

King's Lynn Town Centre Action Plan

A framework and actions for a successful Town Centre

June 2014

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



Foreword

Successful, vibrant, attractive town centres are a key factor in creating a “sense of place” amongst local communities and a pride in their “home town”. However, traditional retail sectors) face a number of very significant challenges. This is particularly the case for medium sized town centres such as King’s Lynn. The threats to the economic vitality and viability of town centres like King’s Lynn include:

- Rapid and ongoing increase in market share of on-line retailing.
- Out of town centre retail parks such as those found on the Hardwick Road.
- Competing (larger) destination retail attractions such as Cambridge, Norwich and Peterborough.
- Major out of town centre supermarkets offering a “town centre in one store”.

There is a growing consensus amongst retail analysts that to thrive in the future town centres must change and adapt. Nevertheless, town centres and indeed retail as a sector have always been dynamic and ever changing and King’s Lynn itself has seen many changes over the years.

The Borough Council is committed to playing its part in helping to develop the undoubted potential that is evident in King’s Lynn to successfully adapt by raising the quality and significantly broadening of the overall town centre ‘visitor offer’ (the mix of retail, culture, arts, leisure, public space and amenity) by maximising the potential of the town’s retail, heritage and waterfront assets is crucial to retaining and enhancing the competitive edge of King’s Lynn as a sub regional centre.

In response to this the Council has developed a Town Centre Action Plan which sets out how the economic potential of the catchment population of 200,000 people and the wider visitor markets can be realised in terms of spend and how additional activity and investment can be secured.

The Town Centre Plan draws together the priorities and plans set out in other policy documents, the Council’s capital programme and activity of other partner organisations to one place so as to create a holistic approach to attracting more people to the town centre by facilitate amenity improvement, attracting investment in a wider range of retail, culture and leisure based economic activity, encouraging housing development, and creating quality public spaces. It will also contribute to attracting wider economic investment based on the quality of place and the range of amenities and the wider King’s Lynn “offer” to residents, visitors and business.

This is not a new strategy. The Local Development Framework Core Strategy, in conjunction with the Sustainable Community Strategy and the evidence base of the Urban Development Strategy, sets out the Council’s vision and objectives for King’s Lynn Town Centre.

A. The Town Centre Plan

In developing the actions and priorities for the plan we engaged with key stakeholders to understand their views on and priorities for the future of the town centre and establish where there are opportunities to work in partnership.

In summary, there was a consensus view that in order to respond to the future threats facing the town centre, the town should focus on;

- Utilising the heritage assets to broaden the overall Town Centre offer
- Enhancing the quality of the public realm and increasing activities and places for people to 'socialise.'
- Developing the markets to broaden the products and offer.

The plan covers the period 2014 to 2017

1. Themes of the Town Centre Action Plan

The Town Centre Action Plan has been summarised into 6 themes contained in the Urban Development Strategy;

1. **High Quality Public Realm & Spaces:** *Creating variety and enhancing the quality and distinctiveness of public realm to improve the perception of the town.*
2. **Maximise Historic assets:** *Utilising the town's historic assets to improve the town's regional position in the tourism market.*
3. **Diversify the town centre offer:** *Increasing activity in areas other than the retail area, particularly along the waterfront and vary town centre provision.*
4. **A town that is easily accessible:** *Creating a pedestrian and cycle friendly town centre environment and enhancing public transport and vehicular access and facilities.*
5. **A place for people to live, work and socialise:** *Focusing residential development appropriate to the intimate nature of King's Lynn and in historic core and creating a lively and vibrant environment which meets the needs and aspirations of people of all ages.*
6. **Events & promotion:** *Marketing the town locally and regionally through a variety of small and large activities, events and promotional materials.*

2. Town Centre Area

The study area is bound by Boal Street in the south, London Road/Blackfriars Road to the east, North Street in the north and the River Great Ouse in the west. This covers the main town centre zones of retail, leisure and heritage as well as the main car parks and transport interchanges.



B Action Plan

Theme 1: High Quality Public Realm & Spaces: *Create variety and enhance the quality and distinctiveness of public realm to improve the perception of the town.*

Actions	Timescales	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources	Lead Organisation(s)
1 Enhancement of Saturday Market Place	2014/2015	£640,000	Borough Council Heritage :Lottery Fund HLF Townscape Heritage Initiative	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
2 Removal of unnecessary and superfluous signage etc	On going	From within existing resources	Borough Council Norfolk County Council	Borough Council (Commercial Services) Norfolk County Council (Highways)
3 Improve public areas by providing and maintaining quality street furniture and paving	2014 onwards	£10,000	£10,000 Section 106 contribution (Tesco Campbell's Meadow) Associated works as part of other enhancement schemes	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
4 Regenerate southern part of Town Centre shop – buildings and public realm	Summer 2014 until 2019	£2,500,000	£1m HLF Townscape Heritage Initiative £1m Borough Council £0.5m property owners contributions	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
5 Promote and undertake planting in the Town Centre	Annually	From within existing resources	Borough Council	Borough Council (Commercial Services)

6	Improvement to car park information	Summer 2014	£100,000	£100,000 Section 106 contribution (Tesco Campbell's Meadow)	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
7	Arts Cities and Landscape	2014/15	£200,000	European Interreg Programme Maison de la Culture d'Amiens Borough Council	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
8	Lighting of key historic and landmark buildings such as Custom House, South Gates and King's Lynn Minster	2015/16	Not known at this time	Yet to be identified	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
9	Improvements to key buildings and gateways to the Town Centre including railway and bus stations, southern side of the town centre, Saturday Market Place and Town Hall	2014 onwards	Costs will relate to the individual initiatives and projects		Borough Council (Planning, Commercial Services and Regeneration and Economic Development) Individual property owners

Theme 2: Maximise Historic assets: *Utilise the town's historic assets to improve the town's regional position in the tourism market.*

Actions	Timescales	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources	Lead Organisation(s)
1 Improvements to Town Hall to increase public access and expand the role of the Town Hall as a stronger attraction	2014/2015	£2,300,000	£500,000 Borough Council £1.7m Heritage Lottery Funds £100,000 Other contributions	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
2 Explore the options to improve the Waterfront including South Quay, Purfleet and Boal Quay/Hardings Pits	2014/15		In kind contribution through staff resources from Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
3 Explore having consistent Sunday opening times across the heritage attractions	2015		In kind contribution through staff resources from Borough Council and other stakeholders	Borough Council (Commercial Services and Regeneration and Economic Development)
4 Promote Heritage Open Day	2015	£2,500 and in kind contribution from Civic Society	Borough Council	King's Lynn Civic Society Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
5 Maximise the use of the refurbished Tuesday Market Place for events including Mart, Festival Too, Classic car rally	2014/2017	Costs will be associated with individual events		Borough Council (Commercial Services)

Theme 3: Diversify the town centre offer: Increase activity in areas other than the retail area, particularly along the waterfront and vary town centre provision

Action	Timescales	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources	Lead Organisation(s)
1 Improve the viability and attractiveness of the Markets	2014	£30,000	£90,000 Section 106 contribution (Tesco Campbell's Meadow)	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
2 Explore the options to increase the retail/leisure offer by up to 20,000 square metres	2014 onwards		In kind contribution through staff resources and Borough Council and resources from landowner/developer	Owners and developers Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
3 Explore the options to bring key buildings and sites back into use.	2014/16		In kind contribution through staff resources from Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
4 Market the opportunity to bring a ship into the Outer Purfleet	On going		In kind contribution through staff resources from Borough Council	Borough Council (Property Services)
5 Promote the pontoon facilities for visiting vessels	annually	£2,000	Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)

Theme 4: A town that is easily accessible: *Create a pedestrian and cycle friendly town centre and enhancing public transport and vehicular access and facilities.*

Action	Timescales	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources	Lead Organisation(s)
1 Improve public transport facilities at the bus station and strengthen the pedestrian and cycling link between the bus and railway stations	2014/15	1,600,000	£500,000 Section 106 contribution (Sainsbury) £500,000 Section 106 contribution (Tesco Campbell's Meadow) £200,000 Norfolk County Council (Highways) £400,000 Borough Council	Borough Council (Commercial Services and Regeneration & Economic Development) Norfolk County Council (Highways)
2 Improve visitor information at Railway Station	Spring 2014	From within existing resources	Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
3 Improve visitor information at car parks	2014/15	£25,000	£25,000 Section 106 contribution (Tesco Campbell's Meadow)	Borough Council (Commercial Services and Regeneration & Economic Development)
4 Increase parking provision at West Lynn Ferry	When the opportunity arises	£400,000	Developer contributions	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
5 Improve accessibility and capacity on the main routes into the town centre.	When the opportunities arise	Costs will be dependent on schemes		Norfolk County Council (Highways)

6	Reroute National Cycle Route 1 so as to remove the 'no cycling' section through the town centre	2014/15	Not known	Sustrans Norfolk County Council	Sustrans Norfolk County Council (Highways)
7	Review the provision and location of cycle parking facilities	2014/15		In kind contributions through staff resources from Borough Council and Norfolk County Council	Borough Council (Commercial Services) Norfolk County Council (Highways) CTC – National Cycling Charity and Bike Users Group

Theme 5: A place for people to live, work and socialise: *Focus residential development appropriate to the intimate nature of King's Lynn and in historic core and create a lively and vibrant environment which meets the needs and aspirations of people of all ages.*

Action	Timescales	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources	Lead Organisation(s)
1 Redevelopment of the former Pilot Cinema site	2014	Not known	Freebridge Community Housing Homes and Community Agency Borough Council	Freebridge Community Housing
2 Conversion and reuse of former Post Office, Baxter's Plain	Not known	Not known	Private finance	Owner/Developer
3 Redevelopment of Silo Site, South Quay	Not known	Not known	Private finance	Owner/Developer
4 Town Centre promotions	2013/16	£100,000 per year	Borough Council	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
5 Development of the housing site Baker Lane/Queens Street	2014/15	Not known	Private finance	Developer

Theme 6: Events & promotion: *Market the town locally and regionally through a variety of small and large activities, events and promotional materials.*

Action		Timescales	Estimated Costs	Funding Sources	Lead Organisation(s)
1	Marketing and promoting the town both in and out of the area,	2013/2017	£35,000	£35,000 Section 106 contribution (Tesco Campbell's Meadow)	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
2	Develop a calendar of events and activities for the town centre	2014/17	£15,000	£15,000 Section 106 contribution (Tesco Campbell's Meadow)	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
2	Promote the investment opportunities and town centre offer via the new Inward investment website	Summer 2014		In kind contribution through staff resources Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
3	Organise and promote the Bepak GEAR 10k run	Annually		Borough Council Bepak sponsorship Entry fees.	Borough Council (Commercial Services)
4	Continue to produce and circulate a suite of leaflets including Discover King's Lynn, King's Lynn Mini Guide, Maritime and Pilgrims trails and Hanseatic King's Lynn	Annually	£12,500	Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
5	Continue to promote and deliver the Ambassador Programme	Annually	£2,000	Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
6	International Hanse Day	May 2015	£16,500	Borough Council	Borough Council (Regeneration & Economic Development)
7	Deliver a programme of historic guided walks	Annually		Ticket receipts and in kind contribution from the Town Guides	King's Lynn Town Guides

8	Festival Too	Annually	£25,000	Sponsorship & donations	Festival Too
9	King's Lynn Festival	Annually	£35,000	Sponsorship and box office receipts	King's Lynn Festival