Foreword by Councillor Donachie, Cabinet Member for Economy & Skills

Swindon has benefited from significant investment in road and rail transport links since the 19th Century securing its position as one of the best strategic locations in the country. This investment, and billions more in the following years, initiated Swindon’s incredible industrial heritage and manufacturing expertise and reputation, transforming the town into the large, multi-cultural, commercial centre that is thriving year on year.

Swindon provides access to five major cities, numerous international transport hubs and to the motorway system through two significantly enhanced junctions. The railway line electrification project will further reduce journey times to London and London Heathrow to 45 minutes, making Swindon an even stronger investment proposition.

The Swindon Borough Council Economic Strategy sets out Swindon’s approach to building upon its well established business base to create wealth, jobs, housing and new opportunities over the next 10 years. Our core Strategy is that “By 2026, Swindon will aim to be the UK’s most innovative, productive, fast growing city and will grow sustainably by up-skilling our workforce to enable our businesses to compete, whilst enhancing residents’ quality of life”

Potential investors and developers will find exciting and lucrative opportunities within this Investment Guide. This is a fantastic time to be involved in Swindon as it takes its next step forward in economic growth. We hope you will choose to work with us and share in the prosperity we will create for businesses, residents and investors alike.

Swindon is open for business and waiting to support you.

Foreword Jenny Groves, Chair of the Switch on to Swindon Place Board

If you bank with Nationwide, use Intel products, drive a Mini or Honda Civic, enjoy Formula 1, have ever visited a National Trust property, watched Tim Peake’s progress through space or have simply benefited from scientific or medical research, you’ve got Swindon to thank.

Swindon has a great location and connectivity, a legacy of fast growth and boundless enthusiasm. Its existing business base is one of the most impressive in the UK and companies that are hungry for growth and success are thriving in Swindon.

Nationally recognised clusters in pharmaceuticals, banking and professional services, automotive and advanced engineering and the digital economy contribute to a thriving business base of 8,600 companies. And Swindon’s population is growing fast – four times the English average over the last four decades – earning it a seat at the table with the Five Fast Growth Cities, which makes it an ideal place to invest in.

The Switch On To Swindon group of almost 500 Ambassadors is enabling even more people to recognise just how much potential there is in Swindon. We look forward to welcoming anyone who wants to invest in the opportunities identified in this guide.
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THE FACTS ABOUT SWINDON:
THE UK’S 7TH MOST ‘INVESTABLE TOWN’

A GREAT PLACE TO WORK

LARGEST APPRENTICESHIP GROWTH INCREASE (2015 – 16)

Over 8,600 thriving companies (of all types & sizes)

91% of schools rated good/outstanding*

12 UNIVERSITIES ARE LOCATED WITHIN 1 HOUR OF THE BOROUGH
5 of which are in the UK’s top 10 for accounting / finance / economics / mathematics

82% of graduates are in a high-skilled occupation
4th best in the UK

A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE

GREAT ROAD AND TRAIN LINKS
Be in London, Oxford, Bath, Bristol and Cardiff and Heathrow and Gatwick Airports within an hour

Within half an hour of some of the finest English countryside, from Stonehenge to the Cotswolds

A GREAT PLACE TO INVEST

LOWEST COMMERCIAL RENTALS along the M4 corridor

£multimillion commercial opportunities planned

TOP 5 MOST ATTRACTIVE REGIONS IN ENGLAND TO LOCATE A BUSINESS

1 OF THE UK’S FASTEST GROWING TOWNS
(5 times the UK average)

1,500 HOUSES A YEAR TO BE BUILT (before 2026)

OVER £0.5 BILLION TOWN CENTRE INVESTMENT

1 of the most INNOVATIVE & KNOWLEDGE intensive places (in the UK)

10th MOST PRODUCTIVE ECONOMY (in terms of GVA per worker)

1 OF EUROPE’S MOST SUCCESSFUL DESIGNER OUTLET CENTRES

Exceptional green & open space, a fantastic mix of high street retail names, boutiques, specialist retailers

HIGH QUALITY, GOOD VALUE HOUSING

Swindon has some of the South’s best ‘house price to earnings’ ratios

Swindon 6.4% • Bristol 8.2% • Reading 8.5% • Oxford 11.7%

A growing population of 222,000

1.9 MILLION PEOPLE live within 1 hour of Swindon
(a ready-made market for labour, retail and leisure)

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Swindon has one of the most impressive, diverse business networks in the UK, with the headquarters of many internationally renowned companies including Honda UK Manufacturing, Intel, Nationwide, RWE Npower, WHSmith and Zurich, to name but a few. Also the UK’s seven Research Councils including Innovate and the European Space Agency choose to operate nationally from Swindon, as do major national heritage organisations with both Historic England and the National Trust being based here.

Swindon has also built up outstanding innovative clusters of expertise in the following sectors:

> **Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing featuring Automotive and Aerospace**

Honda invested over £267 million in Swindon; the centre for Honda Civic production for export to global markets. Pressed Steel Fisher Factory began producing railway sheet metal pressings and bodywork before being taken over by Rover (now BMW). Other key companies include TS Tech and Dynamatic Technologies. Swindon has the 7th largest automotive manufacturing employment cluster in the UK.

> **Distribution and Logistics**

Direct dual access to the M5, M40 and A roads with sympathetic transport policies and major improvements at Junction 16 (ends Spring 18), large business and employment parks all make Swindon a popular choice for distribution and logistics companies. These include Aldi, Honda Logistics and WH Smith.

> **Finance and Digital Technology**

Swindon is in the top third nationally in digital economy jobs, with key employers including Excaliber IT, Cisco, Intel, Swindon Silicon Systems, Siemens, Dialog Semiconductor, Allied Telesis and Appsbroker (affiliated with Google). Nationwide has its UK headquarters in Swindon, employing over 4,000 staff. Other global names such as Zurich, Handelsbanken, MAN Financial Services and Fleetcor Europe have a significant presence here.

> **Low Carbon Economy**

Swindon is fast becoming the destination of choice for Low Carbon research and commercial opportunities. For example, Swindon is the only town outside London with 2 Hydrogen Fuelling Stations and the Council’s 200MW of renewable energy target by 2020 is driving solar energy company growth.

> **Medicine and Pharmaceuticals**

Swindon has the 8th largest pharmaceutical employment cluster with companies such as Patheon, Catalent, Beckton Dickinson, Vygon, Biomet Pharma and Wasdell Packaging. Swindon’s Great Western Hospital, run by the Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, has 400 in-patient beds, serving approximately 300,000 people.

> **Retail and Leisure**

Swindon has a strong mix of high street names in the town centre; boutiques and specialist retailers in Old Town; along with one of Europe’s most successful designer outlet centres in the historic railway quarter. Significant recent investment has improved the town centre, with many other opportunities available.
RECENT SUCCESSES & CURRENT PROJECTS
The TriCentre – Comprises high-quality office accommodation, mainly open plan with meeting rooms, partly utilised by Zurich. The brand-new Fig Offices offer fully specified, modern workspaces with the latest communications technology, superfast broadband and free Wifi as standard.

Metro Bank – The revolution in British banking, is set to open a new store in Swindon in 2017. The High Street bank typically opens seven days a week, early until late, 362 days a year.

The Brunel Shopping Centre – Currently extending to include a high-quality food quarter to offer shoppers popular food brand names.

Swindon Primary Care Trust Building – A large, modern health centre, has replaced the Carfax Street Health Centre, providing a pharmacy, 2 GP practices, dental, podiatry and a variety of community health services and a walk-in centre.

Falcon House – Owned by Standard Life Investments, this is a prominent town centre site above Debenhams Department Store. Swindon Borough Council is working with the owner on a refurbishment proposal to create 90 apartments and to refurbish the store fascia.

The Regent Circus development – Completed in 2015, with Standard Life investing over £50 million to create a figurehead town centre retail and leisure complex, with global brands and fantastic public realm surrounds.

Thistle Hotel – Recently opened in the centre of Swindon. GLH Hotels has revamped ninety-five bedrooms across the seven floors and the bar, restaurant and conferencing facilities.

Swindon Museum and Art Gallery – The Trust and its partners are bidding for funding to move the Museum from its current location to a bespoke culturally significant venue. The proposed site has already been cleared in preparation. This exciting opportunity worth over £25 million will initiate Swindon’s new Cultural Quarter and attract over 100,000 visitors per year.

North Star – This exciting leisure project is for the development of an indoor snow ski slope of c. 15,794m² including main and nursery slopes and a play area; 13 screen cinema; ten pin bowling; sport-related A1 retail and other ‘destination uses’; food and beverage outlets; car parking for 750 cars and a 100-150 bedroom hotel. The scheme is currently at planning application stage with the aim of the first phase being opened in 2020.
The Swindon Designer Outlet Centre – An extremely attractive and popular retail destination, which attracts over 3.5 million visitors per annum. The Centre, based in the renovated Grade II listed former Great Western Railway works, underwent a £40 million regeneration in 2015, providing a greater choice of eating and shopping experiences.

Further plans include opening up the access and visibility between the Centre and adjacent historic STEAM Railway Museum, improving access and the public realm.

The Old Railway Quarter – Residential and office space is fast becoming one of Swindon’s most desirable locations, with an eclectic combination of office, retail, recreational and now residential space in beautifully renovated listed buildings. Impressive neighbours include the National Trust HQ, English Heritage National Monuments Record Centre, STEAM Museum and the Designer Outlet Centre.

1 – 3 Faringdon Road – The restoration of 2 heritage buildings to provide 700m$^2$ of refurbished flats and retail space at this prominent location and key route through the town centre is currently underway. The development will create a sense of arrival to the Railway Heritage Village and demonstrate Swindon Borough Council’s commitment to improving the town centre environment.
OUT OF TOWN DEVELOPMENTS

Swindon benefits from numerous out of town employment and business parks, all of excellent quality, with a variety of office, retail, distribution and industrial opportunities. All are well-served by public transport and the excellent road links into and around the town make them highly desirable options.

A few, recent examples of investment success include:

Wichelstowe new-build project will create a whole new community, comprising 3 ‘villages’: East, Middle and West Wichel. The total site area is 3.1 km² with 125,000 km² separated for employment use. The remainder of the site will include 4,500 homes; 4 local centres; 4 schools; community facilities including an emergency services point; and public open space. Residential and infrastructure construction began in 2007, with over 700 houses already built in East Wichel. Employment land with direct access to the M4 is expected from 2020. The site is owned by Swindon Borough Council, and a joint venture with Barratt Developments is currently enabling the housing and site infrastructure. The flagship Waitrose store already open and trading.

Situated to the north of Swindon, Tadpole Garden Village is a modern development of 2 – 5 bedroom homes, forming part of a thriving new community. The new village has a community centre, retail and convenience facilities, a new primary school, play areas and plenty of open space to enjoy the great outdoors.

Other recent investment at Great Western Way and Rodbourne Road has welcomed Travelodge, a new drive-thru Costa, KFC, Aldi and further residential development.

MAJOR TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS

Building on its excellent transport links, Swindon is currently investing in a £90 million package of transport improvements, to be delivered by 2021. This includes the £12 million upgrade of the M4 Junction 16, which will be completed in Spring 2018 and a £10 million improvement at Junction 15 to make it even easier for people and businesses in Swindon to access the motorway.

On the railway, the £1.8 billion investment in the electrification of the Great Western Railway Main Line through the town will be completed in December 2018, bringing London within 45 minutes, travelling on new electric-powered trains.

The growth of the town at Wichelstowe and New Eastern Villages will be facilitated by new roads, including the Wichelstowe Southern Access linking to Junction 16 and the Southern Connector Road which will connect the New Eastern Villages to Junction 15, and junction improvements, such as the £28 million upgrade of the A419 / A420 White Hart Junction.

A £5 million improvement at Greenbridge Roundabout in Eastern Swindon has recently been completed (2017) as part of the New Eastern Villages package.

Public transport is not being neglected, with planned investment in a new town centre Bus Station and ambitious plans for the re-development of Swindon’s Railway Station.
NEW OPPORTUNITIES
KIMMERFIELDS

One of the biggest business space opportunities west of London and the gateway project for Swindon’s regenerated town centre.

Kimmerfields will be a new £350 million, mixed-use business district with up to 55,742m² of new office space, 13,935m² of ancillary retail, a new hotel, up to 450 homes (some affordable), 850 space multi-storey car park and a new bus exchange for the town.

QUICK FACTS

TYPE:
Mixed use new build (commercial, public realm and residential).

LOCATION:
5 minutes’ walk to the railway station and adjacent to the town centre, which comprises the central business district and proposed cultural quarter.

OWNERS / DEVELOPERS:
Swindon Borough Council owns the majority of the site with the Homes and Communities Agency.

SCALE:
The total site is 80,937m² and has potential to create 4,000 new jobs.

INVESTMENT TYPE:
Institutional investment, possible developers for individual packages.

TIMESCALE:
Currently at scoping stage.
A unique opportunity within a railway heritage building. The £4 million major regeneration scheme will provide well-designed, flexible office and industrial space for a range of uses. The Business Innovation Centre for high-value knowledge-based companies will be supported by a higher-education and research presence, complimented by ancillary retail and hospitality services.

Phase 1, offering a Business Incubation Centre for digital and creative start-up and scale-up companies with 80 workspaces, is expected to open in early 2018.

**QUICK FACTS**

**TYPE:**
Commercial redevelopment (office, ancillary retail and light industrial).

**LOCATION:**
5 minutes’ walking from Swindon Railway Station and adjacent to the town centre, within an attractive railway heritage area of the town.

**OWNERS / DEVELOPERS:**
Swindon Borough Council.

**SCALE:**
25,425m²

**INVESTMENT TYPE:**
Institutional investment, possible developers / operators for individual units.

**TIMESCALE:**
From early 2018 onwards.
The re-development of Swindon Railway Station to create a high quality gateway to Swindon, with increased capacity to handle more train services and to better meet the needs and expectations of an ever-increasing number of passengers.

The project will include improved access between North Star leisure development, the railway station and improved passenger and commercial offer, with new car parking facilities, public transport and cycle interchange improvements, office, retail and station remodelling.

**QUICK FACTS**

**TYPE:** Mixed-use town centre regeneration.

**LOCATION:** Swindon town centre.

**OWNERS / DEVELOPERS:** Various including Network Rail, Great Western Railway and the Homes and Communities Agency.
Granville Street is an existing surface car park with the potential to be incorporated within the Aspen House redevelopment as a future phase.

Well-designed new homes for town centre living. Improving connectivity between the Brunel Centre and Regent Street via Commercial Road.

**QUICK FACTS**

**TYPE:**
Residential redevelopment.

**LOCATION:**
A key location in the town centre.

**OWNERS / DEVELOPERS:**
Swindon Borough Council.

**SCALE:**
12,545m²

**INVESTMENT TYPE:**
Institutional investment, possible developers.

**TIMESCALE:**
Phased development: Aspen (phase 1); Granville (phase 2).
Built in 1852, the first Corn Exchange served as a corn store and market with offices above, later becoming Swindon’s Town Hall, soon to be remodelled into a grand public entertainment space.

A £35 million regeneration scheme to restore Swindon’s most iconic building, creating 80+ homes and other uses. Using an iconic, sympathetic design to create an exemplar mixed-use heritage development that can thrive on a commercial basis.

QUICK FACTS

**TYPE:**
Commercial and residential redevelopment.

**LOCATION:**
To the south of the town centre, at the heart of the popular ‘Swindon Old Town’.

**OWNERS / DEVELOPERS:**
Private owner, working in conjunction with Swindon Borough Council.

**SCALE:**
4,050m²

**INVESTMENT TYPE:**
Institutional investment, possible developers.

**TIMESCALE:**
Planning application is expected within 2017.
The original building, designed by Edward Roberts and constructed by the Great Western Railway workers in 1855, contained the UK’s first lending library and provided health services to workers. It was seen as the forerunner to the National Health Service.

Restoring a Grade II listed building to improve the public realm around Emlyn Square in-keeping with the heritage surroundings.

**QUICK FACTS**

**TYPE:**
Options could include educational, community and research institutions.

**LOCATION:**
5 minutes’ walking from Swindon Railway Station and adjacent to the town centre, within an attractive railway heritage area of the town.

**OWNERS / DEVELOPERS:**
The Crown Estate.

**SCALE:**
25,500m² over 3 floors.

**INVESTMENT TYPE:**
Possible institutional investment / developers.

**TIMESCALE:**
Options under consideration.
The New Eastern Villages (NEV), with a total site area of 7.25km², is the largest of Swindon’s strategic growth areas and will provide a major new community based on a series of linked villages within a countryside setting.

The first phase of development is under construction and will see the delivery of a new 202,000m² storage and distribution facility on the employment park.

**QUICK FACTS**

**TYPE:**
A new community comprising 8,000 homes, a new District Centre, 400,000m² of employment and associated health, retail, education and leisure facilities.

**LOCATION:**
On the South East outskirts of Swindon.

**OWNERS / DEVELOPERS:**
Several development partners will be responsible for the successful delivery of the NEV.

**SCALE:**
7.25km²
For information on any of the Investment Guide opportunities or any other questions relating to investing in Swindon, please contact us at:

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