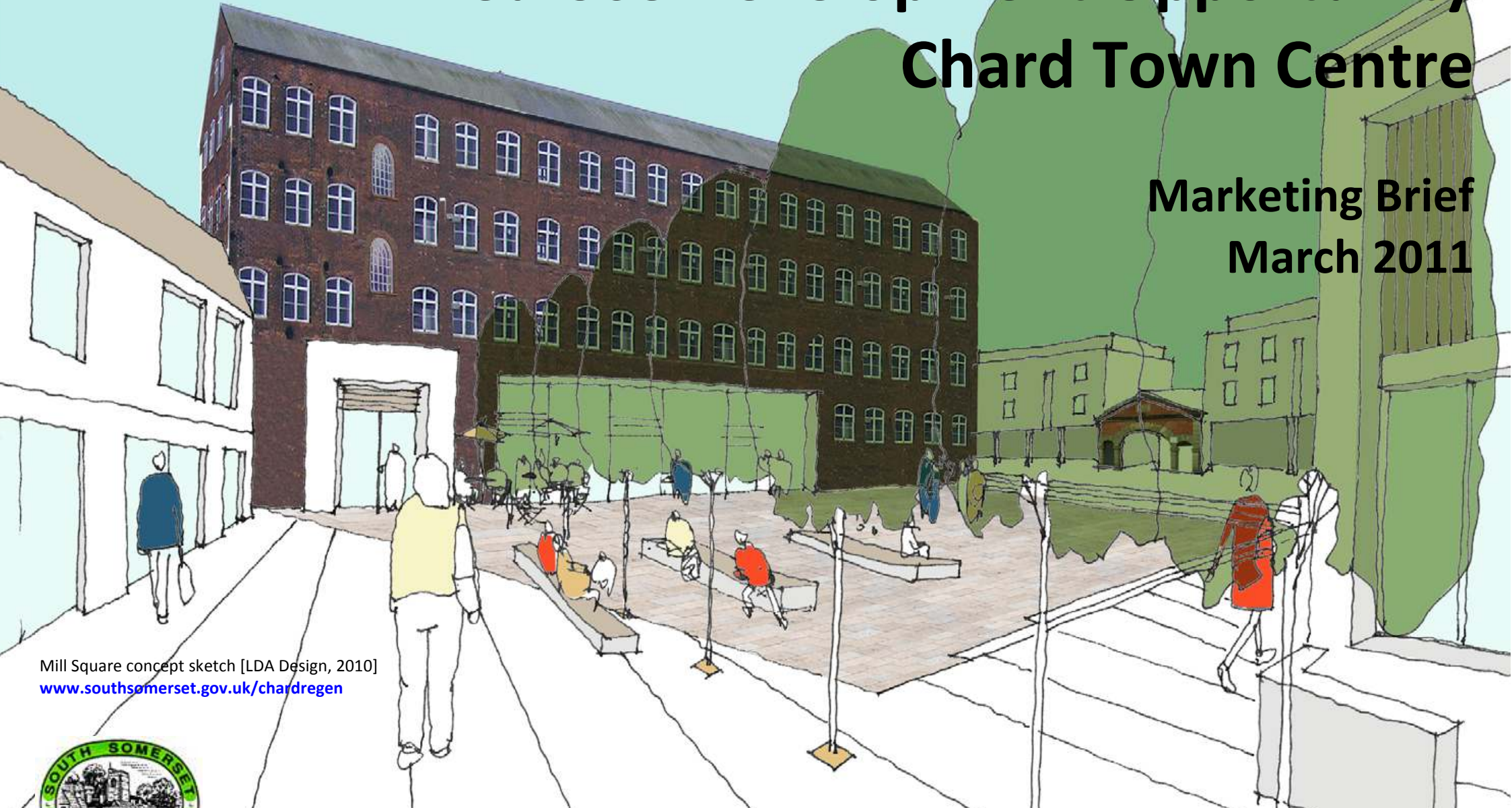


# Mixed Use Development Opportunity Chard Town Centre

Marketing Brief  
March 2011



Mill Square concept sketch [LDA Design, 2010]  
[www.southsomerset.gov.uk/chardregen](http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/chardregen)



## South Somerset District Council

**Purpose of this Brief:**

This significant single-owner plot in the centre of Chard presents an incredible opportunity to bring forward the regeneration of the town's heart, described in the Chard Vision. Initial expressions of interest are invited for the development of this whole town centre site. Single-developer proposals are sought for the future of the Mill, factory site & car parks. The aim of the brief is to provide enough detail for potential developers to make preliminary expressions of interest in developing the whole site prior to detailed negotiations for development. This brief is elemental in its requirements so as not to constrain the imagination or the opportunities for presenting as full a potential range of viable development proposals for the site as possible.

## 1. About Chard

Chard is a market town characterised by its manufacturing and heritage of innovation in a beautiful natural setting. Located in Somerset, between Yeovil, Taunton and Jct 5 of the M5 with direct access to the A30 & A358, the town has a population of 13,000 residents with a 61% self-containment level (2001 census) of people living and working within the town.

The Town Centre is well served with a good mix of retailers, leisure and cultural facilities including the Chard and District Museum, CRESTA Leisure centre and Chard Reservoir Nature Reserve. A feature of the main shopping street is the two streams that run either side.

Chard acts as an important centre providing education, leisure, community and shopping facilities to the residents and wider hinterland. The town has a strong manufacturing base with several business and industrial parks providing a range of employment opportunities. Manufacturing employment contributes almost a third of all jobs within the town, significantly above the County average.

## 2. Chard Regeneration Scheme (CRS)

In 2009 South Somerset District Council (SSDC), Chard Town Council (CTC), Somerset County Council (SCC) and the South West of England Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) established a regeneration partnership. The partnership commissioned LDA Design to produce a Regeneration Framework for Chard to enable the town to achieve its potential through a consistent and planned approach to development. Proposals should clearly demonstrate an understanding of the work and its central recommendations.

**The Vision, Regeneration & Implementation Plans comprising the Chard Regeneration Framework (CRF) are now available to view at: <http://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/chardregen>**

Over the next 30 years, if developed to its natural limits, Chard will see the introduction of 3,667 new dwellings, 5.7 hectares of employment land and the accompanying transport, utility and community infrastructure to sustain this level of growth.

The CRS is a successful example of partnership working between SSDC, SSC, CTC, the RDA and the communities of Chard. For the long-term success of Chard as a Market Town, it is important that these relationships are built on and maintained to ensure a cohesive environment maximising the regeneration benefit from growth & development in the town.

## 3. Town Centre Regeneration

The town centre is the heart of the town and a priority for growth. The first phase of the Chard Regeneration Plan includes the mixed use regeneration of the town centre, focusing on this town centre Key Site [Boden Mill & former factory site, Boden Street & Market Fields car parks] and the existing retail spine of High Street and Fore Street.

An increased diversification and mix of current uses will bring more activity into the centre and create a unique and individual environment to stand out as a great place to visit. We'd look to support new uses (retail, leisure, commercial et al.) that would compliment & strengthen the established economic core of the town around Fore St & Holyrood St.

The development must also have particular consideration for the sensitivity of the site in relation to the adjacent Conservation Area and listed buildings.



## 4. Boden Mill

Boden Mill (below) sits on the southern edge of the site. Its height and massing already give it an important presence and status. The internal space, arranged over 5 floors is approximately 22,000sqft gross. Treatment of the Mill, its long term occupation & surrounding environment will be an important element in the redevelopment of this key site, both in terms of how it looks from a distance and how it works in practice to aid the economic, social & cultural development of Chard town centre. It should be integrated into the function & framework of the town centre to become an iconic building - a visual signpost of regeneration and delivery of the new vision for Chard. The aspiration is to enhance the vitality of the town centre area and create a deliverable scheme which will benefit the long-term function & sustainability of Chard throughout its growth.



### Chard Town Centre: Key Site Opportunity

**Location:** The site lies within the confines of Fore Street to the north, Boden Street to the West, Silver Street to the east and Mill Lane to the South. The core site is indicated (left) & is **C. 1.130 ha (c. 2.79 acres)**.

Whilst adjacent land could be included in any redevelopment, this Brief relates to land within the ownership of SSDC.

A detailed topographical survey of the site was undertaken, authorised by the client body, in January 2005. The change in levels across the site, ranging from 108.37m to 102.20m (a difference of some 6.2m (20.3 feet) is considerable.

## 5. Chard Town Centre: Key Site Opportunity

The site illustrated (right) is at the centre of Chard & provides potential to deliver a mixed use new town centre location to strengthen current surroundings. Currently, the site comprises 2 public car parks, one adjacent to Boden St (66 spaces) & the other 'Marketfields' (77 spaces) situated to the eastern part of the site with access from Fore St. To the south of the site is the vacant Air Control Industries (ACI) factory, the former Lace Mill (Grade 2 Listed) & archway (listed). As part of the CRS, SWRDA grant aided SSDC to purchase the site from ACI. The whole site, identified in the local plan as a mixed use allocation, is now in the ownership of SSDC. The Council intend to reach an agreement on the development of the site as a single lot with vacant possession. It contains a number of challenges that we consider can be met with good design, sound planning & an appreciation of the site & its environs.

Proposals for the comprehensive development of this site should demonstrate how a high quality environment will be achieved which enhances and improves the amenity value of the area and defines a clear sense of place. Initial proposals might support a public realm that promotes public spaces that are attractive, safe & uncluttered. Consideration of the Chard Transport Report (available online) and measures to minimise additional pressure on the A30-A358 junction should also be evidenced. At later stages, a Transport Assessment (TA) will need to be submitted with any final planning application.

**Our Ambitions for the Site:** We are keen at this initial marketing stage not to present a series of overly prescriptive design codes & principles. The CRF content should be used as a resource to inform and build on - not to restrict creative alternative ideas for this central site. The work describes our ambition for a vibrant mixed use space based around the regenerated Boden Mill fronted by working, living & cultural uses - becoming a destination & space for events (see front pg). It also promotes a flexible space connecting Fore St to the Mill with an efficient parking layout that can transform into Chard's market place when required. A core aspiration here is the provision of a well defined public square & strong pedestrian links to both Fore St & Boden St. These concepts, along with new designs to compliment & regenerate the existing town centre should be explored.

**The Process for Selection & Disposal of this Site:** This brief is purposefully unrestrictive in its scope. At this stage, we are seeking practicable but imaginative proposals that will bring the site forward in a way which facilitates the growth and regeneration ambitions described by the Chard Regeneration Framework. In deciding on the most beneficial future for this central site, we will follow a very open and straightforward process for assessing and feeding back on all expressions of interest.

**The selection of a preferred developer will begin with an informal tender, with parties requested to submit an initial expression of interest. The deadline for submission of these proposals is 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011. A maximum of 6 shortlisted parties will then receive a Technical Information Pack and will be asked to submit detailed design & financial proposals. A process of negotiation around development details will take place before a final planning application, TA and relevant legal agreements will be required.**



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**Mixed Use Development: Land between Boden St & Silver St**

## 6. Initial Expressions of Interest

At this stage, we are seeking creative & viable expressions of interest for the development of this Key Site that may be explored in further detail with you. These should comprise:

1. Your full name and address, including any parent company.
2. Details of similar projects undertaken within the past 5 yrs.
3. Details of the proposed professional team, including architects, project managers, etc, along with brief details of their history and experience.
4. Full identification of uses proposed and where known, specific individual occupiers.
5. Details of anticipated method of funding.
6. An indicative financial proposal for the site including outline details of any profit share or overage terms envisaged.

Please note that neither the Council nor their advisors will be liable for any costs incurred by third parties either through the preparation of expressions of interest or indeed once any individual party is selected as the preferred developer - all such costs must be at the individual's risk.

**Viewings:** Access to the site (Inc. Boden Mill) is encouraged and to be arranged by prior appointment. Viewing arrangements will be restricted to specific dates (March 2011)

**Any queries in respect of this brief should be directed to:**

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