



# St Albans City & District Economic Development Strategy 2005 - 2007



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**ST. ALBANS CITY AND DISTRICT**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

**2005 – 2007**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

**Purpose of the Economic Development Strategy**

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to consult on a strategy and programme of action to develop and support the local economy, including ensuring that residents of the District have an opportunity to improve their position within the labour market.

**The Regional Context**

- 1.2 Through the establishment of nine Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in England and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland the Government has strengthened the role of the regions, particularly in economic development. The RDAs were set up with statutory purposes to encourage economic development and regeneration; promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness; promote employment and enhance the development of skills relevant to employment and contribute to sustainable development. More recently RDAs have been given enhanced roles relating to transport, tourism, housing and planning. In addition, in terms of resources RDAs now have a Single Pot that will rise to £2 billion by 2005/06.
- 1.3 Each of the RDAs prepared a Regional Economic Strategy identifying how they would deliver on their statutory purposes. The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) published an updated Economic Strategy in November 2004.
- 1.4 EEDA's draft strategy sets out a long term vision for the region as 'a leading economy, founded on our world-class knowledge base and the creativity and enterprise of our people, in order to improve the quality of life of all who live and work here'. The Strategy has eight goals with a number of related priorities.
- 1.5 The eight goals are:
1. A skills base that can support a world-class economy;
  2. Growing Competitiveness, productivity and entrepreneurship;
  3. Global leadership in developing and realising innovation in science, technology and research;

4. High quality places to live, work and visit;
  5. Social inclusion and broad participation in the regional economy;
  6. Making the most from the development of international gateways and national and regional transport corridors;
  7. A leading information society; and
  8. An exemplar for the efficient use of resources.
- 1.6 St Albans falls within the “London Arc” sub region and the strategy recognises that there are significant longer-term trends, which will impact upon the district. Commuting levels are among the highest in the UK and as a result there are significant areas for development including sustainable patterns of movement, efficient use of land to reduce pressure on greenfield land and improving the area as a location for business.
  - 1.7 Further information on the progress of the Regional Economic Strategy can be obtained from [www.eeda.org.uk](http://www.eeda.org.uk).
  - 1.8 In addition, an Economic Development Strategy for Hertfordshire 2000 – 2005 has been prepared by the Hertfordshire Prosperity Forum. This Forum includes key stakeholders including representatives of the local authorities, Business Link and education, training and business support agencies and the voluntary sector.
  - 1.9 The County Strategy is also in the process of being reviewed and further details are available at [www.hertsobservatory.org](http://www.hertsobservatory.org).
  - 1.10 In preparing the Economic Development Strategy for St. Albans City & District full regard has been given to the opportunity to work within the framework established at the regional and sub regional (county) level. This includes in relation to attracting investment and resources into the area but also recognising the different powers and responsibilities operating at these levels (e.g. infrastructure, inward investment, education and transport). In addition opportunities for working across district boundaries, to achieve greater economies of scale and to benefit from exchange of best practice will be fully exploited.

### **The Local Context**

- 1.11 St. Albans Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) have produced a Community Strategy 2003 – 2007 for the District. The LSPs vision is that the District continues ‘to be an attractive and prosperous place, one where the whole community can enjoy the high living standards, good employment prospects and high quality of life already enjoyed by the majority. We

want to protect and enhance the environment of our beautiful city and surrounding district, and to safeguard our rich heritage for the future. The LSP further states that ‘working as a community, we will develop:

- A district that is more business and environmentally-friendly, where economic prosperity goes hand in hand with better transport and we safeguard our natural resources and surroundings;
- A safer district, where crime, anti-social behaviour and vandalism are reduced;
- A cleaner and greener district, with less pollution, less waste, and more attractive public spaces;
- A healthier district, with healthier lifestyles, good housing for all, and where vulnerable members of the community and their carers can enjoy the support and good quality services they need;
- A district where everyone can enjoy and have access to learning, leisure and the arts regardless of their age, ability or ethnic background.’

### **Principles underlying the Economic Development Strategy**

- 1.12 The Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) carried out by the Audit Commission in January 2004 identified economic development as one of those areas where the council had not developed clear plans and priorities. The CPA report also stated that significant activity had not been undertaken in respect of the then aim to ‘support and promote a thriving and sustainable local economy’. It did, however, make some positive comments concerning the establishment of a business incubator unit and the use of S106 funding to provide local training.
- 1.13 The preparation of the Economic Development Strategy has been identified in the council’s Improvement Plan as a response to this issue. As well as setting clear plans it also identifies those areas where the council can have most significant added value and therefore prioritises activity.
- 1.14 The Council’s proposed new vision for the District is

***‘to preserve and enhance the distinctive character of St Albans City and District, making it an outstanding place in which to live and work and to visit, where everyone enjoys a range of quality and efficient services in a progressive, caring and environmentally concerned community’.***

This is reflected in five aims:

- To build a community that is open, fair and inclusive
- To work in partnership for the health and well being of the community
- To cherish and promote our heritage, arts and culture
- To safeguard our environment
- To ensure the district is a desirable place to live and work.

**To build a community that is open, fair and inclusive**

1.15 Providing community leadership whilst also working in partnership is clearly reflected in the Council's approach to Economic Development. In some cases the Council has a strategic role, leading on issues but working in partnership with others; in other cases it plays a more supportive role where other partners may lead. Alternatively, it may have an influencing role where it seeks to promote the interests of the District to others.

1.16 The Council is prepared to take this responsibility because it is uniquely placed to take a view on the complex and overlapping issues that affect the functioning of the local economy. The Council has planning powers; it owns land and buildings and it has statutory responsibilities in the key area of traffic control and management; environmental health, the environment and licensing. The Council also has a significant impact on the local economy as a result of it being a major employer and purchaser of goods and services.

**To work in partnership for the health and well being of the community**

1.17 Clearly effective partnership working is crucial. The Council is one of several agencies that have a role in supporting and developing the local economy and the vision and agendas of those agencies need to be complementary in order to achieve maximum benefit. Consequently, the Council proposes to continue to work with the Local Strategic Partnership and a range of other public and private sector bodies, business interests, the education and voluntary sectors, regional bodies and the Government. It intends investing its energy and influence in order to help to support and promote a thriving and sustainable local economy.

**To cherish and promote our heritage, arts and culture**

- 1.18 The strategy recognises that one of the strengths of the city and district is its richness in terms of heritage, arts and culture. This is significant with regards to the potential to attract investment to the area but it is also represents an important potential source of future jobs. Indeed, the Economic Development Strategy recognises that tourism is a key employment sector with significant future growth potential.

**To safeguard our environment**

- 1.19 The quality of the local built and natural environment contributes significantly to the quality of life and characteristics of the city and district. Consequently, to improve the health and well-being of residents it is necessary to strike the right balance between protecting and enhancing the environment and supporting and promoting a thriving economy.

**To ensure the District is a desirable place to live and work**

- 1.20 By taking the action that the council proposes the aim is to build on the significant strengths of the area, improve the competitiveness of the local economy and to attract further investment to ensure the area is a desirable place to live and work.
- 1.21 The next section identifies the key economic development issues of the area and how these contribute to identifying the strategic objectives of the Economic Development Strategy.

## 2. KEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

- 2.1 A separate report: 'St. Albans – the state of the local economy' provides a detailed analysis of the local economy and is available from Enterprise and Development, The Civic Centre, St. Peter's Street. St. Albans AL1 3JE. Its main conclusions are summarised below:
- The largest sector in the economy is business, finance and insurance and the fastest growing is construction. The fastest declining is public administration, education and health.
  - The Knowledge sector, seen by the EU and UK Government as a major source of future employment and wealth, is strong in St. Albans.
  - St. Albans scores high on an indicator measuring how good an area is for enterprise though recent trends give cause for concern. New firm growth has been consistently below the county average and in 2002 there was a net loss of businesses contrary to the county and regional trend.
  - Small firms dominate the local economy. An average business size of 7.28 workers per business gives the district the lowest ranking in Hertfordshire in terms of average business size and it ranks 381 out of 407 nationally. Also there is a low representation of large companies.
  - St. Albans has a highly skilled workforce and ranks No. 1 in the county and No. 8 nationally.
  - There is a wide gap, over £200 per week, between the average pay of St. Albans residents and the average pay of jobs based within the district. This reflects a position where the higher paid professional and managerial workers tend to commute out of the district for work.
  - More than half (51%) of the St. Albans resident workforce commute out of the district for work and 42% of local jobs are taken by in-commuters.
  - Unemployment (based on claimant count figures) in St. Albans is well below the national and regional average, in November 2004 standing at 0.8%. However unemployment trends give a mixed story. Over the past year the jobless level in St Albans has fallen by 16.5% but it has increased by 10% since 2001, a period when it had fallen nationally.
  - Although St Peter's ward has the highest level of unemployment (72 – claimant count figures), the largest increase has been in Cunningham ward with the figure almost doubling between 2002 and 2004 to 53.

- There appears to be a mismatch between the jobs being sought by local job seekers and the vacancies being offered. In particular there is a local shortage of professional and managerial posts.
- Where local companies seek to fill professional and managerial posts the level of pay offered is often not sufficient to attract applicants.
- There has been a significant loss in industrial and commercial floorspace in St. Albans. There has been a compensatory increase in retail and office accommodation but there still appears to be a shortage of office space.

2.2 A SWOT Analysis indicating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats relating to the local economy is included at Annex 1 to this Strategy.

2.3 In order to tackle these issues five key objectives have been identified.

- Work with partners to encourage the competitiveness of local enterprises and provide the business support framework for a sustainable and prosperous local economy
- To protect the environment and improve the physical infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth
- Raise the profile of St. Albans District as a first class location for business and as an attractive place to live, work and visit
- To take action and invest resources to achieve social and economic inclusion
- Attract and commit external funding to support the development of the local economy and labour market.

### **3. THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005 – 2007**

- 3.1 This section contains details of the proposed economic development activities that the Council propose to undertake with regard to the Strategy. These activities are listed under the five objectives that have been identified following a thorough analysis of the local economy and labour market.
- 3.2 A detailed Action Plan is included at Section 5.

#### **Work with partners to encourage the competitiveness of local enterprises and provide the business support framework for a sustainable and prosperous local economy**

- 3.3 The broad range of activities listed under this objective are as follows:
- Business Support
  - Business Directory
  - Procurement
  - New business development
- 3.4 Prosperity is central to the vision of St. Albans identified in the Local Strategic Partnership's Community Strategy (2003 – 7). This can only be achieved by maintaining the competitiveness of the local economy and setting the framework to enable local enterprises to establish, grow and thrive. In the publication: Productivity in the UK: The Local Dimension (HM Treasury & ODPM July 2003) the Government recognise that local government has a strategic role to play in this respect.
- 3.5 Progress will be pursued with our partners to encourage business competitiveness and ensure the provision of high quality business support services that are relevant to the needs of St. Albans firms. It is important that information on services is communicated effectively with full use being made of information technology and the World Wide Web and that companies and individuals are signposted to the most appropriate source of advice and assistance.
- 3.6 The Council will seek to ensure that its role as a major purchaser of goods has a positive impact on the local economy. This will include a series of actions relating to raising awareness of the trading opportunities available with the Council. We will also work with our existing local suppliers to ensure that they are well prepared for the wider adoption of electronic procurement.

- 3.7 Work has already commenced with the St. Albans Enterprise Agency (STANTA) to provide a new development of business incubator units on the Valley Road Industrial Estate, using S106 planning gain funds and a loan facility from the Council. The Council will work with STANTA to ensure the successful implementation of this initiative.
- 3.8 Other action will be undertaken to tackle issues affecting business competitiveness such as crime, recruitment difficulties and the skill needs of employers. In addition, policies to promote affordable housing will be included within the Local Development Framework documents being prepared for consultation in 2006.

**To protect the environment and improve the physical infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth**

- 3.9 The broad range of activities listed under this objective are as follows:
- Transport
  - Sustainability
  - Land/Premises
  - Green Travel Plan
- 3.10 Providing an appropriate transport and physical infrastructure is crucial to ensuring a competitive local economy. An inefficient and congested transport system poses a major threat to the local economy. Action is required at both the sub regional (county) and local level to address the problems associated with heavy use of our road network, lack of investment in public transport and pollution.
- 3.11 The Council has only limited powers to tackle these issues and it will be necessary to work with Hertfordshire County Council and the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) to effect change. In particular the Council will work with Hertfordshire County Council to implement proposed improvements to St. Peter's Street. The Council will also work with the County Council to ensure the development of an integrated transport strategy that incorporates the needs of all transport users, including pedestrians and cyclists.
- 3.12 Investment and improvements to our car parks has been secured through the implementation of a Public Private Partnership contract.
- 3.13 In light of the competition for land resources there is also a need to undertake research into employment land needs. This will also include a review of the need for small business premises.

- 3.14 The Council will continue to encourage the adoption of alternative and sustainable transport solutions both by encouraging the development of Green Travel Plans and other specific measures aimed at reducing the need for private transport.

**Raise the profile of St. Albans District as a first class location for business and as an attractive place to live, work and visit**

- 3.15 The broad range of activities listed under this objective are as follows:

- Tourism
- Inward Investment
- Knowledge Economy
- Film Industry

- 3.16 The quality of the local natural and built environment is a key characteristic of the city and district and it contributes to its economic success. A key objective of the Economic Development Strategy is to build on these qualities in a sustainable way and promote the area as an attractive place to work, live and visit.

- 3.17 Tourism is a key employment sector locally but the industry is underdeveloped. TEAM consultants who carried out a review of St. Albans Tourism Information Centre commented: 'In this respect we believe that the future tourism potential of St. Albans should not be underestimated – there are no other historic Cathedral cities in the northern hinterland of London with such excellent transportation connections and such an attractive tourism infrastructure. It has an unrivalled position as the only authentic historic city within such a short distance of (North) London.'

- 3.18 The consultants further commented that, as the district had no one single large attraction the local tourism economy depended on good information on the full range of what the area had to offer. In addition, the need to enhance the role of the TIC, including developing conference bureau facilities and other income generating services was recognised.

- 3.19 To maintain its status as a strong and vibrant local economy the Council will also need to work in partnership with sub regional and regional agencies to seek injections of new investment and businesses. As is demonstrated in the section identifying the key local economic issues there is a high turnover of businesses in the district. With a large number of businesses ceasing to trade it is important that these are replaced by new enterprises, including an appropriate proportion in growth sectors.

- 3.20 St. Albans is a relatively prosperous economy with low unemployment. However there are issues identified in this document that give some cause for concern, particularly relating to the relatively large number of VAT deregistrations and the difficulties that local firms are experiencing regarding recruiting to vacancies. For these reasons and for the need for the area to maintain its competitive 'edge' it is important that new investment is encouraged, especially in growth sectors of the economy.
- 3.21 The District is well placed to benefit from the growth in the Knowledge Economy and also from the increased interest in the area from the film industry. The City Centre provides the backbone of the local economy and the Council is committed to working with the City Centre Management Board in ensuring the continuing attraction and prosperity of the Centre. This will include measures to develop the evening economy in appropriate locations and to develop the area's visitor potential.

**To take action and invest resources to achieve social and economic inclusion**

- 3.22 The broad range of activities listed under this objective are as follows:
- Equalities
  - Skills Training
  - Job Fairs
  - Social Enterprise Support
- 3.23 A principal aim of the Economic Development Strategy is to ensure that the benefits of the economic development of the area are spread widely and, in particular reach those residents in most need and from minority groups. Economic and social exclusion occurs for a variety of reasons and addressing it requires a co-ordinated partnership approach.
- 3.24 We will work with Jobcentre Plus and other partners in supporting local job fairs and other recruitment initiatives, particularly those aimed at target groups identified as in need of priority, such as the long term unemployed, the disabled, those over 50 years of age and people from ethnic minorities.
- 3.25 The development of local Social Enterprises and other 'self help' initiatives will also be encouraged. This will include through the application of S106 resources, the provision of other support and through working with Business Link's Social Enterprise Advisor.

- 3.26 Effective and focused skills training and adequate investment in education and skills is a pre-requisite of a modern economy. It is essential for both businesses to compete and to enable local people to access employment.
- 3.27 We will also be an active partner within the St. Albans Learning Forum and will seek to increase accessibility and widen participation in learning and skills development. This will include acting on behalf of employers to ensure that their needs are appropriately reflected in the planning of education and training provision.

**Attract and commit external funding to support the development of the local economy and labour market**

- 3.28 The broad range of activities listed under this theme are as follows:
- External Funding Network
  - S106
- 3.29 The Council will seek to attract external funds to support programmes aimed at the economic development of St. Albans. This will include working with partners to establish a District wide External Funding Network.
- 3.30 The Funding Network will enable the exchange of information and best practice and provide a forum through which partners can work together to attract external funding. This will involve supporting local groups and other relevant organisations to gain access to various grants and loans, including European, lottery, charitable trust and other funds.
- 3.31 The Council will ensure maximum economic development value from specific S106 funds that are available for employment related purposes. We will also seek to identify further S106 opportunities and identify the potential for other community and economic benefits from major development proposals.

#### 4. MONITORING & EVALUATION

- 4.1 The Actions included within this Strategy will be incorporated, as appropriate, within the annual Service Plan for the Council's Enterprise & Development Service. Progress will be monitored at quarterly intervals and at the end of each financial year an exceptions report will be produced explaining, if necessary, the reasons for any slippage in targets and actions.
- 4.2 The proposed performance indicators are detailed in the table below. Those with references starting 'ECR' have been selected from the Audit Commission publication: 'Economic Regeneration – Performance Indicators, March 2003'. 'LOC' indicates a locally identified indicator, specifically tailored to our own Economic Development Strategy.

##### Key Indicators

Category	Ref.	Short definition	Reporting Frequency
Employment	ECR 1	The proportion of people of working age in employment (Quality of Life Indicator, QoL 1)	Annual
Unemployment	ECR 2	a) Proportion of the working population who are unemployed b) Proportion of unemployed people claiming benefit who have been out of work for more than one year (QoL 2)	Annual
Business Growth	ECR 7	a) The total number of VAT registered businesses in the area per 10,000 population b) The % change in number of VAT registered business in the area over the year (QoL 4)	Annual
Town Centre revitalisation - usage	ECR 13	a) Pedestrian footfall in the town centre (survey) – average weekly footfall	Annual
S106 resources	LOC1	Employment related section 106 resources spent on Economic Development projects	Annual
Tourism	ECR 15	a) Day visitors per annum b) Bed nights per annum c) Average spend per visitor	Biennially

## 5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005/7

### Objective 1: Work with partners to encourage the competitiveness of local enterprises and provide the business support framework for a sustainable and prosperous local economy

Ref.	Action	Principal Partners Involved in Delivery	Milestones
AP 1.1	Conduct an audit of the quality & range of business support services available locally and identify any gaps in service provision. Consider equalities issues and the business support needs of minority groups.	SADC BL STANTA Chamber of Commerce	Complete Audit – June 2005
AP 1.2	Produce web information on business support and other information services. Seek to improve access to business support services for all, including minority groups.	SADC BL STANTA Chamber of Commerce	Web site launched – June 2005
AP 1.3	Produce a revised and improved version of the St. Albans Business Directory	SADC Directory Publisher	Directory Published – July 2005
AP 1.4	Develop proposals for an improved on line Business Directory	SADC Chamber of Commerce	Proposals Report – Sept 2005
AP 1.5	Develop proposals to encourage local enterprises to exploit trading opportunities with the council. Publish a guide, aimed at local SMEs on 'How to do Business with your Council'.	SADC HCC BL	Proposals Report – May 2005 Guide Published – May 2005
AP 1.6	Work in partnership with Business Link to ensure that our local supplies are trained and prepared for the wider adoption of e-procurement	SADC Business Link	Development & signposting of Support Measures - June 2005
AP 1.7	Work with STANTA in the development and promotion of a Business Incubator facility at the Valley Road Industrial Estate (due to be completed Feb 2005).	STANTA SADC	Review progress – Oct. 2005

BL – Business Link Hertfordshire; CCMB – City Centre Management Board; CCTV – Closed Circuit Television; CVS – Council for Voluntary Service; HCC – Hertfordshire County Council; STANTA – St Albans Enterprise Agency; SADC – St Albans City & District Council; TAG – Tourism Advisory Group.

AP 1.8	Work with the Police and local business groups with a view to reducing crime levels that impact on business and competitiveness	SADC Police Chamber of Commerce CCMB Princes Trust	CCMB – Safety & Security Group established – April 2005 CCTV & other initiatives considered for 2006/07 budget proposals – August 2005
AP 1.9	Lead research into the skills needs of employers and seek partner agreement to an Action Plan to address local recruitment difficulties.	SADC Jobcentre Plus Learning & Skills Council St. Albans Learning Forum Business Link	Research Report – June 2006

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005/7

### Objective 2: To protect the environment and improve the physical Infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth

Ref.	Action	Principal Partners Involved in Delivery	Milestones
AP 2.1	Lobby for improvements to public transport to encourage enhanced provision to the District's villages and other isolated areas	SADC HCC	Green Travel Plan (motorised vehicles) Consultation Draft – Mar 2006
AP 2.2	Work in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council to improve and enhance the city centre, including tackling traffic congestion.	HCC SADC	St. Peters Street works complete – March 2006
AP 2.3	Improve city centre car parks through implementation of Public Private Partnership initiative	SADC	Works commence – Mar 2005
AP 2.4	Conduct a review of the needs for small business premises and develop an Action Plan to meet excess demand	SADC, Herts Futures Business Link, STANTA	Review & Action Plan completed – Mar 2006
AP 2.5	Encourage local companies to develop Green Travel Plans or related initiatives aimed at reducing the amount of private transport and need for car parking whilst encouraging alternative modes of transport	SADC HCC	Green Travel Plan (motorised vehicles) Consultation Draft – Mar 2006
AP 2.6	Carry out an access and environmental audit of major industrial and employment estates with a view to identifying potential improvements in landscaping, flood alleviation, road condition, parking and access	SADC HCC	Audit Complete – Dec 2006
AP 2.7	Lobby the Highway Authority to ensure that a high level of access to major employment areas is maintained during periods of severe weather	SADC HCC Chamber of Commerce STANTA, CCMB	Seek assurances from Highways Authority – Oct. 2005

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005/7

### Objective 3: Raise the profile of St. Albans District as a first class location for business and as an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Ref.	Action	Principal Partners Involved in Delivery	Milestones
AP 3.1	Support Herts Futures in actively promoting the area to attract new jobs and investment across a range of appropriate sectors including Public Services (particularly education and health). Working closely with other agencies to ensure a co-ordinated response to inward investment, relocation and reinvestment enquiries and promoting the district's attractiveness to the knowledge based sector. Encourage large business where appropriate.	SADC Business Link Herts Futures Chamber of Commerce	Inward Investment Strategy published – Mar. 2006
AP 3.2	Ensure that the Local Development Framework (LDF) recognises the link between housing, employment and industrial development needs	SADC	Local Dev. Framework adopted – March 2007
AP 3.3	Produce Investment Profiles for the District's Centres in order to attract new and sustainable economic development	SADC	Investment Profiles produced – Sept 2005
AP 3.4	Implement the Review of the Tourist Information Centre	SADC	April 2005
AP 3.5	Implement the Tourism Action Plan	SADC TAG	Progress report incorporated within new Action Plan – Apr. 2005
AP 3.6	Produce revised Tourism Action Plan that recognises the need to promote St. Albans as a city and district of culture, heritage and the arts	SADC TAG	Tourism Action Plan – Consultation Draft – Apr 2005
AP 3.7	Produce a compendium of employment development opportunity sites through an appraisal of Planning Briefs and the District Plan	SADC	Compendium Published – June 2006

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AP 3.8	Provide funding to Screen East subject to a Service Level Agreement that ensures appropriate benefit to the St. Albans economy and local enterprises following from the promotion of the area as a filming location.	SADC Screen East	Review of 2004/5 achievements – June 2005
AP 3.9	Provide funding, in partnership with the private sector, to support a St. Albans City Centre Manager	SADC CCMB	Budget agreed - Mar 2006 & Mar 2007
AP 3.10	Prepare an annual monitoring report on retailing in the District	SADC CCMB Harpenden First	Oct 2005 Oct 2006
AP 3.11	Seek to improve the visual attractiveness of the City Centre including the appropriate encouragement of public art.	SADC CCMB	Local Dev. Framework adopted – March 2007
AP 3.12	Review and Identify the future potential for the evening economy in St. Albans whilst ensuring that the interests of residents are properly considered and protected.	SADC CCMB	Report Produced – Sept 2005

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005/7

### Objective 4: To take action and invest resources to achieve social and economic inclusion.

Ref.	Action	Principal Partners Involved in Delivery	Milestones
AP 4.1	Support the provision of local job fairs and other initiatives to help local people access new employment, training & learning opportunities. Seek to target support particularly at target groups (e.g. over 50 year olds)	Jobcentre Plus SADC SALF	Report on events held during year – Mar 2006 & Mar 2007
AP 4.2	Encourage the provision of job preparation courses in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and other appropriate partners. Utilise S106 and other external resources where relevant.	Jobcentre Plus SADC SALF	Proposals published – Sept 2005
AP 4.3	Encourage the provision of enhanced 'English as a Second or Other Language' courses (ESOL) through the identification and allocation of external funding.	SADC Jobcentre Plus Oaklands College SALF	Proposals published – June 2006
AP 4.4	Seek to improve awareness of employer responsibilities regarding equality issues.	SADC Chamber of Commerce Business Link	Enhanced web site – June 2005
AP 4.5	Work in partnership with local communities and empower them so that they are able to develop community economic development, social enterprise and other 'self help' initiatives.	SADC Business Link	Establishment of Trestle Theatre Café Project – Dec 2005 S106 funding provided to support Computer Friendly Project – June 2005
AP 4.6	Encourage the development and growth of St. Albans District Credit Union	SADC St. Albans District C. U.	Review impact of S106 grant – Apr 2005
AP 4.7	Work to achieve Fairtrade status for the City	Range of Business and Charitable Partners	Review position at end of 2005

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## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2005/7

### Objective 5: Attract and commit external funding to support the development of the local economy and labour market

Ref.	Action	Principal Partners Involved in Delivery	Milestones
AP 5.1	Establish a District wide External Funding Network	SADC HCC CVS	Inaugural Meeting of Network – October 2005
AP 5.2	Work with partners to improve access to and seek to develop appropriate funding opportunities for local business and social enterprises, particularly where there is a direct link to employment and training provision	SADC HCC Business Link Chamber of Commerce	Develop work programme for External Funding Network – Jan 2006
AP 5.3	Review progress with allocation of S106 resources	SADC	November 2005
AP 5.4	Develop proposals for use of Wheathampstead S106 funds	SADC Wheathampstead PC Employment Service Business Link Others as appropriate	April 2005
AP 5.5	Identify opportunities for greater contributions from developers for local infrastructure where development takes place	SADC	Complete options study – Dec 2005
AP 5.6	Consult local groups on feasibility and opportunities relating to Business Improvement Districts	SADC CCMB Chamber of Commerce	Complete initial consultations – Dec 2005
AP 5.7	Work in partnership with local communities and empower them so that they are able to develop community economic development, social enterprise and other 'self help' initiatives.	SADC BL	S106 funding provided to support Computer Friendly Project – June 2005

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**SWOT ANALYSIS****APPENDIX 1**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>WEAKNESSES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong degree of entrepreneurship, with a relatively high number of self employed</li> <li>• Recognised as a good area for 'enterprise' with a high proportion of small firms</li> <li>• Strong representation of the expanding 'knowledge sector'</li> <li>• Excellent strategic location, with access to the M1, M25 and A1(M) motorways and within easy access to international.</li> <li>• Excellent reputation for education standards and a high level of educational attainment</li> <li>• Highly skilled workforce</li> <li>• Strong education provision</li> <li>• Low unemployment</li> <li>• Effective partnership frameworks and active Local Strategic Partnership, Chamber of Commerce and City Centre Management Board.</li> <li>• Strong network of Business Support Agencies including Business Link and St. Albans Enterprise Agency.</li> <li>• Area rich in terms of heritage, arts and tourism.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proximity to London results in higher skilled workers commuting out of the area</li> <li>• Local firms experiencing difficulty in recruiting to vacancies.</li> <li>• Shortage of local professional and managerial jobs</li> <li>• Economy highly dependent on three key sectors</li> <li>• Lack of small business premises</li> <li>• Evidence of significant numbers of over 50 year olds seeking work but not eligible for job seekers allowance and, therefore, not reflected in 'official' figures</li> <li>• Evidence of ageism in employment process</li> <li>• High level of house prices</li> <li>• High turnover in businesses as reflected by VAT registration and deregistration figures</li> <li>• Traffic congestion within the district</li> <li>• No eligibility for main spatial regeneration funding (e.g. Assisted Area, Objective 2)</li> <li>• Poor level of public transport, especially re outlying towns and villages.</li> </ul>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant opportunities to develop the tourism sector</li> <li>• Recognised potential for 'knowledge based' industries to grow</li> <li>• Potential to develop the evening economy</li> <li>• Strong representation of community and voluntary groups and interest in the 'social economy'</li> <li>• Evidence of interest in working together to access external funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Failure rate of small businesses</li> <li>• Trends within the retail industry and threat to city centre shopping centres</li> <li>• Competition from major regeneration initiatives in North London and the subregion</li> <li>• Rationalisation and job losses in key sectors that are dominant in St. Albans</li> <li>• Stagnation of transport infrastructure</li> <li>• Loss of employment land to housing</li> <li>• Inability to meet job needs associated with additional population associated with housing growth</li> <li>• Increased number of over 50-year-old unemployed as pension schemes change rules to limit early retirement options for those facing redundancy.</li> </ul>

BL – Business Link Hertfordshire; CCMB – City Centre Management Board; CCTV – Closed Circuit Television; CVS – Council for Voluntary Service; HCC – Hertfordshire County Council; STANTA – St Albans Enterprise Agency; SADC – St Albans City & District Council; TAG – Tourism Advisory Group.