

## **Trowbridge Area Board – 18 September 2014**

### Trowbridge Economy

#### **Key Characteristics**

Trowbridge has a strong industrial heritage and as the County Town of Wiltshire maintains a key strategic role.

Trowbridge plays an important role as an employment, administration and service centre for Wiltshire. Housing and employment growth are helping to improve town centre vitality and deliver improved infrastructure .

Current population: **31,200**

#### **Planned development**

6000 new dwellings and 25ha of new employment land are to be delivered in the Trowbridge community area by 2025. Of these 3090 dwellings and 10ha of employment land are being built or have been permitted. To date development has been focused at Paxcroft Mead, the East of Trowbridge Allocation and the West Ashton Business Park.

Transforming Trowbridge is undertaking a programme of work to support the growth and development of Trowbridge. This includes strategic planning, and a Masterplan to support the Core Strategy. It also focuses on town centre development, by working with developers and landowners to facilitate development and the promotion of existing development sites through a website.

Whilst Trowbridge has strong commuter links with Bath and Bristol it has retained an important role as an employment, administration and service centre, and it is anticipated that these functions will grow.

The Core Strategy has identified a further 15ha of employment land within the Ashton Park Urban Extension

#### Key sites:

**Ashton Park**, Developer Persimmon, 2,600 homes, 150,000sqm of commercial and industrial space. Estimated potential 1,500 new jobs not including construction.

**Innox Riverside (aka Bowyers)**, Developer Prorsus, 10,500sqm retail, 2,600sqm restaurants, 2,000sqm leisure. Estimated potential 400 new jobs not including construction.

**East Wing**, Developer Wiltshire Council. Mixed use site (retail, leisure, residential). Detail still to be agreed.

**Cradle Bridge**, Developer tbc. 1.2ha town centre regeneration site.

#### Recent Development:

**Shires Gateway** a new retail development in the centre of Trowbridge includes 75,350 sq ft (7,000 sq m) of retail floor space

**St Stephens Place** – Town centre leisure development incorporating multi-screen cinema, 80 bed hotel and restaurants. Majority of units now occupied.

**Brewery Quarter** – town centre mixed use development of 120 homes and supermarket.

**North Bradley** – 2.5 hectare site. Extension to White Horse Business Park to accommodate new £7m HQ for Hitachi Capital.

**Trowbridge Civic Centre** – Trowbridge Town Council completed the redevelopment of the former Civic Hall in 2012. The new Civic Centre includes a main performance space (600 seats), and the home for Trowbridge Town Council and the Tourist Information Centre.

### **Transport & Infrastructure**

Trowbridge has good transport links to many nearby settlements including Bath and Bristol and is 18 miles from the M4. The town has good rail connectivity to the west, via Bath and Bristol and the south, via Westbury and Southampton. The strategically important A350 links Trowbridge with the M4 and the south coast.

### **Broadband**

Good broadband infrastructure available (7 operators providing services) and cable available. <http://www.wiltshireonline.org>

### **Employment**

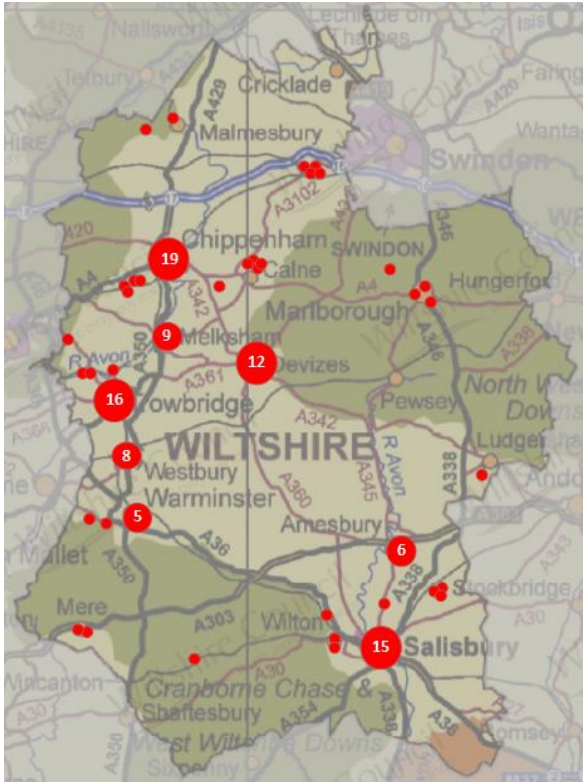
Approximately 21,400 employed (10.9% of total employment in Wiltshire).

Key sectors: Business services, advanced manufacturing and engineering, retail, public administration

Key businesses: Apetito (trade as Wiltshire Farm Foods), Airsprung Beds, Nutricia Ltd, Wiltshire Council, Hitachi Capital, LF Beauty, Acheson and Acheson, The Consortium.

68% of the town's working population work within Trowbridge

The diagram below shows the distribution of strategically significant businesses in Wiltshire.



### **Income & Expenditure**

Average House Price: £197,000

Average Income: £21,260

### **Retail and Leisure Offer**

Trowbridge has 348 (2009 data) retail units, which is good for a town of this size.

The strengthening of Trowbridge's service centre role is highlighted as an important target for the town. Current shopping population catchment - PROMIS estimates that this is 59,000 people. The potential shopping catchment area for Trowbridge is estimated at 147,000.

The town contains a strong mix of comparison, convenience retail and service uses. GVA Grimley Retail study 2011 forecast a requirement for a further 11,000sq.m of comparison retail by 2025.

The planning permission for the redevelopment of the former Bowyers site includes an additional 3,296 sqm of non-food retail. This leaves 7,873 sqm (84,744 sqft) of retail to be provided.

With regard to leisure services, Trowbridge currently has a below average representation of restaurants, pubs and cafes.

More details about Trowbridge can be found in the Town Centre Masterplan - <http://wiltshire.objective.co.uk/file/2672089>

The shop vacancy rate is relatively high for Wiltshire.

Car Parking

Markets are healthier than the national and regional average with higher numbers of stall holders and are generally viewed positively by town centre users and businesses.

Footfall is lower than average but higher than towns with a similar demographic.

### **Business confidence survey 2013** (benchmarked against 92 other towns across the UK)

Positives: Markets, rental values and property costs, car parking, transport links

Negatives: Mix of retail offer, rental values and property costs, competition from other places, competition from the internet.

Businesses rate crime concerns, in particular criminal damage, higher than other comparable towns.

The most common suggestions from businesses were for more variety of shops and cheaper parking.

### **Town Centre users survey 2013** (benchmarked against 92 other towns across the UK)

Users have a positive view of the town centre's physical appearance and 74% rated cleanliness of town centre as good.

The variety of shops is rated poorer on average than surveys undertaken in similar towns. 60% of users rated leisure and cultural offering as good (above average).

Positives: Access to services and leisure facilities, transport, car parking, markets

Negatives: Range of shopping, restaurants, pubs, nightclubs, leisure and cultural facilities

Most common suggestions - more variety of shops, more for families, make it feel safer

There is quite a big disparity between the perception of business towards car parking (generally negative) and that of town centre users (generally positive).

### **Trowbridge Parking useage summary**

- Trowbridge has 2176 parking spaces in the central area (does not include Tescos)
- Parking demand in Trowbridge was approximately 50% of current capacity on the two typical survey days.
- In addition to the relatively low levels of occupancy, the most common parking durations are relatively short, suggesting little use by full-time employees.
- Over 50% of users are from Trowbridge and over 80% of users are from within Wiltshire.
- Parking forecasts reflecting both the impact of increased demand (growth) is matched by proposed increases in car parking supply and therefore 2026 reference case parking demand in Trowbridge is forecast to be approximately 50% of capacity on a typical Friday and Saturday.
- The Trowbridge Masterplan aims to improve Trowbridge's offer, which should increase parking frequency and duration. Forecasts show that an increased

frequency and duration of stay can be accommodated on a typical Friday and Saturday within existing supply as demand is forecast to rise to 60% of capacity.

### **Wider context**

Trowbridge is a major settlement in the A350 corridor running through Wiltshire. The A350 corridor is an important economic sub-region, generating a GVA per head of around £3.4 billion, or 40% of Wiltshire GVA. The area has a strong functional relationship with a number of urban centres to the west of the corridor; many of the people who live in the area work and shop in the main urban centres. The area includes around 60% of the Wiltshire's biggest and most successful companies.

According to the projections, the economy of Wiltshire is forecast to see employment growth of approximately 9% (19,300) over the period 2010-2020, which is almost double that predicted for the UK as a whole. The main reason for this higher growth rate is the area's strong showing in sectors forecast to see the fastest growth over the decade.

The corridor accounts for more than half of Wiltshire's ICT employment and half of its manufacturing base. The A350 has strengths particularly Food and Drink; ICT and Telecommunications; and Tourism. The corridor accounts for around 1 in 3 of the jobs in those sectors from across Swindon and Wiltshire. The last 12 months has seen much stronger jobs growth than average, with a rise in employee jobs of 3.4% - three times higher than the county rate.

# An Overview of the A350 Corridor of Opportunity

## Geography

- The A350 covers **63,600 hectares** and stretches
- 34 miles** through Wiltshire
- 186,800 people** live here

## Productivity

- The A350 corridor generates **£3.4 billion of goods and services**
- This is **40%** of Wiltshire's GVA and
- 24%** of the LEP total

## Jobs

- Local businesses provide **80,200 jobs** in the corridor
- 43%** of all jobs in Wiltshire are here
- Large firms are important: **38%** of jobs are in firms employing 100+ staff compared with 34% in the county

## Priority Sectors

- ICT and Telecoms
- Food and drink
- Tourism

- Businesses in the A350 corridor have created **2,500** additional jobs in the past year



## Defence

- Warminster
- Colerne
- Corsham

## Business

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Food & Drink
- Tourism
- Business & Professional Services
- ICT & Telecoms
- Other

The A350 primary route carries the highest volume of traffic and HGV movements on the area's non-trunk road primary routes. There is a widely acknowledged need to improve route efficiency amongst both the business sector and the public sector. Congestion is exacerbated by the high volume of heavy goods vehicles on the route and its role as the primary route connecting Poole/South Coast to the M4. This results in poor journey time reliability due to high traffic volumes particularly at peak periods. The rail network potential is currently restricted by a number of pinch points and station infrastructure.

There is market evidence of demand from businesses seeking to expand or locate to this area however without the appropriate enhancements to local infrastructure the area will be strangled by its own success.

The northern part of the corridor has strong interrelationships with the M4 corridor. There are centres of innovation in this part of the corridor which add to its strong economic development potential. First, there is a unique concentration of Ministry of Defence, Government information and security and other information and communications technology infrastructure at Corsham which provides a focus of expertise, track record and a community of trust around sensitive data management activities.

The regeneration of Chippenham and Trowbridge, 'Principal Settlements' that function as strategically important centres, are critical to improving the retail and commercial offer within the Swindon and Wiltshire LEP area.

For more information please refer to the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SWLEP) strategic economic plan - <http://www.swlep.biz/docs/1>

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