

**Do you agree with the vision and development principles?
What would you change or add? Why?**

The group agreed with the broad principals set out in the vision and development principals. However the whole group agreed that the vision and development principals are brief and broad brush, therefore there is little to disagree with. Overall the group agreed that the vision and the development principals are acceptable and achievable.

The group commented that the *'devil will be in the detail'* of how these principals will be carried forward and develop in the document – the detail is going to be key.

The group also made a number of specific comments with regard to the vision and development principals:

- Links to the city centre and cohesion with the adjacent and surrounding areas is going to be key to the EDA's success – *'we need to protect communities and their character'*.
- Public transport links will be critical, together with the green corridor which needs to be more than just a bridge to make the area feel part of Swindon.
- Need to ensure that new facilities and developments are multi purpose and not simply separate entities with separate uses to ensure their success and integration with the community
- Suggested that the principals are too general on affordable house – needs to be high profile and need more detail in the principals regarding the type of housing required

Do you agree with our proposed approach to transport? Have enough links to Swindon been identified? (See Section 6 of the document)

The group agreed that the key to the EDA was the developments around the White Hart junction. The group recognised that there are already problems at that junction and that improvements have to be made. However, the group suggested that the cost associated with the preferred option may be prohibitive, and therefore place added risks on the success of the EDA. It was also suggested that additional funding should be sought for this junction due to the existing problems that will be resolved by the EDA proposals. The group acknowledged that although the preferred option is very expensive, getting this junction correct will be the key to the whole development.

It was suggested that the communication between Swindon / Highways Agency / Developers is poor - the leadership of the HA is considered to be poor and therefore causing delays / problems.

The group suggested that the bus station in the centre of town needs to be improved as part of the rapid transit scheme to ensure that it integrates properly. The group suggested that this should form part of the overall proposals for the EDA.

The group stated that they were disappointed that a railway station cannot be built / incorporated into the EDA. The group question if another track could be built along the railway, if there is any possibility of road rail transfer, and if the inclusion of a parkway style area / development could facilitate the development of a station?

Do you agree that we should be trying to integrate the EDA with Swindon or do you think we should separate it out as a stand alone community?

The group all agreed that an integrated approach is essential. The group suggested that there should be a balanced approach to developing the EDA and providing facilities and shops, whilst improving accessibility to transport and public transport links to the centre of Swindon.

The group indicated that there is a need for a mix of shops and facilities within the EDA, however it needs to ensure that conflict is avoided between central Swindon and the new district centre. There should be a level of competition between the areas, but this should not restrict the type of shops or specific retailers from locating in one or the other.

The development of the first areas of the EDA needs to avoid a reliance upon the car to ensure that public transport is used from the very beginning of the areas development. Also connected to ensuring that the EDA does not become a commuter home for M4 users.

How can we the EDA be delivered in a way that provides benefits for nearby communities in east Swindon and the villages?

The key areas highlighted by the group were transport links, improvements to White Hart roundabout and green infrastructure.

- Transport links should not only be to the EDA and east Swindon, but also to the surrounding villages which are currently poorly served by public transport.
- Improvements to the White Hart roundabout will bring about improvements to the whole of the surrounding area, but also if it is done properly then it will ensure that the EDA is linked and becomes a key part of the surrounding communities.
- Green infrastructure and the cycle network should be linked to the surrounding areas and wider network and include opportunities for further expansion. This will help to provide recreation opportunities to the surrounding areas.

The group commented that the park and ride facilities should be maintained and that the times of operation are the problem.

The group highlighted that the economy is key to the successful development of the EDA, but we need to remember that this is a 20 year plan to 2 or 3 years. The costs and benefits of the improvements to the White Hart junction need to be carefully considered.

A continuing message from the group was that lessons to be learnt from the northern development area, and avoid the problems that now exist.

Do you agree with the social facilities we have identified? Is there any infrastructure that you think we have missed? (See Section 11 of the document)

The group all agreed that if a new theatre is to be constructed it should be located in the centre of Swindon with access for all, rather than situated on a limb in the EDA. The provision of libraries also need careful consideration to ensure that vitality and viability of the central library is maintained.

The group suggested that the provision of sports facilities in the EDA should not be through PFI contracts and at schools as this seen to restrict the use of some facilities. Sports facilities should be available for the whole community to use and not be stood empty in evenings and weekends as some are that are associated with PFI / School initiatives.

The group suggested that there is potential to integrate schools and shops / facilities together to form a better community centre for the EDA. Currently it appear that the schools are all separated from shops and facilities and therefore possibly also from transport links. Schools should be the centre of the community.

Some members of the group suggested that the densities within the EDA and especially within the White Hart area are too high, potentially placing great risks on the success of the area.

Look at the northern development area for the problems and lessons to be learnt (car parking / density / waste collection).

Do you agree with proposed phasing, beginning development around White Hart and growing outwards? Have we missed anything on delivery? (See Page 86 of the document)

The group all agreed that starting the development around the White Hart area is the best way provided that the funding is available to develop the necessary infrastructure. Starting in this area will also ensure that key infrastructure is such as the road links, green bridge and rapid transport links are constructed and operational as part of the first phase. It will also ensure they are provided and not left incomplete as with the access road to the northern development area.

Group agreed that phasing the development and starting elsewhere could jeopardise these key parts of infrastructure, which were considered by the group to be critical to the success of the EDA.

The group considered the canal was a distraction to the development of the EDA. The group highlighted that the costs and potential problems with construction and management, including the supply of water for the canal and potential issues with flood risk, may not be necessary, or provide any benefits.

The group also questioned if the route has been designated or still up for debate?

Are we doing enough to address climate change, the environment and ecology in the EDA? Is there anything else you think we should be doing? (See Sections 8 and 14 of the document)

The group suggested that the SPD has currently gone as far as it possible under existing legislation for climate change and the environment, but there is a need to ensure that there is capacity to accommodate increased protection of the environment and requirements of climate change in the future – ‘future proofing’ the EDA.

The group suggested that the issues of climate change and environment appear to be raised within the SPD, but the SPD does not provide any certainty for their continued consideration and implementation.

The group also raised concerns regarding the supply of water to the EDA, and the provision of utilities in general to the area. Renewable energy was an issue raised that does not appear to be covered in any detail in the SPD.

A representative from the EA stated that principals of good design are being accommodated throughout the development of the proposals for the EDA to ensure the area does not pose a flood risk to the properties within the EDA or the surrounding area.

Do you think the proposals are affordable and deliverable? In particular, off-site infrastructure requirements (See Section 16 of the document).

The group raised concerns that the EDA and the necessary infrastructure is not going to be affordable – funding is going to be the key issue for some aspects as proposed. However as highlighted earlier the group noted that the strategy is for 20 years not 2 or 3 years therefore funding may become more available. The White Hart junction is the key to the EDA delivery – if an affordable solution can be found it will provide greater certainty and ensure deliverability of the proposals for the EDA.

Public transport links need to be up front so that people use them straight away and do not become reliant on cars when residents first move in. Connections to the surrounding communities including the existing east of Swindon will ensure success.

The group suggested that there needs to be a study of the type of affordable housing that is required, including the size and style. Suggested that the current reliance on flats is not appropriate. The consideration of affordable housing needs to be focused at an early stage as to how it will be managed.

The group suggested that the SPD is relying upon densities that are too high, although the mixed-use approach was agreed with.

The group felt that a link to Common head would be beneficial, but need to be careful to ensure that the EDA does not become a commuter area from the M4.