Vision for Airedale

‘Airedale Corridors: A Masterplan and Strategy for Airedale’ focuses on the economy and sets out a new role for Airedale in the City Region and Northern Way. It is a Masterplan for accelerating change and building on existing quality. At its heart is the regeneration of the three inter-connected town centres of Keighley, Bingley and Shipley and the enhancement of the rural landscape, the ‘raw material’ for Airedale to be harnessed to deliver future change.

The economy of Airedale grew from an agricultural market area to a rich and varied mixture of mining, textiles, engineering, printing and finance connected to international markets by the Leeds & Liverpool canal. Much of the industry declined but diversified and became more specialised into new business streams in automotives, electronics and design. The economy now has a growing research, design and development sector that complements the specialised manufacturing and growing service sector.

To create a deliverable masterplan a vision has been developed to reflect the importance of the economy, connectivity and as a place to live in the context of a predominantly rural environment. Airedale can be a creative, connected, lifestyle corridor set in a rural backdrop. These are the Airedale Corridors to deliver the Bradford 2020 Vision.
Creative Corridor

Education, skills and training are vital foundations to the long-term economy of Airedale, with specialist schools focused on future skills and raising standards. New accommodation and premises for Keighley and Shipley Colleges are planned, integrated around transport links to form the Airedale Learning Line. Stronger links with higher education and universities are being established to create a presence within the principal towns.

The establishment of a world-class commercial design and development institute, focused on digital and knowledge industries, will lead innovation and enterprise. New facilities linked to higher education and university research and development departments will enhance innovation and product development. Planned provision of managed business incubation and support mechanisms should help the self-employed to grow their business.

Securing land for employment to allow existing businesses to move into new buildings and premises will be a priority. High-quality business premises need to be provided to support new research, design and a growing service sector industry. Raising the quality and environment of existing commercial and industrial premises will attract higher value business.
Connected Corridor

Integrated transport is essential to support a modern economy, including road and public transport options to revitalise the historical links to Central Lancashire. Creation of a rail link to Leeds Bradford International Airport will unlock international markets to a new high-value economy. Regeneration of the three principal railway stations will create gateways to Airedale and act as catalysts for investment.

Information Communication and Technology is increasingly important and rapid take-up of available broadband is vital to future progression. Expansion of ‘e’- learning developments throughout Airedale will be vital to promote learning in rural areas and in connecting them to centres for education. Wireless internet zones around key town centre business zones will introduce a new way of working.

Co-ordination is vital to successful delivery and an administration team that can support the Airedale Partnership will be essential. A central marketing tool that stores information will be paramount in establishing communications to a wider audience. Active championing and promotion of Airedale throughout regional, government and industry forums will advance Airedale’s role in the City Region.
Corridor

Town centres govern the perception of Airedale and balancing traffic, pedestrian movement and public transport will be vital. As market towns, the enhancement of retailing will revitalise the centres serving the rural hinterlands. Leisure and cultural facilities are to be enhanced and reinforce the local character of the town centres.

Residential areas will be focused around town centres, rather than the urban fringe. Where large tracts of housing have become poor it will be selectively regenerated. The engagement with broadband will begin in the home, with installation to all new premises.

Tourism is an opportunity to showcase Airedale and the diverse attractions will be knitted together with a centralised marketing tool. High-quality hotel accommodation will encourage overnight stays for tourists and business users. The core attractions of Saltaire World Heritage Site, the Keighley and Worth Valley Railway and Bronte Parsonage will be built upon to create a product of substance.
Places for Change

The Masterplan focuses on strategic interventions and the future economy of Airedale in its broadest sense. Interventions are concentrated in the three principal towns of Airedale, each of which will play a distinctive role in the regeneration of the area, and along the transport corridors at the bottom of the valley.

**Keighley: A Town Of Heritage & Innovation** – develops as the retail, leisure and cultural centre of Airedale, celebrates the Town’s heritage and quality of its buildings and builds on the spirit of innovation which exists not only in the manufacturing sector but also in the rapidly developing business services and communication sectors.

**Bingley: A Distinctive Market Town with a Creative Edge** – improves the quality of its offer as a town in which to live, visit and shop and develops its creative edge by the construction of a business technology park on the Auction Mart site to attract and support new enterprise.

**Shipley: An International Gateway to Airedale** – reinforced as a location for the creation of dynamic business in the digital and engineering sectors through new commercial developments with new connections to Leeds/Bradford Airport and the reconnection of the town to its best assets of the railway station, Saltaire, and the waterside.

In addition the Masterplan proposes interventions to enhance the rural landscape and interventions in strategic areas: Steeton & Silsden Diverse Business Zone, Bolton Woods Leisure and Education Zone and a series of projects in the Esholt and Baildon areas.
A framework for change has been established to deliver the many projects that are proposed, or underway, within Airedale. Projects are designed to inspire, raise confidence and trigger a chain reaction of regeneration. The co-ordination of investment will be through the Airedale Partnership and its delivery support team.

The timeframe for change is planned over the short, medium and long term between 2005 and 2020. The intention is to capitalise on Objective 2 funding in the short term to facilitate change. The positioning of Airedale as a centre for commercial research and development will provide focus for investment in the economy.

Delivery will require investment from the private sector, encouraged by public sector investment, in supporting priority projects.

Demand for residential accommodation is high and associated values need to be harnessed to regenerate the town centres. Accommodating mixed-use schemes adds value and quality but also supports the provision of the high-quality, state-of-the-art business space that is essential for the new economy.
For further information or a copy of the full masterplan:

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