

Carlisle

Future High Street Fund Proposals

Agenda

- 13.30 Introduction – Steve Robinson
- 13.45 Background to the Future High Street Fund – Steve Robinson
- 14.00 Our Understanding of Carlisle – Mott MacDonald
- 14.30 Future High Street Fund Projects – Mott MacDonald
- 15.30 Discussion and questions



Introduction



FSHF




Our understanding of Carlisle



Carlisle Local Authority Education Level

22% Local authority population have a level 4 qualification or higher  5% Lower than the national average

 56% Local authority population have only a level 2 qualification or below 6% Higher than the national average

4.61% Local authority population have apprenticeship qualification 

Carlisle City Employment rate

Employment rate of 80.1% | Unemployment rate of 4.3%  Carlisle has an economic activity rate of 80.1%




Change in employment rate since June 2012



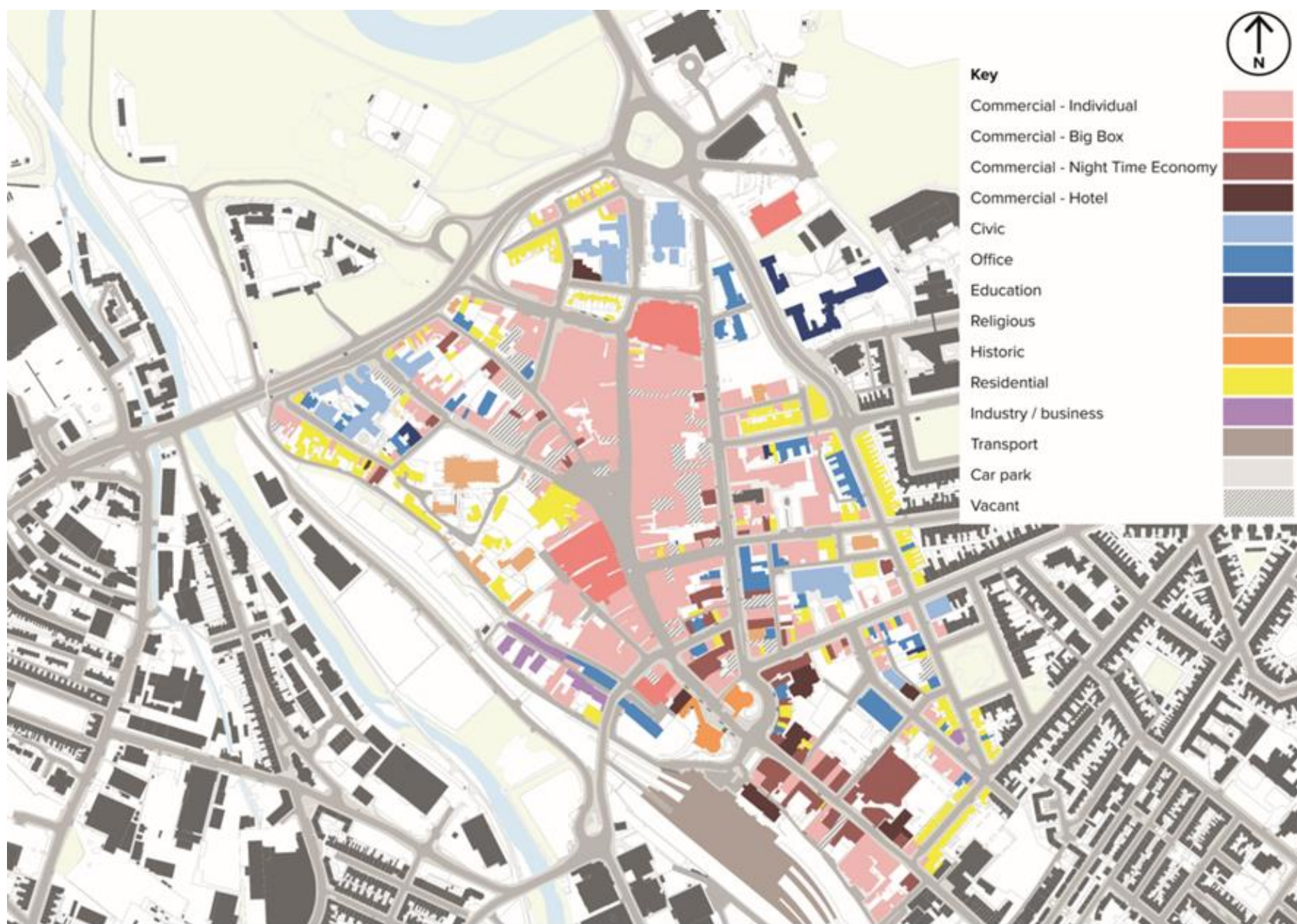
Carlisle Local Authority Annual Income

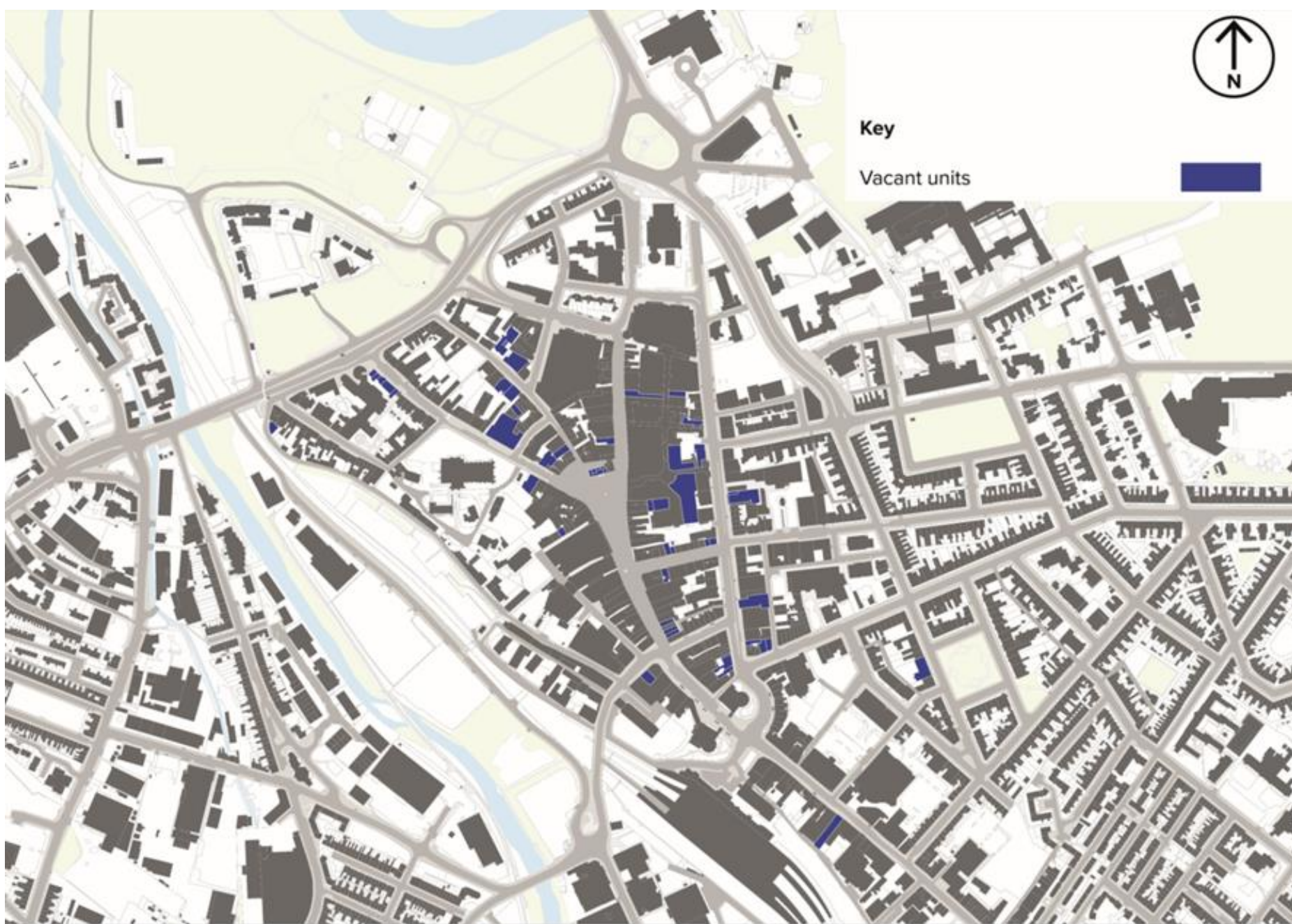
Average gross annual income of £31,422  16% Lower than the UK average

Carlisle City Population Growth since 2011

 Number of people aged 65+ has increased by 13.6% | Number of people aged 18-49 has decreased by 10%
Population has decreased by 0.71%  









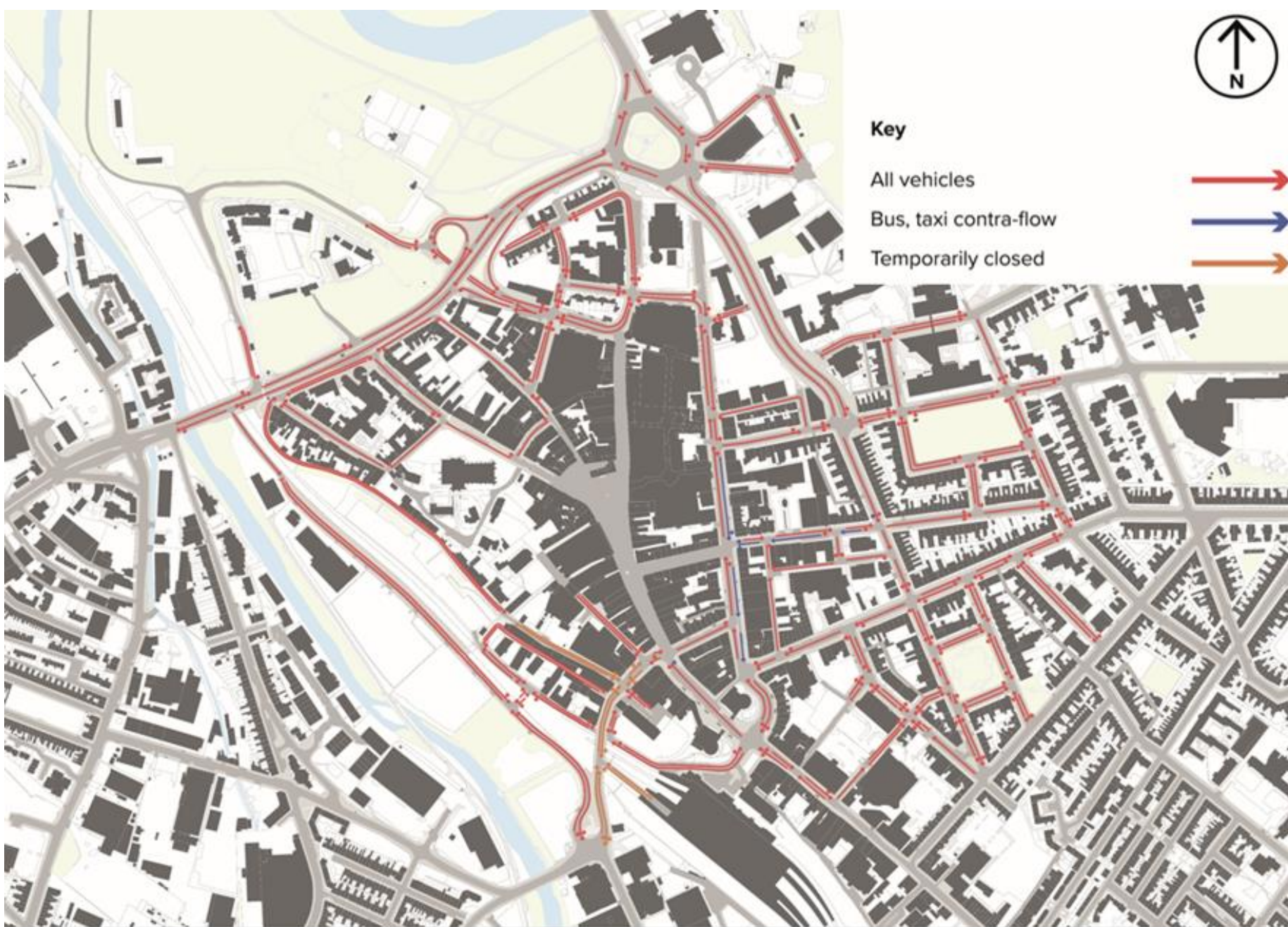
Night time economy

Most of the evening offer is located on Devonshire Street, South Lowther Street, The Crescent and Botchergate.

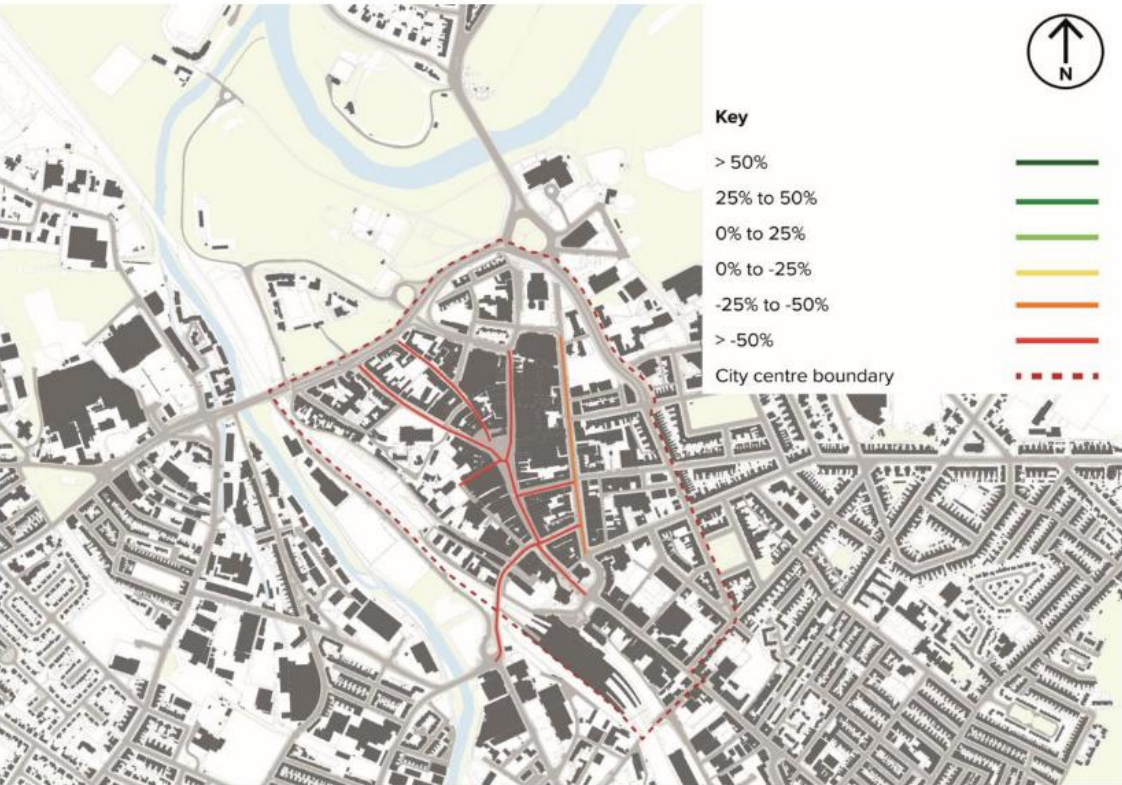
There is a need to expand and diversify the night-time offer, to support a wider spread of evening activities which appeal to a wider audience

Botchergate provides the main night-time economy venues despite being recognised as having low public realm and environmental quality.





Change in weekday / weekend footfall 2012-2019



Source: Carlisle City Council

Source: Carlisle City Council

Ambitions



**Renewing Carlisle City
Centre as a place to live
and work**



**Reactivating Carlisle's
historic Quarter**



**Catalysing Carlisle's
night time economy**

Projects

1. Securing redevelopment for Hooper's Department Store
2. Adaptive Reuse
3. Preparing Central Plaza site for redevelopment
4. Reimagining Green Market/ Market Square as Carlisle's events space
5. Feature / Event lighting in Carlisle city centre
6. Reconfiguring Lowther Street
7. Improving pedestrianisation of Devonshire Street
8. Regenerating the Northern Quarter



1. Securing redevelopment for Hooper's Department Store



2. Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive re-use refers to the repurposing of historic assets to provide a new use or function more befitting of the demands of the area. Applied in Carlisle, this approach would ensure that the contribution of these buildings to the architectural character of the City Centre can be retained, while simultaneously diversifying the city centre offering.

Using this approach can prolong a buildings life and reduce the consumption of materials and resources. It therefore presents a sustainable alternative to the construction of new buildings.

The buildings of 2-24 Castle Street, once refurbished, would be home to a number of new ventures.



The diversity of building types on offer within Carlisle presents a range of opportunities for new uses.

Successful projects elsewhere in the UK have included a mix of housing provision, community facilities, arts spaces and more.

As an example, Gaunson House in Hackney, London utilises an old warehouse space in a range of new ways.

The creation of a various studio and office space, catering to a range of business needs, facilitates a community atmosphere in a space that could otherwise seem derelict.



Gaunson House, London – a warehouse which has been converted into an artist led art studio and workspace complex with shared kitchen, common area and café bar. 20 February 2020



Victoria Viaduct Central Plaza Hotel



4. Reimagining the Market Square

The market square is large underutilised space. Currently the square is filled with bollards – cluttering the space, scattered amenities, and tired materials. The buildings fronting on to have very limited interaction with the square.

The sightlines for the square fragments the space, drawing the majority of pedestrians east of the Tourist Information Centre, away from the Green Market and Castle Street. There is potential to make a more cohesive space which is utilised in its entirety.

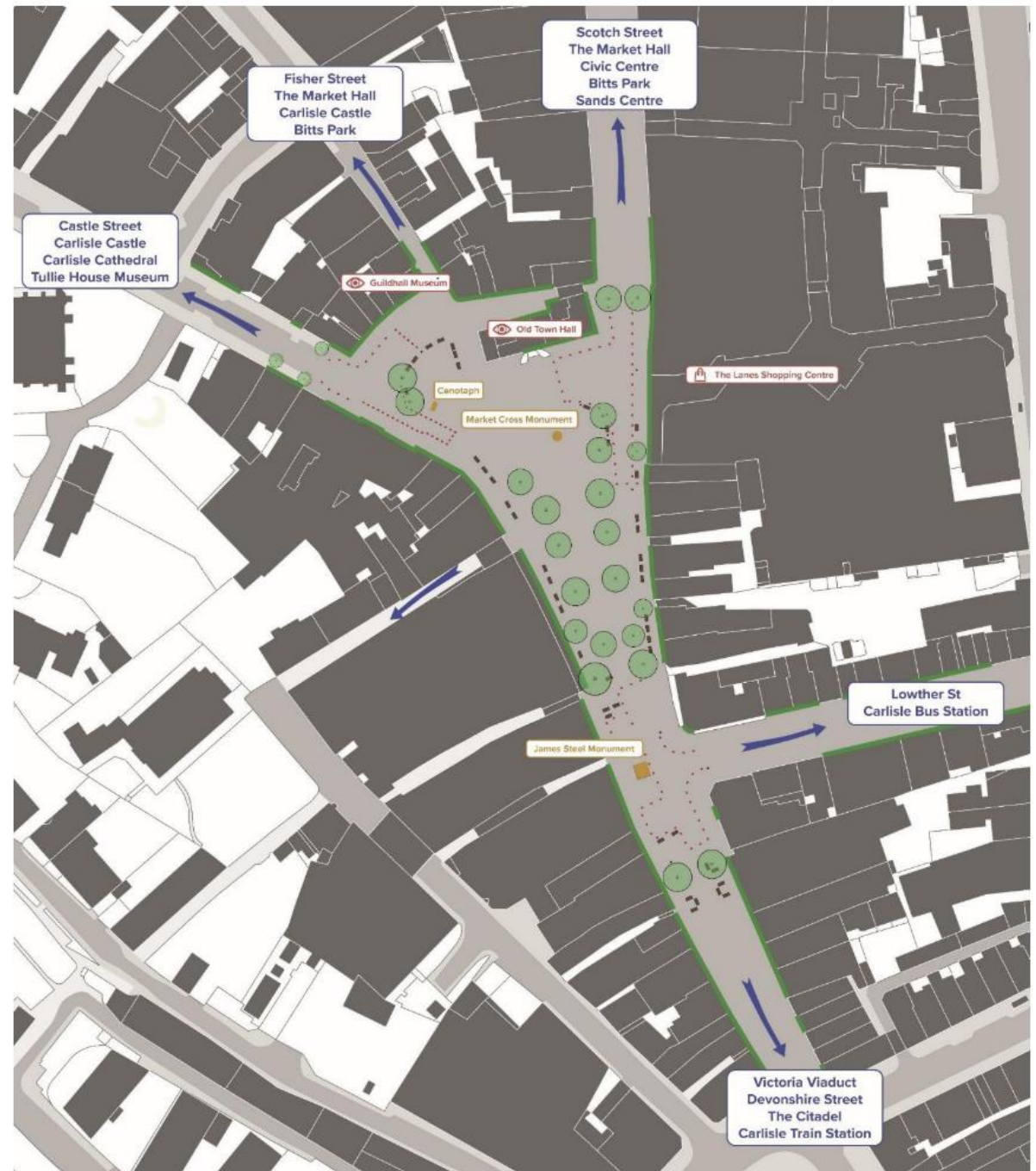


As part of the main retail core of Carlisle there is potential for it to become a dynamic public place, which not only supports the retail footfall but draws people into it.

At approximately 6,000 m² there is potential to provide a variety of amenities in the market square, such as seating, landscaping, and play features, while also allowing shops to interact with the space.

A revised market square design opens opportunities to minimise the dominance of transport infrastructure, prioritising pedestrian movement and providing an outdoor community space.

Three concepts for how the space can be reimaged are presented overleaf, demonstrating the different ways the space can function for the community.





By introducing additional smaller buildings to the space, a more intimate square is created. These new buildings, which could operate as cafes or restaurants, would contribute to the activity and attractiveness of the area.

This however, reduces the overall offer of public space thereby restricting how the area could be used in the future.



This concept explores how the square can be designed to function as one singular space, rather than the Green Market, and Market Square. This could be through a unifying paving technique, tying the spaces together.

By addressing the fractured nature of the space, this design would seek to improve sightlines and permeability, reinforce the historic identity and preserve the flexibility of the area.



By considering the square as having three distinct areas, we can provide a diversity of uses in the one space and design a square that is flexible in its function and provides for all users.

This works to enclose the space somewhat, by introducing different types of activities, however further consideration is required on how this impacts accessibility for loading and disabled parking needs.



Option 1: A Unified Space

This concept explores how the square can be designed to function as one singular space, rather than the Green Market, and Market Square. This could be through a unifying paving technique, tying the spaces together.

By addressing the fractured nature of the space, this design would seek to improve sightlines and permeability, reinforce the historic identity and preserve the flexibility of the area.

This doesn't however, directly address the vastness felt by the lack of activity within the Market Square, and further consideration would be required as to how the design would compliment the existing building frontages.



Senado Square, Macao



Stroget-Jan-Gehl, Kopenhagen

20 February 2020



Option 2: Enclosing a town square

By introducing additional smaller buildings to the space, a more intimate square is created. These new buildings, or kiosks, would be aligned with the existing urban fabric, as to not impede on pedestrian desire lines. They would be an ideal home to new cafes or restaurants, drawing people in to the square and contributing to the activity and buzz. Alternatively, they present an opportunity for the visitor centre to be relocated to a more accessible and prominent location, freeing up the Town Hall for other uses.

This concept does reduce the overall offer of public space, thereby restricting how the area could be used in the future. The placement of these new footprints would need to consider access and blue badge parking provision.



Queens Street Mall, Brisbane



Portsoken Pavilion, London 20 February 2020

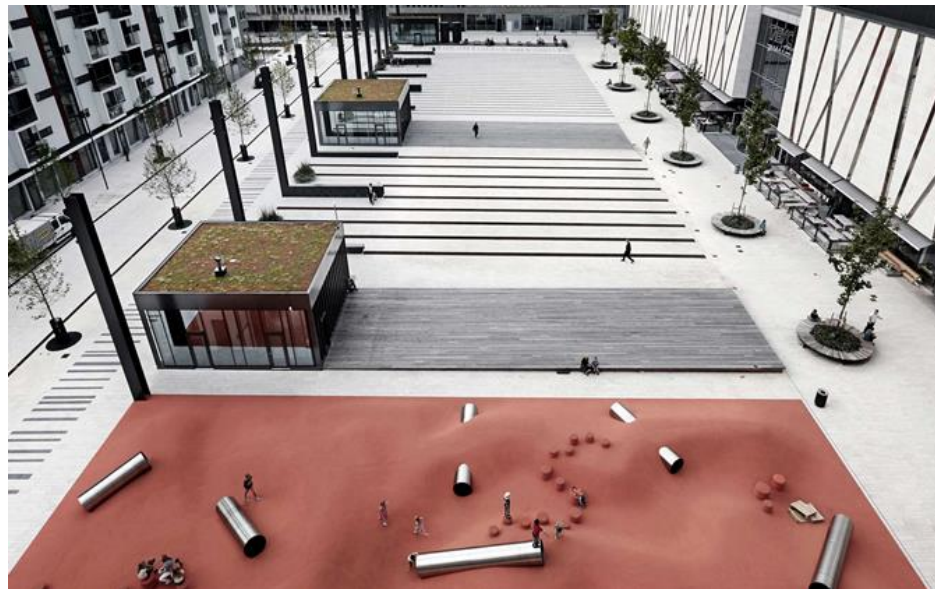


Option 3: Multi-use space

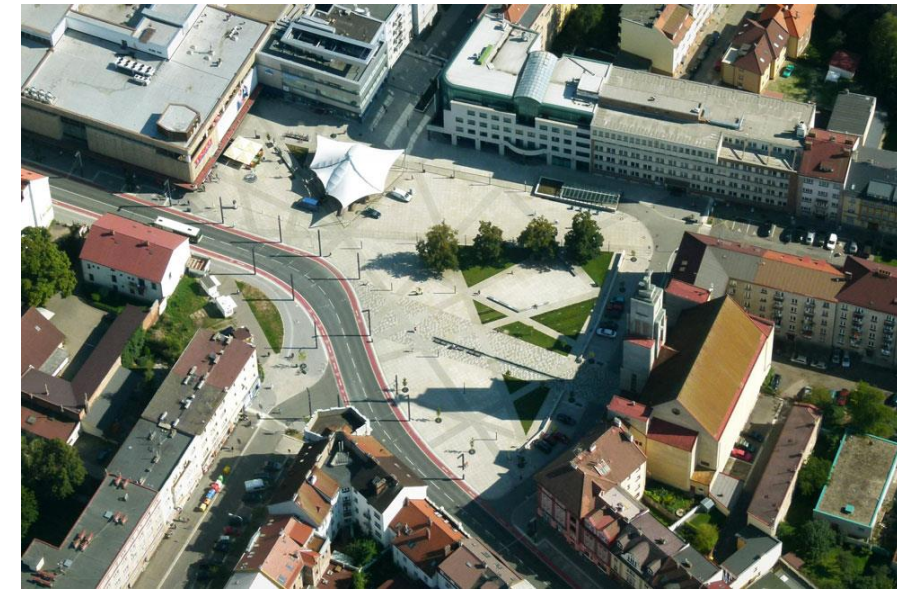
This option brings to consider how the square may function having three distinct areas, we can provide a diversity of uses in the one space and design a square that is flexible in its function and provides for all users.

This works to enclose the space somewhat. By introducing different types of uses such as parklets or seating areas, the volume of space that is currently felt is decreased, without the introduction of additional built form.

Further consideration is required on how this impacts accessibility for loading and disabled parking needs.



Taby Torg Sweden



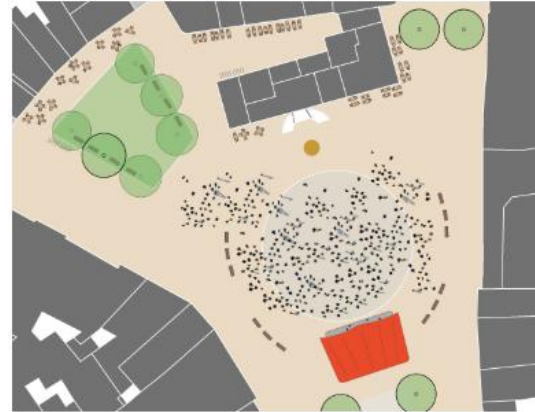
Řijna Square, Hradec Králové

An example of one of these concepts explores the idea of the multi-use space, which provides three key purposes, whilst also appearing as a cohesive and inviting space.

- The area of the Green Market would become a parklet, offering a grassed area enclosed by trees and creating a new area to rest and enjoy the space.
- The central area would remain an open, flexible space that could be home to a number of uses throughout the year. The example includes a water fountain feature, bringing activity back in to the space when in play, yet does not restrict the space when switched off. Moveable street furniture provides a place for relaxation, without imposing on the flexible nature of the space.
- The third space is a tree lined boulevard, connecting the square to the existing pedestrian network. Double sided public seating will run between a row of trees, creating a new meeting space and encouraging socialising.



Granary Square, London



The square during an event





Lighting up Carlisle

The historic assets around Carlisle form a key part of its identity and cultural offering.

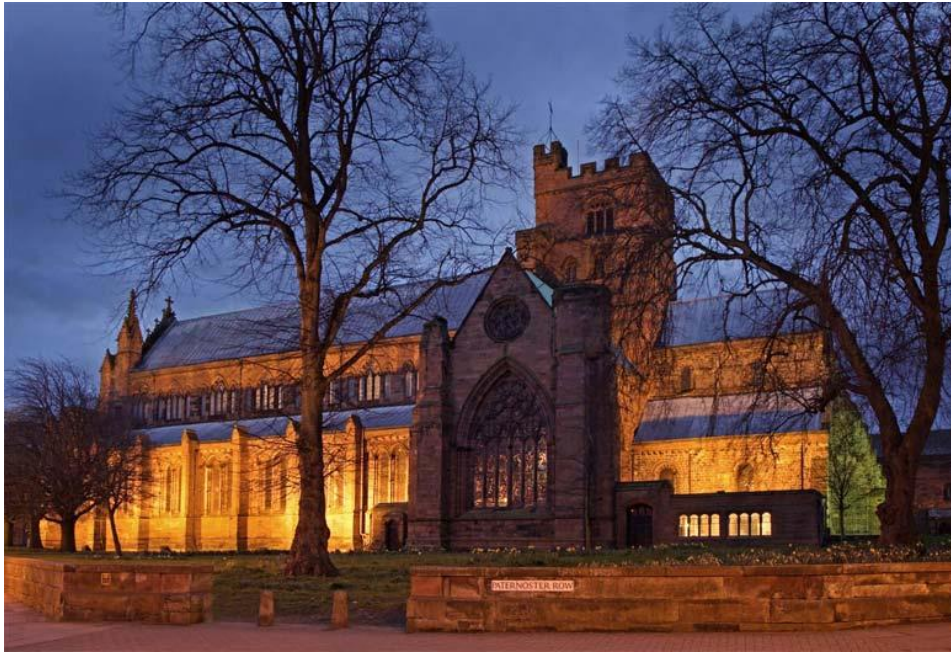
Feature lighting for important sites such as the Castle, Citadel and Cathedral can enhance their presence and further strengthen this historic core.



Evening lighting is already installed in some locations, however there is scope to enhance and diversify this.

Themed or coloured lighting throughout the year reflecting different cultural events can be used to further highlight the identity of Carlisle.

Variations in style and colour can work together to highlight areas of architectural interest, or illuminate pathways.



Current evening lighting at Carlisle Cathedral



Current evening lighting at Carlisle Citadel



Example of a variation of lighting styles - Warsaw, Poland

Feature lighting along streets and alleyways can brighten them up, add interest and improve safety and legibility.

St. Cuthburts Lane and the Ginnel Lanes connect the Market Square to areas west of the town centre, however are currently unlit and poorly serviced, making them feel unsafe to residents.

Introducing feature lighting such as the example provided of Brighton, improves the character, legibility and overall appearance of the area



Mott MacDonald



St. Cuthburts Lane, Carlisle



The Lanes, Brighton



7. Improving the environment of Devonshire Street

Improving the environment of Devonshire Street

Devonshire Street is home to several good quality food and beverage outlets but these assets are not fully utilised due to the vehicle dominance of the space. Vehicle movement is one-way with two lanes (one bus only). The carriageway is excessively wide, with kerb to kerb widths of in excess of 9m at some points. The excess carriageway space provides an opportunity to increase the dedicated pedestrian areas and potential areas for businesses to spill into. Additionally stronger connections could be created with the pedestrian zone. Any proposals must be co-ordinated with bus movements.

Mott MacDonald

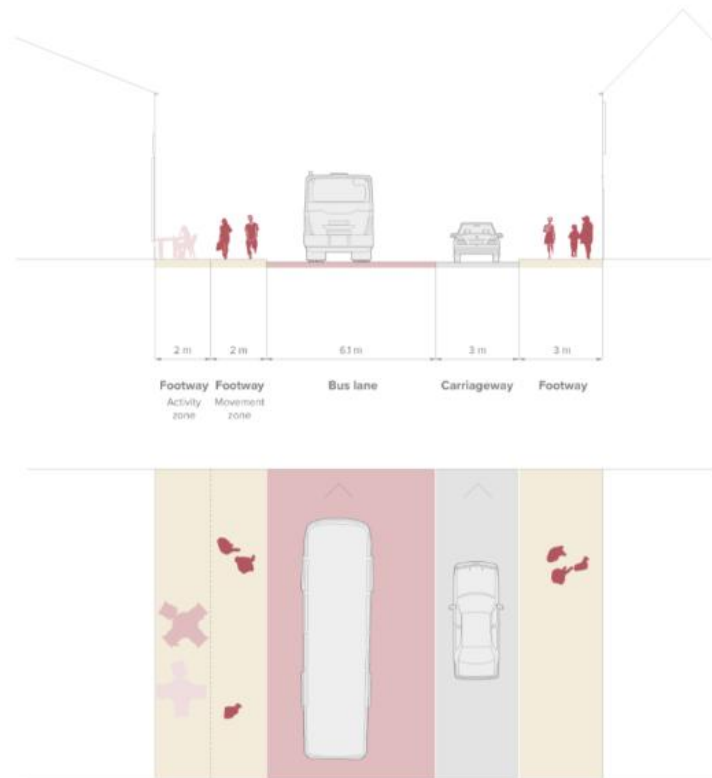


Cross sections

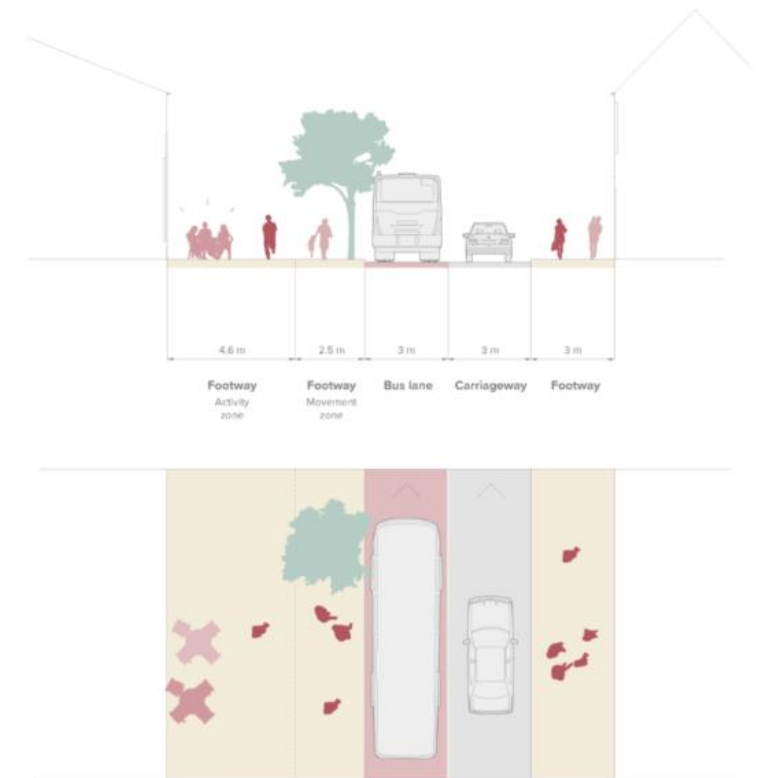
The existing cross section for Devonshire Street shows that there is an opportunity to rationalise the carriageway, reducing the excessive width of the bus lane (up to 6.7m wide).

The space resulting from this rationalisation will be used to widen the northern footway. This will create a meaningful activity zone, with more space for people to walk and spend time sitting in terraces or benches.

Existing



Rationalised carriageway



Proposed design

Two restaurants, a pub and a bar are currently located on the northern edge of the street. This offers a possibility to create a spacious outdoor seating area.

The space gained from reconfiguring the street to one lane, with space for cyclist also enables the provision of a street furniture zone on the northern footway with benches, cycle parking spaces and trees.

The 3m southern footway remains as it is currently.





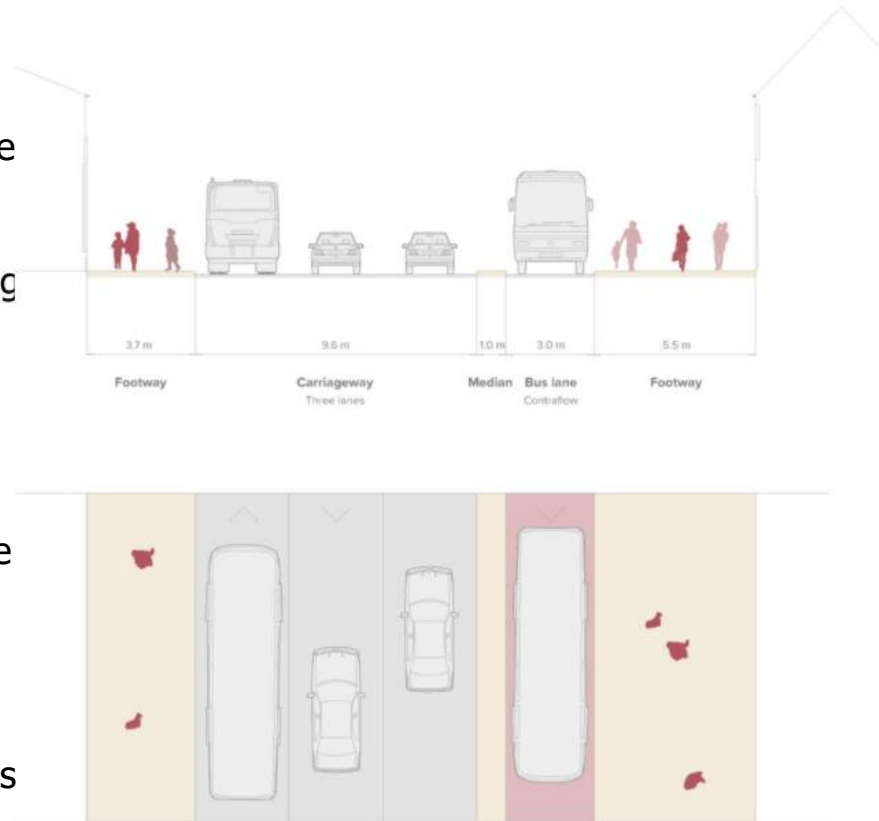
6. Reconfiguring Lowther Street

Lowther Street

Lowther St is on average is approximately 21m in width. It is currently part of the one-way gyratory Victoria Place, Spencer Street and Warwick Road.

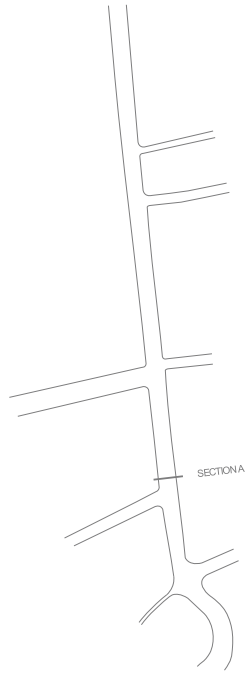
Lowther St's current layout of three north-bound lanes (including one bus lane), one south-bound bus lane and medians with guard railing restrict crossing opportunities and pedestrian desire lines. Vehicle dominance and hard landscaping make it an uninviting place for pedestrians. Despite the street's prominent location, adjacent to the town's primary shopping area, it is a space to quickly move through rather than dwell in.

By reconfiguring the street, there is an opportunity to transform the street into a successful urban corridor which caters to pedestrians without impacting vehicular flow.



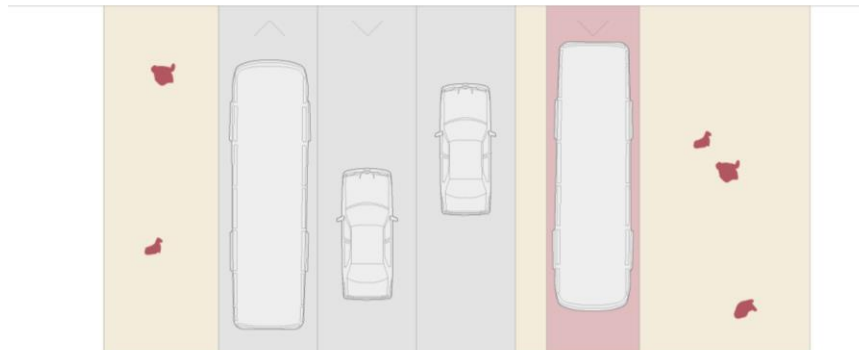
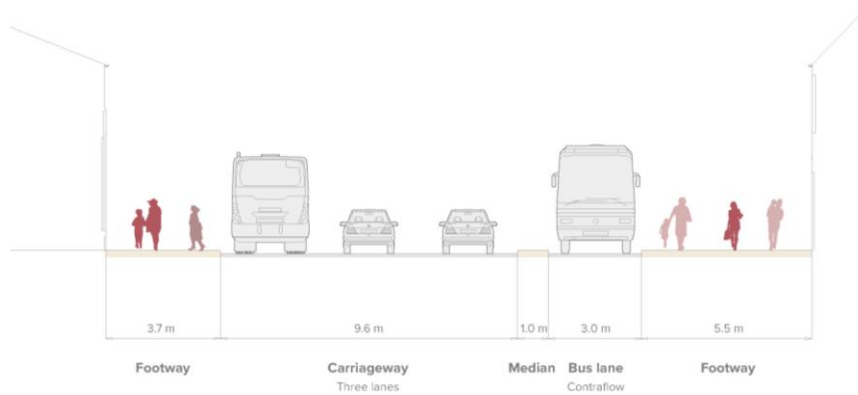
Existing Cross Section of Lowther Street





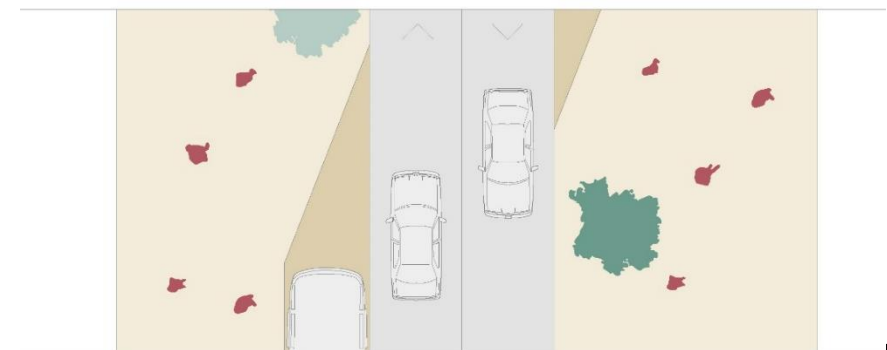
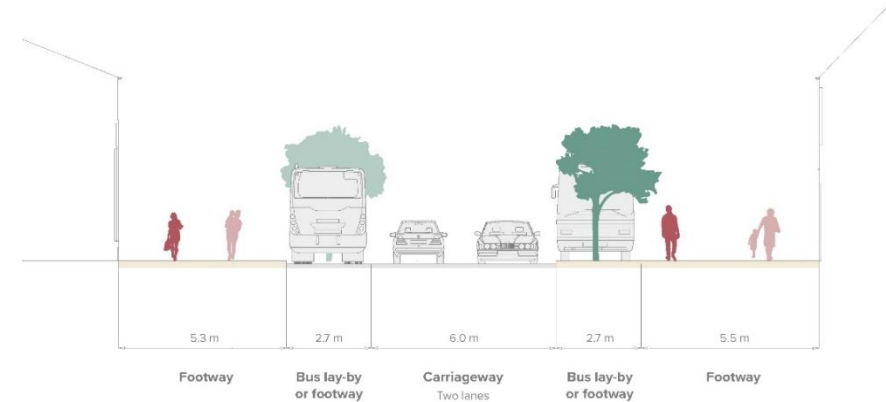
Existing:

Currently Section A of Lowther Street is relatively wide and includes three north-bound lanes (including one bus lane) and one south-bound bus lane. Having a contra flow bus lane creates a confusing and dangerous environment for pedestrians. This is currently mitigated by narrow medians with heavy guard railing which restricts crossing opportunities and pedestrian desire lines and accentuates the vehicle dominance on the street.



Proposal:

The proposals reduce severance and create a space that pedestrians will want to pass through and even dwell in. Traffic along Lowther St is made one-way in each direction, with bus lay-bys in each direction. The inclusion of bus lay-bys should reduce impact of bus stopping on traffic flows. The reduction of overall carriageway width and removal of guardrailling allows for a more informal crossing opportunities for pedestrians.



Existing:

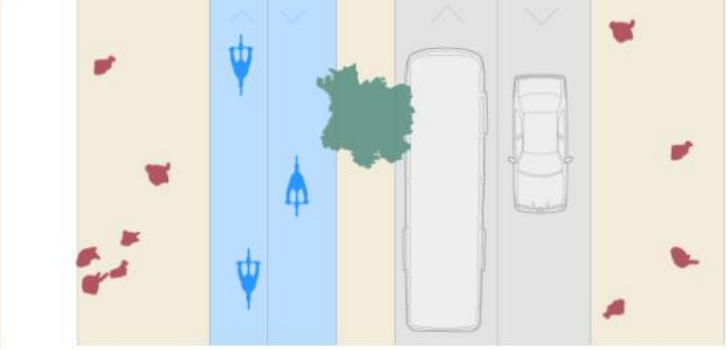
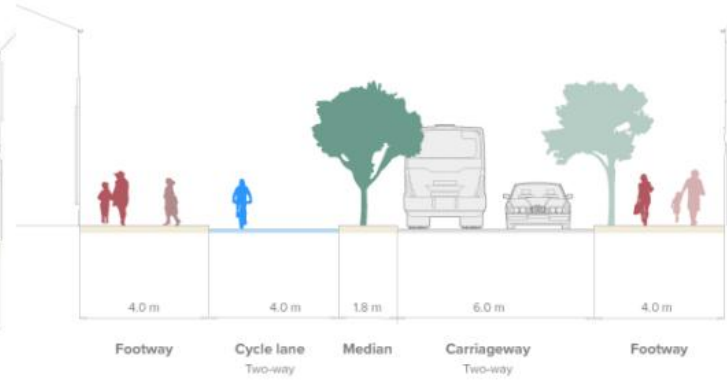
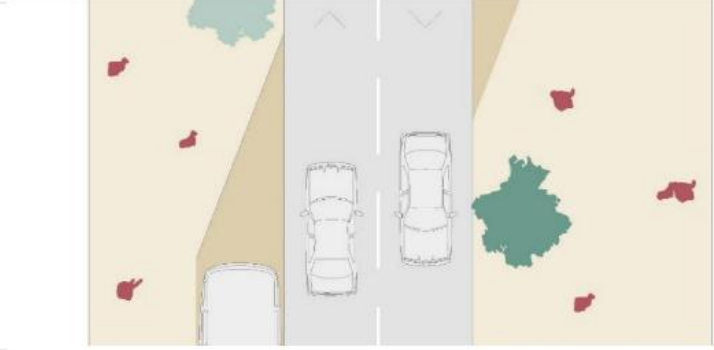
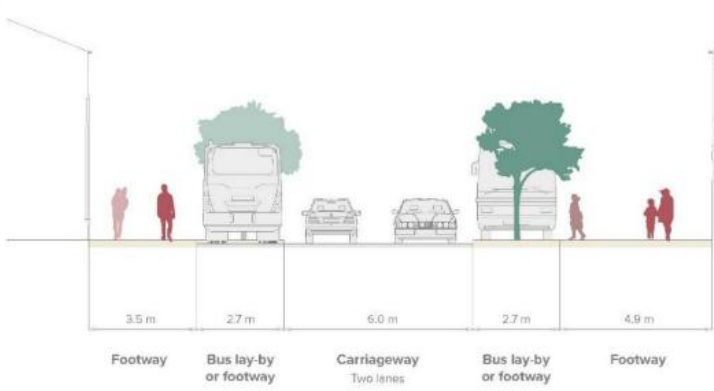
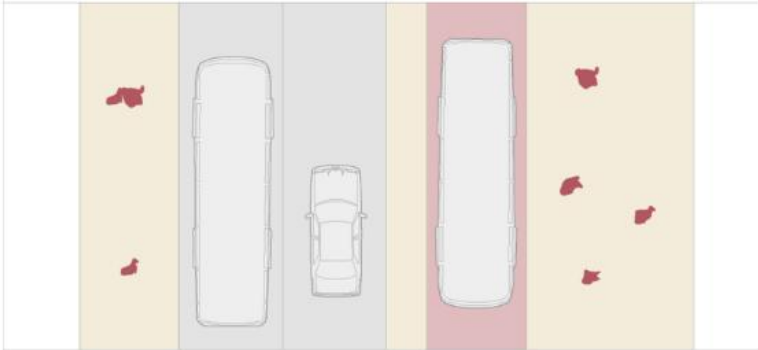
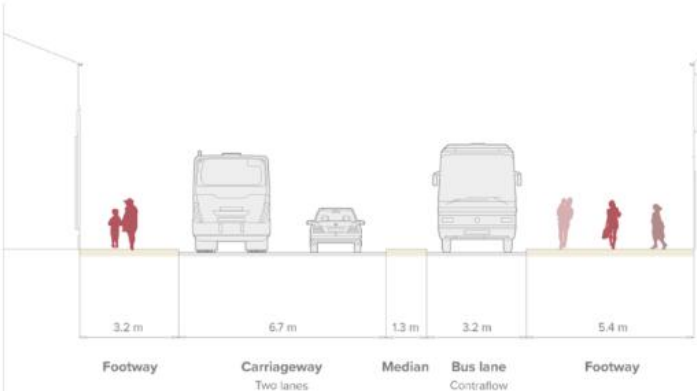
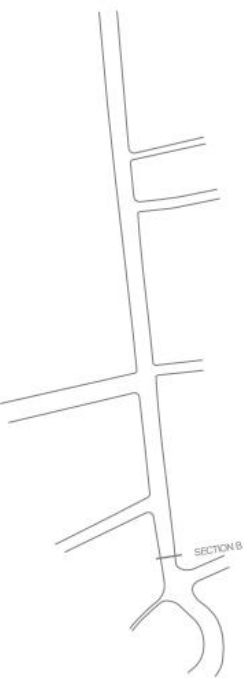
Currently section B of Lowther Street is more constrained than section A, with two north-bound lanes and one south-bound bus lane. The narrow median with guard railing separates the two directions of travel, restricting pedestrian desire lines and creating a harsh visual landscape.

Proposal: Option 1

The proposals continue the same layout as the upper section. The increased footways throughout Lowther St would allow for retail units to spill out onto the street, increasing activity in the space. Furthermore there is space for regular and substantial tree planting along Lowther St, which will soften the streetscape.

Proposal: Option 2

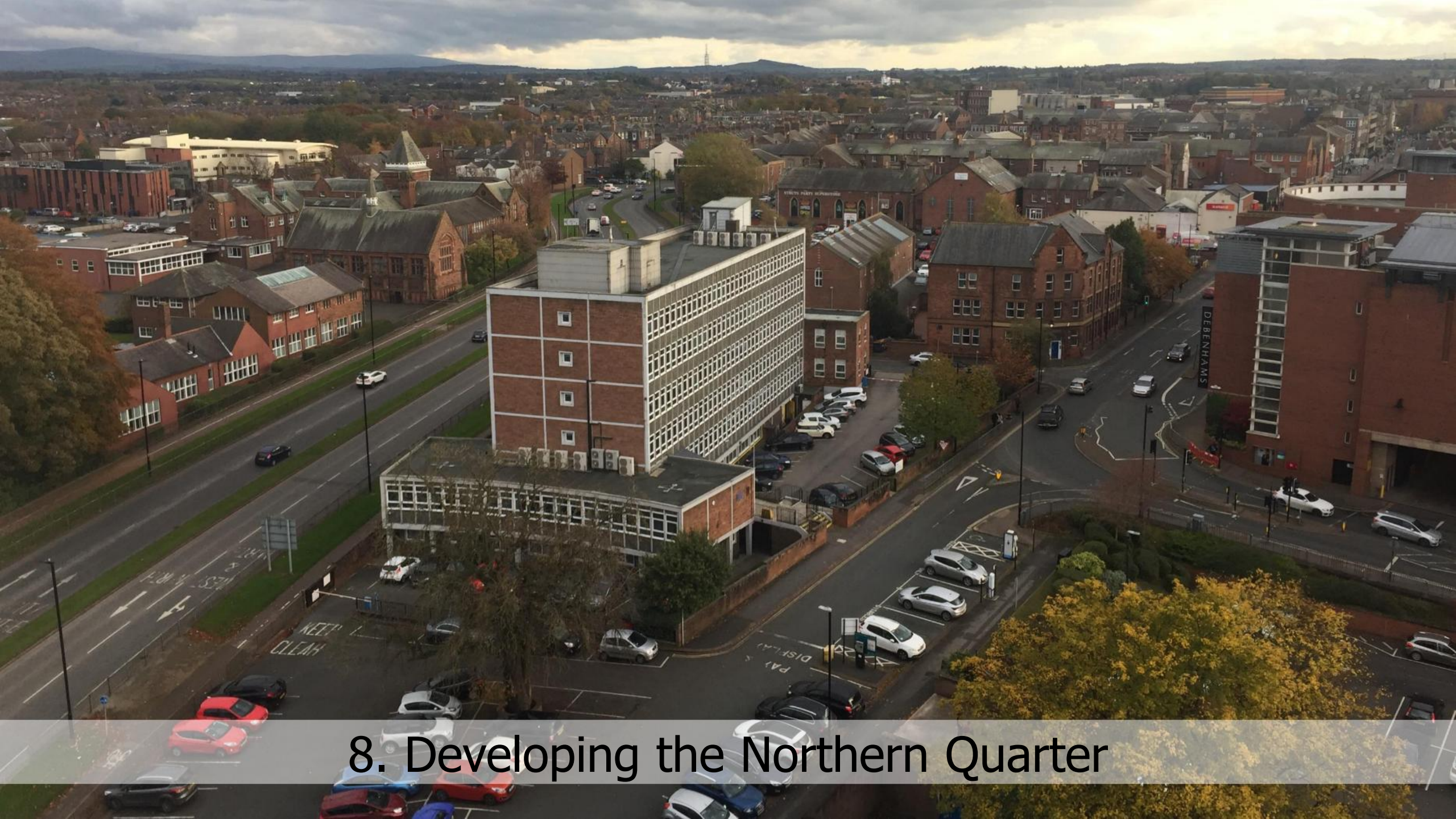
This proposal allows for the future provision of a segregated cycle track along Lowther Street, as well as, wide footways with space for regular and substantial tree planting.



Proposed design



The illustration above illustrates an indicative design for Lowther Street. A single carriageway in each direction and bus laybys allows for steady vehicular flow. Widened footpaths with tree planting and amenities transform Lowther Street into a more pedestrian friendly boulevard. This will encourage people to spend more time along the street and enhance the shopping and dining experience.



8. Developing the Northern Quarter

Future proposal

With the changing market and the decline of bricks and mortar retail, there is potential to create a new scheme which is residential and business led. Providing housing and varied flexible spaces for businesses within the town centre would benefit the town economically and socially. More people living and working in the town centre would also provide critical mass to support economy.

The Northern Quarter provides a great opportunity for redevelopment. Six sites have been identified, four of which are government owned and are considered soft sites, such as non-historic buildings and surface parking lots. Developing these four sites in conjunction with two privately owned soft sites (5, 6) opens up a significant amount of developable land.

Developing new sites allows for the creation of a city grid in the north and buildings with both active ground floor frontage and buildings which front onto the street. This will create more active and attractive streets thereby enhancing connectivity and legibility through the city centre.





Discussion



Thank you



Appendix 1: Carlisle Future High Street Fund Proposals

Strategic Case

Carlisle is a small compact city with a population of 73,698 and is the principal urban area for the Carlisle District. However, as the sole city, Carlisle serves a very wide geographical hinterland and is the economic, administrative and cultural centre for Cumbria and for a substantial portion of the North East and southern Scotland. As the capital of the Borderlands sub-region, which covers a geography as large as Wales, Carlisle has an estimated catchment of 500,000 people.

Whilst Carlisle's strategic location as a border city has contributed to its establishment as a sub-regional economic hub and a gateway to markets in southern Scotland, this has been reinforced by its excellent access to the strategic transport network. Consequently, it has a substantial one-hour drive catchment and Travel-To-Work-Area.

In terms of economic structure, Carlisle's key sectors are manufacturing, logistics and storage, construction and agriculture. Carlisle also has a number of enabling sectors such health care and professional and business services, which are not high value in terms of Gross Value Added but are tied to the City's role as a sub-regional centre. The City is home to several successful national and international companies including Nestle, Pirelli, McVities, Eddie Stobart, Story Homes and Edinburgh Woollen Mill.

Although there are a mix of uses within the primary shopping area (PSA), reflecting Carlisle's sub-regional status, retail uses are predominant. The comparison retail offer is reasonably strong, with national multiples including retailers such as Next, H&M, River Island, Schuh, Joules, White Stuff and Top Shop. There are also a number of main department store anchors including Primark, House of Fraser, Marks & Spencer and Debenhams.

Relative to the retail offer, the extent of leisure, cultural, employment and residential uses are moderate. These uses are distributed around the periphery of the Primary Shopping Area and therefore do not make any meaningful contribution to its vibrancy and vitality. This is especially apparent after 5pm when the retail activity has ended.

Given the significant number of people that look to Carlisle as their Principal Service Centre and depend on it for retail, leisure, health and professional and business services it is vital that the City Centre remains resilient and fit-for-purpose. At present its over-reliance on retail uses makes it highly vulnerable to fluctuations and further contraction of this sector.

Challenges

As the economic and administrative capital of a large catchment of 500,000 Carlisle has protected its retail function to date and it has performed reasonably well since the 2008 recession. However, it is very reliant on comparison retail and is therefore highly vulnerable to further contraction in that sector, which would have an immediate and profound adverse effect.

The City Centre, whose key asset is its historic environment, by its nature is made up of older buildings that require investment and remodelling to provide space that meets modern businesses requirements. Consequently, the City Centre has not demonstrated any indication of market-led diversification. The lack of urban resident and business communities is also certainly a factor in this, with a perception of a lack of vibrancy that has undermined the process.

In order to address these challenges and for Carlisle to properly fulfil its role as sub-regional centre it is important that the underlying strategic economic issues that are compounding the effects of change in the retail sector are recognised.

A high proportion (62%) of Carlisle residents are financially stretched or in urban adversity and are employed in precarious forms of employment with below average level of pay. This means that there is less disposable income within the area, which impacts on the levels of spend on the leisure, entertainment and cultural activities and subsequently, has suppressed the growth of these sectors.

An increasingly ageing labour pool means that employers who are increasingly struggling to acquire the skills they need. Carlisle's working age population is shrinking and is exacerbated by an increase in people aged +65 years and a declining working-age population. This demographic trend continues to have an effect on the City Centre by suppressing a market-led modernisation and diversification process.

There is a failure in the city centre development market, with a noticeable retraction from companies across the sector from speculative development in the City. This is due to a combination of lower interest levels from retailers (in part driven by the ever-growing online trends) and also increased pressure on net income within Real Estate Investment Trusts.

Carlisle key employment sectors are manufacturing, storage and logistics. The relatively small service sector does not generate substantial demand for office space within the City Centre. The limited demand for office space is currently being fulfilled by modern developments on the periphery of the City.

These strategic economic issues have manifested on the City Centre with a perceptible effect on vibrancy and vitality. Evidence from the recent Health Check suggests that footfall count is in decline in most areas of Carlisle from 2012 compared to 2018. Carlisle needs to be creative in its approach to restore that vitality and viability. The High Street Fund will enable the realisation of opportunities that will help address these challenges:

Concentrations of empty and unused properties: The current vacancy level in the City Centre is 12%, but these are concentrated in discrete locations that enhance visual impact. Lowther Street, Castle Street and Fisher Street are locations where this issue is prevalent. In the case of Lowther Street, a higher vacancy rate is attributed to the traffic management within the area. It is part of the one-way system with dedicated bus lanes totalling 4 lanes of traffic and as such suffers from access issues and severance. In the Historic Quarter on Castle Street there are several long-term empty buildings, including the former Hooper's department store consisting of 43,000 ft².

Lack of vibrancy and underperforming night time economy: The evidence points to a very significant under provision in the city centre leisure sector. Food outlets are under-

represented within PSA which local people describe as 'deserted' after 5pm. Activity is concentrated around the periphery of the PSA with bars and restaurants clustering around the intersection of Lowther Street, Devonshire Street and Warwick Road. This area has become a focal point for this formative element of the evening economy. However, these leisure uses are on periphery of the PSA and therefore, do not contribute to its vibrancy. This is exacerbated by a small city centre resident community of approximately 500 people.

Variable environmental quality: A public realm audit carried out in 2018 identified several key issues such as a lack of a focal point for events in the PSA, dated public realm and abundant street clutter, such as pedestrian guard railings and bollards. The current public realm installed in the pedestrianised PSA was installed in 1989 and requires both repair and updating. There is also the issue of pedestrian severance and connectivity and a need to further develop pedestrian priority of key streets such as Lowther Street, Devonshire Street and Bank Street by traffic flow management improvements, enhanced public realm and re-siting of bus stops.

The presence of employment uses within the City Centre is relatively low, with the public sector, civil service and financial institutions being the key office occupiers. Demand for office space is low due to the fact the service sector is not a key sector or major employer but also, anecdotally, because of an identified shortage of modern office space. There has been no speculative office development in the City Centre to address this shortage. However, recent signals indicate that this is beginning to reverse with the recent construction of purpose-built office building within the Historic Quarter to accommodate the Edinburgh Woollen Mill Group HQ.

A residential market within the City Centre has yet to be established, with very little housing delivery occurring in the area. Due to the availability of land and low land values, low density suburban residential development remains affordable and the preferred housing product of developers in the area. The low presence of leisure and employment uses in the City Centre and the underdeveloped night-time economy have cumulatively served to depress demand for housing, as presently it does not have the requisite 'offer'. This is reflected by the small city centre resident community of approximately 500 people.

Over the period 2015-30, Carlisle is projected to see significantly below average growth in population plus an above average ageing population. This is an area of concern for the future vitality of the city centre but one that underlines the importance of delivering a new step-change in terms of the diversification of uses and activity.

Recent viability concerns for national retail chains highlight the vulnerability of the PSA and the sense of urgency to catalyse diversification to make it more resilient. A creative approach to repurposing empty properties which attracts businesses, explores the market for urban living and creates activity and improved experience within the retail sector.

The City Centre challenges are the product of not only the structural changes occurring on the high street but also strategic economic issues. These cumulatively have served to suppress the expansion and diversification of the City Centre resulting in it being over-reliant on retail uses, with a weak office and residential market and significant under-provision in the leisure sector.

Vision and ambition

We have identified four key operational challenges:

1. An increase in the concentration of empty and underused buildings in prominent locations particularly the Historic Quarter;
2. A lack of evening vibrancy and a weak night-time economy;
3. Variable environmental quality attributable to outdated public realm and localised congestion;
4. Connectivity issues associated with traffic flows and pedestrian severance.

Therefore, our vision for Carlisle has been developed with the aim of addressing both strategic and operational challenges.

Our vision is “to create a vibrant and resilient City Centre that is a desirable place to both live and work and an attractive destination that provides a great visitor experience.”

Ambitions



**Renewing Carlisle City
Centre as a place to live
and work**



**Reactivating Carlisle's
historic Quarter**



**Catalysing Carlisle's
night time economy**

Initial Project Proposal included in the FHSF Draft business case

This document represents the first thoughts for the Draft Submission to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for the Future High Streets Fund (FHSF). It is a work in progress and will almost certainly change as we move through the proposal development process.

The FHSF has been created to support towns, like Carlisle, in making their town centres and high streets fit for the future despite declining economic trends. The initiative will co-fund transformative, structural changes that will address the changes in the way communities use their high streets and town centres, and support wider economic growth.

This document sets out the proposals for which FHSF funding is sought. The broad approach under which the schemes within this submission are captured is summarised by three themes. Collectively, these themes will create a holistic set of structural measures which will uplift the economic and social performance of Carlisle.

1. Adaptive Reuse of empty properties in the Historic Quarter

There are a number of architecturally striking buildings within Carlisle's Historic Quarter which have outlived their original purposes and are currently vacant. If left unmaintained, these buildings run the risk of falling into disrepair, eventually requiring demolition.

Adaptive re-use refers to the repurposing of historic assets to provide a new use or function more befitting of the demands of the area. Applied in Carlisle, this approach would ensure that the contribution of these buildings to the architectural character of the City Centre can be retained, while simultaneously diversifying the city centre offering.

Using this approach can prolong a buildings life and reduce the consumption of materials and resources. It therefore presents a sustainable alternative to the construction of new buildings.

The focus will be on Castle Street in the Historic Quarter and the properties selected to provide a regeneration catalyst to the revitalisation of the Historic Quarter whilst providing live work opportunities. The properties will include the following:

- the former Hoopers Building to assist developer in meeting the conservation deficit and viability gap in repurposing this property that has remained empty for several year.
- the buildings of 2-24 Castle Street, once refurbished, would be home to a number of new ventures.

2. Preparing Central Plaza site for redevelopment

The derelict Central Plaza Hotel has been demolished due to structural instability. The site has been levelled to the ground floor allowing for it to become a plot of land which can either be privately or publicly developed.

The Future High Street Fund will contribute towards preparing a viable development site. Any future development of the land, regardless of major use, should have active ground floor usage which will allow it to interact with the street and provide a sense of place.

3. Reimagining Green Market/ Market Square as Carlisle's events space

The market square is a large underutilised space. Currently the square is filled with bollards – cluttering the space, scattered amenities, and tired materials. The buildings fronting on to have very limited interaction with the square. The sightlines for the square fragments the space, drawing the majority of pedestrians east of the Tourist Information Centre, away

from the Green Market and Castle Street. There is potential to make a more cohesive space which is utilised in its entirety.

As part of the main retail core of Carlisle there is potential for it to become a dynamic public place, which not only supports the retail footfall but draws people into it. At approximately 6,000 m² there is potential to provide a variety of amenities in the market square, such as seating, landscaping, and play features, while also allowing shops to interact with the space.

A revised market square design opens opportunities to minimise the dominance of transport infrastructure, prioritising pedestrian movement and providing an outdoor community space. Various concepts for how the space can be reimagined are being considered, demonstrating the different ways the space can function for the community. By considering the square as having three distinct areas, a diversity of uses can be provided in the one space and design a square that is flexible in its function and provides for all users.

4. Feature / Event lighting in Carlisle city centre

The historic assets around Carlisle form a key part of its identity and cultural offering. Feature lighting for important sites such as the Castle, Citadel and Cathedral can enhance their presence and further strengthen this historic core. Evening lighting is already installed in some locations, however there is scope to enhance and diversify this.

Themed or coloured lighting throughout the year reflecting different cultural events can be used to further highlight the identity of Carlisle. Variations in style and colour can work together to highlight areas of architectural interest or illuminate pathways.

Feature lighting along streets and alleyways can brighten them up, add interest and improve safety and legibility. St. Cuthbert's Lane and the Ginnel Lanes connect the Market Square to areas west of the town centre, however, they are currently unlit and poorly serviced, making them feel unsafe to residents. Introducing feature lighting improves the character, legibility and overall appearance of the area

5. Reconfiguring Lowther Street

Lowther St is on average is approximately 21m in width. It is currently part of the one-way gyratory Victoria Place, Spencer Street and Warwick Road.

Lowther St's current layout of three north-bound lanes (including one bus lane), one south-bound bus lane and medians with guard railing restrict crossing opportunities and pedestrian desire lines. Vehicle dominance and hard landscaping make it an uninviting place for pedestrians. Despite the street's prominent location, adjacent to the town's primary shopping area, it is a space to quickly move through rather than dwell in. By reconfiguring the street, there is an opportunity to transform the street into a successful urban corridor which caters to pedestrians without impacting vehicular flow.

This scheme's ability going forward is dependent on the results of the Transport and Movement Study that is currently underway as part of the project development work.

6. Improving pedestrianisation of Devonshire Street

Devonshire Street is home to several good quality food and beverage outlets but these assets are not fully utilised due to the vehicle dominance of the space. Vehicle movement is one-way with two lanes (one bus only). The carriageway is excessively wide, with kerb to kerb widths of in excess of 9m at some points. The excess carriageway space provides an opportunity to increase the dedicated pedestrian areas and potential areas for businesses to spill into. Additionally, stronger connections could be created with the pedestrian zone. Any proposals must be co-ordinated with bus movements.

This schemes ability going forward is dependent on the results of the Transport and Movement Study that is currently underway as part of the project development work.

7. Regenerating the Northern Quarter – Area between Hardwick Circus and West Tower Street

With the changing market and the decline of bricks and mortar retail, there is potential to create a new scheme which is residential and business led. Providing housing and varied flexible spaces for businesses within the town centre would benefit the town economically and socially. More people living and working in the town centre would also provide critical mass to support economy.

The Northern Quarter provides a great opportunity for redevelopment. Six sites have been identified, four of which are government owned and are considered soft sites, such as non-historic buildings and surface parking lots. Developing these four sites in conjunction with two privately owned soft sites (5, 6) opens up a significant amount of developable land.

Developing new sites allows for the creation of a city grid in the north and buildings with both active ground floor frontage and buildings which front onto the street. This will create more active and attractive streets thereby enhancing connectivity and legibility through the city centre.