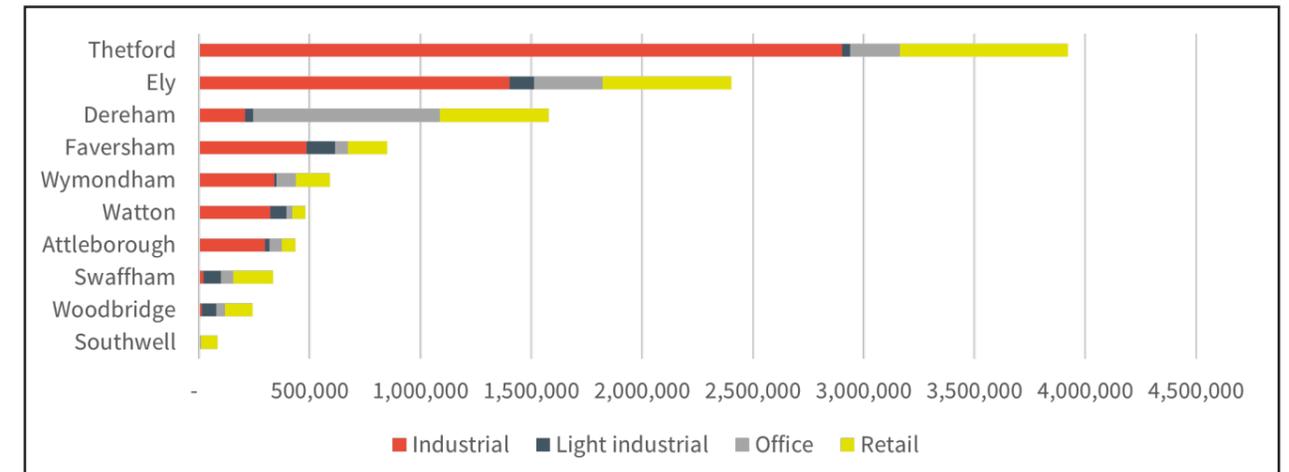
Digital connectivity could also be stronger across the town to better meet business and resident requirements. While most of our residents and businesses have access to superfast broadband (30Mbit/s download), under 5% have access to ultrafast speeds (100Mbit/s download). Other market towns such as Attleborough and Thetford have around 50% and 20% coverage respectively making them more attractive to modern businesses.

Investing in ultrafast broadband will be vital to attract and keep businesses in our town – this is particularly the case for high growth sectors like ICT, Media, Creative Activities, Advanced Manufacturing, Advanced Engineering and Life Sciences. The shift to remote working is also likely to increase demand for faster broadband speeds from current and future residents.

Our commercial property market is constraining the local economy...

We have around 335,000 sqm of commercial property in total, which is by far the lowest amount across the district's market towns. This is broken down by:

Figure 9 Commercial Floorspace By Town



Source: Co-Star, 2021

- ③ **Retail:** 180,000 sqm.
- ③ **Light Industrial:** 80,000 sqm.
- ③ **Office:** 55,000 sqm.
- ③ **Industrial:** 20,000 sqm.

We have a particular lack of office, industrial and light industrial space to support higher and middle value sectors. These factors are preventing a healthy churn of businesses and stopping productive new enterprises moving to the area.

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. Our commercial space offer is highly inflexible as tenants have no option but to take space for at least one year and there are very few spaces that are suitable for small, start-up or growing businesses.

Our strong representation of retail space versus other commercial property types also leaves us vulnerable to economic changes at a regional and national level. While our retail vacancy rates remain low, there is a risk that this will change

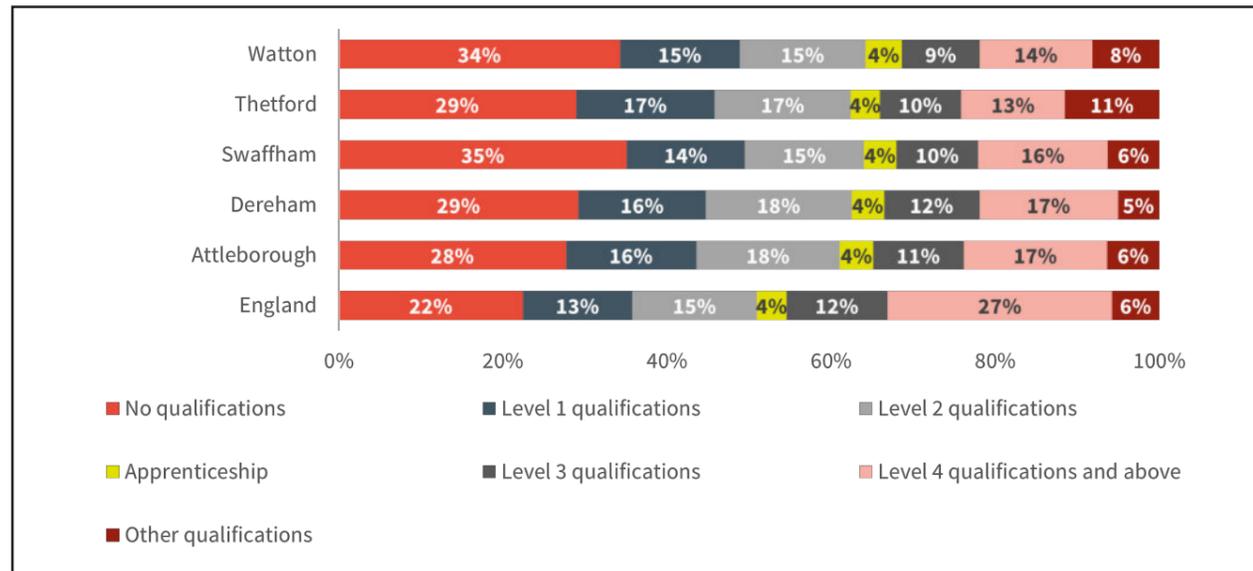
over time due to the rise in online shopping and changing consumer expectations. We need to diversify our economy, and therefore our commercial property offer, to increase the resilience of our local economy.

Our residents have low skills levels and poor access to higher education...

Our skill profile does not align with high and middle value sector requirements. Only 16% of our population have a degree level qualification, which is well below the national average of 27%, and 35% have no qualifications at all making us the worst performer across Breckland's market towns.

While all our primary schools are rated as 'Good' by Ofsted, our secondary school 'Requires Improvement' and no longer offers sixth form provision. This means that young people have to travel to Dereham or elsewhere to access 'Good' further education options. There are also few further education options locally particularly for those with an interest in more technical fields.

Figure 10 Qualification Profile Across Breckland's Market Towns



Source: Census, 2011

This, alongside other factors, means that our higher education participation rate is only 23% putting us in the bottom 20% nationally and below several competitor towns including Southwell (62%), Wymondham (41%), Faversham (29%), Attleborough (28%), Dereham (26%), Watton (18%) and Thetford (18%). Our low-wage economy and the associated lack of higher-wage roles also influences young peoples' decisions and aspirations related to further education.

Geographically, this is reflected in patterns of deprivation as 'Education, Skills and Training' is the biggest driver of deprivation in the area followed by 'Employment' and 'Income' which are all intimately linked. Many of our neighbourhoods are among the top 10% and 20% most deprived in the country. The highest levels of deprivation are to the north of the Buttercross.

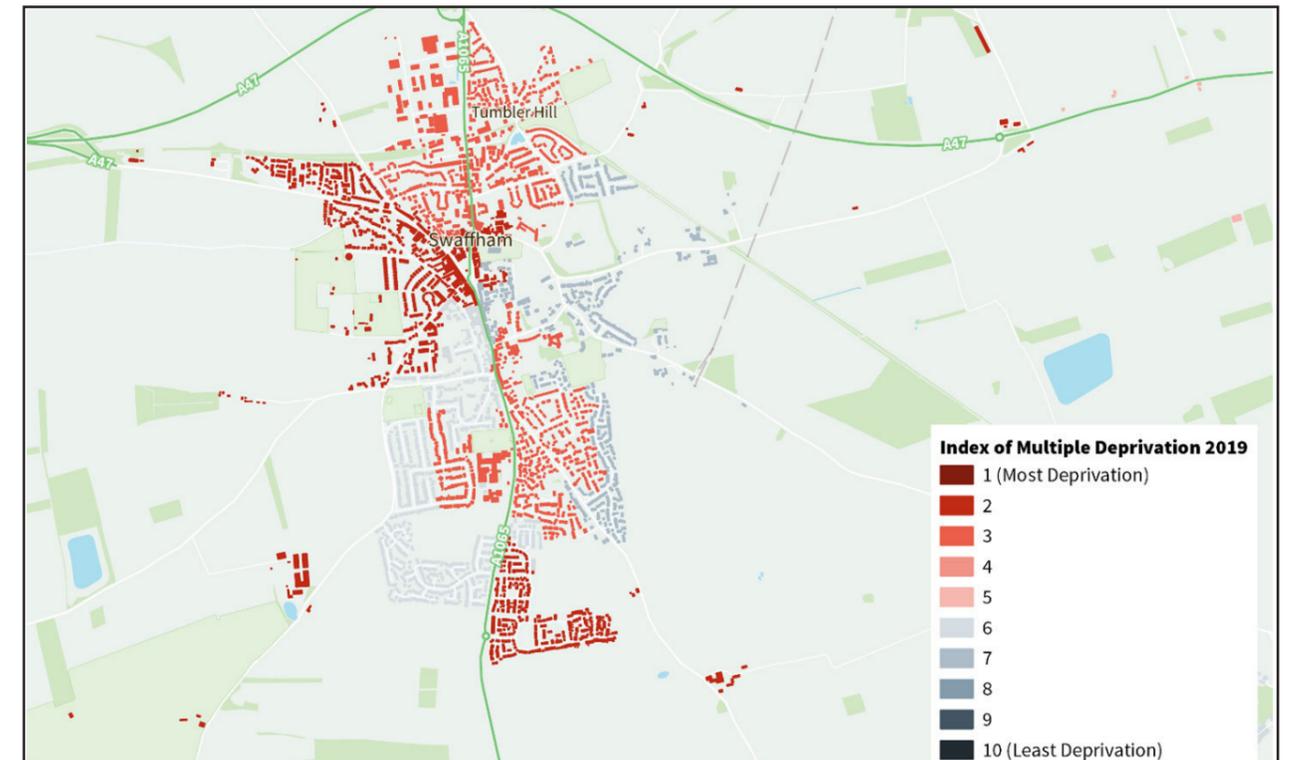
Our town has a low proportion of working age people...

We have an ageing population, with 34% of our residents aged 65+ which is well above the national average of 18%. We also have proportionally fewer working age and young people than at the national level.

This demographic profile brings some important socio-economic benefits as the retired population play an important role in supporting community organisations, voluntary groups and local initiatives. The 'grey pound' is also strong, supporting local businesses and services particularly in the town centre.

It does, however, have implications for our local economy as it limits our labour market, which is compounded by our low skill levels. It also impacts the diversity and vibrancy of the town centre as it influences the types of businesses we can attract.

Figure 11 Swaffham's Deprivation Patterns



Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2019

The provision of new housing that helps to diversify our demographic profile will therefore be important to support the town's evolution over time. The district's Adopted Local Plan identifies a need to deliver 1,553 new homes over the next two decades and several sites have been identified to accommodate this, including:

- ③ **New Sporle Road (South):** 51 dwellings.
- ③ **New Sporle Road (North):** 75 dwellings.
- ③ **Brandon Road:** 175 dwellings.
- ③ **Norwich Road (South):** 185 dwellings.
- ③ **Sporle Road:** 130 dwellings.
- ③ **Norwich Road (North):** 165 dwellings.

A major issue for younger people living and working locally is housing affordability due to our low wage economy. While Swaffham's median house prices (£200k) are below East of England (£290k) and national figures (£246k), median house prices in Breckland are 8.3x average annual earnings which is above the national average of 7.8x. Our private rental market is also relatively limited.

This affordability issue, alongside a lack of employment and further education opportunities, is leading to a brain drain of young people from the town further contributing to our ageing population. Many young people currently move to places like Norwich, Cambridge, Thetford, King's Lynn or other parts of the region to meet their needs and fulfil their aspirations.

We need to improve the local leisure offer to better meet resident needs...

Our town is a good place to live and work, partly due to our community and leisure assets (e.g. Swaffham Community Centre, Swaffham Community Hospital, Swaffham Museum, Swaffham Town Football Club, Campingland and Swaffham Leisure Centre).

There are, however, gaps in the local offer particularly compared to other market towns across the county. This is highlighted in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan, which reports that:

- ③ There is a 5.65 ha deficiency of outdoor sporting space.
- ③ There is a 6.09 ha deficiency of children's play space.
- ③ there is a need for enhanced children's play space.

This is backed up by the Access to Health Assets and Hazards Index (2019) which indicates that most of Swaffham's neighbourhoods fall within the worst 30% in the country in terms of access to the natural environment.

A recent analysis of our leisure offer by Max Associates also highlights this. It sets out that:

- ③ Swaffham Leisure Centre has restricted access as it is shared with Nicholas Hammond Academy.
- ③ Sufficient demand exists to justify the provision of a replacement facility with associated facilities.
- ③ There are gaps in the local leisure offer (inc. soft play, crossfit, Pilates, indoor climbing, high ropes, trampolining, toning, swimming etc).

Compared to other towns there is also a deficit of cultural space for shows, concerts, films, exhibitions and other creative pursuits.

Swaffham's Strengths and Opportunities

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

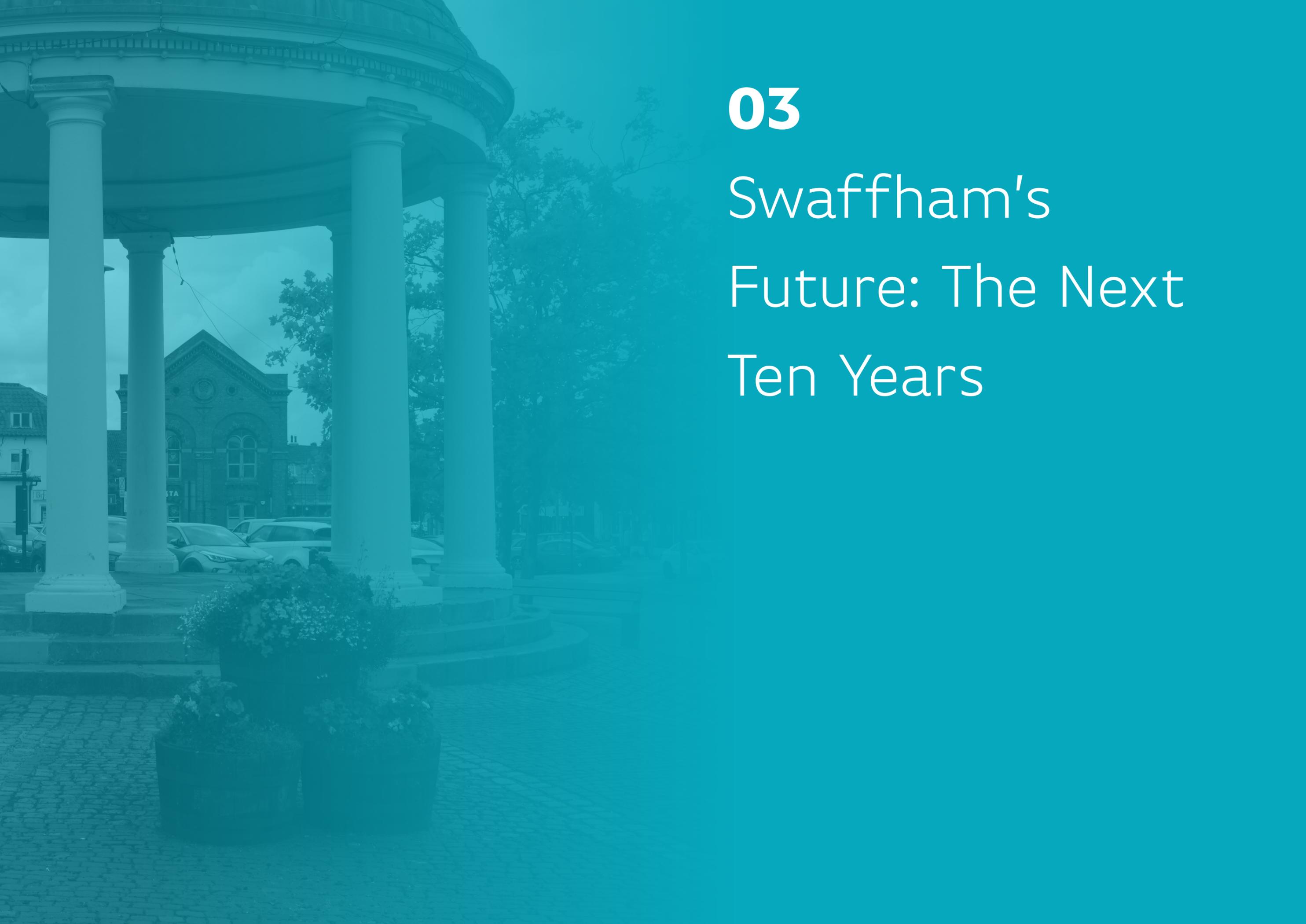
- ③ **Swaffham's market is busy, popular and lively:** Unlike other towns in the area our Saturday market remains strong and continues to attract people from across the county to visit. There is an opportunity to expand it further and to trial different offerings to attract a broader demographic.
- ③ **Swaffham has attractive Georgian architecture:** This is one of our unique selling points. There is an opportunity to use this to attract more people to visit, but investment is required in some prominent dilapidated buildings to realise this.
- ③ **Swaffham has important attractions and is close to others:** Examples include Swaffham Museum, Swaffham Indoor Market, Swaffham Auction, Swaffham Heath, Gooderstone Water Gardens, Sandringham, Oxburgh Hall and the North Norfolk coast. This could be marketed better to attract more people to visit and/or stay in our town.
- ③ **Swaffham has an eclectic mix of independent shops:** This differentiates us from other market towns nearby. This should be celebrated and could be better communicated to drive footfall and interest in the area.

Approach to Plowright Place, Swaffham



Source: We Made That, 2021

- ③ **Swaffham is an attractive place to live:** Swaffham is a pleasant place to live due to its architecture, town centre, community groups, good primary schools and proximity to the countryside. Improving the local offer further will enhance the attractiveness of our town and encourage more working age people to locate here.
 - ③ **Swaffham has several important development sites:** There are employment sites around Turbine Way which could be activated to support economic growth. There are also a number of housing sites that can provide much-needed accommodation for working age people.
 - ③ **Swaffham has a wide catchment:** Over 24,000 people live within 20 minutes' drive of our town. This leaves us well placed to become a stronger destination town for Breckland and Norfolk.
 - ③ **Swaffham has a strong civil society:** Organisations like the Icen Partnership, Rotary Club of Swaffham and Lions Club play an important role in supporting our town and communities. These organisations are well-informed and can be an invaluable asset in driving positive change.
 - ③ **Swaffham has a stable business base with long term tenants:** These businesses and organisations are important for economic resilience and provide a platform from which to grow a larger and more innovative economy.
- 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.

A photograph of a classical building with columns, overlaid with a teal gradient. The building features several tall, white columns supporting a curved roof. In the background, a brick building with arched windows and a sign that says "POST" is visible. The foreground shows a paved area and some potted plants. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent teal overlay.

03

Swaffham's
Future: The Next
Ten Years

Swaffham's Future

The Next Ten Years

This Town Delivery Plan capitalises on Swaffham'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. It is our blueprint to level up Swaffham.

Aspiration for Swaffham

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

<p>Improve the look, feel and function of our historic centre so Swaffham becomes one of the most attractive, desirable and visited towns in the county.</p> 	<p>Capitalise on our strategic position, heritage, assets and opportunities to attract more tourists to spend time and money here.</p> 	<p>Support our market and events calendar to become even stronger so our town becomes one of the most well-known and visited in the region.</p> 
<p>Unlock assets and sites that will enhance provision for deprived groups and improve our town's role as a community, leisure, cultural and service hub.</p> 	<p>Grow the size of the economy and diversify the sector mix to enhance economic resilience and create more opportunities for our residents.</p> 	

Market Place, Swaffham



Source: We Made That, 2021

Aspiration Realised

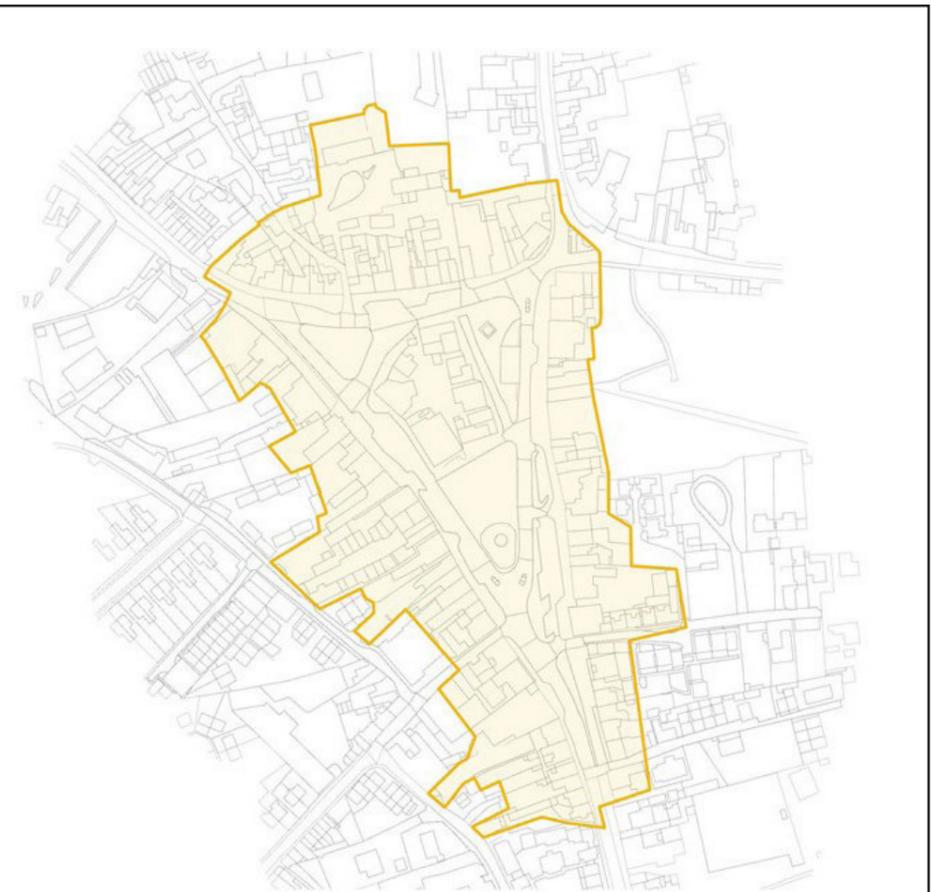
This aspiration will be realised through:

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <p>1. Actively perusing and prioritising five high-impact game changing interventions.</p> | <p>2. Supporting and endorsing a series of long-term high-impact proposals.</p> | <p>3. Delivering tactical short-term interventions that rapidly deliver highly visual improvements.</p> |
|---|--|--|

We also want Swaffham 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.

Swaffham High Street Heritage Action Zone

Our aspiration for Swaffham closely aligns with the objectives of Historic England and Breckland Council's emerging Swaffham High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme and captures some of its activities. Our game changing interventions have been carefully selected to enhance the impact of heritage investments in the town and some will inform and steer the development of future Heritage Action Zone activities. This is particularly the case for the emerging **Heritage Action Zone Town Centre Masterplan** which will draw on the evidence, findings, principles and ideas set out in this document.



Source: Historic England

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 Swaffham 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 Swaffham 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:

- ③ **Visit a reinvigorated Saturday market on a regular basis to purchase a wide range of local produce.**
- ③ **Use the diversified town centre more often to eat, drink, meet, unwind and socialise with other people.**
- ③ **Travel more sustainably within the town and to neighbouring towns using enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure.**
- ③ **Use enhanced leisure, cultural and arts facilities to socialise, have fun and live more healthy lives.**
- ③ **Work in new employment spaces located in the town centre and on the edge of town.**
- ③ **Have more choice about where and how to live within the town.**

These shifts will make Swaffham 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.



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 Swaffham.

Touchpoints

Nine touch points were organised over an intense twelve-week period:

- 1. One -to-one consultations:** In-depth consultations were held with local stakeholders. These conversations explored a wide range of topics, including stakeholders' views on Swaffham's strengths and weaknesses, their aspirations for the future and potential interventions that could deliver transformative impacts.
- 2. Meet the team event:** An online meeting was held with local people 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 Swaffham and sign up for additional engagement events.
- 3. 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.
- 4. Walking workshop:** A walking workshop was held with consultants, stakeholders, Swaffham 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.
- 5. SWOT workshop:** An online SWOT workshop was held to have an open discussion with members of the public about their thoughts on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat aspects of the town.
- 6. Market stalls:** An in-person market stall was held at the Saturday market to introduce local people to the project and gain insights into their thoughts about the town and how it could be improved.
- 7. Interventions workshop:** An in-person workshop was held to discuss a long list of emerging proposals, so that members of the public and stakeholders could contribute thoughts and ideas, as well as letting the consultant team know which proposals they felt should be prioritised. The conversation and findings were taken into account before the short list of interventions was agreed.
- 8. Online draft report:** The draft Town Delivery Plan was published online for public comment. The report was amended in response to comments received.
- 9. Feedback from consultation was used to develop the final report.**

Around 21,300 people have been engaged as part of this process from a wide range of different groups.⁵ Key stakeholders engaged include representatives from Swaffham Town Council, Icen Partnership, Swaffham Museum, Nicholas Hamond Academy, Breckland Council, Swaffham Cultural Consortium and Norfolk County Council. Many other residents, businesses, charities and third sector organisations were also involved in the development of this document.

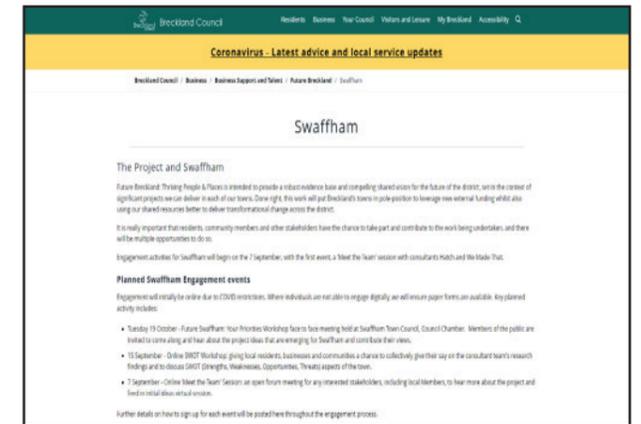
It is also estimated that around 250,000 people will have heard about the plan through radio interviews, press articles, social media posts and direct website hits on the Swaffham page of the [Future Breckland](#) website.

Figure 12 In-Person Intervention Workshop



Source: We Made That, 2021

Figure 13 Future Breckland Website



Source: Breckland Council, 2021

Figure 14 In-Person Intervention Workshop



Source: We Made That, 2021

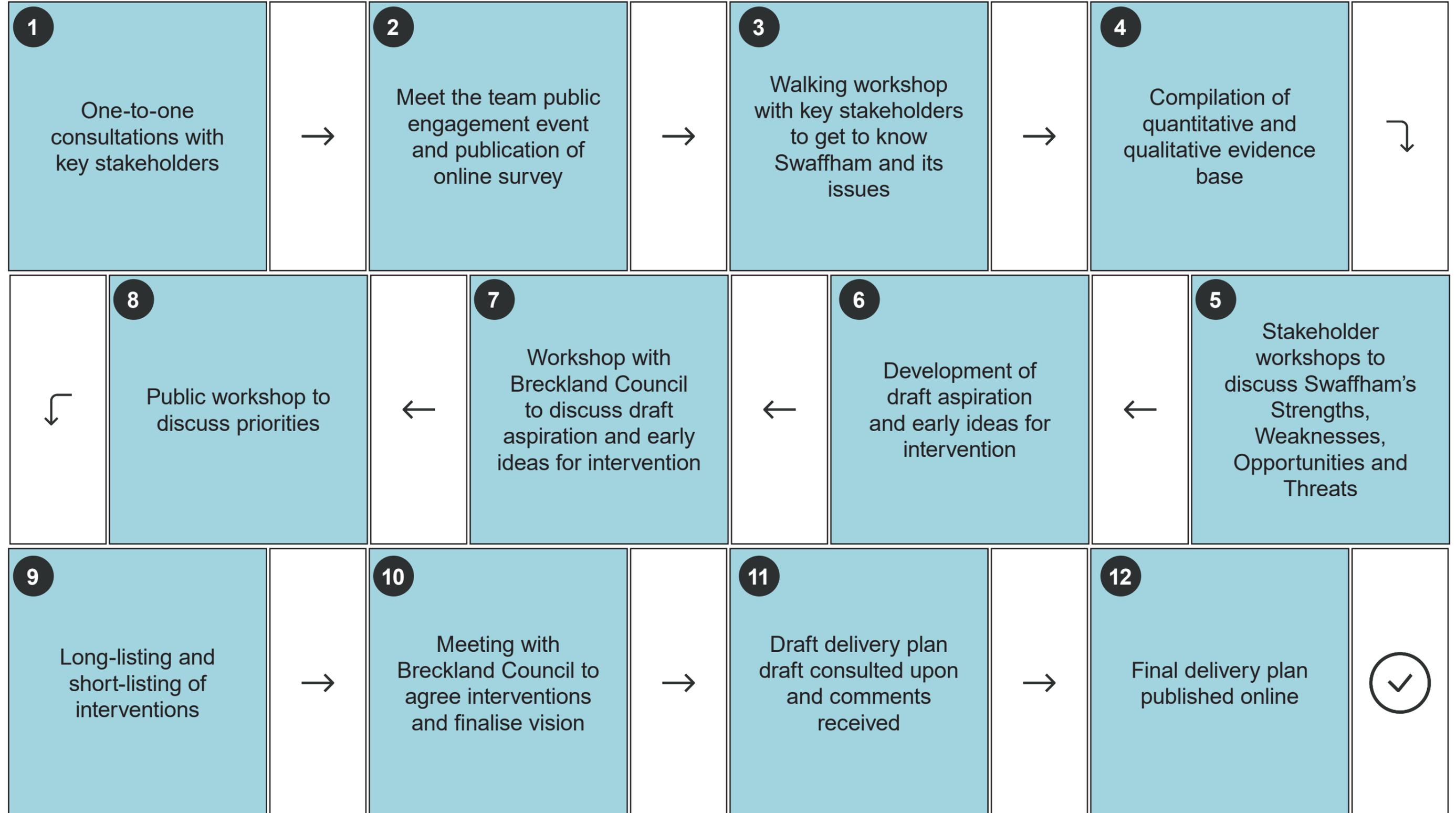
Figure 15 Market Stall Event



Source: We Made That, 2021

5. 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.

Figure 16 Building Swaffham's Town Delivery Plan



Source; Hatch, 2021

Selecting the Game Changing Interventions

Six game changing interventions have been selected to transform Swaffham. These are:

1. **Timeless Swaffham:** Enhancing our Town Centre.
2. **Vibrant Swaffham:** Reinvigorating our Market Place.
3. **Healthy Swaffham:** Building a New Leisure Centre.
4. **Cultured Swaffham:** Providing a New Culture and Arts Hub.
5. **Connected Swaffham:** Re-connecting Swaffham and Watton.

More detail is provided on these later in this report. These represent a clear investment package that will:

- ③ Help to deliver our aspiration for Swaffham.
- ③ Contribute to Breckland Council's overarching **Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places** objectives (See Chapter 1: Swaffham's Town Delivery Plan).
- ③ Align with the themes of major Government funding pots (e.g. town centre regeneration, cultural investment, active travel and policy priorities such as the Levelling Up agenda).
- ③ Complement existing activity and policy aspirations for Swaffham from different partners.
- ③ Align with Breckland Council's Corporate Plan 2020-2023.

- ③ Complement and integrate with one another to deliver positive change.

These interventions were selected using a robust prioritisation process that aligns with Government's 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 Swaffham.

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 Swaffham Ambition

Interventions	Swaffham Aspiration				
	1	2	3	4	5
Timeless Swaffham: Enhancing our Town Centre	■	■	■	■	■
Vibrant Swaffham: Reinvigorating our Market Place	■	■	■	■	■
Healthy Swaffham: Building a New Leisure Centre	■	■	■	■	■
Cultured Swaffham: Providing a New Culture and Arts Hub	■	■	■	■	■
Connected Swaffham: Re-connecting Swaffham and Watton	■	■	■	■	■
Key	1. Improve the look, feel and function of our historic centre 2. Capitalise on our assets and opportunities to attract tourists 3. Build our market so it becomes the most well-known and visited in region 4. Activate assets and sites that enhance provision for deprived groups 5. Grow and diversify economy to enhance economic resilience				
	■ Strong Positive Impact ■ Positive Impact				

Contributing to Breckland-Wide Objectives

As well as delivering against the Swaffham ambition, these game changing interventions will contribute to five 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 Thetford, Dereham, Attleborough and Watton, they will deliver district-wide economic, social and environmental benefits.

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:

1. Viability Gap: Commercial rents are comparatively low making most investments unviable without public sector support.

2. Viability Gap: Housing is more profitable than commercial space so is prioritised by developers over employment space.

3. Abnormal Costs: Much of the town centre is within a conservation area and properties are expensive to develop. Historically, this has deterred investors. However, recently a number of renovations have taken place in the town centre.

4. Public Goods: Public realm, transport infrastructure and some commercial properties are the responsibility of public bodies or third sector organisations and therefore require active intervention.

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 Swaffham and Breckland.

Swaffham Market Place



Source: We Made That, 2021

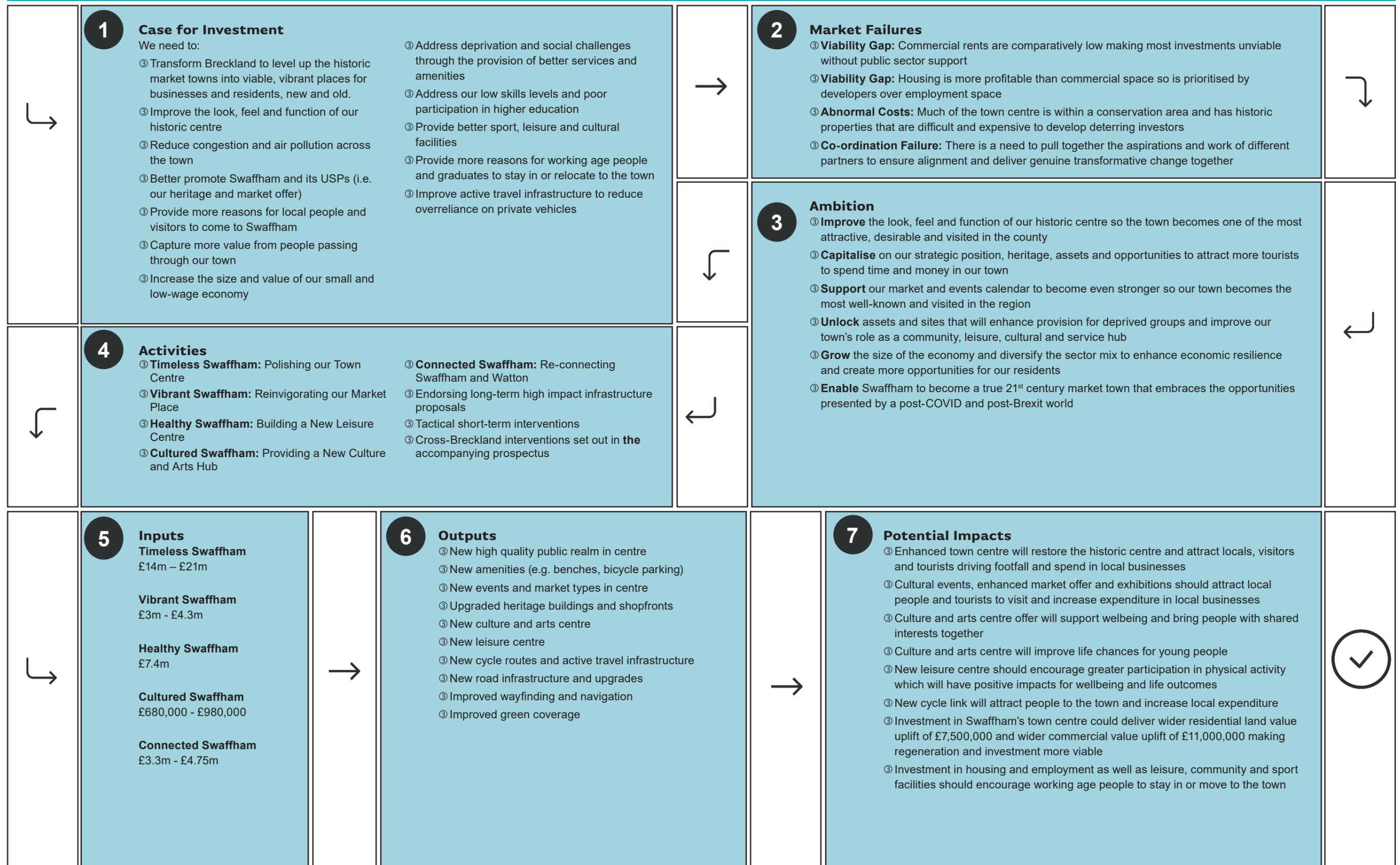
Logic Model

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.

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:

- ③ **Swaffham's Draft Neighbourhood Plan (2016-2036):** This sets out Swaffham Town 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.
- ③ **Swaffham's Network Improvement Strategy (2019+):** This recognises Swaffham's connectivity challenges and includes several short-, medium- and long-term actions to address current issues. It includes actions related to parking, air quality and a potential relief road.
- ③ **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. Swaffham is expected to contribute over 1,500 homes and 9 Hectares of employment land.
- ③ **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.
- ③ **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.
- ③ **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.
- ③ **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.
- ③ **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 17 Swaffham's Logic Model





04

Swaffham's
Game Changers:
Enabling
Transformative
Change

Swaffham's Game Changers

Enabling Transformative Change

Figure 18 Overview of Interventions

1. Magnificent Swaffham: Polishing our Town Centre

- 1.1 Facilitate better flow of traffic by reducing the dominance of the road and parking
- 1.2 Slow traffic down and mitigate the effects through SUDs, greening, trees
- 1.3 Improve the public realm and make the town easier and safer to move around
- 1.4 Improve walking & cycling connectivity

2. Vibrant Swaffham: Reinvigorating our Marketplace

- 2.1 Branding and promotion exercise to develop an identity to help advertise the market offer
- 2.2 New signage, lighting, wayfinding and public art
- 2.3 Permanent removal of the market place car park for improved public realm
- 2.4 Expanded programme and regular events offer
- 2.5 Permanent options (eg. a pavilion or kiosks)

3. Cultured Swaffham: Creating a New Culture and Arts Hub

4. Healthy Swaffham: Building a New Leisure Centre

5. Connected Swaffham: Re-connecting Watton and Swaffham

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

- 6.1 More prominent signage to encourage use of Theatre Street Car Park
- 6.2 Create a green gateway between St Peter and St Paul Church and the centre
- 6.3 Explore opportunities to extend Campinglands

- 6.4 Improve and restore historic buildings
- 6.5 Invest in short-term visual improvements
- 6.6 Trial pop-up market events
- 6.7 Trial partial pedestrianisation schemes and options to reduce traffic dominance
- 6.8 Introduce more formal, pedestrian crossings
- 6.9 Re-opening the former Sacred Heart School's Swimming Pool for community use

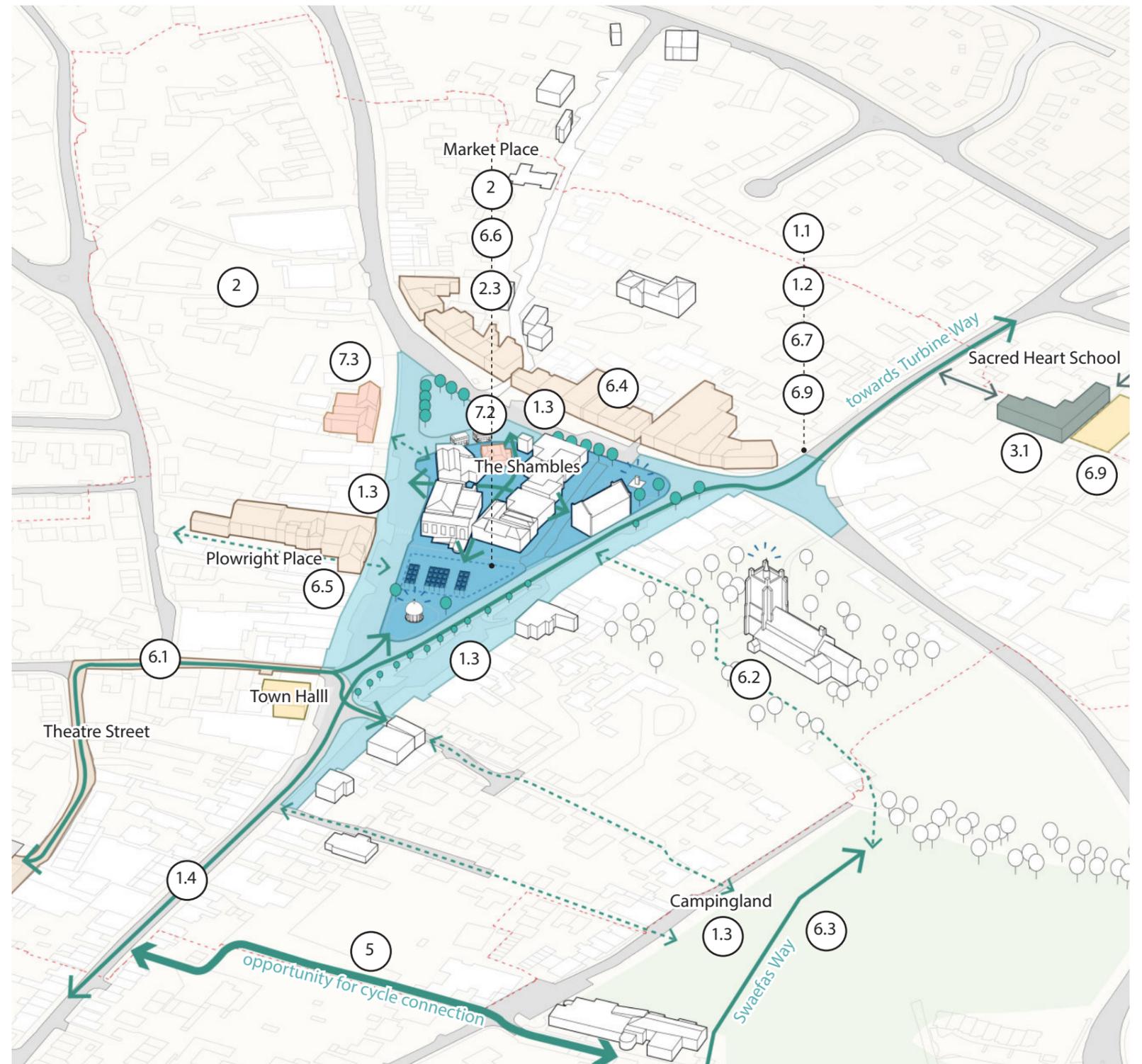
Refer to section 5 for the full list of quick wins

7. Long-term endorsements

- 7.1 Town centre relief road or bypass
- 7.2 Public toilet block redevelopment
- 7.3 New homes at former Hammonds High School
- 7.4 Introduce more formal crossings for pedestrians in the town centre
- 7.5 Provide more secure bicycle parking
- 7.6 Trial practical options to reduce traffic dominance such as car free days
- 7.7 Explore feasibility of re-opening the former Sacred Heart Independent Catholic School's Swimming Pool for community use

Key

- Magnificent Swaffham
- Vibrant Swaffham
- Cultured Swaffham
- Connected Swaffham
- Quick wins
- Long-term endorsements
- Other Breckland District Council-owned sites
- Improve walking and cycling connectivity
- ⋯→ Improve walking and cycling connectivity
- Town centre boundary



Source: We Made That, 2021

1. Timeless Swaffham: Enhancing our Town Centre

Project Description

The dominance of cars and lorries in Swaffham is preventing the evolution of our town centre by crowding out other uses and distracting from our beautiful Georgian architecture. The resulting heavy traffic, noise pollution and air pollution diminish the visitor experience and the quality, safety and usability of the public realm. This intervention involves a series of strategic moves that will improve accessibility, air quality and the look and feel of our historic town centre, while also contributing to improved wellbeing and a healthy town centre environment. At the same time there is a once in generation opportunity to build on the work planned as part of the Heritage Action Zone improvements.

The strategic moves are:

- ③ Explore initiatives to facilitate better flow of traffic around Market Place, reducing the dominance of the road and parking to support the vitality of our centre
- ③ Mitigate the impacts of traffic by slowing it down and providing Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, greening, trees and creating spaces to dwell
- ③ Improve the public realm and make the town easier and safer to move around by foot and bicycle by improving accessibility and readdressing the balance of space between vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians
- ③ Improve walking and cycling wayfinding in and around the town (including to the Theatre Street Car Park, Plowright Place, Campingland)
- ③ Link into a better-connected Swaffham and Watton (see Game Changing Intervention 6 – Connected Swaffham: Re-Connecting Swaffham and Watton)

These moves will provide space for other uses, support public life, allow the market to expand and cement Swaffham's identity as a modern market town.

A range of potential options to reduce traffic dominance in the town centre have been proposed below. Recognising the importance of the road network to the ongoing function of our town, proposals do not remove through traffic in full. Potential options are based on ideas that have been previously explored by partners, which seek to reduce traffic dominance and address the balance of space for vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. Option development will be subject to a detailed transport study, traffic modelling, town centre wide capacity and audit and design feasibility studies.

Options include:

1. Suspend the market place car park for improved public realm
2. Trial and test temporary traffic suspensions or car free days
3. Suspend the Pedlar's triangular car park and integrate with public realm around bus hub and coach arrival point
4. Improve pedestrian crossings at junction of Market Place and Station Street across Lynn Street
5. Improve public realm and suspend parking in front of businesses on East side (currently shared surfaces under temporary arrangements)
6. Pedestrianise the eastern arm of the triangular road network
7. Pedestrianise the western arm of the triangular road network

The options set out here will be considered and progressed as part of the masterplan being developed for the High Street Heritage Action Zone programme. It will also complement the on-going building upgrades being undertaken as part of the programme.

Existing Site Photographs

Swaffham High Street Main Junction



Source: We Made That, 2021

Swaffham Town Centre Public Space



Source: We Made That, 2021

Delivery Partners

- ③ Norfolk County Council; Swaffham Town Council (including the Transport Access and Environment Committee); Breckland Council

Project Rationale

- ③ Heavy traffic and noise pollution negatively impact the visitor experience
- ③ Cluttered and inefficient road network dominates the centre
- ③ Excess of tarmac and roadway across the centre distracts from heritage assets
- ③ Lack of greenery and quiet space to relax, dwell and socialise
- ③ High levels of parking take up a lot of valuable public space
- ③ Air pollution high particularly around junctions
- ③ Poor connectivity between different parts of the town centre (e.g. between the centre and Theatre Street Car Park, Plowright Place and Campingland)

Strategic Alignment

Swaffham Ambition:

- ③ New configuration will improve the look, feel and function of our town centre and its heritage assets
- ③ More tourists will be attracted to visit the improved centre and heritage offer
- ③ Pedestrianised space will unlock the opportunity to expand and broaden the market offer
- ③ Will support Swaffham to become a 21st century market town through the provision of new public space that meets modern consumer expectations and evolving resident needs

Breckland Objectives:

- ③ Will kickstart town centre regeneration allowing our town to realise its potential
- ③ Will support inclusion by creating new public space for all and the provision of new amenities
- ③ Will enhance, restore and improve our town's culture and heritage offer
- ③ Will support business and enterprise as there is a clear link between the quality of place and expenditure in high street businesses
- ③ Will improve the local environment and air quality by making the town centre less vehicle dominated

Government Ambitions:

- ③ Aligns with Government ambitions related to town centre regeneration as set out in the prospectuses for the Stronger Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund

Estimated Costs

- ③ The suite of interventions could include some of the following:
 - Suspend Market Place £1,267,000
 - Temporary Traffic Suspension £1,022,000
 - Suspend the Pedlar's car park £1,512,000
 - Improve pedestrian crossing £706,000
 - Improve public realm £4,450,000
 - Pedestrianise the Eastern Arm £5,386,000
 - Pedestrianise the Western Arm £4.6m

Potential Funding Mechanisms

- ③ Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund); Developer contributions (e.g. s106); Private sector investment (e.g. Municipal Bond Agency); Local public bodies (e.g. Breckland Council, Swaffham Town Council and Norfolk County Council capital funds)

Next Steps

- ③ Feasibility studies with Norfolk County Council to identify ways to reduce the number of vehicles moving through the town centre (including traffic modelling and town centre wide parking capacity study and audit); Detailed design work; Further engagement and statutory consultation; Co-ordinate with Swaffham Masterplan Enhancement Scheme, such as High Street Heritage Action Zone works to improve frontages to activate the public realm; Secure funding; Secure statutory consents; Implement full capital improvement works in line with detailed design of preferred options

1. Timeless Swaffham: Enhancing our Town Centre...continued

<p>Indicative Timescales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Short-Term (0-3 Years): Full feasibility and detailed designs. ③ Medium-Term (0-5 Years): Full capital works 	
<p>Potential Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Range of new public realm & highways improvements (these correspond with the illustrated option diagrams overleaf): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1070 sqm pedestrianised area • 4200 sqm of traffic suspension • 1280 sqm shared surface • 1440 sqm improved crossings at junction • 3680 sqm public realm improvements • 1500 sqm highways improvements & 2880 sqm public realm improvements • 2690 sqm highways improvements & 1090 sqm public realm improvements ③ Walking and cycling upgrades: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 938m segregated cycle way • 220m improved and extended pavement to Theatre St car park (473 sqm existing pavement) 	
<p>Potential Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Enhanced town centre should attract locals, visitors and tourists to visit and increase expenditure in local businesses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An evaluation of public realm improvements in Bristol shows a 25% increase in footfall on Saturdays⁶ • 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 businesses⁷ • Pedestrianisation and the introduction of a new public square in Coventry led to a 25% increase in weekend footfall⁸ ③ High levels of public investment should encourage other business-owners to improve their properties and stimulate wider investment in the town <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St Anne's on the Sea invested £1.75m in refurbishing their main pedestrian square which stimulated over £20m of wider private sector investment in the town⁹ ③ Investment in good quality public realm should increase local land values making wider regeneration more viable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 rates¹⁰ • 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 improvement¹¹ • Using MHCLG appraisal guidance it is estimated that investments in Swaffham's Market Place could deliver wider residential land value uplift of £x and wider commercial land value of £x¹² ③ Re-configured centre should reduce noise and air pollution making it more pleasant to visit, dwell and spend time ③ Public realm investments should enhance and better frame our town's heritage assets ③ Enhanced town centre appearance should improve perceptions of Swaffham as a place to live, work and open a new business 	

Project Examples

- ③ Salisbury Market Square, Salisbury: Salisbury Market Square was refurbished in 2012 using high quality Granite, York Stone and Wiltshire Limestone. It was done in three phases so local markets could remain operational during the construction process. Following completion, Wiltshire County Council handed control of the marketplace to Salisbury City Council given their stronger connections with the local community.
- ③ Cirencester Marketplace, Cirencester: Cirencester Marketplace was sensitively upgraded in 2016 to improve the appearance of the town centre and celebrate its historic architecture, while also reducing traffic and creating a dedicated space for market stalls and other public events. The upgrades, which were designed by Portus + Whitton Landscape Architects, have been welcomed by residents and received a Conservation Area Award at the Civic Voice Design Awards in 2018.
- ③ Altrincham Town Centre and Market Place, Altrincham: Altrincham's town centre has an upgraded pedestrianised area at the market square which provides space for a variety of activities that bring people together and activate the space outside of market days. Alongside the regeneration of the historic market building this has rejuvenated the town centre causing retail vacancy rates to fall and footfall to increase.

Salisbury Market Square



Source: Mildens Construction

Cirencester Marketplace



Source: Discover Cotswolds

6. The Pedestrian Pound: The Business Case for Better Street and Public Spaces, Just Economics (2016)

7. The Pedestrian Pound, Living Streets (2018)

8. ibid

9. ibid

10. ibid

11. The Pedestrian Pound: The Business Case for Better Street and Public Spaces, Just Economics (2016)

12. This is a high-level gross estimate. Detailed economic modelling adjusted for additionality will be undertaken as part of the Breckland Prospectus early next year.

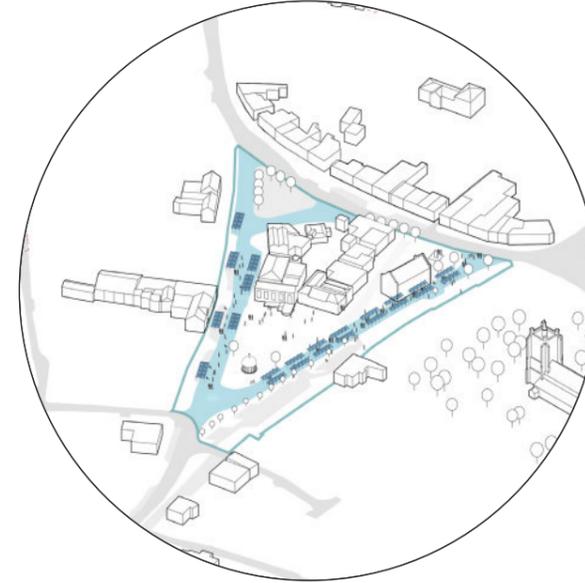
Figure 19 Timeless Swaffham: Enhancing our Town Centre (Diagrams to Explore Potential Options)

Range of new public realm & highways improvements:

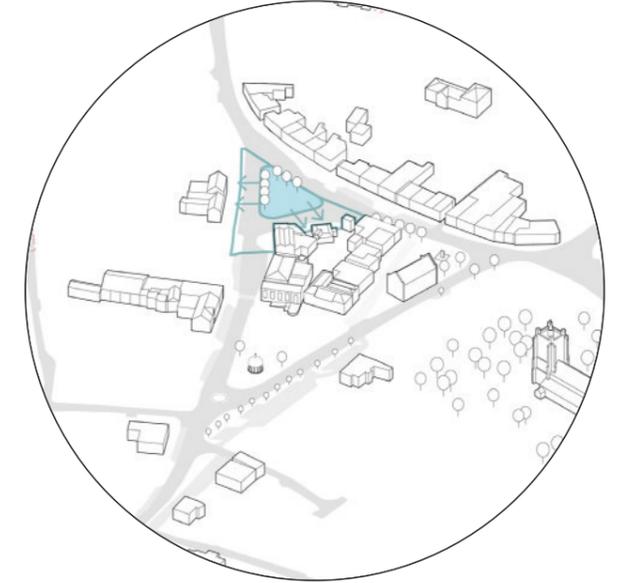
1. 1070 sqm pedestrianised area
2. 4200 sqm of traffic suspension
3. 1280 sqm shared surface
4. 1440 sqm improved crossings at junction
5. 3680 sqm public realm improvements
6. 1500 sqm highways & 2880 sqm public realm improvements
7. 2690 sqm highways & 1090 sqm public realm improvements



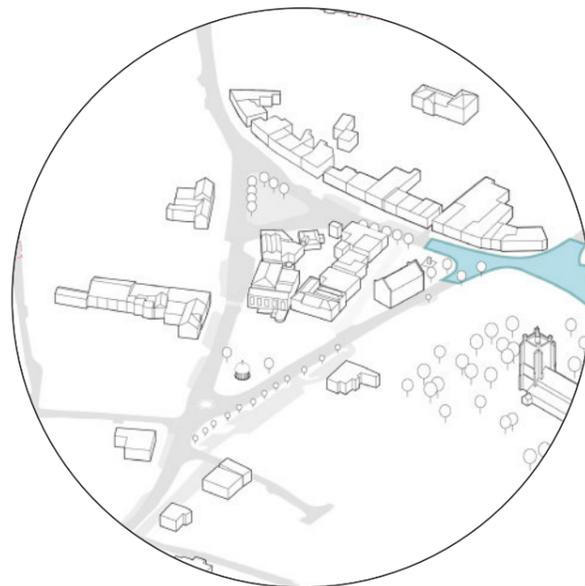
1. Suspend Market Place car park for improved public realm



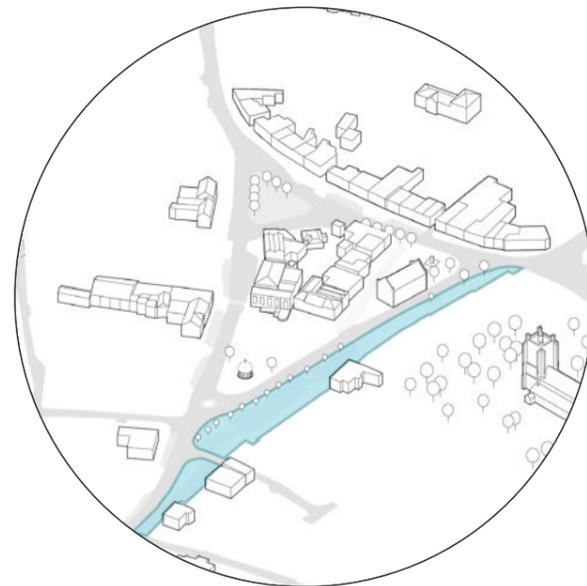
2. Trial and test temporary traffic suspensions or car free days



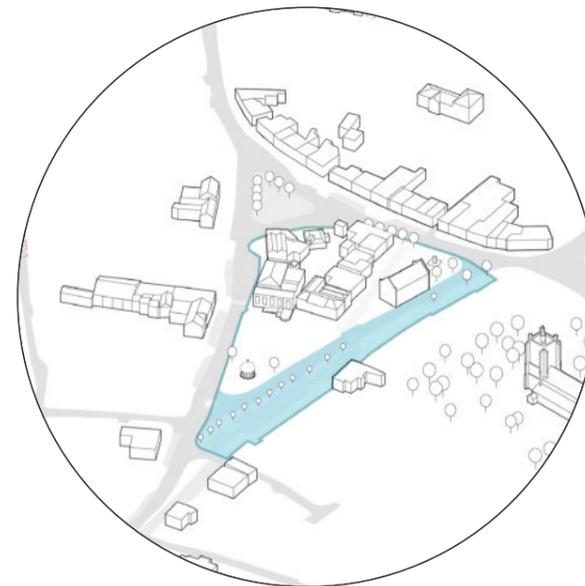
3. Suspend the Pedlar's triangular car park and integrate with bus hub



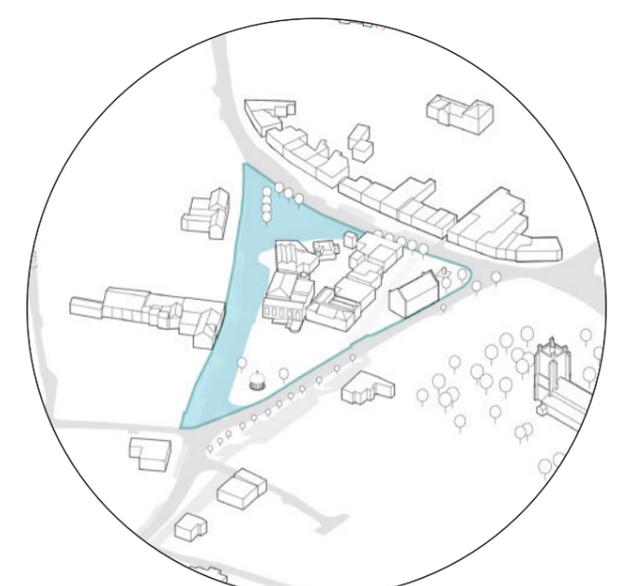
4. Improve pedestrian crossings at junction of Market Place and Station Street



5. Improve public realm and suspend parking in front of businesses on east side



6. Pedestrianise the eastern arm of the triangular road network



7. Pedestrianise the western arm of the triangular road network

2. Vibrant Swaffham: Capitalising on our Market Place and other assets

Project Description

Our markets are an important part of our history and attract people to visit the town. We currently boast the Saturday outdoor market, Saturday auction, indoor market at the Assembly Rooms and the poultry auction. All of these are important for attracting people from local villages, but they also offer the potential to attract day trippers and longer stay tourists.

Our market offer is strong, but the COVID-19 pandemic has interrupted the Town Council Market Committee's emerging plans to improve and broaden the local offer even further to attract more people to visit throughout the year. This intervention will build on the Committee's early work as it aims to re-invigorate our marketplace by making it a test bed for experimentation through the trialing of new events, markets and themed activities.

This intervention will involve establishing a new marketplace calendar which will build on the Market Committee's recent activities. It will involve trialing events such as a teenage market day, evening beer festival, reading event, craft fayre, food and drink festival and live music events. The most successful events will be made permanent annual fixtures over the longer-term and one or two will be built up to become large-scale regional events that can be used to attract people from a broader area.

A series of complementary actions will be provided to enhance the existing market offer and enable new events and activities to succeed. These include:

- ③ A branding and promotion exercise to develop an identity and advertise the market offer
 - E.g. a dedicated website, branded market gazebos, branded furniture etc
 - The place marketing should be undertaken in such a way as to promote the use of other spaces in the town i.e. Campingland
 - The town should expand its events calendar to provide a diverse and attractive menu for visitors.
- ③ New signage, lighting, wayfinding and public art using revised branding
- ③ Permanent removal of the market place car park for improved public realm and to allow the market to expand (in line with Timeless Swaffham: Enhancing our Town Centre)
- ③ Make use of close proximity to Campingland as an opportunity to extend and expand the capacity of the market for occasional events and themed markets
- ③ Explore more permanent options such as a pavilion, raised platform or kiosks to support market activities

Existing Site Photographs

Swaffham Market



Source: We Made That 2021

Swaffham Market



Source: We Made That 2021

Delivery Partners

- ③ Breckland Council, Swaffham Town Council, Swaffham Cultural Consortium, Swaffham Arts

Project Rationale

Swaffham and its market is not currently meeting its tourism or visitor potential – this because there is:

- ③ No co-ordinated and curated events programme
- ③ An underrepresentation of quality places for people to meet, relax, unwind, and socialise
- ③ A weak evening economy with little to do after 6pm for both local and visitors
- ③ Few well-known attractions beyond the markets and museum
- ③ No clear brand and little to no marketing activity
- ③ Few annual events (except for car rally, sheep fair and Christmas lights) attract people from across the region
- ③ A lack of signage and hoarding highlighting the local offer to passing trade

Strategic Alignment

Swaffham Ambition:

- ③ Will broaden and diversify the market which will help our town become more well-known, varied and visited
- ③ Will capitalise on the town's unique selling points (i.e. heritage and market) to attract more tourists to spend time and money here
- ③ Will improve the function of the town centre making it more attractive to visit
- ③ Will enhance the role of the town as an important service and amenity hub

Breckland Objectives:

- ③ Will support town centre regeneration by diversifying the offer and helping the town adapt to changing -economic conditions at a regional and national level
- ③ Will support inclusion if expanded offer continues to meet the needs of a diverse range of local people
- ③ Will enhance business and enterprise by providing opportunities for microbusinesses (businesses with 3-5 employees)
- ③ Will enhance and add to the district's culture and heritage offer

Government Ambitions:

- ③ Aligns with Government ambitions related to town centre regeneration as set out in the prospectuses for the Stronger Towns Fund and Levelling Up Fund

Estimated Costs

Total project cost will be between £3m - £4.3m for capital costs. Additional allowances will need to be made to include revenue costs for 10 market events.

Potential Funding Mechanisms

Public sector revenue (e.g. Breckland Council, Swaffham Town Council and Norfolk County Council); Cross-subsidisation from other sources (e.g. more efficient use of public sector assets); Business Improvement District and levy; Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund); Developer contributions (e.g. s106)

Next Steps

Work with community stakeholders, the Market Committee, traders and businesses to define a programme of activities; Undertake feasibility studies with Breckland District Council and others to identify ways to remove the marketplace car park (see previous intervention); Identify revenue source to support the programme; Undertake detailed designs of an improved market place; Undertake branding exercise; Implement project and schemes in line with programme

Indicative Timescales

- ③ Short term (0-2 years): Develop programme, trial events and deliver short term actions
- ③ Medium term (1-5 years): Full programme of activities to be delivered annually

2. Vibrant Swaffham: Capitalising on our Market Place and other assets ...continued

Potential Outputs

- ③ 1065 sqm pedestrianised area & electric points for market
- ③ + potential addition: 2505 sqm improved public realm
- ③ New market events: up to 10 per year
- ③ New branded market stalls: approx. 37

Potential Impacts

- ③ Interventions should attract local people and tourists to visit and increase expenditure in local businesses
 - The annual one-day Beggars Fare Folk and Roots Music Festival in Romsey, Hampshire attracts around 5,000 people each year who spend around £60k on the day of the event. Around 35% of this expenditure goes to organised events and stalls and 65% goes to other business across the town.¹³
- Enhanced market offer, pop-up shops and events should create opportunities for local people to set up new micro-businesses (companies of just 3-5 employees).
- Interventions should increase the attractiveness of the town and improve perceptions of Swaffham as a place to live, work and open a business
- A carefully curated events programme will support inclusion if the offer meets the needs and interests of different groups

Project Examples

- ③ Trout n' About, Stockbridge Hampshire: An annual food and craft festival that takes place on the first Sunday of August along Stockbridge's high street. The town has several regular markets, but this is the highest profile annual event designed to attract more people from across the region to visit. The event incorporates around 100 stalls offering a wide range of local produce and craft items, alongside music and activities for children. The festival is organised by a paid project manager alongside a committee of local volunteers. The event attracts around 4,500 people each year which delivers around £70k to the local economy.¹⁴
- ③ 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.
- ③ Buxton International Festival (BIF), Buxton: An international opera, music and culture festival that runs every July for 17 days and involves concerts, talks, and markets. It is supplemented by a mini festival in the autumn and regular concerts across the north of England to extend its impact beyond the main event. The festival receives around £120k a year from the Arts Council but generates an economic impact of around £3m for the local economy each year.¹⁵

Trout n' About Festival, Stockbridge



Source: Visit Hampshire

Buxton International Festival

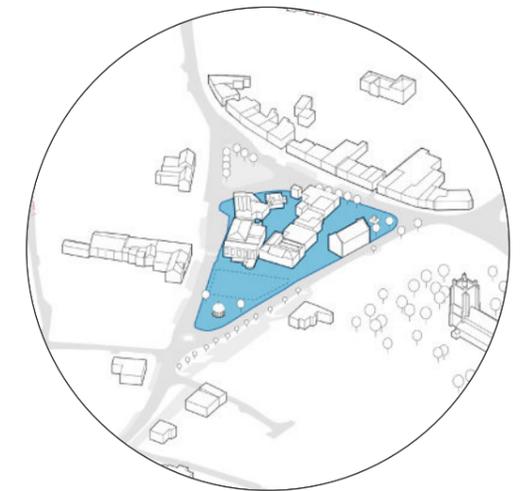


Source: Explore Buxton

Figure 20 Vibrant Swaffham: Re-Invigorating our Market Place (High-Level Illustrative Visual)

Key

- 1065 sqm pedestrianised area & electric points for market (existing market place car park)
- 2505 sqm improved public realm (excluding market place car park)



Illustrative visual: reinvigorating the marketplace

Source: We Made That, 2021

13. The Impacts of Small-Scale Cultural Events on Market Town Vitality, University of Southampton (2017)
 14. The Impacts of Small-Scale Cultural Events on Market Town Vitality, University of Southampton (2017)
 15. Everything You Need to Know About the Buxton International Festival, Buxton International Festival (2020)

3. Cultured Swaffham: Creating a New Culture and Arts Hub

Project Description

Swaffham's Sacred Heart Independent Catholic School closed in 2019 due to financial pressures. Part of the site was re-opened as a state-funded Catholic Primary School, but the original school's performing arts building ('the Barn') was not included. The Barn includes a performance space as well as ancillary rooms and rehearsal space.

This intervention, which is being led by Swaffham Town Council, aims to bring the Barn back into productive use as a community culture and arts centre. A specific vision is currently being developed by a new Barn Steering Group, but the general proposal is to use the performance space for shows, concerts, films, exhibitions and events and the other spaces for other creative activities (e.g., music, art, craft and maker studios).

The Barn has recently been purchased by the Town Council and the next step is to complete a full feasibility and business plan. A final option will be shared with the public for consultation once a financially and operationally sustainable plan has been agreed.

Existing Site Photographs

The Barn Swaffham



Source: We Made That 2021

The Barn Exterior



Source: We Made That 2021

Delivery Partners

- Swaffham Town Council, Swaffham Arts, Swaffham Cultural Consortium, Swaffham Museum, Barn Steering Group and Breckland Council

Project Rationale

- Lack of culture and arts facilities in our town
- Opportunity to bring unused buildings back into productive use
- Lack of places to meet, socialise and relax
- Social mobility is poor and provision for young people is weak
- Deprivation is high and skill levels are low across all age groups
- Opportunity to attract more people and footfall to town centre

Strategic Alignment

Swaffham Ambition:

- Will capitalise on an opportunity to attract more visitors to our town
- Will enhance the local events calendar which will help raise the profile of our town
- Will unlock an asset and site that will offer enhanced provision for our deprived groups
- Will unlock an asset and site that will improve the town's role as a community, leisure, culture and service hub

Breckland Objectives:

- Will support town centre regeneration by enhancing the daytime and evening offer which will attract people to visit and spend money in the town
- Will support inclusion and skills through the provision of classes and opportunities to learn for all age groups
- Will add to Breckland's rich culture offer by introducing new activities and groups to the area

Government Ambitions:

- Aligns with Government ambitions to use culture to deliver town centre regeneration as set out in the prospectus for the Stronger Towns Fund

Estimated Costs

Total project cost will be between £680k - £980k. Allowances will need to be made to include revenue costs.

Potential Funding Mechanisms

Local public bodies (e.g. Swaffham Town Council and Norfolk County Council capital funds); Public sector land sales; Developer contributions (e.g. s106); Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund, Shared Prosperity Fund and Community Renewal Fund)

Next Steps

Use steering group to agree aspirations, objectives and business model; undertake full feasibility study and business plan; complete detailed design; commission relevant partners; undertake conversion and upgrade work

Indicative Timescales

- Short-Term (0-1 Years): Feasibility, business plan and design work
- Medium-Term (1-3 Years): Refurbishment and activation of buildings

Potential Outputs

- c800 sqm of refurbished cultural space

3. Cultured Swaffham: Creating a New Culture and Arts Hub...continued

Potential Impacts

- ③ Community offer will improve life chances for our young people¹⁶
 - Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree
 - Students from low-income families who engage in the arts are 20% more likely to vote as young adults
 - Young offenders who take part in arts activities are 18% less likely to re-offend
- ③ Community offer will support wellbeing and bring people with shared interests together
 - Arts and Mind's 2013 Arts on Prescription project in Cambridge led to significant improvements in participants' wellbeing and mental health – 76% reported increased wellbeing, 69% felt less socially excluded and 71% experienced a fall in anxiety¹⁷
- ③ Offer will attract people to our town centre and encourage wider spend
 - Research from Surrey Arts shows that visitors to Surrey's theatres spend, on average, £23.79 per person in local food and drink venues and £23.61 in local shops per trip
- ③ New space will create jobs of different types and support our economy
 - It is estimated that an activated and operational facility could support 8 FTE jobs and generate Gross Value Added of £370,630 m¹⁸
- ③ Space should provide opportunities for creative businesses to come together and collaborate

Project Examples

- ③ Farnham Maltings, Surrey: An arts centre in Farnham within a former tannery and brewery. Facilities include theatre spaces, a cinema, dance studios, kiln rooms, conference rooms, a bar, a café and craft studios. The facility was set up by the Farnham Preservation Trust who purchased the buildings in the 1970s.
- ③ Nairn Community and Arts Centre, Scotland: A community arts centre in Nairn, Scotland that was built in 2007 using funds from a range of sources. The modern building has become a popular events venue, holding regular live shows, concerts and films, and provides space for community and arts organisations. Over 70,000 people visit each year and around 52 organisations use the space to meet regularly. Any profits made go into a Community and Arts Programme which provides discounted space for community groups and organisations.

Farnham Maltings



Source: Farnham Maltings

Nairn Community and Arts Centre



Source: Nairn Community and Arts Centre

16. The Case for Cultural Learning, Cultural Learning Alliance (2017)

17. Arts and Minds, Arts on Prescription Evaluation, Susan Potter (2013)

18. This is a high-level gross estimate. Detailed economic modelling adjusted for additionality will be undertaken as part of the Breckland Prospectus early next year.

4. Healthy Swaffham: Building a New Leisure Centre

<p>Project Description</p> <p>Our sport and leisure offer is limited and could better meet local needs. There are limited leisure facilities in the town, a deficit of play and open space, all of which discourages participation of physical activity.</p> <p>This intervention aims to enhance sport and leisure provision and participation by building a new leisure centre for our residents. Based on early feasibility work the centre will be a 'dry' site including a mix of facilities such as a gym, fitness floor, exercise studio, consultation room and changing rooms.</p> <p>The centre will be designed and operated in line with the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ It will be accessible and affordable for all our residents ③ It will have flexible opening hours that fit around our lives 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ It will have a mix of classes to suit different ages, abilities and interests ③ It will be run for and by the local community ③ It will be financially sustainable and self sufficient ③ It will be a high-quality facility that flexible enough to accommodate different types of activities ③ It will be integrated into the surrounding area ③ It will be connected to outdoor green space <p>The next step is to undertake a full feasibility study looking at different site options, configurations and business models</p>			
<p>Existing Site Photographs</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Swaffham Leisure Centre</th> <th>Approach to Swaffham Leisure Centre</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Swaffham Leisure Centre	Approach to Swaffham Leisure Centre		
Swaffham Leisure Centre	Approach to Swaffham Leisure Centre				
					
<p>Delivery Partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Breckland Council, Swaffham Town Council and Parkwood Leisure 					
<p>Project Rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Swaffham Leisure Centre is the only remaining leisure facility in our town and it has restricted access ③ Sufficient demand exists to justify the provision of a replacement sports hall with associated facilities¹⁹ ③ Gaps exist in the local leisure offer (inc. soft play, crossfit, Pilates, indoor climbing, high ropes, trampolining, toning, swimming etc)²⁰ ③ During the 2011 Census 8% of Swaffham residents reported that they were in bad or very bad health which is about 3.5 percentage points higher than the Breckland average ③ Current provision focuses more on younger people despite Swaffham's ageing population²¹ ③ The population is expected to grow due to planned housing developments placing further pressure on existing facilities 					

19. Evidence base for Indoor and Built Sports and Recreational Facilities, Breckland Council (2017)

20. Sport and Leisure offer Audit, Max Associates (2019)

21. ibid

<p>Strategic Alignment</p> <p>Swaffham Ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Will enhance local provision which will support deprived groups and local people ③ Will improve the town's role as a community and leisure hub ③ Will improve the town's economy through the provision of new employment ③ Will help Swaffham become a true 21st century market town as it will enable residents to meet their leisure needs without leaving the town <p>Breckland Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Will support inclusion by providing an accessible facility that enhances wellbeing ③ Will help support regeneration by diversifying the local service offer ③ Will encourage linked trips enhancing town centre vitality 	
<p>Estimated Costs</p> <p>Our project estimate is £7.4 million based on information given in the Varsity Consulting Report June 2022.</p>	
<p>Potential Funding Mechanisms</p> <p>Local public bodies (e.g. Breckland Council, Swaffham Town Council and Norfolk County Council capital funds); Public sector land sales; Developer contributions (e.g. s106); Public sector grants (e.g. Levelling Up Fund and Shared Prosperity Fund)</p>	
<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Complete feasibility work; produce detailed designs; secure funding; secure planning permission; procure operator; construction works</p>	
<p>Indicative Timescales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Short-Term (0-1 Year): Full designs, feasibility studies and planning permission ③ Medium-Term (2-3 Years): Secure funding, construction and operation 	
<p>Potential Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ c.250 sqm sport and leisure facility 	

4. Healthy Swaffham: Building a New Leisure Centre...continued

Potential Impacts

- ③ New clubs, classes and provision should encourage greater participation in physical activity. Greater participation will have positive impacts for our residents' wellbeing and life outcomes:
 - The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence report that people who exercise regularly take 27% fewer sick days than their colleagues
 - Research conducted as part of the Art Council's Culture and Sport Evidence (CASE) Programme found that student participation in sporting activities can increase numeracy scores by 8% on average versus non-participants
 - Research from the Government's Department for Media, Culture and Sport found that underachieving young people who take part in sport typically see a 29% increase in numeracy skills and a 12-16% rise in other transferable skills
 - Sportworks have found that sports projects for disadvantaged young people can reduce the risk engaging in crime and antisocial behaviour by 16% and the risk of substance misuse by 33%
 - Research from the World Health Organisation shows that getting 500 people to cycle for 20 minutes just twice a week can lead to a reduction in the risk of mortality of 10%
- ③ New facility will create employment opportunities for local people
 - It is estimated that it could support around 4 FTEs and generate £112,704 in Gross Value Added once operational²²

Project Examples

- ③ Clydebank Community Sport Hub, Glasgow: A new £3.5m sport and leisure hub serving Clydebank, Whitecrook and the surrounding rural and urban hinterland. It incorporates a refurbished sports hall, dojang, flood lit 4G pitch, community space and kitchen/bar. The facility was set up by local sports clubs coming together to achieve a common goal and is now operated as a not-for-profit SCIO (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation).
- ③ King's Cross Sports Hall, London: A new sports hall currently being built as part of the large-scale King's Cross Regeneration scheme being led by Argent. It is being built to Sport England Standards and will be used for badminton, basketball, volleyball and indoor football. The facility was secured by the London Borough of Camden via a section 106 agreement with the developer.

Clydebank Community Sport Hub



Source: Clydebank Community Sport Hub

Clydebank Community Sport Hub



Source: Clydebank Community Sport Hub

22. This is a high-level gross estimate. Detailed economic modelling adjusted for additionality will be undertaken as part of the Breckland Prospectus early next year. Gross Value Added refers to Government's preferred approach to measuring productivity.

5. Connected Swaffham: Re-Connecting Watton and Swaffham

<p>Project Description</p> <p>The Watton and Swaffham Railway, also known as the Crab and Winkle line, used to connect Swaffham and Watton to Thetford and beyond. It opened in 1875 and operated for around 90 years before closing.</p> <p>The aim of this intervention is to re-purpose and re-activate the line for walking, running and cycling. This will better connect our two towns for residents travelling for education, employment and leisure purposes while also creating a new attraction to encourage people to visit our towns and spend money in local businesses.</p> <p>The intention is for a trunk route to run from the Old Station in Swaffham to Loch Neaton in Watton with secondary connections to our town centres and residential areas. This will improve accessibility and encourage modal shift among residents. Relevant infrastructure (e.g. cycle lanes, pavements and cycle parking) will be provided to maximise use.</p> <p>The route will also link up with other bridleways and quiet lanes where possible to provide an extended walking and off-road cycling route. This will include a connection to the popular and well-visited Peddars Way linking the towns to the North Norfolk coast. This extended network will make the route and towns highly attractive to visitors. Investments to make Loch Neaton into an outdoor swimming lake and attraction in and of itself, as set out in the Watton Town Delivery Plan, will make this route even more appealing.</p> <p>Given the route will be around 15km long it will need to come forward in stages. Early feasibility work indicates that attractive and viable routes can be created in stages by linking with the network of quiet lanes and bridleways that already exist in the area. The next step will be to undertake a full feasibility study and secure access to land required.</p> <p>This project could be the lead intervention of a number of walking and cycling initiatives that could serve to improve local connectivity.</p>	
<p>Delivery Partners</p> <p>③ Norfolk County Council, Swaffham Town Council, Watton Town Council, Breckland Council, Sustrans</p>	
<p>Project Rationale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Comparatively low proportion of trips in Swaffham and Breckland are made by bicycle or foot ③ Overreliance on private vehicles is creating severe traffic, congestion and air pollution issues ③ Lack of dedicated active travel infrastructure acts as a barrier to walking and cycling ③ Current route between Watton and Swaffham is relatively busy and dangerous for cyclists ③ Opportunity to attract more visitors and tourists to the town via new attraction ③ Both town centres need support to prosper and remain vibrant ③ Planned housing growth will place more pressure on road network without investment in active travel infrastructure ③ Future infrastructure investment from Government will require dedicated cycling routes to be provided 	

<p>Strategic Alignment</p> <p>Swaffham Ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Will improve linkages to the town centre which should drive footfall and spend in local businesses ③ Will capitalise on an opportunity to attract more visitors to the town ③ Will unlock the old railway which will improve the town's role as a community, leisure, cultural and service hub ③ Will support the local economy through increased visits and engagement with local businesses <p>Breckland Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Will support town centre regeneration by attracting new people and groups to the town ③ Will support inclusion through the creation of a new safe and accessible cycle route between two important nodes ③ Will enhance physical infrastructure making it easier for residents, visitors and works to move around ③ Will improve sustainability by providing a green and low carbon alternative to driving <p>Government's Ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Aligns with 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 	
<p>Estimated Costs</p> <p>Total project cost will be between £3.3m - £4.75m. £660,000 construction risk. £790,000 professional fees.</p>	
<p>Potential Funding Mechanisms</p> <p>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</p>	
<p>Next Steps</p> <p>Undertake full feasibility study; develop full business case; produce detailed scheme plans; secure planning; secure funding; secure access; implement partial schemes; implement full scheme</p>	
<p>Indicative Timescales</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Short-term (0-1 Years): Full feasibility study and route planning ③ Long-term (5-8 Years): Full scheme linking Swaffham to Watton with associated infrastructure ③ Medium-term (1-4 Years): Partial scheme linking Swaffham centre to quiet lanes and bridleways 	
<p>Potential Outputs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ③ Over 15km of new dedicated walking and cycling infrastructure; at least 300,000 trips per year 	

5. Connected Swaffham: Re-Connecting Watton and Swaffham...continued

Potential Impacts

- ③ Increased footfall and spend in Swaffham and Watton town centres
 - 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 – this means local businesses in Watton and Swaffham could receive an additional £1.8-£2.7m per year if 300,000 trips are made annually²⁴
 - 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 occupancy²⁵
- ③ Improved health and wellbeing of residents which has implications for employers and productivity
 - 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
- ③ Improved perceptions of Swaffham for inward investment
 - 74% of Business Improve Districts in London report that walking and cycling are important for attracting and retaining businesses and employees

Project Examples

- ③ **Bristol and Bath Railway Path:** A 13-mile traffic-free flat cycling route between Bath and Bristol managed by Sustrans. The route includes a variety of sculptures, steam engines, pubs and shops making it popular with tourists as well as commuters. Around 2.5 million trips are made on the route every year, which equates to around 7,000 trips per day.
- ③ **Camel Trail Cornwall:** An 18-mile surfaced cycle route between Wenfordbridge, Bodmin, Wadebridge and Padstow. Following a disused railway line once used by the London and South West Railway, the trail follows the Camel Estuary before joining the Camel Valley to Bodmin. It is estimated that around 400,000 people use the route each year generating c£3m of expenditure in local businesses.²⁶

Bristol and Bath Railway Path



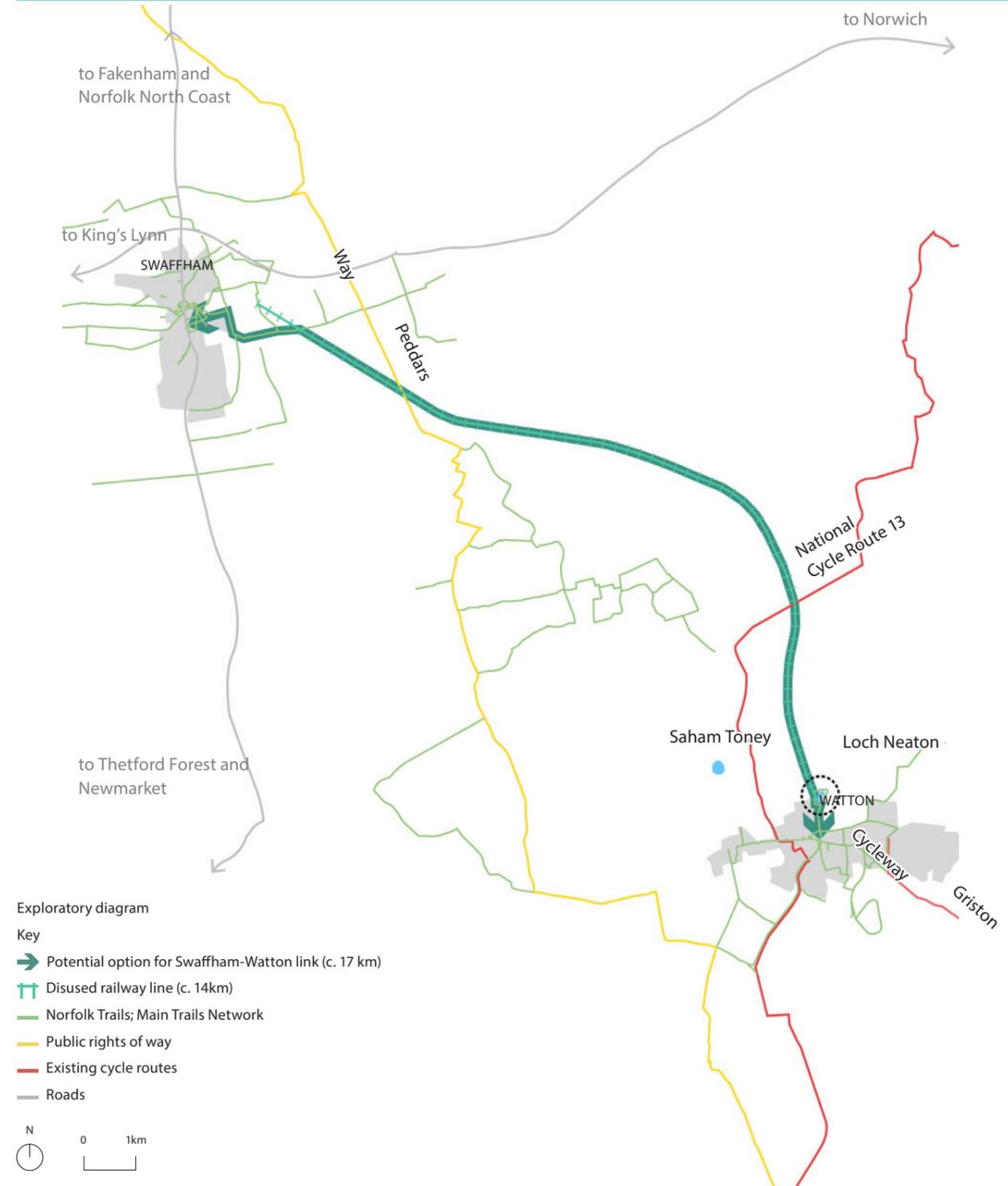
Source: Visit Bristol

Camel Trail Cornwall



Source: Visit Cornwall

Figure 21 Connected Swaffham: Re-Connecting Watton and Swaffham (exploratory diagram)



24. This is a conservative estimate based on ridership on other major walking and cycling routes in Norfolk

25. Visit England (2016)

26. North Cornwall District Council

Long-Term Potential Additions

There were several important proposals on the intervention long list that could make a significant impact to Swaffham 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.

Town Centre Relief Road or Bypass

The A1065, which goes through Swaffham Town Centre, has experienced long-term growth in traffic volumes and this is expected to continue given the scale of housing developments coming forward in our town. Analysis from Norfolk County Council also shows that 45% of vehicles that pass through the town centre are travelling to other places to the north and south of the town. This creates high levels of traffic and congestion in our town centre particularly at peak times.

One option that could help alleviate these pressures is to build a bypass for through traffic. This would improve journey times for drivers while also reducing traffic in our town and surrounding villages. Analysis from Norfolk County Council indicates that any bypass should be to the west of the town to serve north and south traffic, but also the significant number of trips made west towards King's Lynn. Public sector partners will continue to explore the feasibility of this by undertaking options appraisals and traffic modelling as a first step.

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

Support Required: Options assessment, impact assessments, traffic modelling, feasibility studies, advocacy

1

Public Toilet Block Re-Development

Our Town Council own the building just off Market Street that is currently home to our public toilets and 'Sue's News'. The building is in a prominent location between the Shambles and bus stops and has a footprint of around 95 sqm. Its current configuration and appearance do not, however, complement the heritage of our town centre and it shuts off the historically significant shambles. It also does not use the site efficiently as it is only one storey and much of it is unutilised following a reconfiguration of the toilets. There is a clear opportunity to re-develop it to provide a better building with more active space and to improve connectivity and permeability to the Shambles. The new space could also be used to provide employment and community space to meet local needs and diversify our town centre offer. Public sector partners will work together to explore options for the site and determine the optimum uses and design over the next two years. The Town Council will be able to bring forward the preferred scheme as the landowner and landlord if sufficient finance can be raised.

Delivery Lead(s): Swaffham Town Council

Support Required: Options analysis, detailed design, planning study

2

Former Hamonds High School Development

The former Hamonds High School is an important and prominent heritage asset in our town centre. The buildings are listed and have been empty since the closure of an antiques centre in 2013. The site is in a state of disrepair and is damaging the vitality of our town centre. The buildings have been acquired by a property investment company and a planning application has been submitted for 19 new homes, incorporating a mixture of conversions and new build accommodation. A decision has not yet been made on the application but given the prominence of the site and importance of the buildings a long-term scheme that is sensitive to the site's conservation status and our town's heritage is needed to support the vibrancy of the centre. Public sector partners will work collaboratively with A.R. and V. Investments to help bring forward the optimum scheme for the site.

Delivery Lead(s): A.R. and V. Investments

Support Required: Planning decision and guidance

3

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.

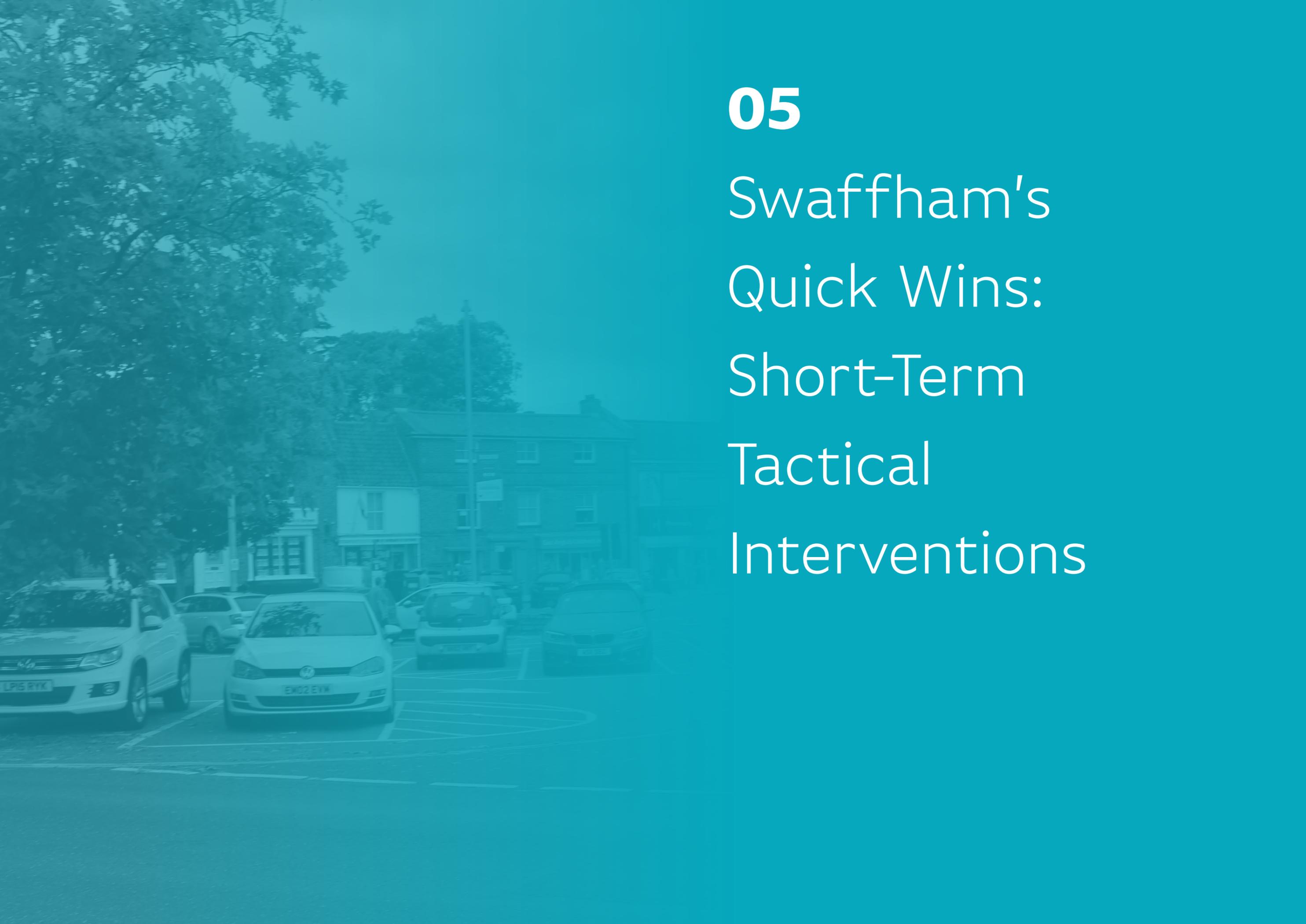
All costs have been calculated to Q2 2022. This was done to make it easier to understand and because we cannot be sure when the works will commence due to uncertainties around funding. At this early stage in project development a range of costs have been given for each project to allow for significant risk and contingency values to be added to construction estimates and professional fees.

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		
<p>£14m-£21m</p> <p>1. Timeless Swaffham: Enhancing our Town Centre</p>	<p>£3m-£4.3m</p> <p>2. Vibrant Swaffham: Reinvigorating our Market Place</p>	<p>£7.4m</p> <p>3. Healthy Swaffham: Building a New Leisure Centre</p>
<p>£680k-£980k</p> <p>4. Cultured Swaffham: Providing a New Culture and Arts Hub</p>	<p>£3.3m-£4.75m</p> <p>5. Connected Swaffham: Re-connecting Swaffham and Watton</p>	

While Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council, Swaffham 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 Swaffham. The overarching Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places Prospectus goes into more detail on this and sets out an approach to securing funding for Swaffham and the district more broadly.



05

Swaffham's
Quick Wins:
Short-Term
Tactical
Interventions

Swaffham'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 county councillors and the Town Council. Swaffham has also recently secured capital funding from Historic England as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone Programme.

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:

- ③ Some of the small-scale projects that are being delivered via the High Street Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) have been captured within the table.

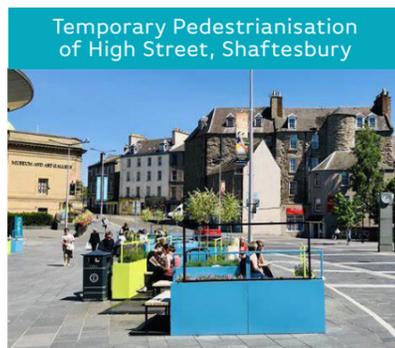
- ③ Some of the small-scale public realm interventions that will support the Timeless Swaffham and Vibrant Swaffham aspirations have also been captured.

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.



Source: Rea Designs



Source: Shaftesbury Town Council



Source: Place in Print



Source: Folkestone Artworks



Source: Bikehanger and Brighton University



Source: Speak EV

Table 2 Tactical Short-Term Investments

Investment Area	Potential Interventions	Timescales
Wayfinding Improvements	Install new brown signs at entry points to the town communicating the local visitor offer to people passing through	0-1 Years
	Introduce more prominent signage to encourage passing trade to use the Theatre Street Car Park	0-1 Years
	Provide better maps and signage to help visitors navigate through the town and locate all places of interest (HAZ project)	1-2 Years
Green Enhancements	Increase tree coverage and planting across the town (will support the Timeless Swaffham aspirations)	1-2 Years
	Introduce parklets to the town centre (will support the Timeless Swaffham and Vibrant Swaffham aspirations)	1-2 Years
	Create a green gateway between St Peter and St Paul Church and the centre (will support the Timeless Swaffham aspirations)	1-3 Years
	Provide more electric vehicle charging points in the centre	1-3 Years
	Explore opportunities to extend Campingland	1-5 Years
Placemaking Interventions	Trial a new 'Stop Off in Swaffham' campaign and monitor effectiveness	0-1 Years
	Work with local artists to produce lamppost banners that celebrate the town and communicate its main attractions to visitors and people passing through (needs to respond to the Vibrant Swaffham branding exercise)	0-1 Years
	Work with local creatives to produce public art installations across the town (will need to align with the Vibrant Swaffham programme)	1-3 Years
	Improve, restore and repair historic buildings and shop fronts in the town centre (HAZ project)	1-2 Years
	Invest in short-term visual improvements to Plowright Place, particularly to help make its entrance more prominent and appealing	0-2 Years
	Trial pop up market events and new concepts such as a Friday/Saturday evening market	0-1 Years
	Trial partial pedestrianisation schemes to assess the impact of traffic flow and business performance (will support Timeless Swaffham and Vibrant Swaffham aspirations)	0-1 Years
Health and Active Travel Improvements	Introduce more formal crossings for pedestrians in the town centre (HAZ project)	2-3 Years
	Provide more secure bicycle parking options for residents and workers	2-3 Years
	Trial practical options to reduce traffic dominance such as car free days	0-1 years
	Explore feasibility of re-opening the former Sacred Heart Independent Catholic School's Swimming Pool for community use	1-3 Years

A photograph of a narrow alleyway between brick buildings, overlaid with a teal color. The alleyway leads to a street with parked cars and a building with a chimney in the background. A trash bin is visible on the left side of the alleyway.

06

Delivering the Plan

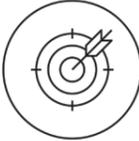
Delivering the Plan

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 to level up the town. It provides a clear roadmap that we can support and progress at pace.

It does, however, come at a challenging time. The public sector has fewer resources than ever before, with several economic pressures 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		
<p>Collaboration and Partnership: Making the most of opportunities to work collaboratively to share resources and accelerate, shape and refine delivery.</p> 	<p>Positivity and Problem Solving: Approaching delivery positively and having a 'can do attitude' to solving problems and overcoming barriers.</p> 	<p>Commitment and Focus: A shared long-term commitment to responding to the challenges and opportunities identified and driving forward delivery.</p> 
<p>Town and District: Striving to address district-wide issues while also addressing town-specific challenges and opportunities.</p> 	<p>Innovation and Creativity: Experimenting with innovative project ideas and exploring new approaches to leverage funding.</p> 	<p>Agility and Pace: Working rapidly together to deliver change and continuously reviewing projects to ensure they respond to changing needs.</p> 

Timescales for Delivery

A mix of short-, medium- and long-term interventions have been set out in this document. This has been managed 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, although it is important to note that these timescales will vary due to the nature of funding opportunities.

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 may involve developing Full Business Cases and undertaking additional work where required, depending on the type and funding opportunities.

Table 3 Indicative Timescales

	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031
Tactical Interventions										
Timeless Swaffham: Enhancing our Town Centre										
Vibrant Swaffham: Reinvigorating our Market Place										
Healthy Swaffham: Building a New Leisure Centre										
Cultured Swaffham: Providing a New Culture and Arts Hub										
Connected Swaffham: Re-connecting Swaffham and Watton			Partial				Full			

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 partner, successful delivery will require the support of a wide range of local organisations.

A new Future Breckland Board will help oversee the overarching 'Future Breckland: Thriving People and Places programme'. The board will help bring together key views and perspectives from core partners and stakeholders from across the private, public, charity and voluntary sectors to enable effective and informed decision making and resource planning at a district level.

Unique partnership and local approaches will now be established as required within each of Breckland's five Market Towns, based on the feedback and experience of developing this plan, alongside existing local structures and areas of interest. The aspiration is that these groups will be to help coordinate, realise and, as necessary, prioritise local activity.



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