

# Beverley Town Plan

## Visitor Economy Development & Management Plan

January 2010



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# 1. BACKGROUND

## Introduction

- 1.1 The Visitor Economy Development and Management Plan (VEDM Plan), supports the Investment and Development Strategy (IDS Plan) and draws out some particular action areas that will strengthen the visitor economy in the short to medium term addressing a number of challenges and opportunities that have been highlighted through our work.
- 1.2 A significant Evidence Base was prepared as part of the study (Baseline Report<sup>1</sup>) which contains an assessment of the current visitor offer and identifies a number of key assets which should underpin this Action Plan. These include: the Minster; St Mary's Church; The Guildhall; and the Treasure House. The purpose of this Plan therefore is not to re-iterate the content of the Baseline Report but rather to identify key action areas which collectively will add to the visitor economy of Beverley.

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<sup>1</sup> The Baseline Report Document is part of the full suite of Town Plan Documents

- 1.3 However, it is worth noting at the outset, that fundamental to this Plan is a recognition of the economic importance of attracting visitors to Beverley and indeed in enhancing the quality of life and health and well-being of the resident community. The two work 'hand in glove' as a vibrant visitor economy positively impacts on businesses and in providing facilities and activities which benefit the local community.

## Visitor Development and Management

- 1.4 Improving the visitor offer both in terms of diversity and quality of product and service, combined with focused marketing will enable a 'higher spend' tourist to be attracted. There are significant assets on which to build visitor development notably in heritage, arts and events (as commented upon in the Baseline Report) but also fundamental weaknesses in some aspects of the tourism infrastructure including serviced accommodation and signage which guides the visitor to the various attractions.
- 1.5 Alongside visitor development is the need to 'manage visitors' and co-ordinate activity by ensuring the components that make up the visitor experience e.g. signage, welcome, information navigation are in place alongside the visitor facilities themselves.

## The Challenge

1.6 The challenge in developing the visitor economy in Beverley is to achieve:

- A cross sector consensus on its importance and benefits (i.e. public funded agencies, businesses, voluntary sector, local community)
- A commitment to the action areas identified
- Allocation of resources, both people and money
- Leadership

1.7 In the following sections we re-affirm the vision (set out in full in the Investment & Development Strategy), identify a number of guiding principles and highlight the objectives of particular relevance to the visitor economy.

## 2. VISION, GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND KEY OBJECTIVES

### Introduction

- 2.1 This Plan aims to give a clear direction and purpose in developing the visitor economy in Beverley by optimising its strengths, co-ordinating visitor services and overcoming identified weaknesses. The vision noted in the Investment & Development Strategy (highlighted to the right) acknowledges the contribution of culture, heritage and leisure in re-positioning the town as an 'attractive tourist destination' (source: Beverley Town Plan 2006).

*"By 2016 Beverley will be one of the region's premier historic market towns, it will be thriving and prosperous, providing visitors with a unique heritage tourism offer including the Minster, historic markets and buildings. The town will offer high quality retail, leisure, community facilities, recreational and open space. Employment opportunities in the town will be boosted through new, high value, knowledge based businesses that will be operating in the area. The town will be served by new park and ride facilities linked to an improved road network."*

The 'Our East Riding': East Riding Community Plan 2008 Update

### Guiding Principles

- 2.2 To achieve this vision, the following guiding principles will be of importance:
- To provide an environment which is conducive to showcasing the quality of the tourism assets
  - To provide a high quality visitor experience that regularly exceeds customer expectations

- To conserve, manage and enhance the heritage assets of the area, making the most of the distinctiveness of the area
- To improve the quality, mix and linkages of and between all elements of the tourism /visitor infrastructure
- To provide a good quality, visitor experience which gives Beverley a 'competitive edge'
- To ensure a 'joined up' approach to promoting Beverley as a visitor destination co-ordinating the people and resources of: public funded agencies, commercial sector, the voluntary sector and local community thereby optimising resources

## Key Objectives

2.3 The Town Plan identifies 9 key objectives that will enable the vision to be delivered of which the following are particularly pertinent to this Plan:

### *Objectives*

- The town centre will include a stronger and more diverse retail and 'leisure offer'. This will contribute towards ensuring that Beverley continues to be a thriving and bustling shopping centre and reduce shopping leakage to other competing centres
- Beverley's Visitor Economy is recognised as a core driver of the town. The potential of its existing assets, including the Racecourse and the Minster, are realised and other new opportunities are explored to further enhance the offer
- Beverley's Cultural Offer represents a key asset in attracting visitors and creating a vibrant place in which to live. This is represented both in quality and number of venues in the town but also the breadth and diversity within its event calendar
- The profile of the town is raised and over-time matches that of other Yorkshire towns such as Harrogate or Whitby
- The entry experience of Beverley is clearly defined through the provision of strong 'Gateway' entrances to Beverley and the Town Centre. These gateways, announce the retail and visitor offer which the town has for visitors, residents and potential investors
- The town's retail, visitor and commercial offer is enhanced by a high quality and distinct visual appearance of the town centre and surrounds. This will

include the public realm and the visual contribution of new developments

- 2.4 Taking the above into consideration, the key theme of relevance to this Plan is:

*Visit Beverley – Projects targeted at developing the Visitor Economy within Beverley and enhancing the overall visitor experience*

- 2.5 Key action areas relevant to this are noted in the following section.

## 3. ACTION PLAN

### Introduction

- 3.1 The Action Plan that follows takes as its basis the projects outlined in the Investment & Development Strategy (and aligns with the numbers referenced from this document<sup>2</sup>) but builds on these to provide further specific details and tasks. At the conclusion, we note several further action areas that will also be important in driving forward the Visitor Economy.

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<sup>2</sup> The Investment and Development Strategy is the main document within the full suite of Town Plan documents. Project numbers are linked to the the four themes identified within the Strategy.

Project Number as referenced in Investment Strategy	Requirements	Actions	By Whom
4.1 - Long Stay Coach Parking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing drop off points at key locations e.g. Minster and at Markets and providing accessible and secure coach parking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm appropriate drop off points</li> <li>Liaise with tour operators re access, parking and facility requirements</li> <li>Identify sites for permanent and temporary parking</li> <li>Provide information and maps on location(s) and facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERYC</li> <li>Highways Agency</li> <li>Town Council</li> <li>Operators</li> <li>Town Centre Manager</li> </ul>
4.2 Westwood Visitor Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To capture the tourism related assets, as part of the Beverley visitor offer, notably:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Racecourse</li> <li>The Beverley Golf Club</li> <li>Provide a primary Gateway to Beverley</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To incorporate Race meetings and events located at the Racecourse and Golf Club in a newly promoted programme of events</li> <li>To ensure the Racecourse and Golf Club are represented within appropriate working groups</li> <li>To establish the costs of providing visitor facilities at Westwood (new or based at the Racecourse) which provide visitor facilities, toilets, refreshments and information (e.g. orientation map packs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pasture Masters</li> <li>ERYC</li> <li>Operators</li> <li>Town Centre Manager</li> <li>The Racecourse</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review opportunity to the open spaced more 'visitor friendly' e.g. picnic benches, play/recreation areas for children and extend events there in the spring/summer.</li> </ul>	
4.3 Beverley Town Centre Manager (or management team)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fundamental need to co-ordinate activities and independent groups working within the sector</li> <li>Implementation of Town Plan Investment Development Strategy in relation to Visitor Economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure funding (combination of private and public sector) for 3 year initial term</li> <li>To prepare job description with key responsibilities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop events/ festivals programme</li> <li>Ensure cross-sector 'buy in'</li> <li>Develop Evening Economy</li> <li>Support existing Visitor Economy groups</li> <li>Provide a focal point for inter agency working</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERYC</li> <li>Town Council</li> </ul>
4.4 Visitor Signage Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To raise profile of Beverley's visitor facilities</li> <li>Provide directions and guidance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To liaise with County Transport Dept to provide brown signage for key assets e.g. the Minster, the Racecourse, St Mary's</li> <li>To identify a single point of contact for all</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERYC</li> <li>VHEY</li> <li>Operators</li> </ul>

		<p>signage issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide key information points e.g. touch screens, orientation map packs</li> <li>To ensure fully function Tourist Information Centre (TIC)</li> </ul>	
<p>4.5 Town Centre Signage Strategy – Beverley Town Trail (Short-term)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coherent Strategy to provide visitors with focal points and a ‘way round’ Beverley with improved signage throughout the centre. This will build on the Beverley Town Trail which encompasses the main tourism assets and the development of 40 linked artworks and visitor information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To develop written promotional guides targeted at different target groups e.g. education market, ‘grey’ market, ‘family’ market with potential to add incentivised competitions in an ad hoc basis</li> <li>Invest in additional signage within the town centre as required.</li> <li>To provide printed material to enhance community and stimulate interest, to:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>existing of accommodation and attractions</li> <li>tour group operators</li> <li>TIC in the wider Yorkshire area</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERYC</li> <li>Highways Agency</li> <li>VHEY</li> <li>Town Trail Committee</li> </ul>
<p>4.6 Promotional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to provide comprehensive information re: “what to see and what</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop Beverley food and drink/eating out guide</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town Centre Manager</li> <li>VHEY</li> </ul>

<p>Activities</p>	<p>to do” in Beverley and which widens current target markets presently attracted to Beverley</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an annual programme of events</li> <li>• Enhance the programme of events to include ‘Real Ale Festival’,, speciality foods e.g. chocoholics, Jazz Festival, developing the Food Festival into a 2-day event, Christmas markets, creation of a horticultural themed event</li> <li>• Add ‘plug and play’ (i.e. access to utilities through new infrastructure provision) at key locations, encourage street entertainment to ‘draw’ locals and residents into the area</li> <li>• Develop an on-line/hard copy Beverley Evening Guide, which is regularly updated and comprises:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listings of venues and ‘circuits’, with routes customisable by theme (e.g. food cuisine/music)</li> <li>• Advance events notice (e.g. fairs, musical, gigs)</li> <li>• Travel information (including parking)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operators</li> <li>• Tourism businesses</li> </ul>
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4.7 Memorial Hall / New Cultural Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for a multi-purpose indoor space capable of hosting a range of events including: theatre and dance; as well as providing a base for functions and meetings</li> <li>• Delivery of a 'year round' programme of events requires a combination of both indoor and outdoor spaces and the Memorial Hall has the potential to become a 'cultural hub' for the town</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support existing plans for the Beverley War Memorial Hall re-development project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ERYC</li> <li>• VHEY</li> <li>• Memorial Hall Trust</li> </ul>
4.8 Cycle Beverley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building on Beverley's achievement in competitive cycling and the significant growth in recreational cycling, develop:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safe, cycling routes in and around the town with appropriate bike racks/secure</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritise new cycle routes across and within Beverley in line with the Wolds Tourism Development plan.</li> <li>• Promote existing town cycle routes through the development of appropriate signage.</li> <li>• Based on this, identify appropriate location</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ERYC</li> <li>• British Cycling</li> <li>• VHEY</li> </ul>

	<p>bike storage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a range of circular routes of different lengths and difficulty catering for the family market and mountain bike market</li> <li>• Provision of bike hire and support visitor facilities</li> </ul>	<p>for securing bikes (e.g. within the retail core, Minster, Treasure House)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the potential to deliver a cycle hire centre.</li> </ul>	
4.9 Westwood Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facility audit identified the need for a full service hotel in Beverley. Although the main operators are 'lukewarm' at present reflecting the economic climate, the potential to utilise the Westwood Hospital site for a new hotel development needs to be taken forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commission a feasibility study to identify market opportunity and financial feasibility of developing a new hotel and determine likely market position e.g. full service (boutique, conference, leisure); limited service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ERYC</li> <li>• VHEY</li> </ul>
1.2 Minster Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whilst not specifically a Visitor oriented Project (included under the Theme First Impressions) the improvements to the wider Minster Environment are closely linked to the Minster's own potential plans to improve the visitor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with representatives of the Minster to understand in more detail the scope of the proposals;</li> <li>• Programme in any plans to improve the Minster facilities to twintrack other projects in close proximity including the improvements to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ERYC</li> <li>• VHEY</li> <li>• Minster Representatives</li> <li>• Town Council</li> </ul>

	<p>facilities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These improvements could include the introduction of a visitor and education facility and refectory able to accommodate approximately 60 visitors.</li> </ul>	<p>the Minster Garden surrounds and Key vista projects;</p>	
<p>1.5 Beverley Beck Waterside and Lock</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This project is included within the Investment Strategy under the First Impressions Theme. The successful delivery of the project will contribute towards generating greater levels of visitors within the town and contribute towards creating an improved visitor offer.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake an assessment of the overall mooring capacity and the impact of creating additional visitor moorings in partnership with Beverley Beck Boating Association;</li> <li>• Engage with businesses located in the Grovehill Industrial Estate which back onto the river to understand their aspirations and intentions for improvements to boundaries;</li> <li>• Monitoring of developer interest in introducing permanent moorings (note: recent interest of London based Living Waters)</li> <li>• Soft market testing with watersports clubs and organisations to identify if any interest exists to use / or be based in the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ERYC</li> <li>• Beverley Beck Boating Association</li> </ul>

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## 4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The foregoing Action Plan provides the detail in delivering the projects identified in the Town Plan, which in turn accord with the Key Objectives. Outside of these, consideration needs to be given to the following:

Facilities:

- build on existing food and beverage offer by targeting some branded operations
- review potential for 'micro brewery' (Minster Ales) which builds on existing real ale offer and growth in real ale consumption

Connectivity:

- development of a vibrant evening economy needs a combination of elements, notably: food and drink; retail; cultural activity (e.g. events, theatre, music, library) which all commit to opening extended hours. The Christmas period presents the first opportunity for these facilities to link together and start to promote activity in the key periods of 5-7pm and 7-11pm

4.2 The development and management of the visitor economy will require a cross sectoral approach which involves public agencies, leisure/hospitality operators, businesses and the voluntary sector to ensure a 'seamless' approach where the visitor comes first. Ensuring a high quality experience (facilities and services) will lead to repeat visits, extended stay time and recommendation to friends and family, with consequent economic benefits.

