

MEETING:	Cabinet
DATE:	Wednesday, 14 July 2021
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall
PUBLIC WEB LINK:	https://barnsley.public-tv/core/portal/webcasts

SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

Items for Decision/Recommendation to Council

Regeneration and Culture Spokesperson

13. Urbed Town Centre Plan (Cab.14.7.2021/13) (Pages 3 - 34)

To: Chair and Members of Cabinet:-

Councillors Houghton CBE (Chair), Andrews BEM, T. Cave, Cheetham, Gardiner, Howard, Lamb and Platts

Cabinet Support Members:

Councillors Cherryholme, Eastwood, Franklin, Frost, McCarthy and Tattersall

Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Chair of Audit Committee

Sarah Norman, Chief Executive
Matt Gladstone, Executive Director Place
Melanie John-Ross, Executive Director Children's Services
Wendy Lowder, Executive Director Adults and Communities
Shokat Lal, Executive Director Core Services
Julia Burrows, Director Public Health
Neil Copley, Service Director Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Martin McCarthy, Service Director Governance, Member and Business Support (Monitoring Officer)
Garry Kirk, Service Director Legal Services
Michael Potter, Service Director Business Improvement and Communications
Katie Rogers, Head of Communications and Marketing
Anna Marshall, Scrutiny Officer

Corporate Communications and Marketing

Please contact Martin McCarthy on email governance@barnsley.gov.uk

8 July 2021

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Urbed Town Centre Urban Design and Sustainability Report

Updated consultation draft document 8/7/21

Pages 19 and 20 Employment and Skills interventions amended.

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Barnsley Town Centre

URBAN DESIGN SUSTAINABILITY & POST-COVID STRATEGY

Summary Report and “Long
List” of Interventions





OUR TEAM



CONTACT

This report has been produced by URBED for Barnsley Metropolitan District Council. If you have any queries please contact Vicky Payne at URBED: vicky@urbed.coop

CONTENTS

Introduction.....1

Baseline Summary.....2

General

Economy

Sustainability

Post Covid Future.....5

An Inclusive Town Centre.....7

Sustainability.....9

Themes.....11

Spatial Strategy.....13

Long List.....15

Retail

Culture

Skills/Employment

Housing

Greenspace

Connections

INTRODUCTION

URBED and the team were commissioned in November 2019 to produce an Urban Design and Sustainability Strategy for Barnsley Town Centre, taking into account Barnsley Zero 40 and Zero 45 targets. We have worked with ADE Regeneration and LEDA to produce a response to this commission. We roughly split the work into zero carbon interventions with measurable effects and harder to measure sustainable urban design interventions, combining to create a robust strategy.

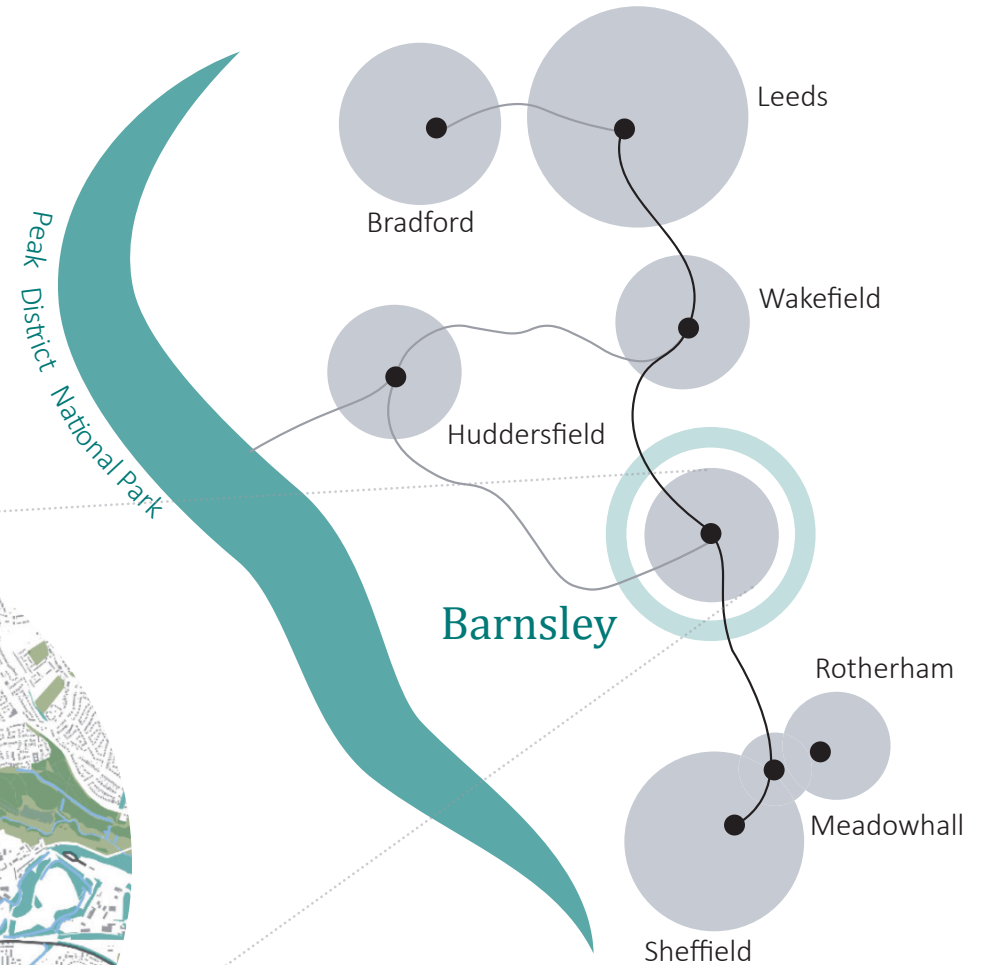
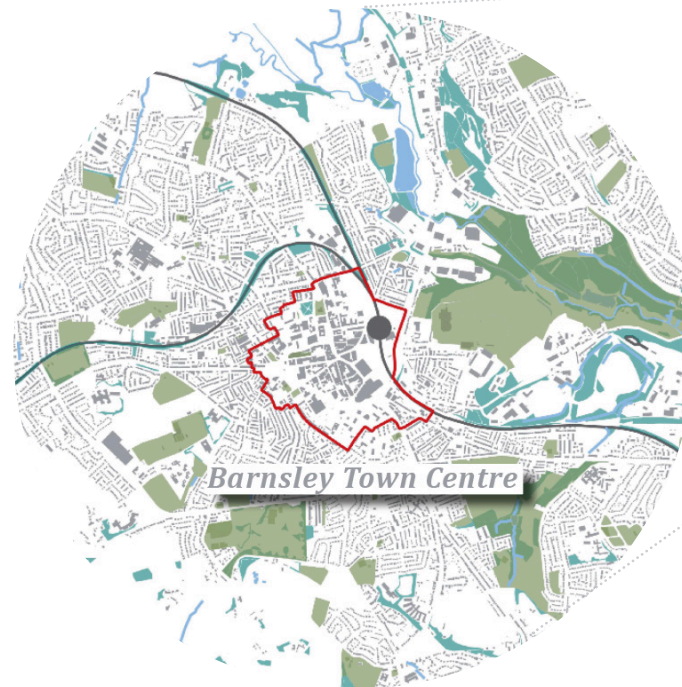
Page 8

During the course of the work the UK experienced the Covid-19 pandemic, and in January 2021 we were asked to adapt the focus of the commission to include interventions that would support the recovery of the town centre post-Covid 19.

The following document summarises the work we have completed so far and ends with a “long list” of possible ideas for

the town centre that can be developed with the Council the community through the consultation process. This is a starting point - not all these ideas will be taken forward and some may happen a long time in the future.

Over the course of our work we have been in dialogue with the internal team producing the Town Centre Action Plan and have provided inputs into the regional scale “Economic Blueprint” work.

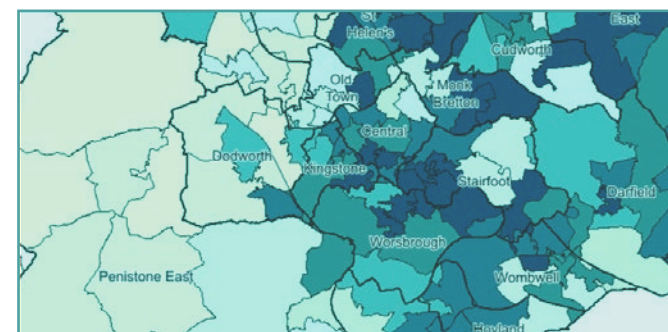


Barnsley sits within a collection of towns and cities, many of which are connected by rail. The boundary of the town center is quite tightly drawn, so the commission has looked beyond this to explore the relationship with the surrounding residential suburbs

BASELINE SUMMARY: GENERAL

A detailed analysis of the town centre was undertaken in the first phase of the project. This was revisited and updated in light of Covid-19. The following pages give a high level summary of our key findings. They are not intended to provide a complete overview of our analysis, but instead highlight the main insights that have influenced the ideas set out later in the document

Page 9



Progress Against ARUP Plan

- Many previously identified sites in progress.
- Some gaps + further opportunities identified by URBED and client team.
- Connections needed to bring it together.

Population

- Increasing population and higher than average percentage of working age people.
- Higher deprivation/preventable mortality.
- Lower home/private vehicle ownership.



Transport

- Good bus/rail services.
- Poorer walking and cycling links.
- Road infrastructure and car parking are acting as barriers.

Greenspace

- Strong green infrastructure networks and larger recreational spaces in the wider area.
- Some green spaces on the edge of centre but very little in the town centre itself.

Landuse

- Large amount of retail space for the size of the town.
- Sometimes confusing mix of uses/identity.
- Some “linking spaces” between key buildings/uses are of poor quality.

BASELINE SUMMARY: ECONOMY

A detailed analysis of the town centre property market was undertaken in 2020 and updated in May 2021 to provide insights into the current and expected impacts of Covid-19. Research was also undertaken to understand the measures being taken by other town centers to respond to the post pandemic conditions, and key reflections were made to guide the response in Barnsley.

Key findings on post-Covid property market:

- The retail market in Barnsley and Sheffield has been significantly affected by the coronavirus outbreak and lockdown restrictions, although Barnsley has fared better than some similar towns in the UK.
- There's a general reduction in demand for office space due to remote working and an expectation that businesses will scale back their office space over the next two years. On a local level, demand for offices showed signs of recovery and the Barnsley market went in to the pandemic in relatively healthy shape.
- Barnsley's local retail and office space is expanding through the Glass Works and The Seam Digital Campus at a time when demand nationally is decreasing. These two combined factors will likely pose challenges for the town centre in the future.

Further detail can be found in the Pygott and Crone Report "May 2020 Property Market" and the 2021 "Barnsley Property Market Follow Up" note.



Key actions for post-Covid recovery:

- Monitor the economic health of the town centre to ensure problems are identified early and responded to.
- Plan to remove surplus retail, either through the provision of diverse uses, or removing the quantum of built form all together.
- Diversify uses so the town is less dependent on retail, introducing creative workspaces, cultural assets, additional housing, civic services, events space and workspaces.
- Communicate about the safety of the town centre, and ensure the transport to and from allows people to feel safe.
- Support independent retail to lessen the reliance on big-chain retailers that are consolidating into larger urban centres and growing their on-line presence e.g. suitable flexible accommodation, financial support and business mentoring.
- Ensure the town's employments space is capable of meeting the changing requirements of a post-pandemic workforce.

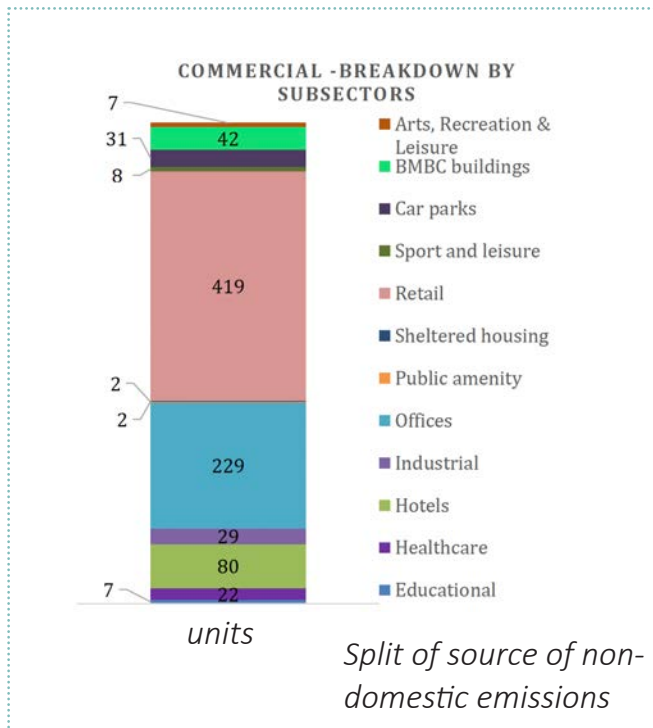
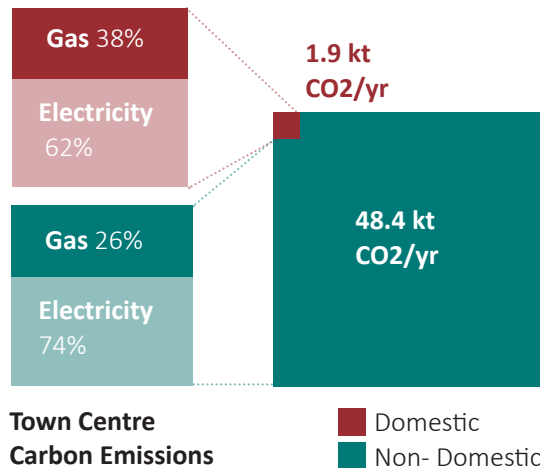
Further detail can be found in the ADE Regeneration Report "Urban Centres, Planned Response to Covid, A Summary of UK Efforts"

BASELINE SUMMARY: SUSTAINABILITY

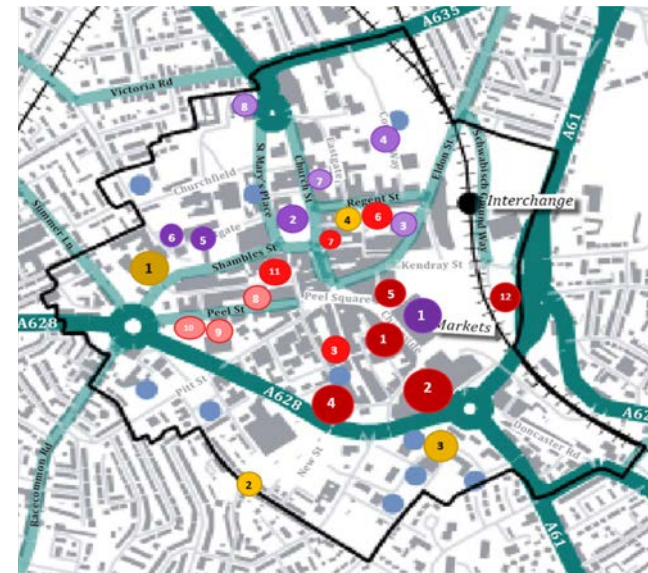
A study was undertaken to quantify the carbon emissions from buildings within the town centre, based on best available data. Strategies have then been provided to reduce emissions to achieve Barnsley's Zero 40 and Zero 45 carbon reduction targets (summarised in the next section).

Key findings:

- Partly due to the composition of the town centre (few houses within the boundary) non-domestic buildings represent 95% of the total carbon emissions and is where the primary focus should be to meet the 2040 carbon targets.
- Domestic: the total baseline for carbon emissions is 1.9 kt CO₂/yr. 38 % of household's heating (space and hot water) demand is supplied by gas and 62% by electricity.
- Non-domestic: the total carbon emissions baseline is calculated to be 48.4 kt CO₂/yr. 26% heating demand is supplied by gas and 74% by electricity.



Split of source of non-domestic emissions



Map extract showing location of big emitters by sector - see report for full detail

Highest emitters:

- Domestic: Plaza Quarter, Princess Street, Skyline Flats, Regent House
- Non-domestic: Cheapside retail units, Alhambra Shopping Centre, Market Street units + more (see full report)
- BMBC Buildings: Markets, Town Hall, Civic Hall, Digital Media Centre + more (see full report)

Four case studies are detailed in the report to illustrate the approaches that might be followed for different building typologies.

POST-COVID FUTURE

Town centres across the UK were struggling even before the pandemic hit. The continuing growth of online retail was reducing demand in brick and mortar stores. When customers did travel to shops in person they were often looking to have experiences in highly curated spaces link that with leisure activities - going for drinks and eating out. This meant that retail activity (and big name retailers) were consolidating their activities in city centres, which also benefited from their office market through commuter spending – at lunchtime and after work. A “winner takes all” pattern was emerging where town centers lost out to big cities.

Page 12

Barnsley wasn't suffering too badly from these circumstances pre-Covid; our market reporting from 2020 noted that “despite challenging conditions, Barnsley’s retail market appears to have held steady over the last 12 months, bucking the nationwide trend for the retail market”. However, it seems inevitable that those market forces would have begun to bite. Covid-19 has now flipped the script on the towns vs cities dynamic. Data from Centre for



POST-COVID FUTURE

Cities shows that city centres have in many cases been hit hardest by the sudden changes. With their greater reliance on department stores (now contracting or going bust entirely), office markets (at a time when most companies are planning to downsize space in the next 2 years) and access from a wide catchment area by public transport (when safety fears are high and passenger numbers are curbed) city centres have suffered significant losses.

Barnsley is now in a really interesting position. Like many medium sized towns in the UK Barnsley has been better equipped to weather the storm, partially by dint of not having city centre style assets to lose in the first place. It had no significant office market and no large department store anchoring its high street and it is in many ways a practical town centre, serving the needs of residents as much as visitors or commuters.

Because of this Barnsley is in an excellent position to respond to the emerging trends following the pandemic. It may need, as ADE Regen highlighted, to rethink its relationship with retail, reducing its floorspace by up to a third, but it is well placed to plug the gaps left behind.



People want to move out of city centres, away from cramped apartments, without completely giving up the amenities they enjoy. Barnsley can provide family houses in town centre neighbourhoods, with outdoor space and access to independent shops, café's, restaurants and culture. People want to work more flexibly, working from home sometimes and using office facilities when they need to. Barnsley can provide home office spaces, co-working facilities, spaces to start a business and rail links to larger centres

when and if they are needed. People want a sense of community, to live more connected and healthy lives. Barnsley can provide great walkable and cyclable streets, access to green spaces and a network of local businesses and facilities.

This new way of life is not just advantageous for Barnsley's recovery, its is also inherently sustainable and can support Barnsley's zero carbon ambitions.

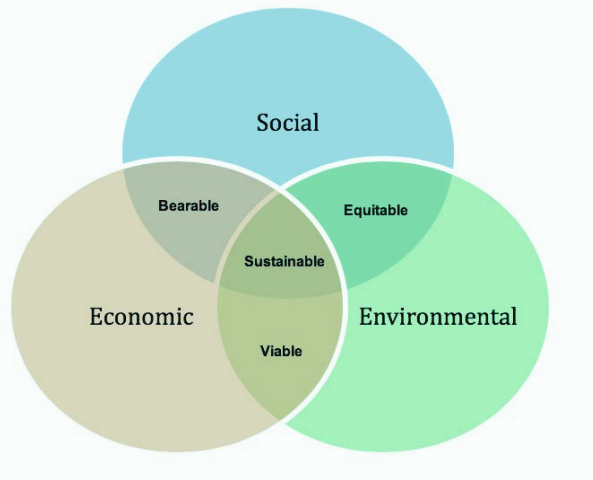
AN INCLUSIVE TOWN CENTRE

When we talk about a sustainability strategy it's important to think about this in its widest sense. Often sustainability is broken down into three parts: environmental (which many people are familiar with), economic and social.

Thinking about sustainability from a social point of view means seeing people as part of the planet and the environment

We were also inspired by Barnsley's network of equality forums to set some people-focused principles to guide our work and shape our ideas about what the town centre should be like in the future.

Page 14



The Three Pillars of Sustainability - University of Nottingham

PEOPLE FOCUSED PRINCIPLES



AN INCLUSIVE TOWN CENTRE

Be Age Friendly

Homes that meet people's needs as they get older, shops and services that are easy to access, friendly, vibrant public spaces that are easy to navigate, places to sit and slow down.

Be Child Friendly

Safe neighbourhoods that aren't dominated by cars, spaces to explore and play, a town centre that is fun and sparks creativity, places to learn and spend time with family.

Be Accessible to All

Affordable, reliable transport options that are easy to use, walking and cycling links that are easy to move through and navigate for everyone, whether they have disability or not.

Feel Inclusive

Spaces that feel safe and welcoming for everyone, a town centre that celebrates all the different people that live there and the value they bring to Barnsley.

Foster Community

Places where the people of Barnsley can come together, to celebrate events, relax, share food or work together for a common goal.

Support Healthy Living

Clean air, options for active travel (getting to where you're going on foot or by bike), green spaces, healthy food, warm, safe houses and businesses.

Although some of these ideas are focused on the possible needs of a specific group, most of them are things that everybody will benefit from: adults need to play and have fun sometimes, younger people can benefit from slowing down and sitting still occasionally, and you don't have to be a new resident to enjoy the feeling of a town that welcomes everybody.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability Interventions



In-progress and existing projects

- Identify intervention points for the introduction of carbon reduction measures at key stages.
- Undertake retrofit of existing buildings, focusing first on high emitters, completing domestic buildings first and moving on to non-domestic (see full report for detailed case studies).
- Targeted demolition or change to lower emission use.

New buildings

- Fabric first approach.
- Set standards for new development.
- 2025 UK target for no gas boilers in new builds.

Carbon

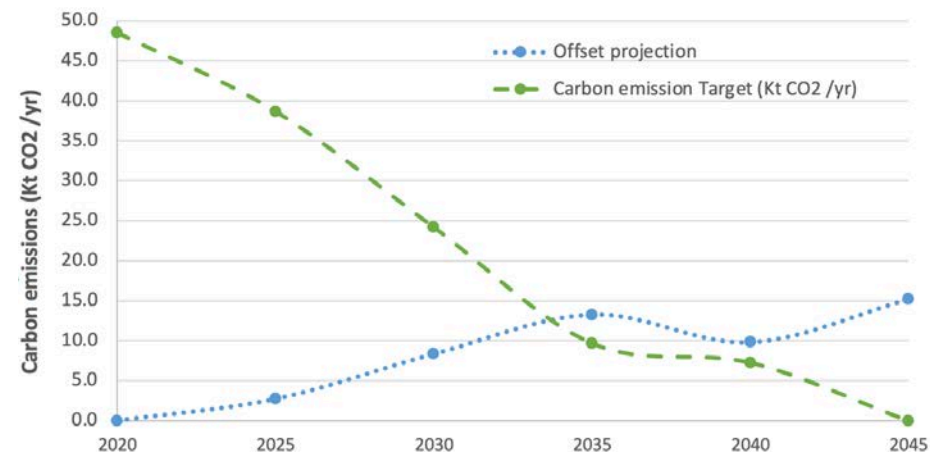
- Develop strategies to decarbonise energy supply.
- Offset residual emissions.
- Create and maintain green spaces.
- Monitor and transparently publish progress/carbon savings.

Further detail can be found in the LEDA Report “Zero Carbon Strategy for Barnsley Town Centre”

Page 16

From our baseline analysis, conversations with the client group and insights from the Town Centre Action Plan team we developed a set of themes with which to think about the next stages of work. Barnsley’s zero carbon agenda was the original focus of the commission and the client team have confirmed that

this should be the overarching principle that guides this project. The sustainability interventions therefore sit above the six themes (explained on page 7) and should be integrated into all of them. The following pages provide a summary of the approach that should be taken when doing so.



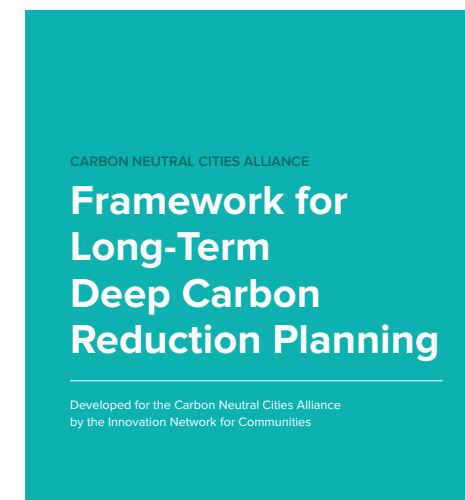
Graph 1. Carbon emission targets and offset projections

SUSTAINABILITY

There are a number of financial and structural approaches that could be taken to push forward and support the interventions listed on the previous page. This page provides an overview of some of the options and again more detail can be found in LEDA's "Zero Carbon Strategy for Barnsley Town Centre" report.

Levers and Strategies

- A "Green New Deal" for Barnsley Town Centre. A comprehensive public policy approach to address climate change and achieve other social aims like job creation and reducing income inequality.
- Grants for small businesses to make aesthetic and sustainability improvements. This could make use of Council borrowing ability to create a revolving fund.
- Power purchase agreements - funding and support to allow multiple small businesses to purchase sustainable energy collectively.
- Attractive leasing arrangements for new "green" businesses that meet certain standards, along with support for existing businesses to make changes.



The Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance Report "Framework for Long-Term Deep Carbon Reduction Planning provides some useful examples of approaches that other urban areas have taken.

THEMES

Sustainability Interventions

Retail

Culture

Skills/Employment

Housing

Green space

Connection

The six themes sitting under the overall sustainability agenda have helped to guide our thinking about the future of Barnsley town centre. This section gives an overview of the themes, explaining the overall idea in each case and the reasons behind it.



Retail

What?

Reduce/diversify some retail floorspace while increasing independent, sustainable, local businesses.

Why?

- Improve town centre resilience following Covid 19.
- Build on the market and existing independent retail.
- Support local businesses.
- Lower reliance on vulnerable national retailers.
- Attract young people.



Culture

What?

Boosting Barnsley's existing cultural assets, linking them up and improving early evening options for food and drink.

Why?

- Build on good existing cultural offer.
- Boost early evening economy.
- Tie in with independent retail identity and town centre neighborhoods ideas.
- Attract visitors from a wider area and younger people.



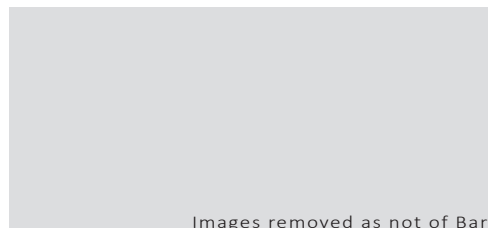
Skills/Employment

What?

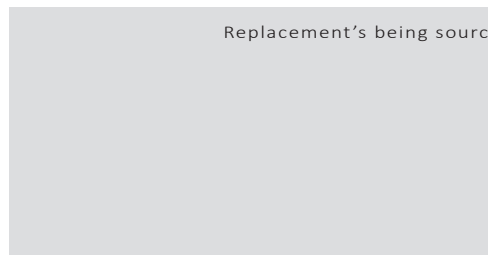
Make Barnsley a great place to learn skills, start a business or work remotely.

Why?

- Support and retain young people.
- Boost local economy with “green” businesses.
- Facilitate working from home/ flexible working trend.
- Build on existing educational assets and The Seam digital campus.



Images removed as not of Barnsley.



Replacement's being sourced

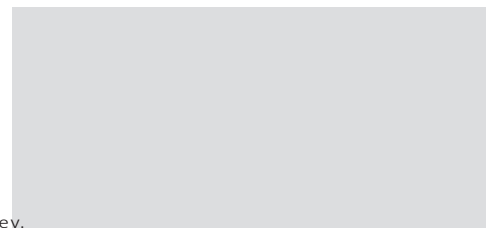
Housing

What?

Increase the resident population in and around the town centre with high quality housing.

Why?

- Local residents supported the town centre during Covid 19. Growing population will help recovery and reduce reliance on visitors
- Boost/support other measures.
- Address housing need.
- Encourage sustainable patterns of development and travel.



Green space

What?

Bringing green and blue spaces into the town centre.

Why?

- Improve resident and visitor access to greenspace as a boost to mental and physical health.
- Create an attractive environment to support other themes - especially Housing, Culture and Connections.
- Improve biodiversity, resilience to flooding and air quality.



Connections

What?

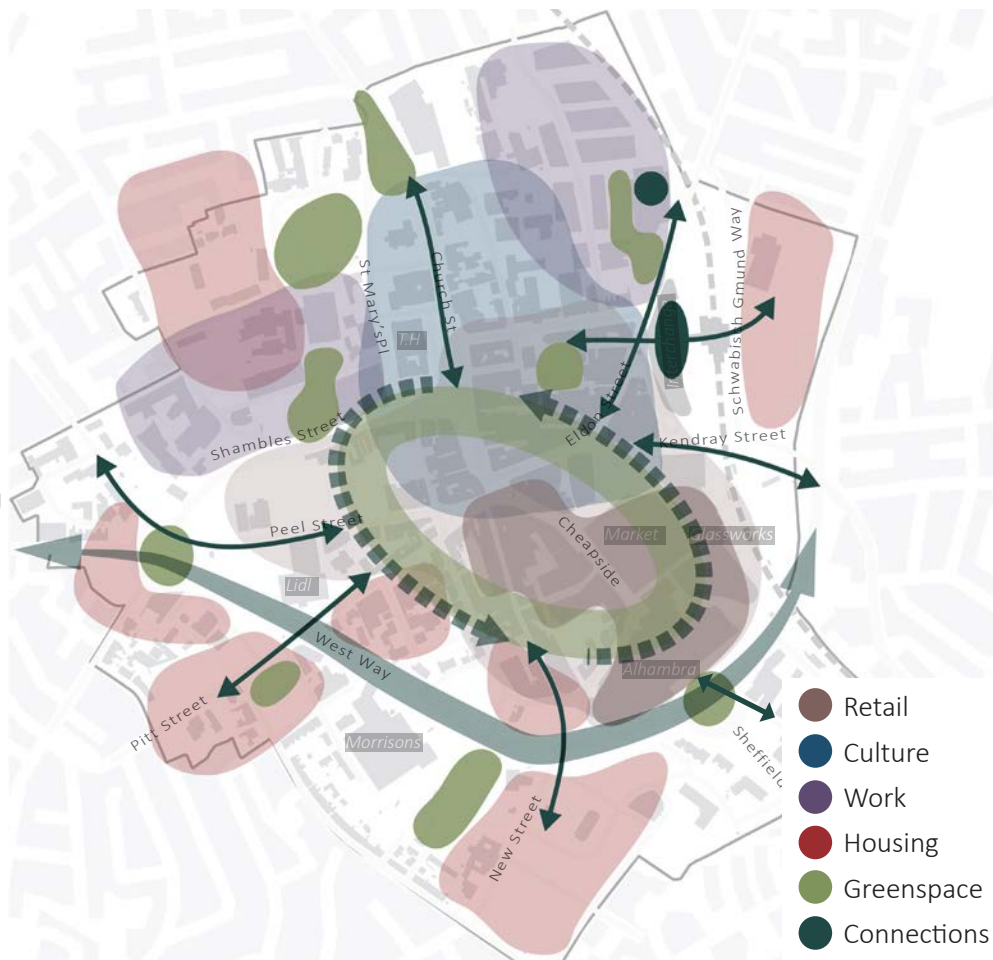
Creating an inclusive, accessible town centre with good non-car travel options.

Why?

- Improve resident and visitor mental and physical health.
- Allow the town centre to function better and boost existing businesses.
- Improve air quality
- Encourage sustainable travel patterns.

SPATIAL STRATEGY

Page 20

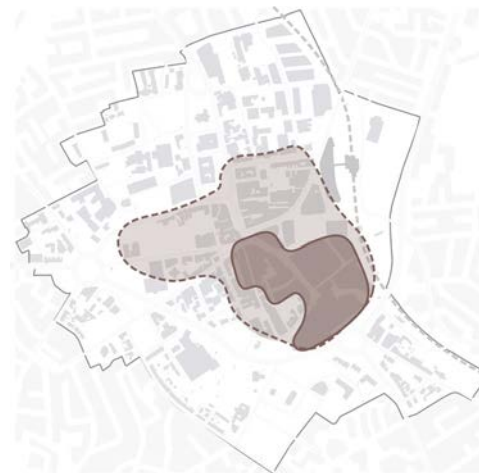


The next step was to develop a high level spatial strategy for each of the themes.

The sustainability components cut across all the themes and should

be integrated at “intervention points” within specific projects

The following diagram series illustrates our initial spatial strategy:



Retail

- Contraction of inner retail core focused around Glassworks, market and Alhambra Shopping Centre.
- Development of wider “indy town” outer core, in which to explore diversification to independent retail and alternative uses.



Culture

- Development of a cultural “zone” around the existing cultural institutions: The Civic, Parkway Cinema, Lamproom Theatre, Cooper Gallery and Barnsley Museum.
- Public realm improvements/ activation of connecting streets and spaces: Eldon Street, Church Street, Mandella Gardens etc based around the early evening economy.
- Improvement of eastern connectivity out to the Metrodome.

SPATIAL STRATEGY



Skills/Employment

Introduction of flexible offices, co-working spaces and studios.

- At The Seam Digital Campus to the north, such uses could help to diversify the offer of the existing masterplan and build connections with surrounding educational institutions.
- To the north west these could be introduced through intensification and have a relationship with Barnsley Sixth Form College

Housing

Drawing high quality housing from the surrounding suburbs into the town centre.

- Around Churchfields to the north west.
- Around Townend Roundabout including junction reconfiguration.
- Along Pitt Street and New Street with improved crossings over the West Way.
- Around the “Youth Zone” development site to the east.

Greenspace

- Improvement of existing green spaces and introducing additional larger green spaces around the periphery of the town centre.
- Introduction of smaller scale green interventions into a zone in the core of the town centre: pocket parks, green roofs etc.
- Development of a “wellbeing route” of green links around the core of the town centre.

Connections

- Improvement of walking and cycling connections around the periphery of the town centre. Including a strong link between the Active Travel Hub at The Seam and the existing Interchange.
- Development of “wellbeing route” around the town centre core with improved walkability.
- “Taming” of the West Way with landscape softening, reconfigured junctions and improved crossings



1. Inner Retail Core

The inner retail core is defined around the Glassworks, Markets, Alhambra Shopping Centre and new public square.

This would be the main focus for retail floorspace in Barnsley town centre, following the one third contraction recommended in the economy section. This is where you would expect larger brands and multiple retailers, though they would not be expressly prohibited from other locations. Independent retail could play a role, building on the market.

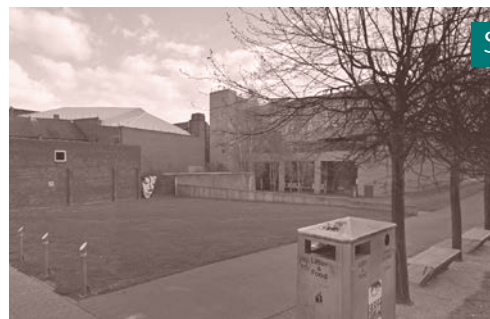
LONG LIST RETAIL



2. Outer Retail Core

The outer retail core covers a wider area and is defined around Church Street, Eldon Street, Shambles Street and Pitt Street. This would be a “reinvention zone” with a stronger focus both on independent retailers but also on diversification to other active uses.

The Council’s role here could be in creating a fund to buy up vacant retail properties, particularly those where occupiers have relocated to the Glassworks. A leasehold structure could be set up to support new businesses with cash pots for improvements to the units (which could be aesthetic but also include sustainability improvements).



3. Regent Street South

This could be activated by pop up units to expand the offer in the area. This could serve as a test bed for independents who could then be supported to take permanent units.



4. Residential Ground Floors

The housing proposed at New Street and Peel Street has potential for flexible units at ground floor for shops, cafe’s or restaurants to serve residents.



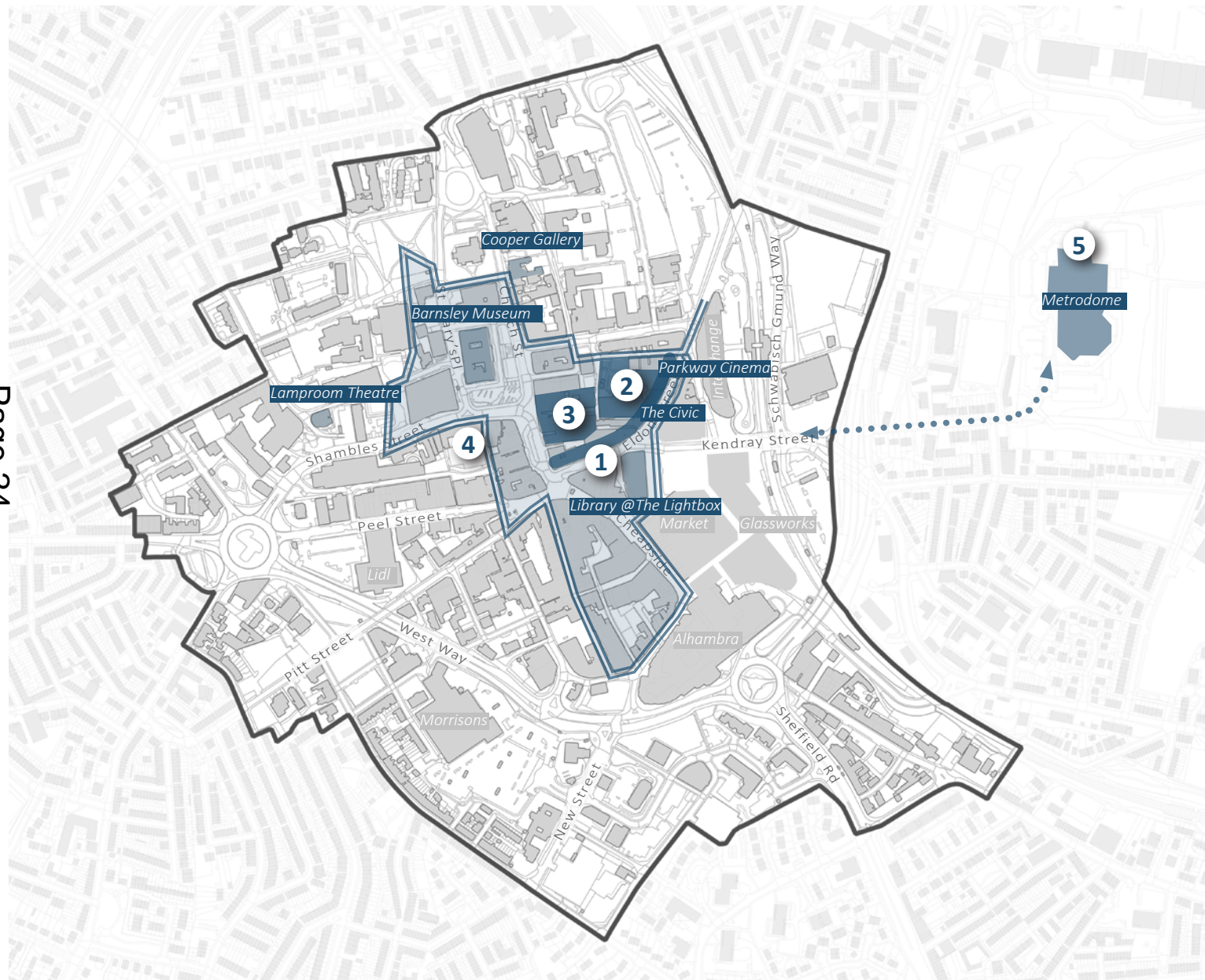
5. Alhambra Shopping Centre

Development of a distinct identity and offer for the Alhambra. This will likely include retail but could also explore a reduction, with alternative uses on different floors.



6. Eldon Street

Improvement and integration of active ground floor uses, including retail as part of the Heritage Action Zone work.



1. Eldon Street Access

Frontage and public realm improvements through HAZ to include improved access to Regent Street South/Civic - cut through near "Globe Holidays"



2. Regent Street South

Animating the space with Parkway Cinema (screen on the green?) and The Civic (indoor/outdoor events) See Retail 3 and Greenspace 1

S

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LONG LIST: CULTURE



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3. George Yard/Arcades

Improvement of public realm and active encouragement of early evening activity, food and drink.

Detailed design should consider access and servicing requirements.



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5. Metrodome

Clearer role/more diverse events. Better connectivity with town centre, encourage linked trips, effective car park use. See Connections 3

Page 25



M

4. Multipurpose Route

“Culture trail” active travel route linking different attractions.

Greened/improved public realm.

Route to be determined. See

Greenspace 7 and Connections 4

LONG LIST: SKILLS/EMPLOYMENT

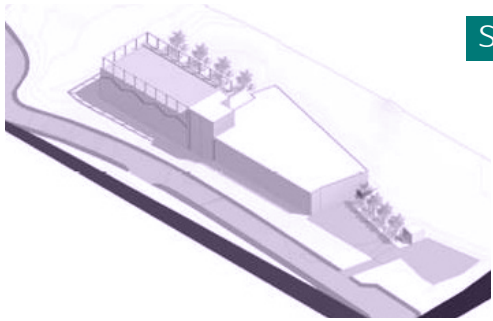


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1. The Seam

Barnsley's emerging digital campus combining digital and creative businesses, housing, green spaces, new connections and an active travel hub. The masterplan is already in development but there may be opportunities for additional boosts to Barnsley's skills/employment offer - including possible higher education links.

LONG LIST: SKILLS/EMPLOYMENT



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2. Youth Zone

The Youth Zone would offer a wide range of physical and recreational activities for young people as well as personal development and informal education to help raise aspirations and improve prospects.



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4. Home Working

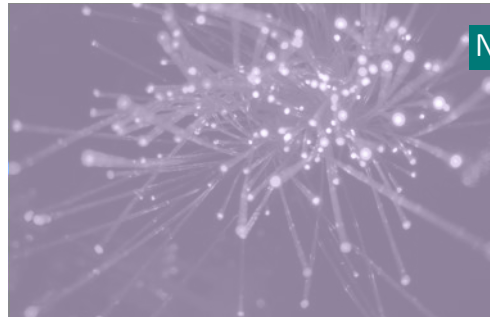
Integration of spaces suitable for homes working and provision of high speed Internet to serve proposed residential development.



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3. Westgate

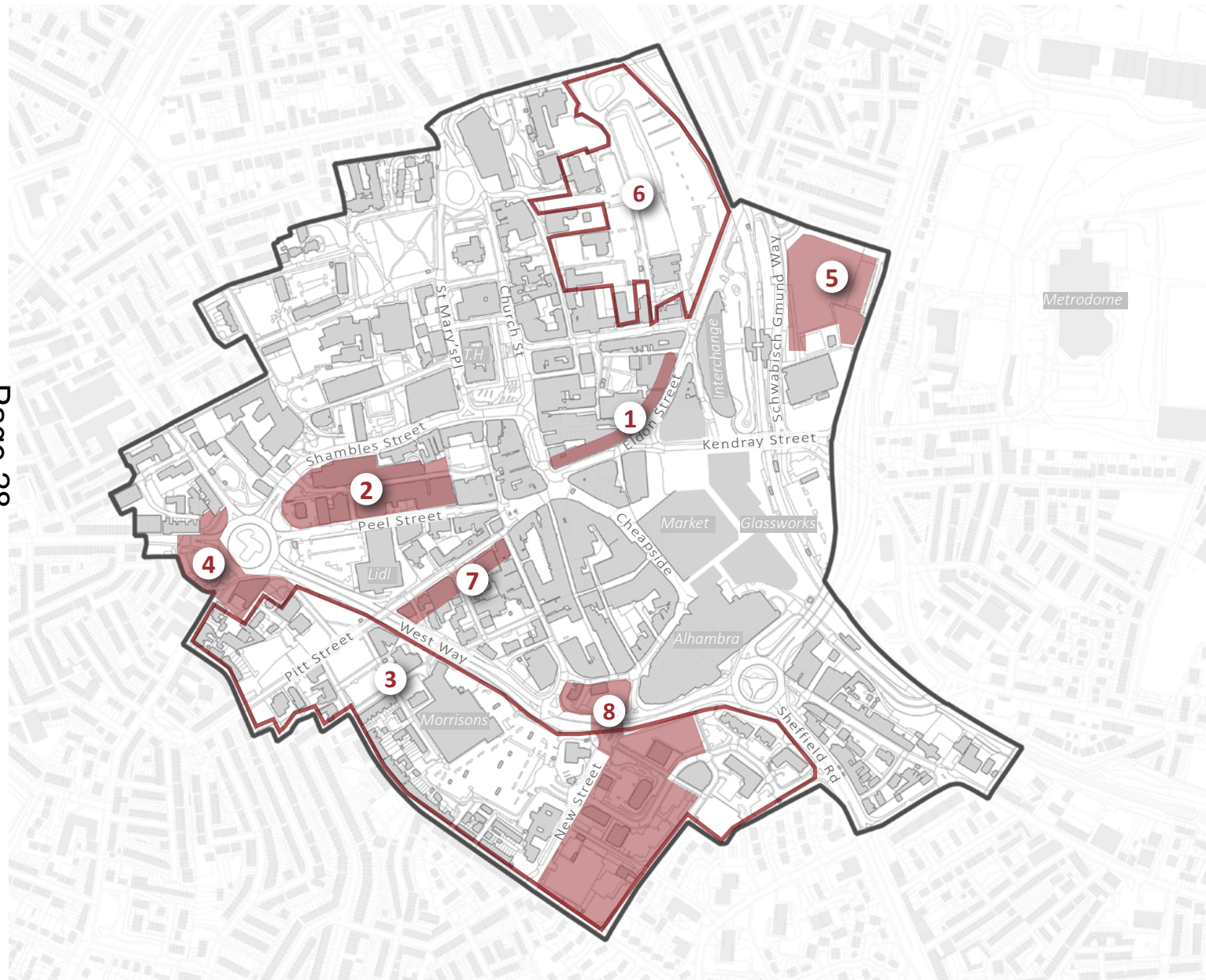
Intensification and re-defined identity for the Westgate area. Retain/reconfigure current uses + introduction of business/co-working spaces.



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5 Digital Connectivity

Provision of high speed Internet access across the town centre for homes and businesses to assist remote and co-working.



Approach

The overall aspiration is to increase the amount of high quality housing within the town centre. This should be sustainable and cater to a range of ages and needs. The following list represents a possible starting point and further opportunities for homes in the town centre may come forward in future.



1. Eldon Street

Housing along Eldon Street frontage, above ground floor active uses as part of Heritage Action Zone. Civic and Harral's Buildings as possible locations.

LONG LIST : HOUSING



L

2. Peel St North

Partial demolition of existing buildings including Peel Street Arcade. New mid-density housing - active ground floor uses.



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4. Townend Roundabout

Reconfiguration of roundabout, partial demolition of existing buildings and new housing development.



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6. The Seam

Housing included within the Seam masterplan



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8. New Street Neighborhood

New housing and change of overall use/character of the New Street area - improvements to West Way crossing and links into the town centre.



L

3. Southern Fringe Opportunity Area

No specific sites have been identified at this stage, but the area to the south of West Way has potential to deliver housing within the town centre.



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5. Youth Zone

Housing on land adjacent to Youth Zone development site.



L

7. Pitt Street

New and retrofitted mid-density housing and active ground floor uses along Pitt Street

LONG LIST: GREEN SPACE



1. Regent Street South

Improvements to green space to tie in with pop up interventions. See Culture No. 2



2. New Street Neighborhood

New green space and greened streets/crossing points could be delivered as part of new housing in and around New Street. See also Housing No. 8

LONG LIST : GREEN SPACE



M

3. Alhambra Roundabout

Improvements to access and green space at the Alhambra Roundabout pedestrian routes. See also Connections No.3.



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5. West Way

Greening and softening the West Way, especially at key crossings/junctions. See also Connections No.2.



M

7. Multipurpose Route

Multipurpose “wellbeing/culture” route through town. Exact route to be defined considering accessibility and other projects. See also Connections No.4.



M

9. Eldon Street/Interchange

Possible new green space between Eldon Street and the Interchange.

Page 31



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4. The Seam

New green spaces and green links delivered as part of the emerging Seam digital campus masterplan.

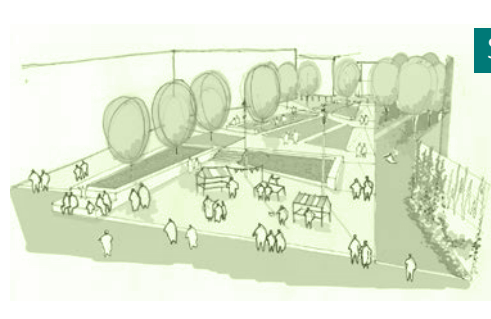


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6. Green Connections

Street trees and greening along key routes in and out of town centre. See also Connections.



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8. Urban Park

An urban park for the town centre at Cheapside/Albert Street. Possibly located on a site currently occupied by Sport Direct. Embodied carbon associated with any demolition to be considered.

LONG LIST: CONNECTIONS



1. New Street

Improvements to crossing over West Way and New Street and improved gateway to the town centre.



2. West Way

Integration of improved walking and cycling connections both across and along the West Way. See Greenspace No 5.

LONG LIST: CONNECTIONS



3. Routes in and out of town

Improvements to walking and cycling connections in and out of the town centre along key streets to improve access for surrounding residential neighborhoods.



5. Eldon Street Access

Frontage and public realm improvements through HAZ to include improved access to Regent Street South/Civic - cut through near "Globe Holidays"



7. The Seam

New links and connectivity through the site delivered as part of the emerging Seam digital campus masterplan.



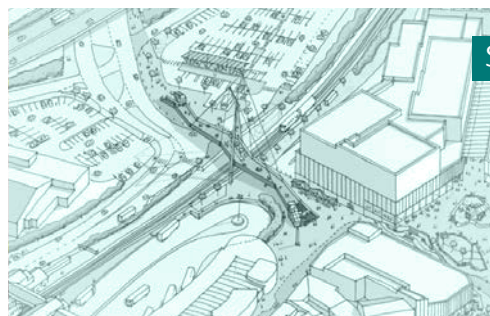
9. Gateways

Gateways at Sheffield Rd, Dodworth Rd, Huddersfield Rd and Old Mill Lane - taller, visually attractive and impactful development encouraged.



4. Routes within town

Multipurpose "wellbeing/culture" route through town. Exact route to be defined considering accessibility and other projects.



6. Market Gate Bridge

Improvements to walking and cycling provision and quality of public realm on either side of the proposed Market Gate Bridge crossing.



8. Metrodome "Green Sprint"

Improved walking and cycling connectivity between the Metrodome and the town centre including a new bridge over Harborough Hills.

