AGENDA ITEM

11

AREA COMMITTEE:	**BARNFIELD, ICKNIELD, LIMBURY AND SAINTS**
DATE:	**23RD JUNE 2004**
SUBJECT:	**TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK**
REPORT BY:	**DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND REGENERATION**
CONTACT OFFICER:	**LAURA CHURCH 546549**

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	**COMMUNITY SAFETY**	
EQUALITIES	**ENVIRONMENT**	
FINANCIAL	**CONSULTATIONS**	✓
STAFFING	**OTHER**	

WARDS AFFECTED: SOUTH

PURPOSE

1. To outline the Consultants proposals for the Town Centre Development Framework and to seek initial views from the area committee prior to the detailed public consultation in July.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. Barnfield, Icknield, Limbury and Saints Area Committee are asked to provide some initial views on the Town Centre Development Framework.

BACKGROUND

3. Through the work of the Council's Regeneration Service funding has been secured to develop a Development Framework for Luton Town Centre. The purpose of the Development Framework is to provide a pragmatic framework setting out the manner by which Luton Town Centre may achieve its potential to serve Luton's catchment population and provide a location for living, shopping, leisure, work, learning, and transport interchange. . Funding has been secured from EEDA, ODPM through the

Growth Area and English Partnerships (EP). This is the first time that EP has funded a project of this type in Luton.

4. The Council has appointed David Lock Associates, a multi-disciplinary practice from Milton Keynes, to undertake the work. The DLA team includes specialists covering transportation, public consultation and communications and public affairs. As a separate appointment, CB Richard Ellis are providing specialist market and development appraisals. The team were appointed in January.

5. Phase 1 of the project has been an assessment of the current situation in Luton, evaluation of market demands and a summary of key issues, trends and drivers.

6. Phase 2 of the project has been the preparation of a draft development framework for the town centre, which addresses the key issues. The draft Development Framework, as proposed by the consultants, will be used as the basis for public consultation and stakeholder engagement in the process.

REPORT

7. A number of issues have been addressed in the Development Framework. These include:

- "Taming" the inner ring road
- Improving linkages between the bus and railway stations and the remainder of the town centre to create an attractive gateway
- How to achieve the redevelopment of the railway station
- Creating a better pedestrian environment and better public realm
- Meeting additional demand for retailing in the town centre
- Meeting additional demand for at least one hotel
- Potential for additional restaurant/café culture in the town centre adding vitality and interest
- A depressed office demand currently but potential for additional office accommodation in the long term
- Creating additional residential units in the town centre
- How to treat the River Lea
- Establishing investor confidence

8. A brief presentation will be made at the meeting of the key principles in the Development Framework. In summary these are:

- Improving the "legibility" of the town centre, that is the interrelationship between different areas and the connections between them to help people understand the town centre.

- Concentrating public transport access to the town centre in three areas at the new bus station, St. George's Square (Bridge Street) and Church Street. Only the bus station would be used for layovers and driver changes.
- Creating a series of 8 interconnected and interrelated neighbourhoods each with a different role and function
- Creating a necklace of new and improved public open spaces in the town centre linked by pedestrian friendly routes that will provide a circulation around the town centre
- Creating a pedestrian route between the bus and railway stations
- Encouraging the conversion of some out dated current office accommodation to residential
- Additional retail in the Silver Street and the Power Court site but that this is fully integrated with the remainder of the town centre.

9. The draft Development Framework represents the consultant's recommendations to the Council on proposals to regenerate the Town Centre. These recommendations will be used as the basis for consultation with the wider public, stakeholders and key strategic agencies. Amendments to the Development Framework will take place following the consultation process.

10. As wide as possible public consultation process will be needed. Consultation will be aimed at the following:

- Residents and town centre users through an exhibition in the Arndale Centre, information on the Council's website and articles in the local press and Lutonline on 1st July. Questionnaire responses will be collected.
- Presentations at Area Committees in June
- Community, faith and voluntary groups through the Luton Assembly.
- Businesses via a business breakfast with facilitated workshops. This will be undertaken in partnership with Luton Town Centre Partnership.
- A briefing to the Luton Forum
- A more detailed briefing/ feedback session for Members.
- Lunchtime briefing for Luton Borough Council staff
- Attendance at specialist meetings.

11. The period of public consultation will last until the end of June. The public consultation will have gauged the level of public support for the key principles of the Development Framework. During the summer the key principles will be developed into a more detailed action plan on how the development Framework can be implemented. This will included interventions and actions required by agencies such as the Council, private sector developers and other agencies such as English Partnerships and EEDA. The final Development Framework and Action

Plan would need to be endorsed by the Council in September. This will then be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance or form part of the Local Development Framework.

12. There will be a number of opportunities for more detailed consideration of the proposals. However, Members may wish to comment on any issues specific to their area at this initial stage.

PROPOSAL/OPTION

13. Undertake consultation as proposed: This will maximise the range of opportunities for views to be given on the Development Framework proposed by the consultants.

14. Limit the public consultation: To Limit the public consultation to a public exhibition only. This would limit the opportunities for other stakeholders and businesses to engage in the process and would not be acceptable.

15.

15. Undertake no public consultation: This would limit the opportunities for the Framework to be used as Supplementary Planning Guidance

CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

16. This presentation forms part of the consultation on the Development Framework.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D

17. There are no background papers relating to this report.