

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

Generally the group felt that the vision and principles were appropriate. The alternative option of accommodating development in smaller extensions around Swindon was discussed, although it was accepted that there are limited options to the South, North and West.

The vision is up to 2026. The group queried whether this is really a viable solution for 2026 given the current economic situation.

It was agreed that the flood risk area needs to be treated with care – only certain uses are appropriate for these areas, for example flood meadows. Sports pitches on the other hand are not. The way in which essential infrastructure is protected from the flood risk needs to be examined - for example roads and bus routes must be on causeways. One delegate suggested siting a lake in the flood risk areas with high density residential and a marina surrounding it. This would provide massive flood-water capacity and create a high quality urban environment.

Concern was raised that the EDA is not integrating with rural areas and communities.

The philosophy and approach to the EDA as currently planned is based on the previous, buoyant economy. There is a significant issue here relating to the availability of securing contributions for essential infrastructure. The vision and principles reflect Plan 'A', the best case scenario. Perhaps a more incremental scheme would work in reality.

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

The group felt that the proposed green bridge is essential. They also wanted more detail on the options for the White Hart junction

The group had a discussion about the proposed bus Rapid Transit system. One member of the group queried whether rail is a viable option – i.e. a tram? In response a delegate from the local bus provider informed the group that the bus Rapid Transit system could be upgraded to rail in the future as it occupies a dedicated public transport corridor. For the Rapid Transit system to work and be used, journey time is key (for example no more than 20 minutes into the Centre) and buses should have their own right of way to assist. The group suggested that the Rapid Transit should link the various employment areas around the town because the system will be of limited use for people who don't work in the Centre. It was also suggested that there should be a local network of public transport running off Rapid Transit. Reliability and real-time information are key to the success of the Rapid Transit.

The group felt it is important to integrate public transport in from day 1. The development of public transport options needs to be phased and must serve employment areas. More information is needed about how the EDA will be designed so as to deter trips onto the strategic road network.

The group requested more information on how rat running will be deterred at Commonhead.

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 agreed with the general approach presented, but felt that the 'weave' presented the best alternative as it has built-in flexibility but still seeks to integrate. The 'crunch' was felt to be a less viable and flexible option than the 'weave', especially given prevailing economic uncertainty. It requires a large infrastructure investment up front, although the aspiration to join the EDA to Swindon is strongest in this approach.

How development is integrated is the key, and the group felt that incremental development may assist in achieving this.

Adding to and integrating with the existing urban area is easier for public transport providers.

The group acknowledged that the A419 does present a significant constraint and challenge to integration.

With regards to density, some members of the group queried whether the areas indicated will actually accommodate 12000 homes?

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

The villages are extremely unhappy about the whole thing, especially the potential rat running of people across rural areas.

The current SPD doesn't consider the rural interface in enough detail. Rural areas will not benefit from the improved public transport provision as it will bypass these areas.

According to one delegate, the rural areas have been considered but it does not appear in any detail in the draft SPD.

Wish for more engagement with the process, and consultation about mitigation in terms of restricting access.

The group queried how the edges of the EDA should be treated so as to avoid further growth? There are no proposed physical barriers or strategic gaps. One delegate suggested a woodland may provide a good edge as it would inhibit further growth outwards as it will be protected to some degree. Without a defined edge some delegates are concerned about further expansion.

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 felt that all of the necessary social infrastructure has been identified in the draft SPD, with the only area for debate being whether a second secondary school ought to be included in the EDA or in existing areas of Swindon.

A number of delegates expressed concern that schools are identified as delivering a wider community benefit and facilities, although it was accepted that co-location of facilities would work.

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 felt this is a logical approach and it provides flexibility to respond to changing circumstances. If there were a rigid phasing plan, land ownership could halt development, although it is understood that the vast majority of required land is now in the ownership of the developers.

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 acknowledged that flood risk is a key issue which the development of the EDA must address. One suggestion was to implement a lake which would provide a significant amount of flood water storage, enhance the environment and provide recreation opportunities.

The wider sustainability issues identified in the SPD are supported by the group although some members felt the statements were somewhat generic and not particularly visionary.

The group wanted to know what Code for Sustainable Homes level development will be required to attain. The higher the code level the more expensive the development will be, which may compromise the delivery of essential community facilities. Densities will be affected by the code also.

General comments on the SPD approach: The group felt that detail is lacking from the draft SPD, and questioned when will the detail be consulted on. It contains a series of broad statements. They did acknowledge however that the approach needs to be flexible and viable.

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

The proposals require significant on-site infrastructure, and there is a funding gap for off-site infrastructure. How this gap will be bridged is critical.

The group queried whether this is really a viable solution for 2026 given the current economic situation.

The canal was discussed at length. Whilst it may not be viable in the town centre, within the EDA it may well be, and it would have significant flood alleviation virtues. This would be a 'nice to have' for the future, and the current plans should not preclude it. Should land be set aside?