

# **Herefordshire Economic Master Plan update**

## **General Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Sept 2016**

# Plan Rationale

- The Master Plan will:
  - Identify the required conditions to enhance our economic growth.
  - Facilitate movement towards a higher value economy.
  - Create better coordination as a county in our discussions with government and the LEP.
- Seven themes – broad building blocks for investment
  - A Great Place for/to:
    - Business
    - Learn
    - Live
    - Visit
  - Great Market Towns
  - A Great Environment
  - A Great Place to Get Around

## 6. Key themes

### A Great Place for Business

The aim is to transform Herefordshire into a high value, knowledge economy, with a modern and diverse commercial property stock and to be at the forefront of innovation and the development of new sustainable industries.

Major new and upgraded employment sites at Rotherwas, Moreton, Three Elms and in the key market towns will help drive the future economy of the centre. The city in particular has enjoyed strong commercial development over the last 2 to 3 years principally as a result of the Enterprise zone status awarded to Rotherwas.

Hereford is identified in the Core Strategy as being the principal location for new employment growth but this is supplemented by other allocations at Leominster, Ledbury and Ross on Wye offices and needs to plan for major growth. The county has had notable recent successes with both Cargill and Heineken making recent multimillion pound investments further cementing their commitment to Herefordshire, the sale of x ha of land at the Enterprise Zone demonstrates that given the availability of well-located opportunities then investment will follow.

Alongside a continued push for inward investment there is likely to be continued growth in local companies, some of which will look to upgrade their current space and expand and it is important their demands for modern accessible office space are met.



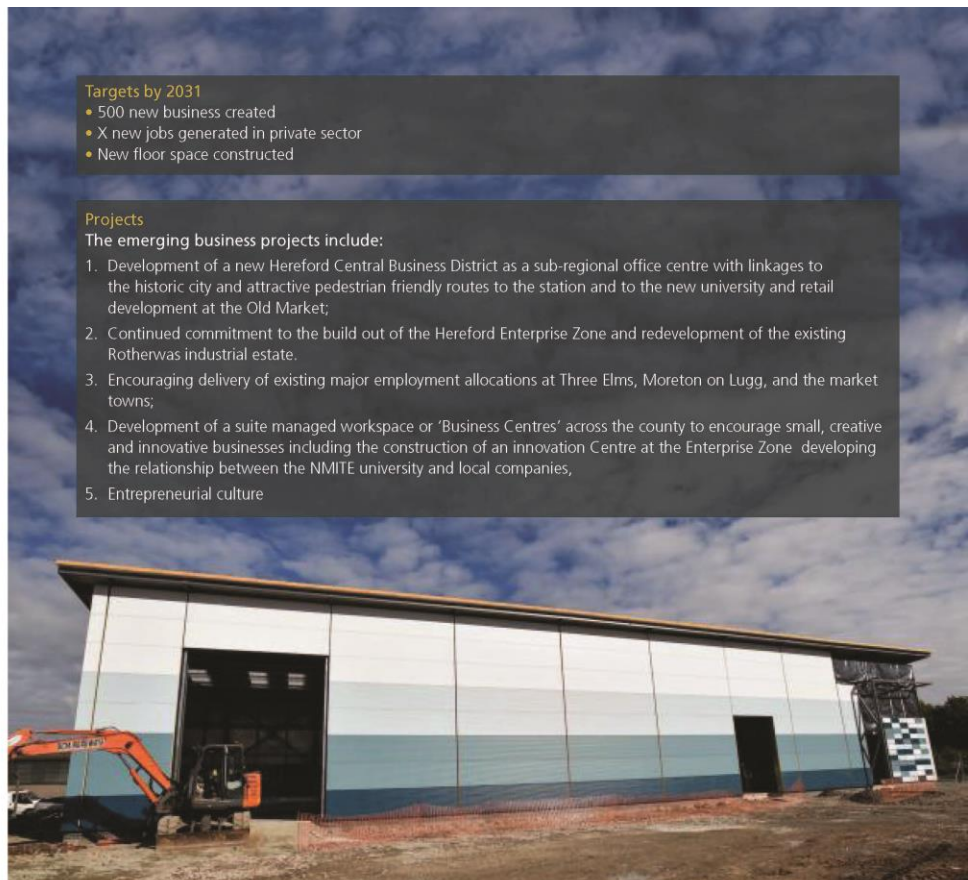
#### Targets by 2031

- 500 new business created
- X new jobs generated in private sector
- New floor space constructed

#### Projects

The emerging business projects include:

1. Development of a new Hereford Central Business District as a sub-regional office centre with linkages to the historic city and attractive pedestrian friendly routes to the station and to the new university and retail development at the Old Market;
2. Continued commitment to the build out of the Hereford Enterprise Zone and redevelopment of the existing Rotherwas industrial estate.
3. Encouraging delivery of existing major employment allocations at Three Elms, Moreton on Lugg, and the market towns;
4. Development of a suite managed workspace or 'Business Centres' across the county to encourage small, creative and innovative businesses including the construction of an innovation Centre at the Enterprise Zone developing the relationship between the NMIITE university and local companies,
5. Entrepreneurial culture



## A Great Place to Visit

The aim is to unlock the potential of the county as a unique, special place to visit at a regional and national level, offering a unique blend of heritage, architecture, countryside walks, rural communities to explore, modern leisure attractions, shopping, new and inspiring cultural and arts developments.

Herefordshire is a definitively rural county. Without the large scale visitor numbers drawn to better known locations such as the Lakes, Peak District, or South West, the county still has a host of attractions and events to tempt visitors. The offer is one that is rooted in both being local and distinctive, there is a preponderance of niche festivals, quirky accommodation, and fantastic food and drink.

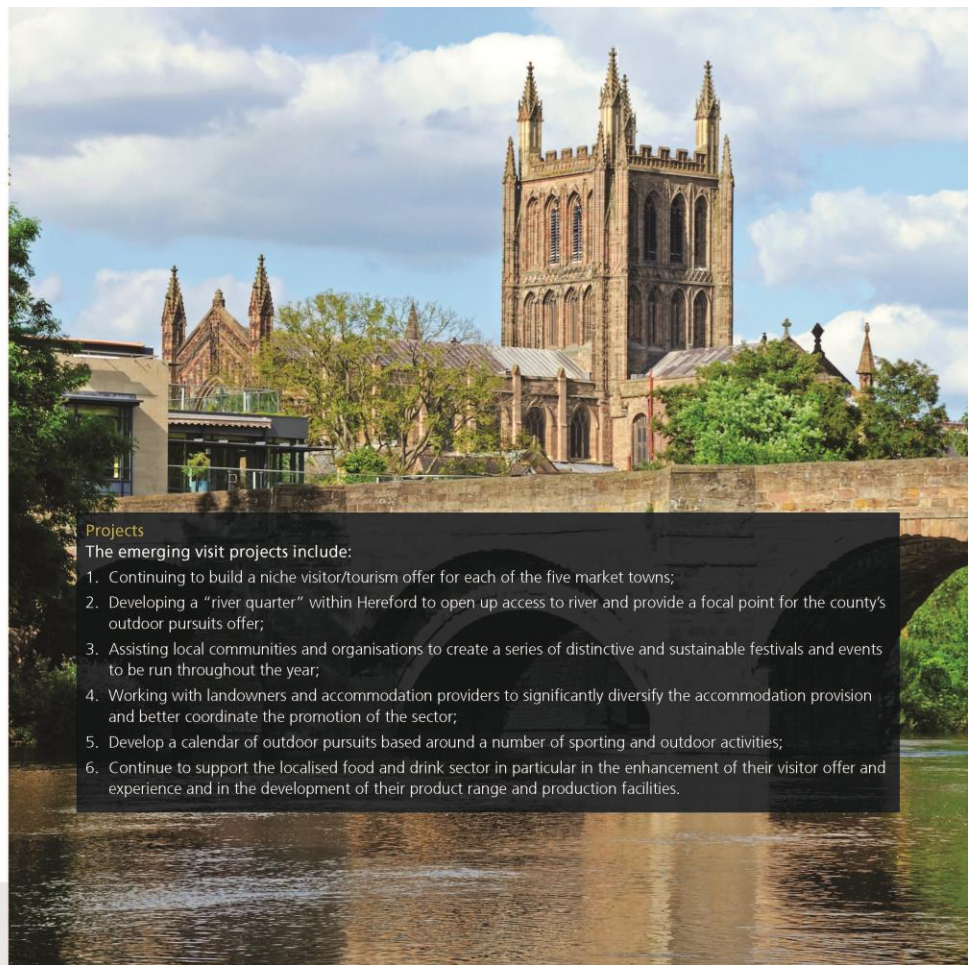
Potential exists to utilise the natural offer to enhance the visitor experience with specific emphasis being placed on the outdoor pursuits market. This will focus on only on the year round offer gained from walking, cycling and water sports but also on developing a series of regular events such as long distance assault courses, orienteering, open water swimming and mountain biking.

The traditional accommodation offered throughout the county will be supplemented through the provision of a new, quality, hotel offering high end accommodation and the potential for business conferencing. At the other end of the size scale encouragement will be given to the provision of a wide range of small scale and unique accommodation experiences whether yurts, Hobbit Holes, bivouacs, or high end camping.

To ensure a diverse and unique visitor experience this accommodation will be offered alongside market towns each with a specific specialisation – antiques in Leominster, walking in Kington, Poetry in Ledbury for example – and a range of small scale, distinctive events and festivals celebrating the best that the county has to offer.

As is expected Hereford has the most diverse visitor offer and acts as a compelling base from which to explore the rest of the county, in addition to traditional features such as the Cathedral, Courtyard Theatre and Cider Museum it has a modern offer through a multi-screen cinema, vast range of restaurants and bars, and other leisure activities.

The city could benefit from more diversity to its offer and there is opportunity to consider developing the role the river plays



### Projects

#### The emerging visit projects include:

1. Continuing to build a niche visitor/tourism offer for each of the five market towns;
2. Developing a “river quarter” within Hereford to open up access to river and provide a focal point for the county’s outdoor pursuits offer;
3. Assisting local communities and organisations to create a series of distinctive and sustainable festivals and events to be run throughout the year;
4. Working with landowners and accommodation providers to significantly diversify the accommodation provision and better coordinate the promotion of the sector;
5. Develop a calendar of outdoor pursuits based around a number of sporting and outdoor activities;
6. Continue to support the localised food and drink sector in particular in the enhancement of their visitor offer and experience and in the development of their product range and production facilities.

# Very Important Projects

- Initial set of 25 plus VIPs – currently....
- Infrastructure Investments
  - Sets out HC commitment to the Plan.
- Investment opportunities
  - Hereford
  - Herefordshire and Market Towns
    - Suite of projects
    - Specific projects
- Developing a distinctive identity



# NMITE

## Overview

NMITE is scheduled to be a new independent, not-for-profit, world-class teaching university, based in Hereford that will address the skills shortage for graduate engineers in Marches and British businesses in advanced manufacturing, agri-engineering, data, defence, resources security and sustainable/smart living technology sectors.

The curriculum will be targeted at the needs of engineering and technology employers to produce employment-ready, productive, industry relevant, innovative, economically and financially literate graduates who will be able communicators and project managers.

With a new approach to learning – based on real-world problem solving and the blending of high quality engineering and design with communication and employability skills targeted at the growth sectors of the future, the NMITE project is projecting a student population of 5,000 by 2031.

NMITE are committed to the construction of a state of the art 21st century teaching and innovation campus in the centre of Hereford, developed on the latest 'agile' principles involving the construction/or refurbishment of teaching and administrative facilities. Linked to the city centre facilities will be laboratories and workshops and the NMITE Application & Development centre on the Enterprise Zone.

The first phase of the project will see over 1000 students taking courses by 2021, rising to 5,000 by 2031. The current rental market within Hereford is not geared to meet this level of demand so students will predominately be housed within dedicated accommodation in various units across the city.

Crucial to our future plans is the planned creation of a new engineering university for the UK, based in Hereford - the New Model in Technology & Engineering (NMITE). This exciting project to create a new, independent, not-for-profit world class teaching university will have a game-changing impact on the city, county and UK plc.

Delivery of the NMITE model will help to address the UK's skills shortage in engineering, which threatens to cripple our national capacity for growth and frustrate our ability to compete in the global economy. The establishment of NMITE as a University in Hereford will provide a counter to the net exodus of our brightest and best students and serve to attract others from across the country. Inevitability this influx of students will result in spin off companies settling locally with benefits to the local employment and R&D markets. The project has made rapid progress over the course of 18 months with the private sector promoters building a management team, developing a curriculum and sourcing academic institutional partners and business contributions. To establish itself, NMITE is seeking £18M of government and European funding, with the Council willing to invest in, and take shared risk, on the provision of student accommodation.

## Quick Facts

Sponsor	Herefordshire Tertiary Education Trust
Scale	£80m
Type	Education and Student Accommodation
Location	Hereford City Centre
Investment Type	Equity investor, developer and development funder
Programme	2018-2025

## Opportunity

Current accommodation plans envisage three sites each of 350 units all located within easy walking distance of the University's academic buildings, the residences will provide a superb environment for living and studying with generous en-suite bedrooms, including hard wired and Wi-Fi internet access.

NMITE are looking for private sector partners who can match their expectations for accommodation of a very high quality design providing all the modern facilities expected by the students of tomorrow.

As a city centre based University there will be significant opportunity for the student population to be integrated with the local population and in particular to use the service, culture and leisure facilities available within Hereford. There will be opportunities to provide a range of services, which aren't currently available (or only available to a limited extent), aimed directly or partially at the student market.

With the expectation that redundant shops will be turned into seminar spaces and old offices with the right floor plans converted into studio/worklabs for 20-30 students – no lecture halls, no mass classroom settings – there will be significant investment opportunities for private sector partners.

# Hereford River Quarter

## Overview

Hereford is built on the banks of one of the UK's great rivers, the Wye has always had a reputation for great fishing and is increasingly becoming known as the premier destination for canoeing and other water related activity. The natural advantage provided by the Wye is not currently capitalised upon, with access to the river restricted as it enters the city centre, for many visitors the location and opportunities provided by the river remain an unknown attraction.

This project will redevelop the 300 m stretch of riverbank, and beyond, between the Great Western Way and A49. Hereford Rugby Club will be relocated to a site where they can develop their playing and spectator facilities. Hereford Rowing Club will be given the opportunity to redevelop their boathouse and riverside access facilities.

The focus of the site will be on outdoor events, riverside and water based leisure activities, and a small scale food, drink and retail offer, accompanying a residential presence. Enhanced access will be provided to the riverside via Greyfriars Ave for vehicles, and for cyclists and pedestrians via connections directly onto the Great Western Way.

Leisure activities will be aimed at developing the site for two primary purposes, firstly as a focal point for water based activities, including canoeing and kayaking, open water swimming, and rowing, and secondly as a city centre based outdoor events space that is adaptable for a range of cultural events such as festivals, theatre performances, or music events.

As the project develops, improvements to the linkages to the city centre will be made with enhancements to pedestrian crossing points of the A49 made at the Barton Road junction. Pedestrian and cycle linkages will be incorporated within the site to create looped trails travelling across the river, along the southern bank to the Bishop Meadows and back via the cathedral and city centre, thereby ensuring the project site can be successfully incorporated within the wider city.

In time the project will become one of a number of natural hubs within the city aimed at pulling in tourists and visitors to sites cross the city, linked with the retail and cultural experiences available at the Old Market and city core, the river quarter will

## Opportunity

There is scope for a comprehensive redevelopment of this x acre riverside site adjacent to Hereford city centre. The project will require a range of innovative and flexible uses to maximise the developable area and mitigate the impacts of river flooding, support from a range of government initiatives will be sought to assist in the development of these mitigating measures.

The riverbank within this project will be served directly by a number of new build restaurants and cafés, supported by small scale retail opportunities aimed at leisure niche and/or localised producers.

Behind the riverfront development will be residential properties, the potential to use innovative flood defence methods will be explored to maximise the developable area. Part of the existing playing fields will be converted into a semi-permanent festival facility with grass banked amphitheatre, camping washroom facilities, and electrical points to facilitate city centre camping.

## Quick Facts

Sponsor	Herefordshire Council
Scale	£15m
Type	Mixed use riverside regeneration
Location	Hereford City Centre
Investment Type	Equity co-investment and development finance
Programme	2019-2022

# Future project development

- Master Plan is a living document that will evolve over time.
- Aim is to build a pipeline of projects
- Communities should have an opportunity to submit project ideas
- Projects should be in conformity with the core strategy
- What would the process be for incorporating new projects
  - Annual review.
  - Link to monitoring.
- Including project ideas that aren't VIP's



# Governance Approval Process

- Process and timeline

Cabinet Member / Officer Briefings	1 <sup>st</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> September
General Overview and Scrutiny Committee	27th September
Group Leaders Briefing	4 <sup>th</sup> October
All members briefing	TBC
Cabinet	1 <sup>st</sup> December
Full Council	16 <sup>th</sup> December

# GOSC Feedback

To inform the development of the plan document we are requesting GOSC views on the following:

- a. The general ambition and objectives of the plan.
- b. The scope and scale of the various projects.
- c. The mix of projects in terms of location, sector, theme, contribution to the Herefordshire economy.
- d. The intended future project development route and opportunities for future projects to be included in the plan.

**Questions?**