King's Lynn’s riverside location should be promoted.

Sites close to the town centre suitable for new small scale employment.

Historic core to be promoted as a location for businesses.

Council Offices to remain in the town centre.

Area along Railway Road and Blackfriars Road ideal for start up businesses.

Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension to be promoted.
Employment economy

It is important that adequate land – both quality and quantity – is supplied to provide employment opportunities for the people of King’s Lynn and the sub-region. As befits a sub-regional city, the employment market needs to be flexible. Larger operators will need to be near good road links and favour short-term lets. The market for industrial properties seems to be cyclical in demand and supply. There are current vacancies in larger units on the big estates, around 5,000 square feet. Other major estates in King’s Lynn are nearing capacity, but the comparatively small total industrial floor space levels mean that a large site coming onto the market can produce anomalous results. The economy needs to be diversified and developed towards more office-based jobs and small businesses.

The Norfolk Employment Growth Study (Roger Tym & Partners for Norfolk Local Government Associations EEDA and EERA, June 2005) notes that the employment constituent of Nar Ouse Regeneration Area (NORA) should be sufficient to meet sub-regional demand for high-quality, office-based development in the sub-region in the short and medium term. The Study also supports the development of the Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension, which will provide for the growth of industrial activity. This extension supports the development of the Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension. The employment component of the Nar Ouse Regeneration Area (NORA) should also support the development of the Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension. The economy needs to be diversified and developed towards more office-based employment. This along with A. features as one of the key actions on page 19.

A Develop the Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension and intensify land use in the existing estate to accommodate the growth of local business and to attract inward investment, allowing a natural reduction in Austin Fields and other areas on approaches to the town where there are vacancies/voids. This along with D. features as one of the key actions on page 19.

B Provide opportunities for newer premises in other locations for low value employment uses in sites also suited to housing-led mixed-use development.

C Identify a range of employment sites to respond to medium and short-term needs, ensuring that employment opportunities are also as close to housing-led developments as possible. The framework for industrial properties needs to be flexible, allowing for change and development to accommodate the growth of local business.

D Encourage business activity in historic core. The historic core is a strong response to the growing demand for employment, both in terms of the town centre and in the historic area. The economy needs to be diversified and developed towards more office-based employment. This along with A. features as one of the key actions on page 19.

Location

Consider the following points:

- The location of employment sites in relation to housing-led developments;
- The range of employment sites in relation to existing and new development;
- The accessibility of employment sites to existing and new development.

It is important that the employment sites are of high quality and located in the town centre to stimulate demand for shops and cafes, supporting a more mixed use of land. This will bring other benefits to the town centre, as a greater range of shops and cafes will bring workers to the town centre and encourage a greater range of business functions within the town.

B. Provide opportunities for newer premises in other locations for low value employment uses in sites also suited to housing-led mixed-use development.

C. Identify a range of employment sites to respond to medium and short-term needs, ensuring that employment opportunities are also as close to housing-led developments as possible. The framework for industrial properties needs to be flexible, allowing for change and development to accommodate the growth of local business.

D. Encourage business activity in historic core. This will go some way to returning the life to the quieter parts of the town and will bring a variety of land uses to the town, supporting a wider range of businesses. If its under used, high quality historic environment is one of the town’s greatest opportunities, locating business in the historic core is a strong response.

The Norfolk Employment Growth Study (Roger Tym & Partners for Norfolk Local Government Associations EEDA and EERA, June 2005) notes that the employment constituent of Nar Ouse Regeneration Area (NORA) should be sufficient to meet sub-regional demand for high-quality, office-based development in the sub-region in the short and medium term. The Study also supports the development of the Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension, which will provide for the growth of industrial activity. This along with A. features as one of the key actions on page 19;
Empty properties in the historic core could be converted to business premises

E. Develop employment uses, along with other uses, on key development sites – particularly the timber yard and around Boal Quay. The existing fishing fleets and boat repair facilities should be safeguarded.

F. Retain the presence of the council offices in the town centre. As a major employer, the council brings spending power and life to the town centre. In addition, the presence is good for accountability and keeping a grip on the current issues in the town.

Range

The Urban Development Strategy has an important role in providing a wider range of premises with a variety of floor space for local and incoming business. Ranging from small workshops to large production and processing facilities, a lack of premises to expand (or even contract) into should never be a reason for a business to leave or decide not to locate in King’s Lynn.

G. Encourage the provision of space for small start-up businesses and a range of business space to accommodate growth perhaps along Railway Road and Blackfriars Road to increase activity;

H. Provide for larger employers at Hardwick and NORA.

Quality of place

King’s Lynn cannot compete with many places in terms of access – the town is quite remote from the motorway system, for example. It cannot compete with Eastern Europe or China for availability of land or cheap labour. But it can compete on quality of place, and there is a clear link between the quality of the built and natural environment and economic development. This is why ‘sunbelt’ locations are experiencing the highest rates of growth throughout the developed world. King’s Lynn must make the most of the sometimes hidden quality of the town and the surrounding countryside, promoting itself as a good place to do business. It must make the most of its waterfront assets, helped by a marina. In addition, if it succeeds in diversifying the income levels of residents in the town – again based on quality of place – it will create a supply of people more likely to establish and grow businesses.

I. Create activity on the waterfront; (See rest of Urban Development Strategy)

J. Improve marketing and development of cultural facilities

Sectors

The population of King’s Lynn is going to grow, but what are the new residents going to do for a living? This needs to be fully understood, and provided for, as the plans evolve. Initially at least, commuting out of the town may well increase, but new jobs will be needed in King’s Lynn itself. Many of these will be in town centre/sub-regional services as the local economy grows. Likewise, the tourism and leisure sector has the potential to grow (but needs to be pushed), as does Higher Education, particularly if links to the universities of the East of England and East Midlands regions can be strengthened. The engineering and food processing sectors that the sub-region specialises in will continue to have an important role, which would be supported by the Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension. The economic future of the town needs to be fully understood, and planners need to do what they can to facilitate sustainable growth in response.

K. Produce sectorial employment projections and plan for them;

L. Encourage strong links with regional universities. In addition to the current course to be run from King’s Lynn, the town has much to offer in terms of competitively priced teaching space.
Supporting economic development

There is a range of non-spatial measures that will support growth. These relate to things like skills, ways into work, encouraging enterprise. Using existing organisations and structures, these should be developed to supplement the Urban Development Strategy.

Links with regional universities may bring opportunities for contemporary educational use buildings
Layer 6 - Retail economy

- Focal point to encourage pedestrian movement through the market.
- Areas of retail concentration to be retained and strengthened.
- Retail activity to be extended in one select area only (Purfleet St).
- North-South route to be strengthened.
- Town centre “anchor points” to be strengthened.
- Key node of retail activity to be strengthened.
- Shop front improvements in key locations.
- Retail development to the east to be discouraged, apart from those serving local needs.
Retail economy

King’s Lynn currently has a relatively stable retail centre but fails to provide for the region as well as it should. The surrounding towns often have a larger pull and attract from greater distances than they would if King’s Lynn had more on offer. Even residents of King’s Lynn will often prefer to travel from the town to places such as Peterborough, Ely and even Swaffham for more choice and better quality. The following measures will bolster the town’s retail provision:

A. **Strengthen North-South retail axis** and northern and southern ‘anchor’ points formerly based around markets in Tuesday and Saturday Market Places. This can be done by:
   - Allowing markets to grow by reorganising parking
   - Encourage activity beyond Tuesday Market Place (residential and possibly art based studios or live/work units) to the north thereby encouraging movement through square and along High Street.

Creation of an attraction and destination to the north of Tuesday Market Place will increase footfall through this key part of the historic town centre. This along with B. features as one of the key actions on page 19.

B. **Strengthen the markets by inviting greater choice and a higher quality of produce.** Effort is needed to attract a higher quality of produce in the market. Increasing the frequency of the Farmers’ Market to a weekly market will help cement the fixture in the minds of the resident. The market has declined in recent years (only ten years ago the market filled Tuesday Market Place). The reorganisation of parking in Tuesday Market Place will help the market to spread. The construction of the Vancouver Centre provides a good opportunity to strengthen the town centre with a variety of quality shopping units, cafes and attractions, which will draw in visitors and local residents. Its relative proximity to both the train station and the bus station makes it ideal for regular visits, and can provide an added cohesiveness to this part of the town. A variety of higher quality produce and regularising the currently bi-annual French market amongst other efforts will make the markets far more attractive. This along with B. features as one of the key actions on page 19.

C. **Vary town centre provision.** There is currently a need for a wider variety of uses such as cafes and food outlets. The retail landscape should be widened to encouraged mixed use into the centre through variations in rents or where interventions of this sort are not possible, by earmarking suitable units for A3/4/5 use.
D. Maintain or raise the standard of retail frontages in the town centre. If there is a need for shop front improvements and there is a lack of leverage to ensure this is done, it may be that a policy is required to administer this.

E. Improve parking. To coincide with an increased retail appeal, car parking provision will also improve with a rationalised parking strategy and by the introduction in due course of a Park and Ride system.

F. Explore with retailers the town centre improvements that they consider would assist in increasing attractiveness of town and improving their retail turnover. The services of the town centre manager should be used for this purpose and a retail forum should be set up. This would involve not only the shop managers but also investors with retail holdings in the town who may have greater experience from other locations as to successful asset management strategies which could be imitated to increase footfall in King’s Lynn. Strategies may vary from improvements to the physical shopping environment, to initiatives such as organising joint product promotions or family entertainment days. A town centre management plan to deliver these strategies should be drawn up. Alongside the forum and strategy, creating a fund for collecting and administering retailer contributions for town centre improvements, such as for planting, lighting, signposting etc. would provide funds for implementing strategies identified.

G. Retain main concentration of retail in town centre within the High Street, St. James’ Street, Tower Street and Norfolk Street. Other additional retail must not dilute this core but may provide retail ‘quarters’ providing specialised sectors. Retail frontage can be allowed to spread to Purfleet Street.