

SWINDON DRAFT MASTERPLAN EXHIBITION FEEDBACK

The Swindon Town Centre Masterplan exhibition was launched on Monday 3 September 2012 at Swindon Central Library and on a dedicated website. The physical display set out a summary of the key proposals and provided feedback forms for completion by visitors. The website included pdfs of the masterplan exhibition boards and the masterplan report, along with an online feedback form. The consultation ran until 19 October 2012, although feedback submitted after this has been accepted.

This paper sets out a summary of the consultation responses to the draft masterplan exhibition and report, including:

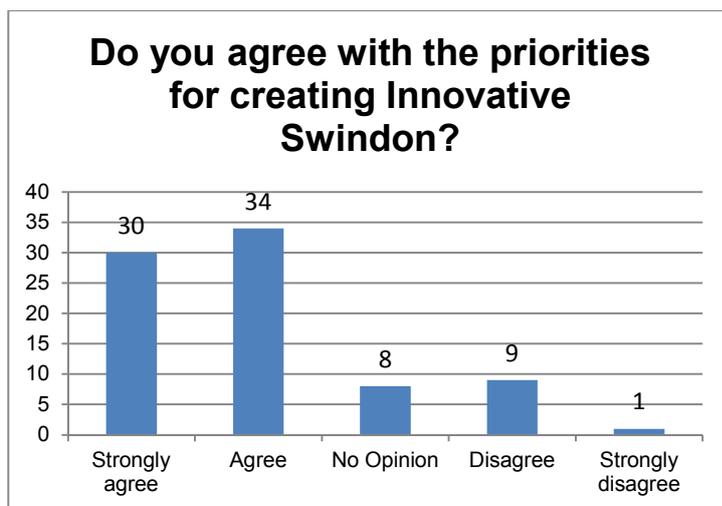
- Completed questionnaire forms;
- Completed on line forms;
- Emails to the dedicated email address for the masterplan;
- Letters to Forward Swindon; and
- Detailed submissions from key stakeholder groups for the project.

An overview of the response to the draft masterplan is provided through the feedback form. More detailed comments are included in a comments table, with suggested updates where appropriate.

Summary of questionnaire responses (online and hard copy)

Close to 100 completed questionnaires were returned, either from the online form or using hard copies, with feedback on the draft masterplan exhibition. Overall, the feedback indicates that the local community is happy with the draft masterplan proposals. A summary of the responses for each of the 10 questions provided on the questionnaire is set out below. Detailed comments on both the exhibition and the report are still being received and the review is continuing. However, it is possible at this stage to pick out some key messages.

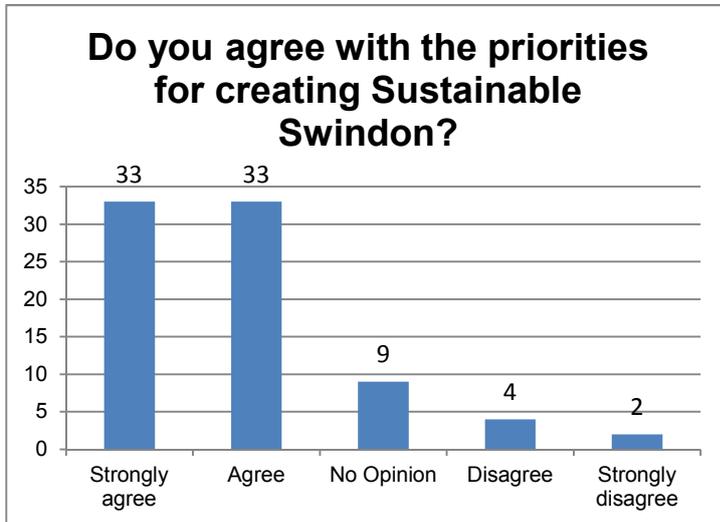
1. Do you agree with the priorities for creating Innovative Swindon?



Of 82 people who answered this question, 64 were supportive of the proposals to create Innovative Swindon. 10 people disagreed. Of additional comments made, suggestions included the recreation of

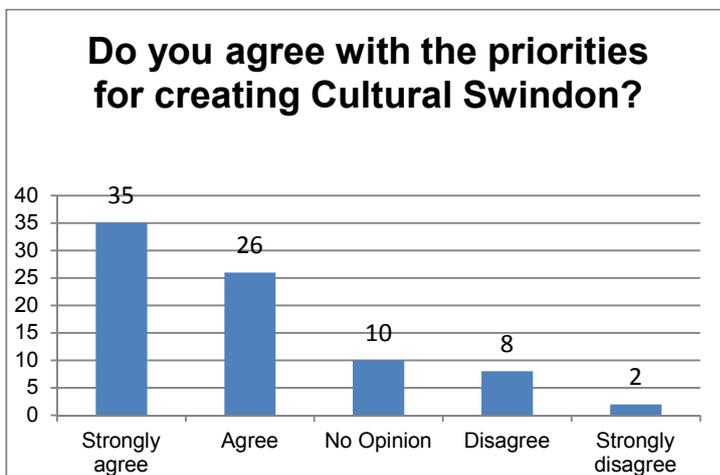
the canal link, concern regarding retail out of the town centre and the importance of including local groups in taking plans forward.

2. Do you agree with the priorities for creating Sustainable Swindon?



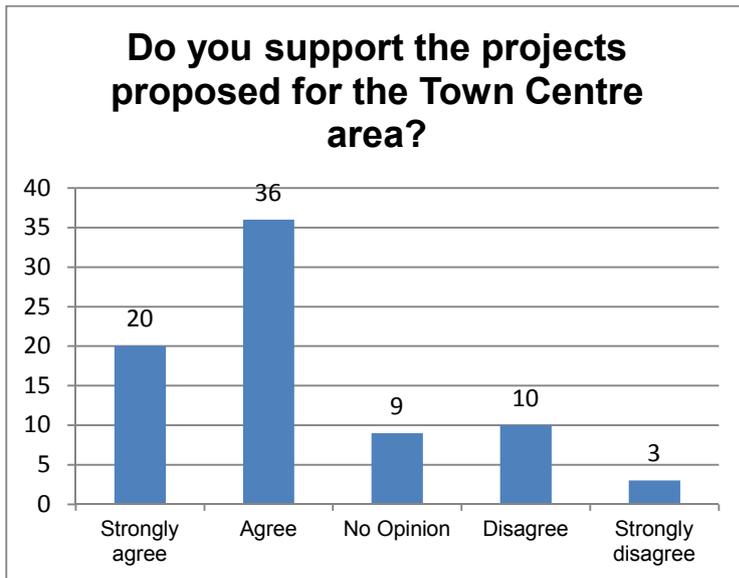
Of 81 people who answered this question, 66 people agreed with the proposals. Only 6 people disagreed. Additional comments were made about the importance of providing employment opportunities. The canal was mentioned, as was the importance of drawing out the heritage of the town through walking routes and the public realm.

3. Do you agree with the priorities for creating Cultural Swindon?



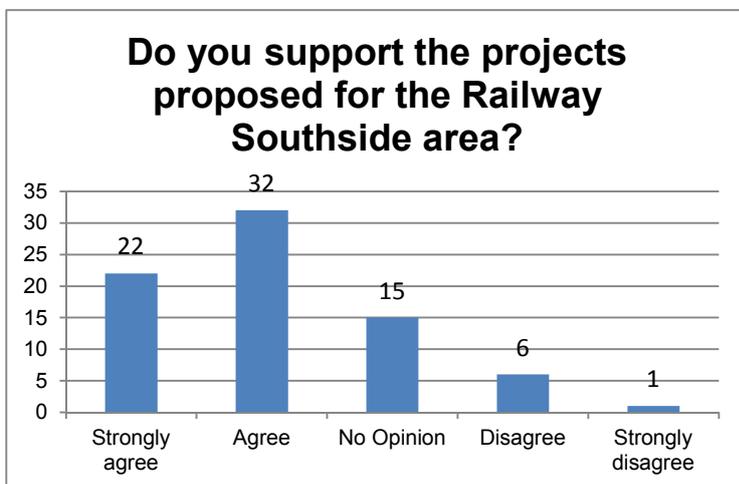
Of 81 people answering this question, 61 agreed with the proposals to create Cultural Swindon and 10 people disagreed. Additional comments identified specific buildings such as the Mechanics Institute and the old technical college building for refurbishment and reuse in the town. Support was expressed for a greater profile and larger collection for the museum and gallery.

4. Do you support the projects proposed for the Town Centre area?



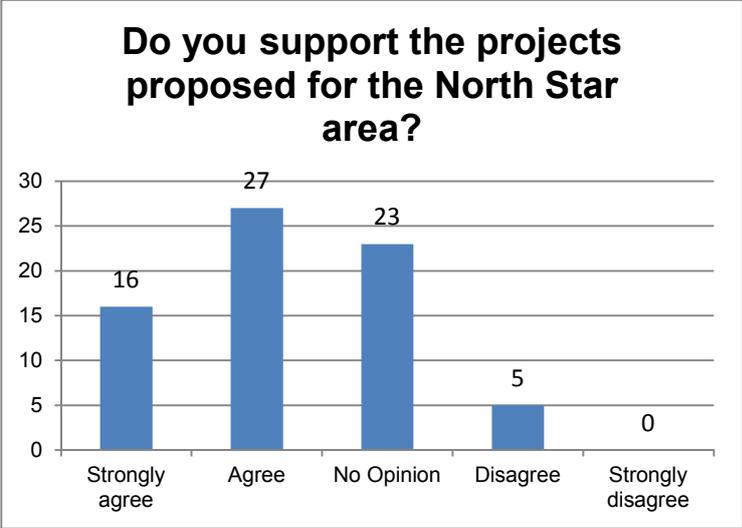
78 people answered this question and 56 of them agreed with the proposals for the town centre area. 13 people disagreed with the proposals. Suggestions were made for attention to be given to the 'bottom end of town' by Wilkinsons and Iceland. References were made to principles of the Venus Project, part of the One Community movement. Further comments were also made about the importance of heritage – both the built environment and the canal.

5. Do you support the projects proposed for the Railway Southside area?



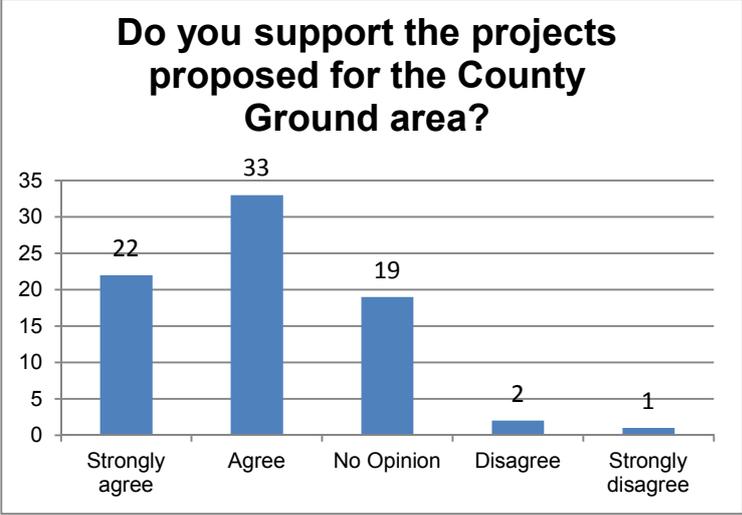
76 people answered this question and 54 people supported the proposals, with 7 people disagreeing with the proposals.

6. Do you support the projects proposed for the North Star area?



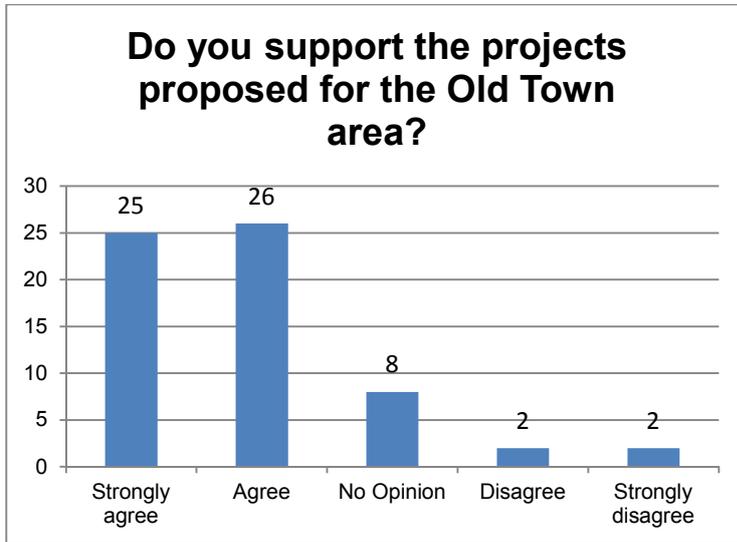
71 people answered this question and 43 people supported the proposals. 23 people had no opinion and 5 people disagreed.

7. Do you support the projects proposed for the County Ground area?



77 people answered this question and 55 of them agreed with the proposals. Only 3 people disagreed with the proposals.

8. Do you support the projects proposed for the Old Town area?



63 people answered this question – a lower response rate than for other questions. The proposals were well supported with 51 people stating that they approved of the proposals. 4 people disagreed with the proposals.

Questionnaire responses: Swindon's Canal

An organised consultation response was coordinated around the reinstatement of the Wilts and Berks Canal, following discussion of the issue at the AGM meeting for the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust. In total, the project team received:

118 emails asking for the Canal to be reinstated; and

7 letters with detailed information on the Canal and a request for full reinstatement

The letters and emails were from a range of groups, organisations and individuals including:

- The Inland Waterways Association
- Wiltshire Swindon & Oxfordshire Canal Partnership
- The Houseboating Society
- Sheldon School (network manager)
- Kennet and Avon Canal Trust
- Stuart Fisher, author of Canals of Britain
- Wiltshire County Council, Canal Officer
- Eastern Thames and Severn Cotswold Canals Trust
- Wilts and Berks Canal Trust
- Vice Chairman of WBCT
- Oxfordshire County Council Deputy Leader (Cabinet Member for Transport)
- Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce

SWNDON MASTERPLAN COMMENTS TABLE

Page /section reference	Comment
Innovative Swindon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 14 respondents requested the inclusion of the full canal route through the town. Questions were raised regarding the exclusion of the canal route, when this is included in other SBC plans. 2. Concern was expressed about sufficient employment space and training/activities to promote business activity. Higher education provision, such as Swindon University, was considered a priority. 3. The relationship between the town centre and edge of centre retail was mentioned, with the latter being considered a threat to town centre retail and management to balance these considered important. 4. A few requests for a tram system were made. 5. Requests were made to improve Queens Park and Spring Gardens and to create a green trail in Swindon. 6. A request was made to include the football ground regeneration plans in greater detail, as a key gateway to the town 7. Suggestions for better links across the railway include a footbridge above the steam tunnel and a cycle route alongside Bottelinos
Sustainable Swindon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor commercial buildings on Marlborough Road should be replaced with more sympathetically designed apartments. 2. The Locarno and The Mechanics Institute should be prioritised for investment and re-use 3. Explore how to involve churches and other community groups in delivering the plans 4. The bus station should be re-provided. It is poor and badly connected to the station 5. A decent market was requested by a number of respondents, with reference to Oxford's market as a positive example. 6. Pedestrian and car free zones were mentioned or homezone speed limits in residential areas with families. 7. Greater support for cyclists, including cycle lanes and parking, with the designation of Swindon as a 'cycling town' (as in Bristol) was suggested. Mention of this was also made in the 'cultural Swindon' section

Page /section reference	Comment
	<p>8. 9 Comments were made regarding the reintroduction of the canal as part of the green spine and sustainable transport</p> <p>9. Comment was made about providing a diversified night-time offer, with the existing bars easily policed in a central, well-lit area and an alternative offer of eateries elsewhere in the town.</p>
Cultural Swindon	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Wyvern needs a radical revamp or replacing on a new site. 2. Develop a cinema with café and opportunities for talks/seminars 3. A number of respondents stated that the town needs a space for larger events, including a concert hall. Concert facilities were mentioned by a number of people as needing a greater role in the strategy. 4. Requests were made for a larger art gallery, with the museum and art gallery moving to the Mechanics Institute being one suggestion and moving to the college Building on Victoria Road in another suggestion. 5. Indoor facilities for people in the parks were mentioned. 6. The restoration of the full canal route was mentioned by 7 people in response to the question. 7. A science and engineering museum was requested by a few people.
Strategic approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A request was made for the key infrastructure projects and broad costs of these to be clearly drawn out - the masterplan as a whole is considered too lengthy to pick this out. 2. A number of people suggested a phasing plan would be useful for development projects, with priorities clearly set out. 3. The reinstatement of the canal was mentioned by 8 people as a strategic project that would change people's perceptions of the town. 4. Comments to address the terrible road layout on Princes Street by the hotel, which has apparently been the site of an accident. 5. A range of views were expressed about the approach to traffic, with some people stating that cars should be encouraged as town centres rely on them and others stating that vehicular access to the centre should be further limited. 6. Greater consideration and reference should be made to making the town accessible to older people and disabled people.

Page /section reference	Comment
Town Centre projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concerns were raised regarding two-way traffic in Commercial Road and Farnsby Street, in terms of the cost of this and the unknown impacts. 2. Swindon does not have a clear centre and the masterplan needs to help create one. Some comments were made that the masterplan is not strong enough in achieving this. 3. The 1970s buildings around the Parade and Debenhams were identified as an eyesore suitable for demolition. 4. Comment was made that the millions it would cost to reinstate the canal should spent on improving the town centre so that it doesn't decline over the coming years. 5. Request was made for a cycle route between the outlet centre and Mechanics Institute and a DDA footbridge or improving the environment under Rodbourne Bridge. 6. The area at the bottom of Regent Street was identified as in need of rejuvenation. 7. Comment was made that the canal route should be reinstated throughout the town centre.
Southside projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The bus station was identified as a 'disgrace' in need of redevelopment by a number of respondents. Comments were also made regarding improving bus services and coordination of these with train times. 2. Links between the Brunel Centre and Outlet Village were highlighted as in need of strengthening 3. The majority of comments addressed the need to bring the Mechanics Institute back into use, with CPO mentioned. Shorter term artists' studios were suggested and an open day to encourage ideas for the space. Comments were also made about making plans realistic. 4. Concern was expressed regarding the emphasis on multi-storey car parks. 5. Suggestion was made to house the science and engineering building in the Carriage Works rather than a new building. 6. Comment was made regarding the importance of reinstating the canal through this area.
North Star projects	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Again, the reinstatement of the canal was mentioned, with suggestion that the canal passes under the railway bridge along its original route. 2. The link across the railway was highlighted as a key priority for this area, particularly under Rodbourne railway bridge. 24/7 access to the station from the north was also mentioned.

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Direct bus routes to this area were requested, so that people don't need to go via the town centre. 4. More rail parking was identified as a priority for this area, to support businesses and ensure they don't relocate. 5. Suggestion was made that traffic flow through Beatrice Street is altered, as it is currently used to bypass GWW. This could be coordinated with improvements to Gorse Hill shopping frontage. 6. Inclusion of active areas for football, skateboards and an adventure play park was suggested.
County Ground	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concern was expressed regarding any loss of sports and recreation facilities to gain more housing. It was considered important for this area to retain a recreation focus. 2. One comment was made that the County Ground land was bequeathed to the people of Swindon for recreational and leisure uses and therefore any development should take this into account, with housing being unacceptable. 3. The need for an Olympic sized swimming pool was stated as a priority. An indoor bowls facility was requested. 4. Signposting to this area is apparently poor and affects movement on match days. 5. Improvements to the cycle link from the magic roundabout to Shrivenham Road / Greenbridge were suggested. 6. Some respondents questioned whether the area needs a new football ground, considering the existing ground to be fine. Others felt the ground should be redeveloped as in Reading. 7. Public transport was highlighted as needing more thought. One respondent suggested speaking to Sustrans and reviewing their 'more haste, less speed' report. 8. One respondent questioned the idea of replacing Whalebridge roundabout with traffic lights as this makes trips longer.
Old Town	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The railway path ends at Signal Way and should continue, with the removal of some units, to continue the green corridor. 2. Could the green spine include a cycle track?

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. More detail was requested on how private property owners can be persuaded to restore frontages 4. Suggestion was made to refurbish the walk-a-bouts in Woodlands "behind Cirencester Court Drive Road" "Bluebell Wood" North of Morrison's North Swindon. An old town trail (station to Toothill) was suggested. 5. The Locarno building and Corn Exchange were identified as in need of refurbishment and protection. 6. The use of the Locarno and adjoin land should be identified for mixed use rather than retail only. 7. The reinstatement of the historic canal was mentioned as a priority by some respondents. 8. The current museum and art gallery premises were identified as being inadequate for the role of a city gallery. There is too little parking and low profile. 9. The pedestrianisation of Wood Street was suggested.
Further comments	<p>Comments were made regarding the importance of reinstating the canal.</p> <p>Requests were made for the masterplan to pick out the key projects, how this will be done and the broad costs.</p> <p>Traffic congestion and the lack of proposals to address this were highlighted as a problem.</p> <p>Requests were made to replace the water feature in the town centre.</p>
Comments from individual respondents or groups.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support the proposals for better, safer pedestrian routes across the railway line. • We support the development of the "Green Spine" as an attractive pedestrian route between the Town Centre and Old Town. The increase in tree planting is very welcome but will create a need for prompt clearance of falling leaves in the autumn to ensure wet leaves do not become a hazard. • We oppose the proposal to allow cyclists into Queens Park. This type of formal park, which attracts many families with young children, is unsuitable for cycling. None of the entrances link to existing cycle routes.

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We support improved signage on the approaches to the Old Town Railway Path. The “poetic sculptures” which were installed along the path in the mid-1990s also need attention, as many of the inscriptions can no longer be read. The stonework needs to be cleaned and the soil and vegetation which has built up around the base of the sculptures needs to be removed.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A proposal for an Urban Forest and allotment project has been developed and should be included in the masterplan, if possible. It is located on the site north of the St Marks Recreation Ground, currently identified as a ‘leisure hub’. It covers Pickards Small Field and Hreod Burna Brook. A landscape plan of the proposals was provided.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider secured planning permission for Paragon Laundry and Old Swindon Technical College in relation to proposals Ensure that changes at the Magic Roundabout do not impact on the working of the junction. Will new homes front the County Ground? Replace references to Union Square with Kimmerfields so that the document doesn’t date The approach at Commercial Road should suggest either two-way working or parking and tree planting, depending on further detailed studies, rather than suggest both as one solution, which will be very difficult to achieve Proposals for the Oasis area need to reference the Development Agreement that Moirai have and the masterplan that is required as part of this. There is danger that this will look different from the emerging town centre masterplan and will cause issue regarding the linear park.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a prestige art gallery should be a priority for the masterplan. The Labour Group recommends an iconic building is located at the London/Shepherd Street car park. The link between North Star and Shepherd Street should be replicated between the outlet village and Bristol Street car park. This would require the reorientation of the residential element on Bristol Street car park. A landscaped area on the south side of the rail line, similar to that proposed next to the rail station, could be included here. The concept of the land train should be shown in more detail, utilising the new walkways across the rail line New public realm works should help to make clear the walking route to the town centre, similar to works in Gloucester between the city centre and the docks. Greater provision of green and open space should be provided, one option being a green square between the Wyvern Theatre and the Magistrates Court, before a cultural building is positioned here. Another is greater provision of green space within the Granville Street development by reducing the size of the two blocks.
	<p>The plan shows new building on the current car park within the Core Area of Old Town and also on the Prospect Place Car Park. Both of these car parks play a vital role in ensuring the vitality and viability of the area, and at night are frequently full. Do the building plans propose parking underground?</p>

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The traffic plans do not appear to have taken the wider context of traffic in and around the town centre into account. We have concerns over how the suggested two-way traffic on Commercial Road would interact with the new College Site development and the existing Crombey Street through route. How does maintaining Victoria Road as a road with motor traffic support its proposed residential development, other than encouraging more multiple-occupancy? • The current Art Gallery has a world class collection...Expansion on the current site would still leave it cramped and do nothing to enhance the cultural quarter around the Wyvern and Library. We suggest it should be moved into the attractive and culturally significant Technical Schools building at the bottom of Victoria Road. • Stage Coach's depot on Eastcott Road offers a rare opportunity for large-scale development in Eastcott. The plan fails to grasp this by transforming it into a miscellany of smaller developments. We recommend that King William Street School, an existing centre of excellence be considered as a centre-piece of development to create a community green space, utilised by the school and residents after hours, whilst also providing space for extra class room accommodation. • Throughout the masterplan there appears to be a fixation for inserting low density housing into open spaces. As well as the inappropriate housing on the Stage Coach site, the suggestion of adding housing south of Cross Street will add to existing traffic problems both on the street and the existing 'rat-runs' between Bath Road and Victoria Road. • Back Garden recommends that the residents are offered an opportunity to discuss the Plan with Forward Swindon and is willing to host a public meeting for this purpose.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Swindon Chamber of Commerce, part of the Thames Valley Chamber Group, suggests that the Swindon Town Centre masterplan is aspirational and more positive than recent plans. It will be important that there is a focus on the implementation of this plan and delivery of developments and initiatives as soon as possible so that the offer of the town centre is improved. • There has also been feedback to ensure that in the appropriate locations, there are adequate parking facilities and that these are not restricted by development. • An enhanced town centre offer will be of value in supporting businesses and local consumption/ expenditure as well as attracting investment – all of which can have a positive impact on the economy.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My main concern as far as Old Town is concerned is the proposal to build on existing car parks, especially those at Godwin Court and Prospect Place which are the life blood of businesses in Old Town. I do not see alternative / replacement parking offered within the plan. • I would agree that the existing long stay car park behind Locarno is under used and may be considered for redevelopment in the future.

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The masterplan for the Town Centre fails to include or more precisely chooses to ignore the Wilts and Berks Canal. With all due respect this cannot be right and I must register my disappointment. Can this please be rectified? • To ignore the canal will represent a missed opportunity. The stored canal can contribute so much to the badly needed regeneration of the Town Centre.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We must...also voice our concern and disappointment that the masterplan only appears to concern itself with an isolated section of canal, as shown on the maps, and that in the text of the draft plan there is little or no mention of the intention to restore the canals in the town centre, nor of the varied benefits which will undoubtedly flow from restoration, nor reference to the restored canal as an important feature of the town centre. • We unreservedly support and endorse all points made by the Canal Partnership and the Canal Trust regarding the present and future restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal and the North Wilts Canal in and through the town. We agree with them on all the immediate and wider aspects of the eventual restoration of the Wilts & Berks Canal and the North Wilts Canal, which both foregoing responses have summarized. • We would urge that further careful investigation is made of the current planning policies of Swindon Borough Council regarding the canals, as it is our understanding that full restoration of the canals in the centre of the town has for some time been the declared policy of the Borough Council, as the local planning authority.It was with some surprise that we discovered that Forward Swindon is in partnership with Swindon Borough Council in producing the masterplan, and yet appeared to have overlooked or ignored the local planning authority's published policies. • We ask Forward Swindon to reconsider its approach to those parts of the town centre where restoration of the line of either or both canals is a declared option, if necessary seeking an amendment of its remit to extend the area of its consideration to cover other parts of the town centre. • We further suggest that the information and suggestions put forward at the workshop sessions and subsequent meetings by those representing the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust and the Wiltshire Swindon and Oxfordshire Canal Partnership be further reviewed, and the positive benefits of restoration and regeneration be incorporated in an amended draft document or the final version. • We ask you to reflect carefully whether the town centre should be nothing more than brick, stone, concrete and tarmac, or whether there should be the contrasting effect of flowing water as well
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No suggestions for bus priority in any of the area where highway changes are suggested, coupled with a number of other ideas of removing buses from areas considered key to the operation of both the town's major bus companies. • Section 6, Transportation: the only mention of the bus at all is in respect of this free service but rail patronage car parking, pedestrian routes are all mentioned more than once.

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst the company has no argument with the concept of green spaces and tree planting, we must point out that trees must always be planted at the rear of pavements on bus routes to avoid serious damage to buses • Section 3.4: A prerequisite of the whole project which bus operators have never been able to dislodge is the idea that Fleming Way had to be lowered and made one way. The net effect of this is that the routings of some services to the new bus station will be more circuitous take longer to achieve and as a result cost more to provide in operational terms which is likely to get passed on to the customer. • Section 4.1: Cycling does not always work well in bus lanes as riders can often achieve speeds of 22-24mph which can often delay buses because it is too slow but yet again be sufficiently fast as to mean it is unsuitable for a bus to overtake • On page 45, we would advise against making any changes to the Magic Roundabout which works exceptionally well and no other form of junction could work in the same efficient manner. • We totally oppose any proposals for free 'Hopper' bus services to link North Swindon, the retail core and Old Town. There are already very adequate bus services between all these places and this company has additionally recently extended a service from Wroughton to the bus station on to Swindon College in association with the college as part of a Green Travel Initiative. Hopper buses operating free town centre services which are inevitably at best subsidy junkies and at worst, as would be in this case, an undermining force on the conventional public transport network. • Section 5.2: Modelling is needed regarding proposals for two-way traffic on Commercial Road/Farnsby Street • These streets have an issue with illegal parking. Additionally with the proposed amendments to the road network we will see an increase in traffic numbers along roads such as Manchester Road and County Road, which currently suffer from the same large amount of illegal parking issues and hinder the smooth flow of bus operations around the town centre. • Whilst Regent Circus is an important bus stop, it is not likely to become a terminal point and I would need to understand a full traffic model before committing to suggestions for traffic changes in this area. • We object to comments about potentially reducing the size of the facility as we will have less space than currently in a town which is supposed to expand. Detailed studies informed the current 26 bays • P73: 'Dwelling' should be replaced by 'layover', changing drivers by 'crew changes' and 'catching up on timetable functions' by 'recovery time' to accord with normal parlance. • Although there is a desire to reduce the traffic circulation in central Swindon, the plan to build three multi-store car parks in the vicinity of the town centre and the reduction in car parking charges appears counter-productive. • Section 6.3: p94 Site principle on page 94; we would not expect to see cyclists riding across the centre of the bus station concourse as implied here.

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pages 122/124 suggests removing a prioritised bus access on one of the most important access routes to and from West and North Swindon for buses which has over 20 buses an hour in each direction by recommending their exclusion from Church Place. • The new Bus Station has been designed to take full advantage of the bus gate by a new contra-flow bus lane along Sheppard Street and London Street. This priority cannot be lost. • 6.5: Access to Penzance Drive must remain bus only. • 6.7: One of the key masterplan actions would be to improve the link between Old Town and the town centre – particularly along Victoria Road. There is no mention of how this would be achieved.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Object to proposals for a 'hopper' bus service as it will undermine the existing bus service, they suggest if private support is available for a hopper it should be put towards the existing public transport network. • 6.3/town centre/Fleet Street: There is no mention is made of the impact that the relocation of the bus station to the western end of Fleming Way will have on Fleet Street. This is likely to generate far more pedestrian traffic in Fleet Street than the railway station. We believe the increase in footfall brought about by the new bus station will benefit retailing in the area • Fleming Way: We are concerned at the use of the phrase "<u>If</u> the bus station is to be relocated..." in the section about bus station integration and we feel this should be replaced with "<u>As</u> the bus station is to be relocated...". We do not wish to see any uncertainty introduced into the Masterplan about the crucial importance for the town of a new bus station • 6.4: We object strongly to the proposal to remove bus services from Church Place. This is a crucial ingress and egress route for bus services linking the town centre with North and West Swindon and beyond. In combination with the bus gate between Church Place and Bristol Street it helps to isolate these bus services from the endemic traffic congestion along Faringdon Road. • We have been experiencing delays to our services as a result of the current temporary re-routing of westbound services along Faringdon Road due to the road restrictions outside the Mechanics' Institute. We do not wish to see this diversion made permanent. • 6.5: We think it important that bus access is provided between Hawksworth Industrial Estate and Oasis to give the opportunity for services running to/from North Swindon to be routed this way and thereby serve all the employment, education and leisure destinations at North Star.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swindon Borough Council should update its Central Area Action Plan – the blueprint outlining the framework for the regeneration of the Town Centre adopted by Council on 22nd November 2007 – at the earliest opportunity to reflect the current economic conditions. • The updated plan should include how Theatre Square, which is owned by the Council, could be developed into the town's Cultural Quarter. • Forward Swindon should be supported to expand its role as the first point of contact for potential developers and retailers.

Page /section reference	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A visible project management framework could be established to provide ongoing transparency and accountability for all development projects currently being undertaken. • The Council should consider how it can introduce officers who will act as a single point of contact and work with developers to help negotiate the complex governance arrangements of a democratically accountable local authority. • Also a specific individual should be selling Swindon Town Centre and the product needs to be clearly defined. • Good signage linking the station to the Steam Museum, the Outlet Village, the town centre and the bus station should be an immediate priority. • Swindon Council should design a retail circuit for the town centre. This should be signed off by town centre landlords and supported by plans to integrate car parking and bus station services with the chosen retail circuit. • The high streets should be given clear lines of sight.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A clearer, flexible and aspirational vision for the future of Swindon is developed. The vision needs to incorporate a direction for the Town under a number of headings • Swindon needs to ensure that it fully involves Communities, Residents, Retailers and Developers in the development of the Vision. • The Committee would like to see plans develop around the Theatre Square area that create a 'cultural hub' in the Town Centre. • Areas of heritage such as the Mechanics Institute and the Railway Village should be included in the masterplan to ensure future development does not forget our heritage but seeks to build upon it and ensure that any new development is sympathetic. • Leisure offerings in the town centre would be a huge step forward and would like to see the masterplan take account of this. The Town Centre needs more than retail to draw people in and to provide Swindon with its identity. • The previous interim report highlighted the importance of providing good quality public toilets in the town centre; the Committee continues to support this recommendation. • The masterplan needs to be clear about transport links into the Town Centre, in particular it needs to be clear about how the bus station will be integrated into the future of the Town Centre. The Committee felt that there has been a lack of information forthcoming on the future of the Bus Station and how any proposals would benefit the town. More thought should be given to bus users' views on the location of the bus station.
<p>Responses specific to one element</p>	<p>The majority of those who emailed expressed a preference for a through route for the canal. The canal ending in a basin is seen as a 'dead-end' which is of limited economic value and therefore won't get used. One person noted that a journey of 6 miles down the spur navigating 3 locks would take at least 3-4 hours.</p> <p>Those for the through-route were keen to point out the potential benefits to the local economy / increased tourism etc. of a canal.</p>

Page /section reference	Comment
	<p>Oxfordshire County Council want to see a through route as they believe the canal "offers significant long term opportunity to regenerate urban areas and bring benefits to the wider rural corridor"</p> <p>Queries as to why Swindon Borough Council are backing canal restoration but not providing a through route as other plans have suggested. Why is the canal in the Core Strategy but why not this one?</p> <p>References were given to restored canals at Brindley Place, Birmingham; Stratford-upon-Avon, Reading, Banbury, Liverpool Link, Manchester, Stroud as to the economic benefits, regenerative effects.</p> <p>As well as people commenting on tourism, economic, environmental benefits of a through canal the benefits of a tow path were also mentioned for walkers, cyclists, a green way of commuting</p>
	<p>Comments against a through route for the canal are the disruption and major costs involved. Also it won't differentiate Swindon from other places with canals such as Reading / Bath.</p> <p>How would effects on local commuters and residents be mitigated whilst work took place?</p> <p>Railway has more relevance to Swindon than canals.</p> <p>It does seem that the majority of those for a through canal are members of various canal groups who have asked their members to comment on the Forward Swindon proposal solely relating to the canal and not taking into account anything else within the masterplan.</p>
Traffic/transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that new housing will increase traffic and parking issues: • Will the existing stone boundary wall, separating the depot from South Street, be removed? • Will the existing ground level of the depot site be lowered before building the new terraces, as this is currently higher than South Street and would potentially cause "loss of light" issues? • How many new parking spaces will be created for the residents of the new terraces and the proposed apartments adjoining Prospect Place? - Will these be created entirely within the boundary lines? • The draft diagram shows connectivity from the new site to South street; is this purely for pedestrians and cyclists or is the plan to create a new road for vehicular traffic to exit the new site, turning left down South Street, rather than solely exiting via Eastcott Road as the buses currently do

Page /section reference	Comment
	<p>Concern about the value to the town of investment and improvements to Old Town, and highlight the town centre as the best focus for the plans.</p> <p>Questioned the exclusion of Gorse Hill, Broadgreen and Rodbourne, given the inclusion of Old Town.</p>
	<p>Call for an area-wide plan around the Old Town Hall and Corn Exchange</p>
	<p>Would like to see some of the cultural projects accommodated within Swindon's heritage area, rather than being concentrated in the Promenade Area</p>
	<p>A number of comments submitted on the detail of the Plan, where they relate to inaccuracies or the need for clarification, changes will be made to the document.</p>