



Spennymoor Area Action Plan

Public Participation (Issues and Options)

August 2008



**This document is also available in large print and audio format.
It may also be available in other languages.**

Arabic

يُوفّر هذا المستند أيضاً بطباعة مكبرة وبتسجيل صوتي. كما يمكن توفيره بلغات أخرى.

Bengali

এই দলিলটি বড় হরফে এবং অডিও ফরম্যাটেও পাওয়া যায়। এটি অন্যান্য ভাষাতেও পাওয়া যায়।

Cantonese

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Hindi

यह दस्तावेज बड़े प्रिंट और ऑडियो में भी उपलब्ध है। यह दूसरी भाषाओं में भी उपलब्ध हो सकता है।

Polish

Dokument jest również dostępny w formacie dużego druku i nagranie audio oraz w innych językach.

Punjabi

ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਵੱਡੇ ਛਪੇ ਅਤੇ ਆਡੀਓ ਫਾਰਮੈਟ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ। ਇਹ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ।

Spanish

Este documento también está disponible en letras grandes y en formato de audio. Además, puede suministrarse en otros idiomas.

Urdu

یہ دستاویز بڑے حروف اور آڈیو کی شکل میں بھی دستیاب ہے۔ یہ دوسری زبانوں میں بھی دستیاب کر لیا جاسکتا ہے۔



Forward

To be inserted by SBC



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background and Objectives

An Area Action Plan (AAP) is a type of Development Plan Document that forms part of the statutory planning framework – the Local Development Framework (LDF) – for the local area. It provides a means of guiding the pattern of development within a specific area of change. The Government's Planning Policy Statement relating to local plan making (PPS 12 Creating Strong Safe and Prosperous Communities through Local Spatial Planning – published in June 2008), states that AAPs should be used to:

- Deliver planned growth areas;
- Stimulate regeneration;
- Protect areas particularly sensitive to change;
- Resolve conflicting objectives in areas subject to development pressures; or
- Focus the delivery of area based regeneration initiatives.

The Area Action Plan for Spennymoor town centre will help deliver Sedgefield Borough Council's regeneration objectives for the centre. The AAP will provide a comprehensive regeneration framework that challenges current use, targets change and inspires action to guide future investment and activity.

The Area Action Plan will:

- Provide a comprehensive development strategy for the area;
- Contain a comprehensive planning policy framework and where applicable propose amendments to the town centre boundary;
- Identify key sites with opportunities for development;
- Identify areas where the physical offer that can be reconfigured to maximise investor appeal;
- Identify practical opportunities to develop/redevelop the centre to best serve its current and future needs;
- Create opportunities for increased employment within the town centre;
- Include opportunities for promoting environmentally sustainable development and embedded renewable energy use;
- Provide practical initiatives and proposals for implementation;
- Identify improvements to vehicle and pedestrian movement in and around the town centre;
- Identify improvements to linkages between the town centre and existing/emerging residential developments;
- Provide a specific purpose to attracting/diversifying retail in the town centre; and
- Provide a comprehensive marketing proposal to promote the opportunities identified to prospective delivery partners.

1.2 Spatial Planning Context

The Area Action Plan will form part of a Durham-wide Local Development Framework, which, when adopted, will replace the saved policies of the Sedgefield Borough Local Plan (1996). The Sedgefield Borough Local Plan is being replaced by a County-wide LDF because of the Local Government Reorganisation that will result in a new county-wide Unitary Local Planning Authority in April 2009.

The saved policies of the existing Sedgefield Borough Local Plan provide – for the time being – the existing statutory policy basis for guiding development in the town centre, the most relevant policies of which are:

- Policy S1, which promotes and protects Spennymoor as a District Shopping Centre;
- Policy S2, which indicates the types of land uses that will be permitted and those that will not in the town centre; and
- Policy S3, which ensures that new development proposals meet Borough transport policies relating to highways and parking.

The need for an Area Action Plan for Spennymoor town centre was initially identified in Sedgefield Borough Council's Core Strategy Preferred Options Document (June 2007). Although this document will eventually be superseded by a County-wide Core Strategy, it remains an important document in setting the policy context for the Area Action Plan. The aims of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Document are as follows:

1. To enhance social inclusion and well being
2. To improve the quality of where people live
3. To reduce the impact of development on climate change
4. To protect and enhance natural resources
5. To encourage and support a competitive and diverse economy.

The Area Action Plan will play a key role in driving forward these aims in a spatial context. Further details of the Core Strategy Preferred Options document is provided in Chapter 2.

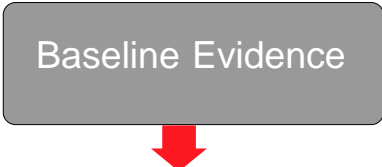
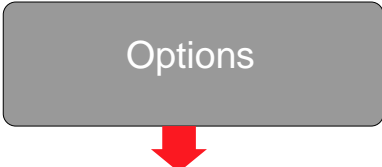
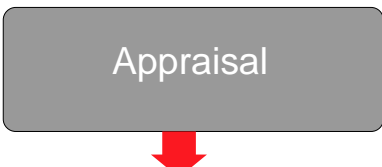
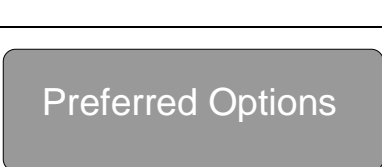
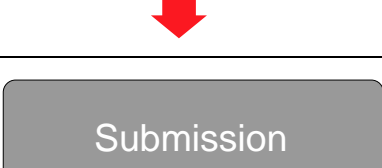
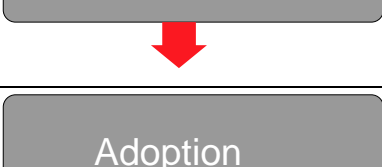
1.3 AAP Preparation Process

The timetable for the production of the Area Action Plan is set out in Sedgefield Borough Council's Local Development Scheme and is as follows:

Milestones	Dates
Informal consultation and evidence gathering (leading to release of Issues and Options Paper)	Up to September 2008
Issues and Options Consultation	October – November 2008
Development of Preferred Option	December 2008
Preferred Options Consultation	January – February 2009
Submission of DPD to Secretary of State and DPD Consultation	July 2009
Examination	February 2010
Estimated Date For Adoption	September 2010

The Local Government Reorganisation that is currently taking place in County Durham has affected the timescale for adoption of the AAP. Under the new arrangements, which include the dissolution of Sedgefield Borough Council and establishment of a new county wide Unitary Authority (April 2009), the new Authority will be responsible for the document's adoption. Therefore, there is currently some uncertainty as to the precise timing of the adoption process.

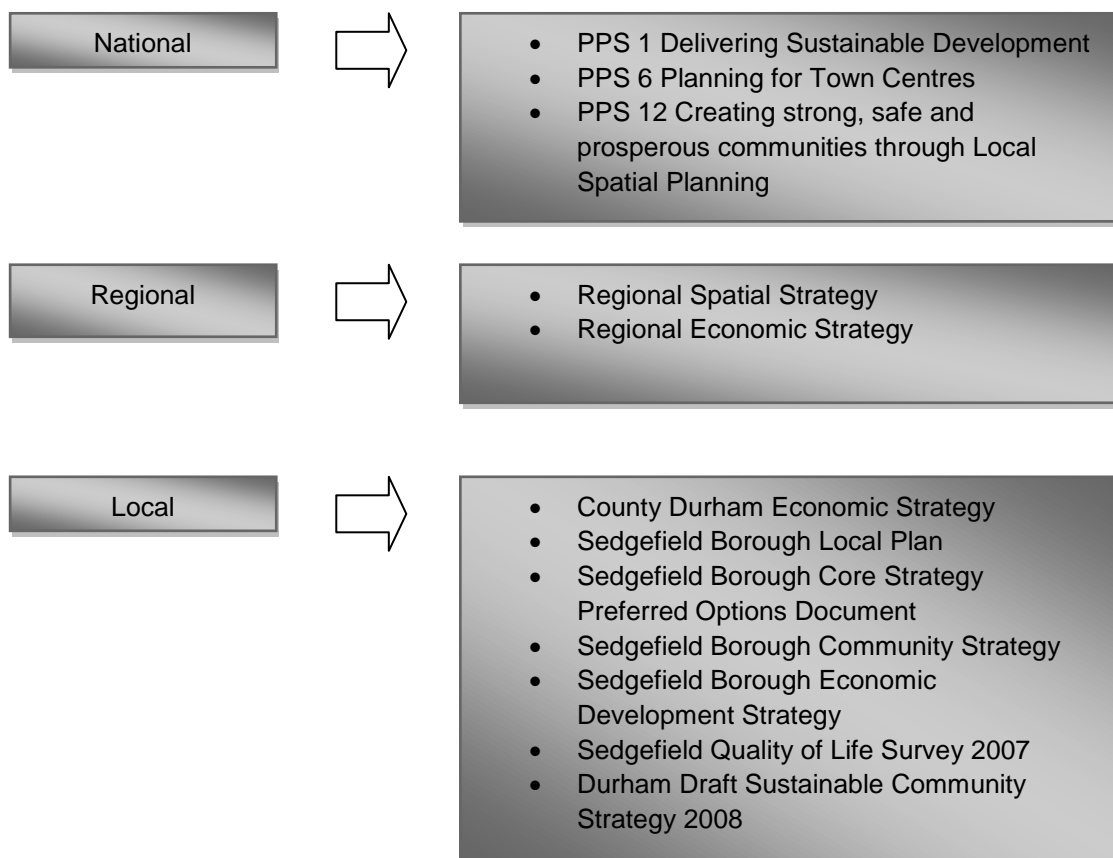
The table on the following page provides a summary of the steps that will be taken as part of the AAP preparation process.

 <p>Baseline Evidence</p>	<p>A baseline assessment was carried out to provide an evidence base to support the development of the Area Action Plan. The Assessment examined a range of social, economic and environmental factors affecting the town centre.</p>
 <p>Options</p>	<p>The purpose of this document is to set out the proposed issues and options, vision and objectives for the town centre. It should act as a tool for consultation and provide the opportunity for the public and stakeholders to express their views on the issues and options facing the area.</p>
 <p>Appraisal</p>	<p>An appraisal of the options will then be undertaken to demonstrate how each option will fulfil the plan's objectives.</p>
 <p>Preferred Options</p>	<p>A preferred options document will be produced in order to refine and finalise the options. This paper will reflect the issues and recommendations raised through the initial stakeholder consultation. The paper will then be subject to a formal consultation period in light of the arising options.</p>
 <p>Submission</p>	<p>A development document will then be prepared and submitted for examination into the soundness of the plan.</p>
 <p>Adoption</p>	<p>Following the Secretary of State's examination of the plan, it will be adopted by Durham Unitary Authority.</p>

2.0 Policy Context

2.1 Overview

Spennymoor Town Centre Area Action Plan will form part of the proposed Local Development Framework for the new Unitary Authority. However, it also sits within the context of several important policy documents at national, regional and local levels:



2.2 National

Each of the Government's Planning Policy Statements is relevant in setting the context and guiding the development of policy in the Area Action Plan. The most relevant documents are PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPS6 (Planning for Town Centres), and PPS12 (Local Spatial Planning).

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development (2006)

PPS1 sets out the Government's overarching planning policies on the delivery of sustainable development through the planning system. It puts the delivery of sustainable development at the heart of the planning system, and also sets out objectives for achieving a transparent, flexible, predictable, efficient and effective planning system. It defines the system as being plan-led, with planning applications being determined in line with an adopted development plan, and also sets out its objectives for a spatial approach to be addressed in the preparation of development plans.

The key implications for Spennymoor Area Action Plan are:

- The need to reinforce the role and viability of Spennymoor town centre through concentrating retail, office and leisure uses there;
- The importance of the AAP acting as a mechanism for delivering the spatial implications of the Borough's Community Strategy, and responding to the needs of the area and community;
- The need for the AAP to provide a robust basis for determining planning applications;
- The AAP must contribute to addressing global sustainability by tackling the causes and impacts of climate change;
- The policies of the AAP must promote high quality design;
- The AAP should seek to create a sustainable pattern of development which minimises the need for travel.

Planning Policy Statement 6: Town Centres (2005)

Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS 6) Town Centres states that new development (of retailing and other defined uses) should be focused in existing centres. In terms of the locational spread of future growth across existing centres, PPS 6 recognises that there may be a need to rebalance the network of centres to ensure that it is not overly dominated by the largest centres. The emphasis upon development and regeneration with medium and smaller sized centres has therefore increased.

The sequential approach in selecting sites for development also increases the emphasis on developing medium and smaller sized centres. Town centre and edge-of-centre sites are more likely to be used as the sequential approach makes clear that only if there are no town centre or edge-of-centre sites, can out-of-centre sites be considered.

PPS 6 stresses the importance of ensuring that a local network of centres exists and that the function of centres is appropriate to meet peoples' day - to - day needs. This includes identifying opportunity sites suitable for development or redevelopment, or where conversions or changes of use could be encouraged.

PPS6 is in the process of being updated and a new draft version of the document has been produced. The Draft reinforces the emphasis of prioritising development in town centres and proposes a new impact test as a requirement for new retail proposals to ensure that any negative effects are taken into consideration when assessing planning applications.

Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (June 2008)

PPS12 sets out the Government's policies for the creation of Local Development Frameworks. It emphasises the importance of 'spatial planning' which:

- Produces a vision for the future of places that responds to the local challenges and opportunities and is based on evidence, a sense of local distinctiveness and community derived objectives, within the overall framework of national policy and regional strategies;
- Translates the vision into a set of priorities, programmes, policies and land allocations together with the public sector resources required to deliver them;
- Creates a framework for private investment and regeneration that promotes economic, environmental and social wellbeing for the area;
- Coordinates and deliver the public sector components of this vision with other agencies and processes (e.g. LAAs);
- Creates a positive framework for action on climate change; and
- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

It sets out the various documents that can form part of the Local Development Framework (including Area Action Plans) and provides guidance on the process for preparation including requirements for Sustainability Appraisal and Community Involvement. It also redefines the tests of soundness as being:

- Justified (i.e. founded on robust and credible evidence and the most appropriate strategy in relation to alternatives);
- Effective (deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored); and
- Consistent with national policy.

2.3 Regional Strategy

North East Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS, July 2008)

The Regional Spatial Strategy sets out the long term strategy for spatial development in the North East. The RSS states that the majority of new development should be within the main conurbations, such as Sunderland, Newcastle and Durham. The RSS acknowledges that delivering sustainable communities by retaining and stabilising population in sustainable locations requires a better mix of housing size, type and tenure within high quality living environments. Key challenges identified in the strategy include:

- Stemming and reversing population decline
- Tackling and regenerating low demand areas.
- Providing an inclusive range of housing

The RSS provides for 23,545 dwellings for the County Durham area between 2004 and 2021, at an annual average rate of 1,385 dwellings. Within Sedgefield Borough specifically, the plan provides for 4420 dwellings of over the plan period, at an average annual rate of 260 dwellings. The table below details the annual net housing provision for Sedgefield and County Durham as a Whole:

Figures Rounded	2004-11	2011-16	2016-21	2004-21
Sedgefield	280	260	225	260
County Durham	1,670	1,330	1,035	1,385

It goes on to state that different approaches and solutions will be needed in different areas, and these may not necessarily be related to growth, particularly outside the conurbation and Durham City. The priority in all areas will be to create and maintain sustainable communities and the scale of development will vary in different locations.

The RSS identifies Spennymoor as a regeneration town in the Durham Coalfield Regeneration area and therefore it is important that the function and vitality of Spennymoor is supported so that it can meet the local shopping, recreational and community need. It goes on to say that Spennymoor has a particular role to play as a main focal point for readily accessible local employment opportunities, services and facilities for its residents and those in the surrounding areas.

Policy 6 – the Locational Strategy describes how major assets and opportunities available in the North East and regeneration of those areas affected by social, economic and environmental problems will be supported by incorporating the Locational Strategy within plans, strategies and programmes. This will help achieve a balance between housing, economic development, infrastructure and services.

Spennymoor sits within the Tees Valley City-Region – Policy 10 states that “strategies, plans and programmes, and planning proposals, should support the polycentric development and redevelopment of the Tees Valley City-Region by, among other things, supporting the regeneration and development of towns including Spennymoor for sustainable growth without adversely impacting on the regeneration initiatives within the Tees Valley conurbation.”

In relation to employment land, Policy 18 Employment Land Portfolio states that Local Authorities should make provision for up to 3,435 ha of general employment land and key employment locations across the north east region. In Sedgefield Borough, the plan states that the Local Authority should provide for up to 55 ha of general employment land and a further 95 ha of land for key employment locations. The policy goes on to state that, in determining the land portfolio, planning authorities should undertake sub regional and local employment land assessments based on a 25 year level of supply and take up. These assessments should include consideration of the need to protect employment land and premises from redevelopment to alternative uses, where they are an essential part of the long-term employment land and premises portfolio, as well consideration of the potential of existing employment allocations no longer required for employment purposes for reallocation to alternative uses or de-allocation.

Finally, of particular relevance to the AAP, Policy 25 Urban and Rural Centres, states that Local Development Frameworks and planning proposals should ensure that, among other things, “where a need for retail-led regeneration has been identified for Regeneration Towns, retail and leisure development may be allowed above the scale that would be required for the centre to maintain its role; provided that it would support the sustainable regeneration of these centres without compromising the vitality and viability of other town centres.”

Regional Economic Strategy (RES)

The One North East's RES (Leading the way) does not specifically mention Spennymoor. However, the strategy highlights the importance of hubs of innovation, one of which is NETPark in Sedgefield. The RES has been structured with a focus under three areas for action; Business, People and Place.

Encouraging business is a key element in growing the north east economy. Therefore, the key service sectors, which may be attracted and benefit town centre locations are Knowledge Intensive Business Services; Tourism and Hospitality; Commercial Creative; and Health and Social Care.

Whilst the references to town centres are limited, it is clear that the delivery of viable and sustainable town centres will have an important role in contributing to the delivery of economic objectives and targets for the region as a whole (for example in creating attractive places in which people will want to live). Furthermore, Spennymoor town centre can play a role as an economic development hub and employment centre.

2.4 Local

County Durham Economic Strategy 2008-2013 (July 2008)

The economic strategy for County Durham has been prepared by County Durham Economic Partnership (CDEP). The document sets out the CDEP's long term vision for the economy in 2023 and the actions that need to be put in place up until 2013.

Currently the performance gap between the County, North East and the UK economies is widening with County Durham having one of the lowest Gross Value Added per capita in the country. The CDEP wants to build a more prosperous County with high quality jobs, access to training and well paid jobs. The CDEP highlights the need to build consensus with a range of partners such as the Regional Development Agency (RDA), local government, businesses and also the public to achieve their agreed vision:

“By 2023 “Dynamic Durham” is known for its strong economy, commitment to lifelong learning, enhanced environment and its strong, healthy and safe communities. It is a great place to live, work, visit and invest.”

The strategy identifies three key objectives:

- “to make businesses more competitive and productive, and rebuild a culture of enterprise across the County
- to improve the employability and skills of the workforce and to help re-engage adults with work and learning

- to improve the economic competitiveness of the major towns and create a business infrastructure fit for the 21st Century.”

To meet the vision and objectives, the strategy sets out a number of priorities under the themes identified in the Regional Economic Strategy under the categories of Competitive Businesses, Competitive People and Competitive Places.

Spennymoor is in the Bishop Auckland – Darlington Corridor, an important gateway into the County. A key priority up to 2013 is further development at the Green Lane Industrial Estate in Spennymoor.

Sedgefield Borough Local Plan (1996)

The existing Local Plan for Sedgefield Borough was adopted in 1996 and covers the period up to 2006. S1, S2 and S3 Policies are saved by a Secretary of State direction, under paragraph 1(3) of schedule 8 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Policy S1 states that the role of the Borough’s Town Centres should be protected by granting planning permission for development appropriate to the scale of the town, and by granting permission for development which leads to the improvement of the centres through the redevelopment, improvement, or conversion of buildings.

Policy S2 sets out the types of uses which will be usually be acceptable within the town centres. These uses include shops, offices, food and drink outlets, businesses, hotels, community facilities, leisure and recreation facilities, car parks and public transport facilities.

Policy S3 states that proposals for new developments in the Borough’s town centres should normally be well related to public transport and road network, meet the councils’ car parking standards and provide visitor car parking.

Sedgefield Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options

Sedgefield Borough Council's Core Strategy Preferred Options document was published in June 2007. The Core Strategy document sets out a spatial strategy for the Borough of Sedgefield and identifies the need for an Area Action Plan for Spennymoor town centre. The key aims and objectives of the Core Strategy are to:

- enhance social inclusion and well being
- improve the quality of where people live
- reduce the impact of development on climate change
- protect and enhance natural resources
- encourage and support a competitive and diverse economy.

Further details of the aims and objectives are outlined in Table 2.1 over the page.

The Core Strategy document sets out a number of preferred options under various policy theme headings. The principle options which are relevant to the Area Action Plan are as follows:

- Locational Development Strategy – proposing a sequential approach to development in which Spennymoor, alongside other 'main' towns, is prioritised as a location for development.
- Retailing and Town Centres – the role and function of town and local centres will be protected. The diversification of these centres will be supported provided that it does not have an adverse impact on the primary retail function. The provision of new hot food takeaways will be strictly controlled to ensure that there is no adverse affect on the health and wellbeing of the community.
- New tourist facilities should take account of the sequential approach to development and works of art should be used to provide focal points that contribute to the character and interest of civic spaces.
- Design of Built Environment – development must respond appropriately to the qualities of the site and its surroundings, utilise sustainable methods of construction, incorporate a clear network of routes that provide connectivity to the wider settlement, use building frontages to define streets, ensure motor vehicles do not dominate the urban form, achieve enclosure to streets and spaces, incorporate a network of open and green spaces and accommodate recycling and servicing requirements in ways which minimise visual intrusion.
- Landscape Character – development must respect and respond appropriately to the distinctive qualities of the surrounding landscape character.
- Conservation – development within or affecting a conservation area must respect the area's historic or architectural quality, or provide a successful contrast with it.



- Transport – development must demonstrate how it will reduce the need to travel, including accounting for reducing private car usage, encouraging alternative forms of sustainable transport, traffic safety, improving traffic and pedestrian flow, avoiding harm to the character of the town or village as a result of the traffic generated.
- Energy – development must demonstrate how it accords with the energy hierarchy in respect of: reduce the need for energy; maximise energy efficiency; supply energy from renewable sources; where fossil fuels need to be used, use as efficiently as possible.
- Open and Green Space – Development should maintain, improve and create community access to areas of open and green space by improving the quantity, quality and accessibility of open and green space provision.

Table 2.1: Core Strategy Aims and ObjectivesAIM 1: To enhance social inclusion and well being

Delivered through the objectives of:

- meeting the needs of all sectors of the population, especially the elderly;
- supporting where appropriate or endeavour to support the retention of existing community facilities, and where required, encouraging the provision of new facilities;
- promoting mixed-use developments;
- improving accessibility to goods and services; encouraging healthy lifestyles;
- encouraging wider community involvement in the planning process;
- improving greenspaces and access to them;
- providing for recognised housing needs in safe and attractive neighbourhoods.

AIM 2: To improve the quality of where people live

Delivered through the objectives of:

- regenerating areas suffering from deprivation and/or degradation;
- improving community safety and reducing the fear of crime;
- conserving, maintaining and enhancing the quality of landscapes and townscapes;
- securing high quality design and layout in all new developments;
- provide high quality, affordable housing for future generation.

AIM 3: To reduce the impact of development on climate change

Delivered through the objectives of:

- supporting a clean, safe and accessible public transport system;
- reducing the need to travel and reliance on the private car;
- promoting sustainable construction and design;
- promoting energy efficiency and the generation of energy from renewable sources;
- minimising the risk of flooding;
- promoting high quality design that takes account of future climate change;
- encouraging habitat creation and habitat retention as part of new development.

AIM 4: To protect and enhance natural resources

Delivered through the objectives above:

- adopting a sequential approach to land development;
- conserve, enhance and create biodiversity and geodiversity sites;
- prioritising the re-use of previously developed land and buildings in sustainable locations;
- taking account of the physical constraints on the development of land;
- reducing pollution and preventing the deterioration of land quality;
- encouraging the efficient use of natural resources.

AIM 5: To encourage and support a competitive and diverse economy

Delivered through the objectives of:

- providing opportunities for the development of a competitive and diverse economic base;
- ensuring the provision of high quality employment sites;
- encouraging the provision of tourism, leisure or artistic activities;
- encouraging the development of social and community enterprises;
- supporting vibrant town centres;
- maintaining a flexible supply of business sites and premises that meet the modern needs of business.

Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy

The Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy analyses the main features of the Borough and sets out the key issues that need to be tackled. One of these issues is the regeneration of towns and villages. Its aim is to implement a comprehensive improvement programme to create a sustainable location that is an attractive and vibrant place in which people can live, work and do business.

Specific priorities for Spennymoor include the development of the Borough's unique cultural tourism attractions. By 2014 the strategy aims to create strong and vibrant town centres able to meet the needs of communities offering a range of services, leisure and shopping facilities. The key activity is to support an extensive programme of upgrading work to Spennymoor.

Currently, 39% of local employment is within the declining manufacturing sector. One of the Borough's aims is to attract organisations involved in new and emerging technologies. Therefore, a key priority is to create a strong and sustainable business base which will stabilise the manufacturing sector, whilst encouraging greater levels of service sector employment.

A key priority of the Community Strategy is to enhance transport provision throughout the Borough via integrated travel measures and public transport improvements in Newton Aycliffe, Shildon and Spennymoor. Major highway maintenance on the A177 between Sedgefield and Thorpe Larches and the A688 Spennymoor Bypass will also improve the provision of a high quality transport system.

A further key issue is the role of local town and village centres, which have struggled to maintain their competitiveness in the light of changing shopping patterns. Town centre management initiatives are in place in the Borough's major towns to oversee physical and environmental improvements and to encourage new investment.

Sedgefield Economic Development Strategy 2007-2011

This strategy details how partners in Sedgefield will work together to support economic activity and increase levels of local prosperity. The key priorities are categorised as follows:

People

- Maximise the participation of local people in the labour market;
- Develop the skills of local residents and employees to meet future demand.

Place

- Maximise the Borough's contribution to the regional economy;
- Improve the attractiveness of the Borough as a sustainable business location.

Business

- Increase levels of enterprise;
- Improve the sustainability of the existing business base.

A particular focus is proposed around Spennymoor and Green Lane Industrial Estate due to its close proximity (6 miles) to Durham City. The strategy also proposes to support the regeneration of the town centre through the production of the town centre and specifically states the need to diversify into non retail activities.

Quality of Life Survey 2007

The Quality of Life Survey was commissioned by Sedgefield Borough Local Strategic Partnership in order to collect information that would help partnership organisations improve their understanding of local needs and requirements and maximise people and businesses economical potential. The key priorities for Spennymoor residents are:

- To feel safe when walking in their local town centre after dark;
- To have a good employment base for local job opportunities;
- To provide areas for teenagers to socialise in a safe social way;
- To have high employment levels;
- For people to treat each other with respect and consideration;
- A secure environment where the community has no burglary/ theft from homes or gardens;
- To have safe streets which reduce dangerous driving and speeding vehicles;
- A clean environment which is free of litter and dog fouling;
- To have good accessible parking provision;
- A safe environment which discourages people from using or dealing drugs.

Durham Sustainable Community Strategy 2008-2023 (Draft)

A Draft Sustainable Communities Strategy has recently been prepared by County Durham Community Partnership that will help underpin the future County-wide Local Development Framework. The draft document identifies seven key priority themes for the County: Economic wellbeing; Achieve; Physical Place; Health and Wellbeing; Safe; Enjoy; and Positive Contribution. Under the 'Physical Place' theme, the following priorities have been identified:

- A high quality clean, green, attractive and accessible environment;
- A high quality local built and historic environment that meets the needs of communities;
- Provision of sustainable residential accommodation across all tenures, meeting identified needs, in particular those of vulnerable groups;
- Enhance choice and access to sustainable and integrated transport networks;
- a balanced natural environment with a reduced impact on climate change.

3.0 Baseline

3.1 Strategic Context

The regeneration of Spennymoor town centre must be set in the context of:

- The Sedgefield Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options Document, which identifies the need for Area Action Plans for the Borough's main town centres.
- A robust national planning framework promoting sustainable development, mixed use and town centres – Key Planning Policy Statements that are relevant are PPS 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), Supplement to PPS 1 on Planning and Climate Change, PPS6 (Town Centres), and PPS12 (Local Spatial Planning).
- An ambitious regional spatial planning agenda which reinforces the sequential approach to development in respect of putting town centres first, and identifies Spennymoor as a “regeneration town” within the coalfield area and Tees Valley sub-region.
- A new system of local governance (i.e. the new Durham Unitary Authority), which, when it comes into effect in April 2009, will have implications for the delivery of local services and spatial planning at the county and local levels.
- A Community Strategy that has identified the regeneration of Spennymoor as a key priority in helping to foster a vibrant and sustainable community at the local level.
- Growth. On the 15th July 2008 Spennymoor was awarded Growth Point status as part of the South East Durham Growth Point area. As a result, it will have access to a national pot of over £100 million for infrastructure investment to support housing growth and sustainable development.

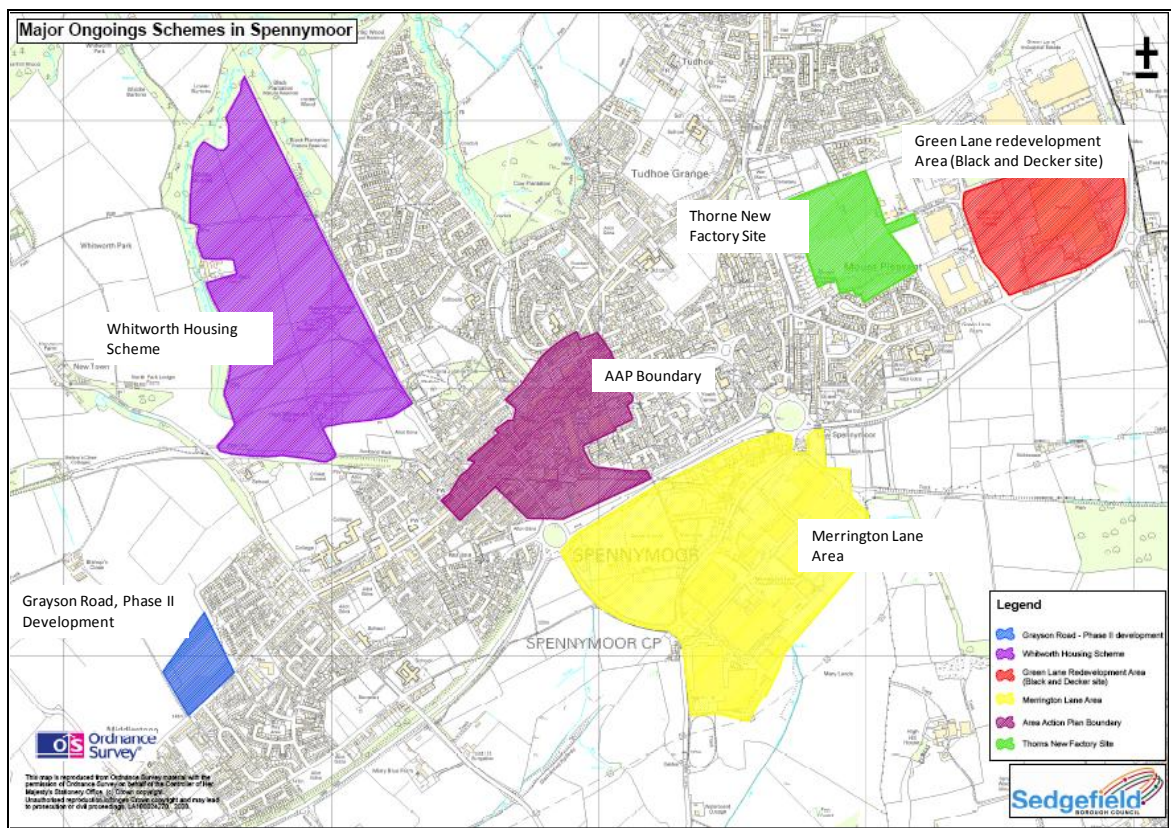
The last of these points is particularly significant in respect of its potential to shape the future development of the town centre. Figure 3.1 over the page illustrates the emerging development proposals in Spennymoor. They include:

- South Spennymoor Urban Extension, which offers the potential to accommodate upwards of 1000 new dwellings;
- Durham Gate, comprising approximately 45,000 square meters of office floor space, as well as new residential development and ancillary services; and

- A new secondary school. (Durham County Council are considering consolidating the existing secondary schools)

These developments represent both opportunities and challenges in respect of the future role of Spennymoor town centre. They offer the potential to increase its customer base and generate more demand and commercial interest. However, there is also a risk that the opportunity will be missed if the town is not developed in such a way as to capture this additional potential. Therefore, the future development of the town centre must be planned in a way which meets this challenge.

Figure 3.1: Emerging Development Opportunities and Proposals in Spennymoor



Source: Sedgefield Borough Council

3.2 Socio Economic Analysis

A socio economic analysis has been undertaken of the Spennymoor area as a whole. The analysis draws on standard data sources across a range of socio-economic indicators. The key messages from the analysis are:

- The town has a population of approximately 19,000 and an ageing population (at the time of the 2001 Census);
- However, the potential exists for this population to significantly increase as a result of housing developments that are coming forward on the edges of the town;
- The employment base is dominated by a declining manufacturing sector;
- There has been a decline of the town's role as an employment centre;
- Occupation and skill profiles mirror the employment structure – examples of occupations?;
- There is a lower income profile (“blue collar enterprise, ties of the community and municipal dependency are dominant mosaic classifications);
- The town as a whole has low value housing stock (65% homes in council tax band A);
- 32.2% of the population does not have access to a private car/van.

The socio-economic characteristics of the town carry a number of implications for the planning and regeneration of the town as whole, as well as specifically for the town centre. Notably, the AAP can play an important role in helping to improve socio-economic conditions through:

- Developing the town centre as an employment/enterprise hub, providing new workspace and other employment generating activities;
- Recognising and developing a strong service offering that will create new employment opportunities and more income in the local area;
- Consider the need/opportunity for the provision of improved public/social infrastructure facilities (for example, health centres, council services, training facilities) that will improve access to and quality of, service delivery.

There is also an opportunity for the town centre to grow its customer base given the growth of the town's population that is anticipated, and provide new services and activities that will meet the needs of this new population.

3.3 Town Centre Performance

Town Centre surveys have been undertaken across all the town centres within the Borough between 2003 and 2007. The surveys measured a range of vitality and viability indicators. The key issues from the town centre health and viability check are:

- Shrinking quantity of town centre shopping provision over the period 2004 to 2007

- Loss in convenience and comparison floor space and a small reduction in service and residential;
- Vacant floorspace has increased from 2190 m² to 3236 m² over the same period
- Several fascia gaps identified by recent retail studies.

Key Challenges are:

- Build on the provision of the leisure centre, bars, night club and Bingo Hall;
- Sustain a diverse range of shop floorspace yet maintaining A1 as the prime use class;
- How to control the rise in A5 (Hot Food Takeaways) in the town centre;
- Increase and maintain town centre footfall levels;
- Provide a high quality public transport network to access key services and jobs for the 32.3% of the population who do not have access to a car or van;
- Increase passing trade through on street provision;
- Achieving an appropriate mix of residential development in and around the town centre.

3.4 Market Assessment

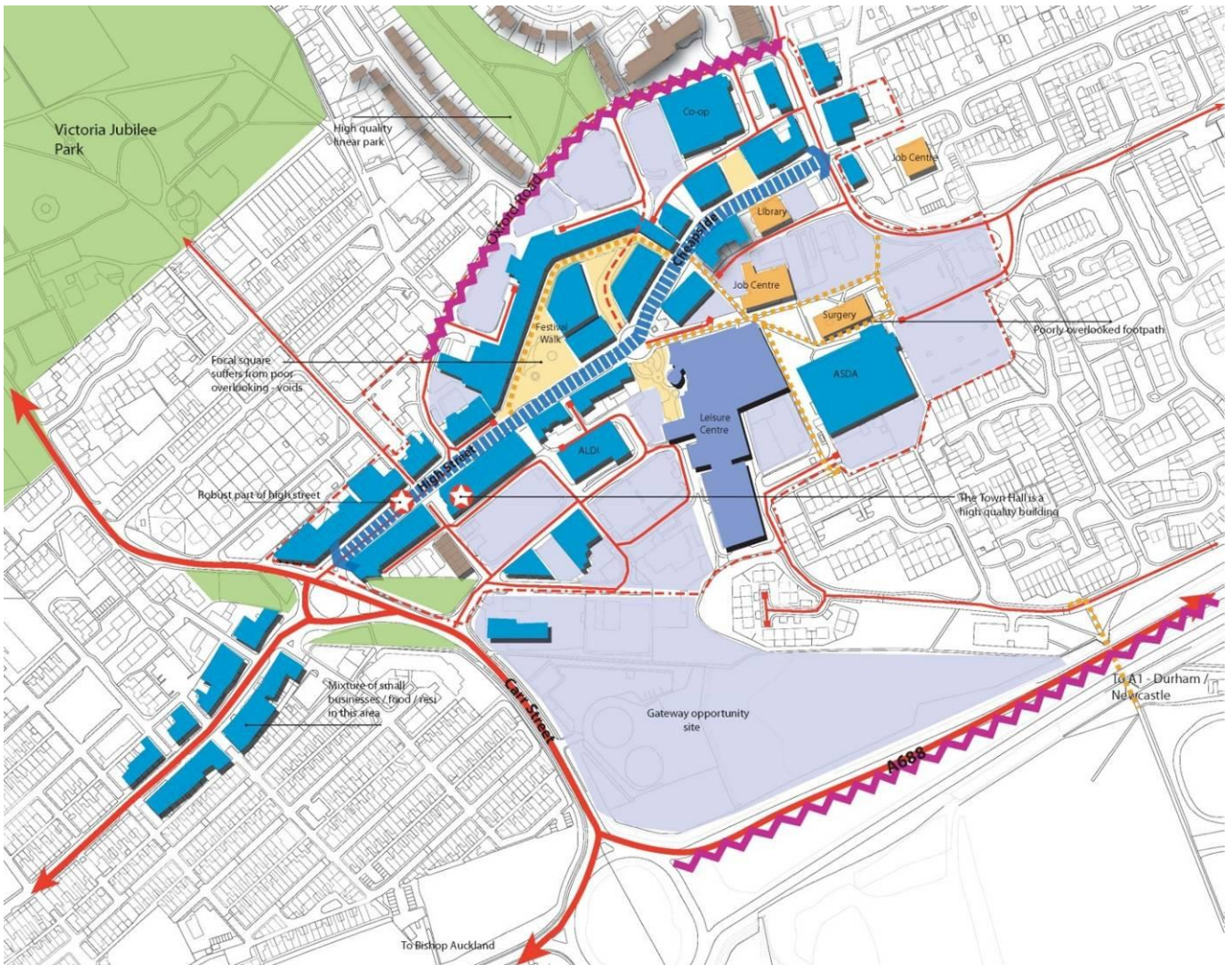
In general, Spennymoor town centre's property market performance can be regarded as relatively weak. Aside from strong interest from the budget grocery food operators, the centre is characterised by low levels of occupier and developer activity and a modest retail sector. Looking ahead, the future success of the town centre will depend on the degree to which it is able to reposition itself to attract commercial interest. The Area Action Plan can play a key role in helping to transform the centre's fortunes. The key market challenges for the centre include:

- Adding to the retail offer by providing accommodation for operators/activities that are not currently present in the town centre
- Developing an eating/drinking leisure market to complement the existing leisure centre and retail offer
- Promoting opportunities for workspace, possibly on the edge of the town centre that benefit from the main road frontage
- Town centre residential development, including the possibility of retirement flats.

3.5 Place Analysis

A place analysis was undertaken to establish the context of Spennymoor Town Centre. It analysed the urban structure, building quality, the public realm, access and movement, and identified opportunity sites. The diagram below illustrates the existing form of the town centre.

Figure 3.2: Place Analysis



The key issues and challenges for the centre include:

Issues

- Large “shatter zone” lacking frontage and natural surveillance;
- Voids and Festival Walk present a poor image;
- Poor gateways and legibility;
- Roads dominate the scene;
- Oxford Road is a barrier between the community and the Town Centre;
- A lack of retail variety;
- No public frontage on the A688. Therefore, the town can be missed;
- Buildings are in poor state of maintenance and signage;
- Potential lack of demand for town centre residential, offices, new retail space etc;
- Town centre vitality is compromised by big and numerous supermarkets;
- A fragmented urban structure;
- Many vacant sites and surface car parks;
- Lack of activity on the high street due to vehicle restrictions;

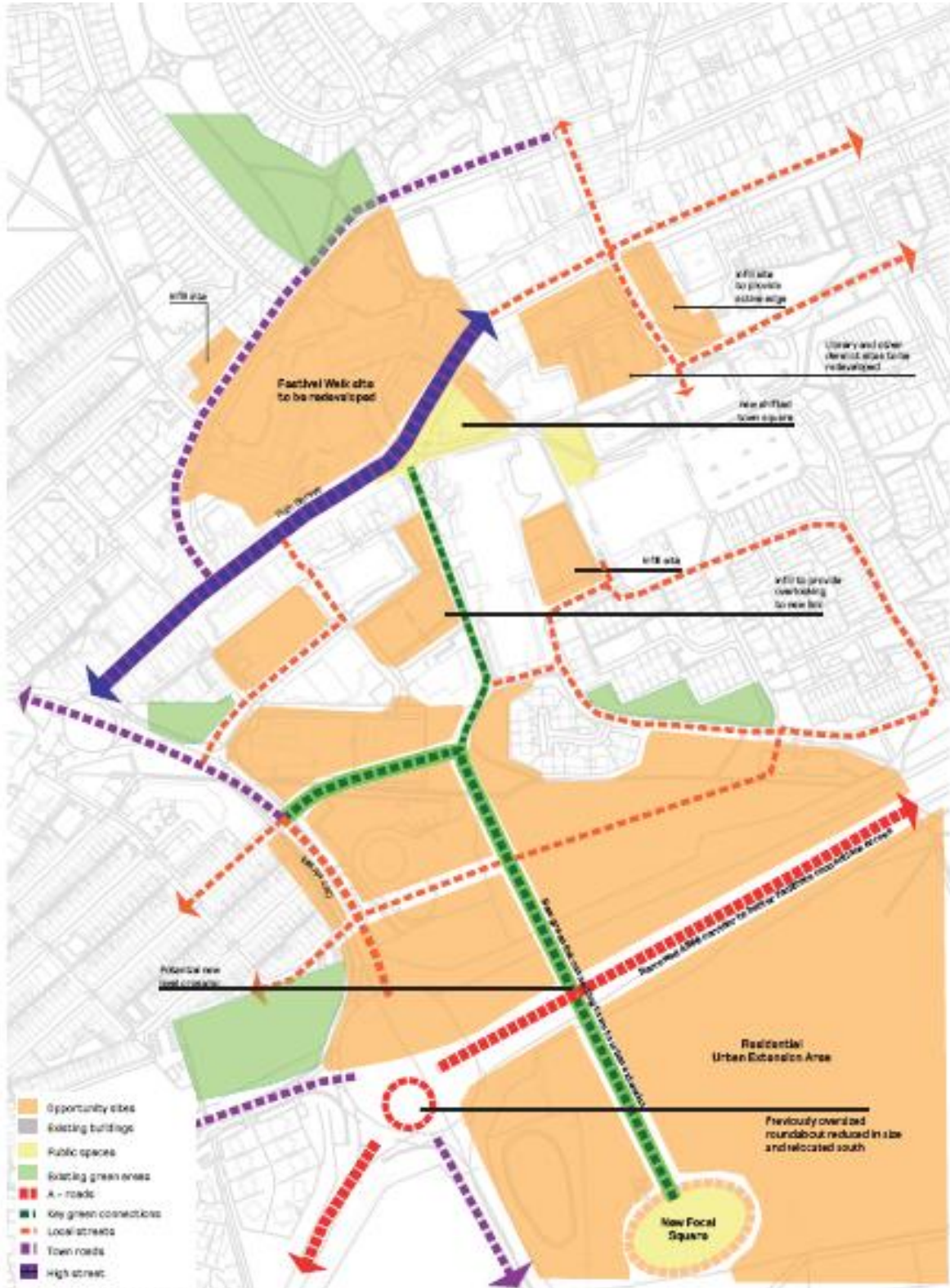
Challenges

- Utilise the substantially sized development sites;
- Improve structure through new development;
- Create green links to Victoria Jubilee Park and Tudhoe Green;
- Improve the mix and quality of development to boost the centre;
- Improve circulation and rationalise car parking-locate in less obtrusive locations;
- Continue shop front improvements;
- Potential difficulty acquiring infill sites;
- Growth of population on the wrong side of the bypass would create new barriers to be overcome and would encourage car use;
- New development repeating mistakes of the past (e.g. retail sheds with poor frontages);
- Improve the current poor arrival experience;
- Improve the Festival Walk retail precinct so that it does not detract from the vitality of the town centre;

The diagram overleaf illustrates the key development opportunity sites within and in close proximity to the town centre and potential access and movement enhancements which are discussed later in the report. The development sites are:

1. Gateway Site including the former Gasworks Site
2. Festival Walk
3. Library, surrounding derelict buildings and vacant land
4. Surface car parks
5. Telephone exchange building behind leisure centre
6. Smaller infill sites

Figure 3.3: Opportunity Sites



3.6 Summary – SWOT Analysis

The table below provides a framework on which to build a strategy to underpin the Area Action Plan: strengths should be safeguarded and nurtured, weaknesses should be tackled, and the town centre must be positioned to both take advantage of the opportunities, and limit the impacts of the threats.

Strengths	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility – well connected to road routes and bus corridors • Car parking availability makes it a convenient shopping destination • Strong base in food retail • Leisure centre is key asset/attraction • Modest level of character created by traditional/landmark buildings (e.g. town hall) • Car parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several significant land owners active in regeneration process • Fascia gaps in the high street represent opportunities to attract new retail operators • Diversification of activities – public services, workspace, leisure • Opportunity for new civic focus (i.e. new town hall) • Former Gas Works site represents key gateway development opportunity • Enhance green linkages to Victoria Park • Growth in town’s population creates opportunities for new shops and services
Weaknesses	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catchment area relatively small and currently dominated by average and low income groups • Limited quality and range of shops and services (i.e. particularly comparison sector) • Festival Walk represents eyesore and has diluted/dispersed retail core • Lack of prominence/visibility to A688 • Lack of permeability and connectivity within centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in leakage of spend to competing centres as they raise their game • Growth of food stores that dominate offer and opportunity sites, squeezing out other functions and land uses • Land assembly difficulties – cost and time delays could limit aspirations for bringing sites to the market • Market weaknesses – limits to the number and type of operators that are willing to invest in the centre • Too much residential development could detract from ‘active uses’ focus of centre • Uncertainty of planning policy in view of Local Government Reorganisation

Stakeholder Questions:

Q1: Do you think the issues and challenges described above are accurate and represent an adequate evidence base on which to develop an Area Action Plan for the town centre? Please explain.

Q2: Are there any other issues and challenges you think are relevant?

4.0 Vision and Objectives

4.1 Vision

The vision has been developed through a thorough consideration of the existing policy frameworks and their implications for the town centre (as set out in Chapter 2), a socio-economic, market and physical appraisal of the town centre, and consultation with stakeholders.

The proposed vision is based on three core propositions:

- i. To create a vibrant and progressive town centre that meets the needs and aspirations of the town's growing population and transforms its role as a sub-regional district shopping centre.*
- ii. To redefine the centre's offer and establish a strong and distinctive range of complementary uses and activities.*
- iii. To remodel the built fabric and create a high quality and sustainable town centre environment.*

This vision is derived from our analysis of the issues and challenges facing the town centre, and specifically, the following factors:

- **The Existing Policy Framework**, as defined in the Sedgefield Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options document, which identifies Spennymoor as a main town centre and proposes its regeneration and diversification of uses.
- **Local Aspirations**, which are to establish a robust, lively and vibrant town centre which meets local needs and acts as a focal point for the community. There is a need to improve the town centre to enable it to fulfil its potential as a major centre serving the local population and surrounding catchment area.
- **Growth Potential** - There is an opportunity presented by the growing population in and around Spennymoor and the recent designation of the settlement as part of the South East Durham Growth Point. Growth in population means growth in the customer base. In order to benefit from this there needs to be an improvement in the offer, access and connections.
- **Shopping Trends** - However, national trends in shopping habits such as retail decentralisation, growth of larger centres and e-tailing have squeezed small town centres like Spennymoor.

Therefore, there is a need to reinvent/reposition its role, create a distinctive offer and promote the diversification of uses.

- **Investment** - There is a need for new investment in the built environment, to provide a high quality environment which offers a range of economic opportunities, housing and community facilities.
- **Sustainability** and design quality are needed to ensure that the regeneration of Spennymoor Town Centre is future proofed, and meets Government objectives in respect of environmental construction standards.

We set out below the key objectives in taking forward this vision.

4.2 Objectives

1. Enhance the retail offer through plugging key fascia gaps

The Sedgefield Retail Gap Analysis demonstrated that there is currently an under-provision of floorspace in several retail categories including Hardware & Household Goods, Children & Infants Wear and Florists. There is also no presence of Toys/Games/Hobbies in the town centre. Key to enhancing the offer must be a strategy to broaden the range of shops and services.

2. Developing a leisure cluster for the town centre

Leisure is considered to be a key opportunity given the existence of the Spennymoor Leisure Centre in the town centre. The development of a cluster of leisure activities would include the following key priorities:

- Expand the leisure centre's role and offer and integration with other services;
- Promote the links between health services and leisure under the concept of "healthy living";
- Encourage specialist leisure retail opportunities;
- Promote an evening economy through cafes, bars and restaurants;
- Consider opportunities for new sports facilities linked to the leisure centre.

3. Develop the role of the centre as an employment and enterprise hub

In order to support the growth, diversification and regeneration of the town centre, there will need to be employment opportunities. This was highlighted in the Quality of Life Survey where one of the key priorities is to have a good employment base for local job opportunities. This is further supported by the RSS, Sedgefield Borough Community Strategy and Economic Development Strategy

Concentration of office space within the town centre would create a more vibrant town centre which is easily accessible for all. Furthermore, the close proximity to Durham makes Spennymoor an attractive option for new investment

4. Expand the civic/public service role of the centre

Local services can play an important role in bolstering the offer of the town centre, in concentrating footfall, and in facilitating investment. The rationalising and moderating of local services, including through the local government reorganisation may present some opportunities to facilitate this option.

5. Improve access and movement patterns in and around the centre

This objective will promote and support a range of access and movement types including improved bicycle access, pedestrian access from key housing areas and car parks, and will increase the passing trade on the High Street which is currently restricted to buses only

An improved bus service which is legible and reliable for all will support the RSS's sustainable development agenda of ensuring good accessibility of homes to jobs and services by public transport.

6. Promote town centre living

The promotion of town centre living will bring a customer base into the town centre, create a natural surveillance to improve community safety and bring forward infill sites for development.

7. Create a high quality, distinctive and attractive town centre environment

The Retail Gap Analysis stated that improving the general ambience and environment would encourage more shoppers to visit the town centre. Furthermore, the Quality of Life survey highlighted the importance of a well maintained and safe environment, which can be achieved though high quality urban design is a key priority of theirs.

8. Promote sustainability and energy efficiency.



The promotion of a sustainable and energy efficient town centre should be achieved through functionality a form of development that encourages low car based transport and employs standards relating to the quality and type of construction.

Stakeholder Questions:

Q3: Do you agree with the vision?

Q4: Do you agree with the objectives?

Q5: Are there any other objectives that you feel require incorporating into this further?

5.0 Options

5.1 Approach

This section sets out the range of possible options that are available as a means of taking forward the vision and objectives for Spennymoor Town Centre. The options are summarised under the following headings:

- Town Centre Boundaries
- Sectors and land uses
- Development sites
- Public Realm
- Access and Movement

In some cases, there are linkages between the various options and categories. However, for presentational purposes, we have set out the options separately, indicating the linkages where appropriate.

5.2 Town Centre Boundaries

The definition of the town centre boundary is an important consideration in respect of delimiting the area within which specific town centre policies will apply. We consider there to be two key options that require consideration in this respect:

- a) Whether to expand the town centre boundaries to include the former Gas Works site or retain the boundary as set out in the existing Local Plan
- b) Whether to introduce a core and secondary area within the town centre boundaries to allow for a two –tier approach to land use policy

Expanding the town centre boundaries to include the former Gas Works site would allow for the enlargement of the town centre and would enable the former Gas Works site to be brought forward for development for town centre related uses. It would also create a “gateway” site to the town centre from the A688 road. The two possible town centre boundaries are illustrated in Figure 5.1 below.

The introduction of core and secondary retail areas would allow for prime retail uses to be concentrated into a core area with other supporting uses (e.g. leisure, evening economy, services) in a secondary area. The rationale for adopting this approach is that it:

- Allows for spatial consolidation of prime retail area, thus creating a viable and focused shopping environment
- Provides opportunities for promoting diversification of uses – e.g. leisure, services, town centre living, employment, in secondary locations.

Figure 5.2 presents a proposed core and secondary policy area.

Town Centre Boundary Options	
A.	Expand town centre boundaries to include the former Gas Works site or retain existing Local Plan boundaries
B.	Introduce core and secondary policy areas or retain one policy area

Figure 5.1: Town Centre Boundary Options

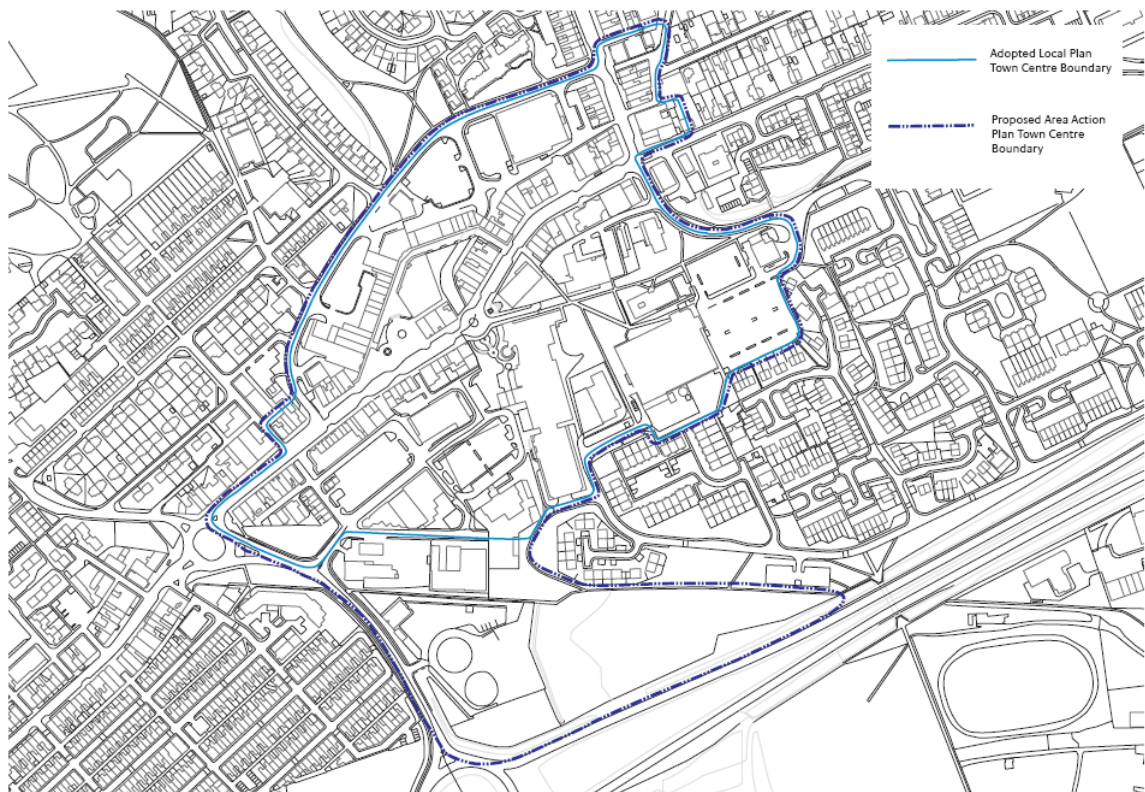
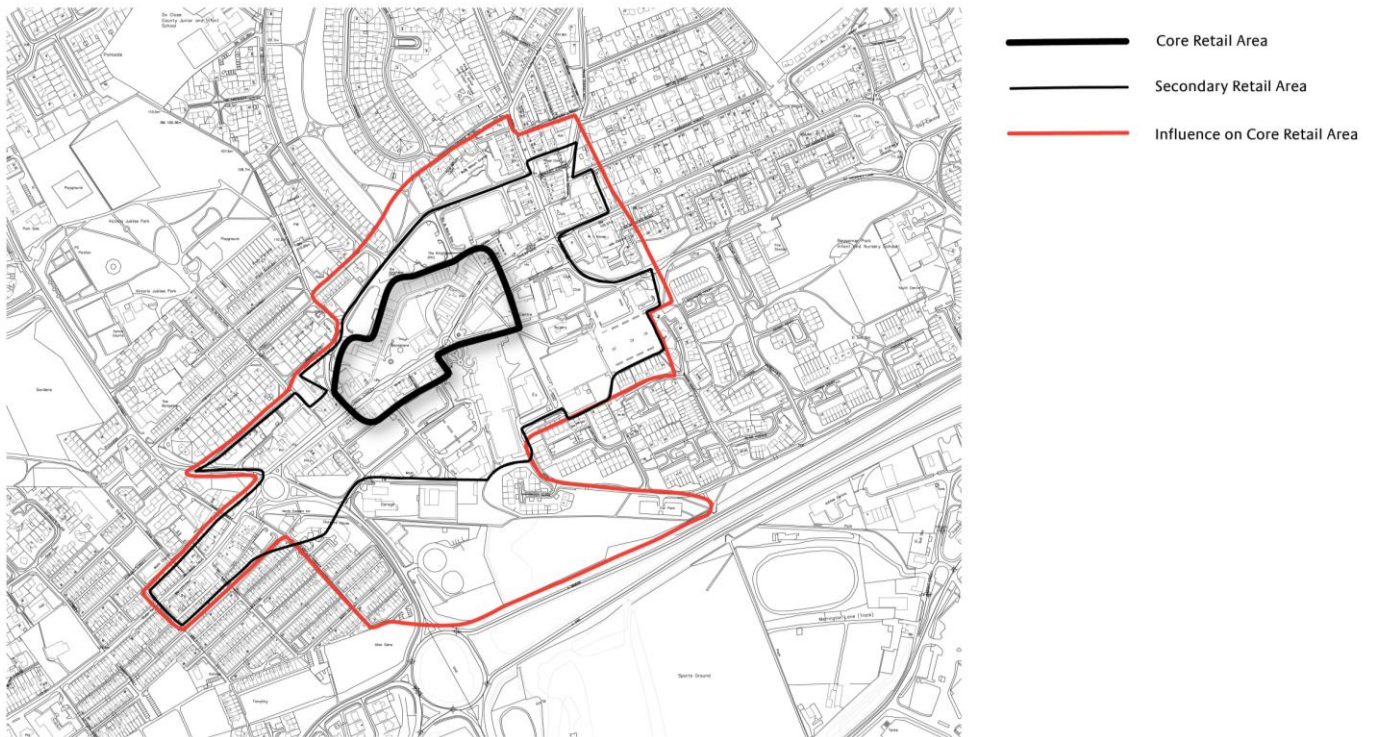


Figure 5.2: Primary and Secondary Retail Area Option



5.4 Development Sites

Three principal areas of physical change have been identified in the town centre:

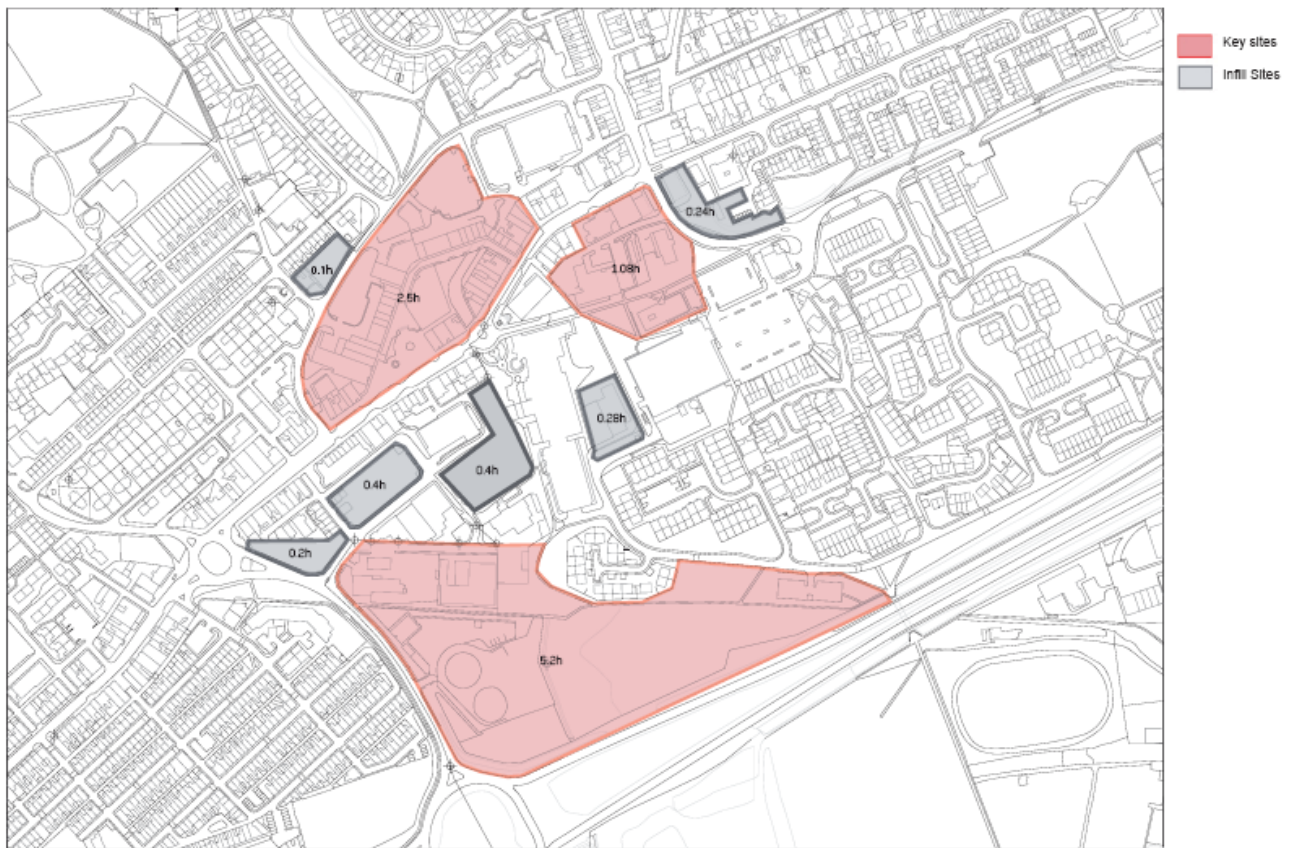
- Festival Walk shopping centre and environs
- Former Gas Works site
- Cheapside

All of these areas are considered to offer significant development potential which could underpin the regeneration of the town centre. Festival Walk is currently in poor condition with a number of voids and is in need of renewal. The former Gas Works site is a vacant site that occupies an important position at

the gateway to the town from the A688 and offers the opportunity to improve the linkages between this and the town centre. The Cheapside site is currently occupied by a number of public service buildings that are all in a poor condition and in low density surroundings, yet occupying a central position in the town centre.

There are also a number of infill sites which offer development potential, such as behind the High Street adjacent to the leisure centre. However, the nature and scale of these sites is such that they are not considered to warrant detailed options appraisal through this process, but be considered as part of the overall strategy for the town centre.

Figure 5.3 Key Areas of Change

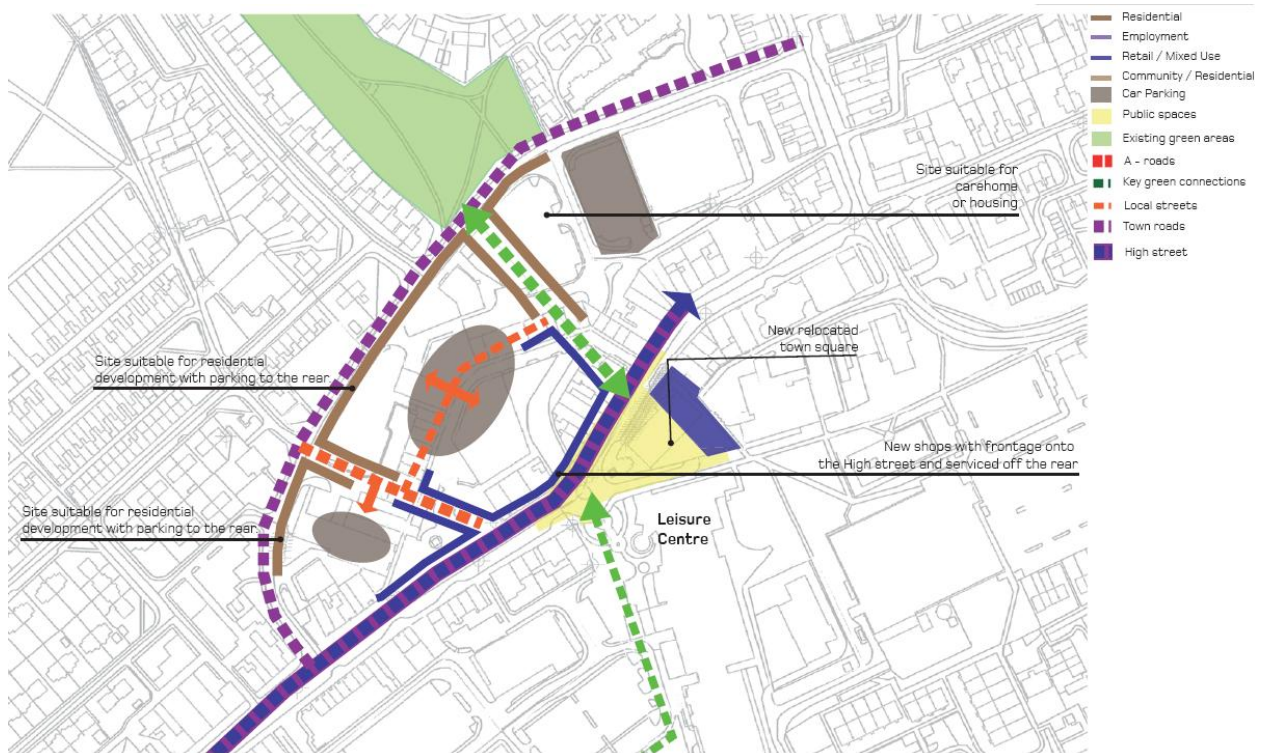


5.4.1 Festival Walk

Festival Walk Option A: Shopping Centre

- Redevelopment of Festival Walk Shopping Centre
- Replacement with new retail units fronting High Street including small food store
- Land to rear utilised for servicing, car parking and infill residential development
- Public square and bandstand relocated to site fronting Leisure Centre
- Possibility of inclusion of existing retail units fronting high street in comprehensive redevelopment
- Option to include covered/arcade style shopping centre desirable
- Provision of green link to Victoria Jubilee Park

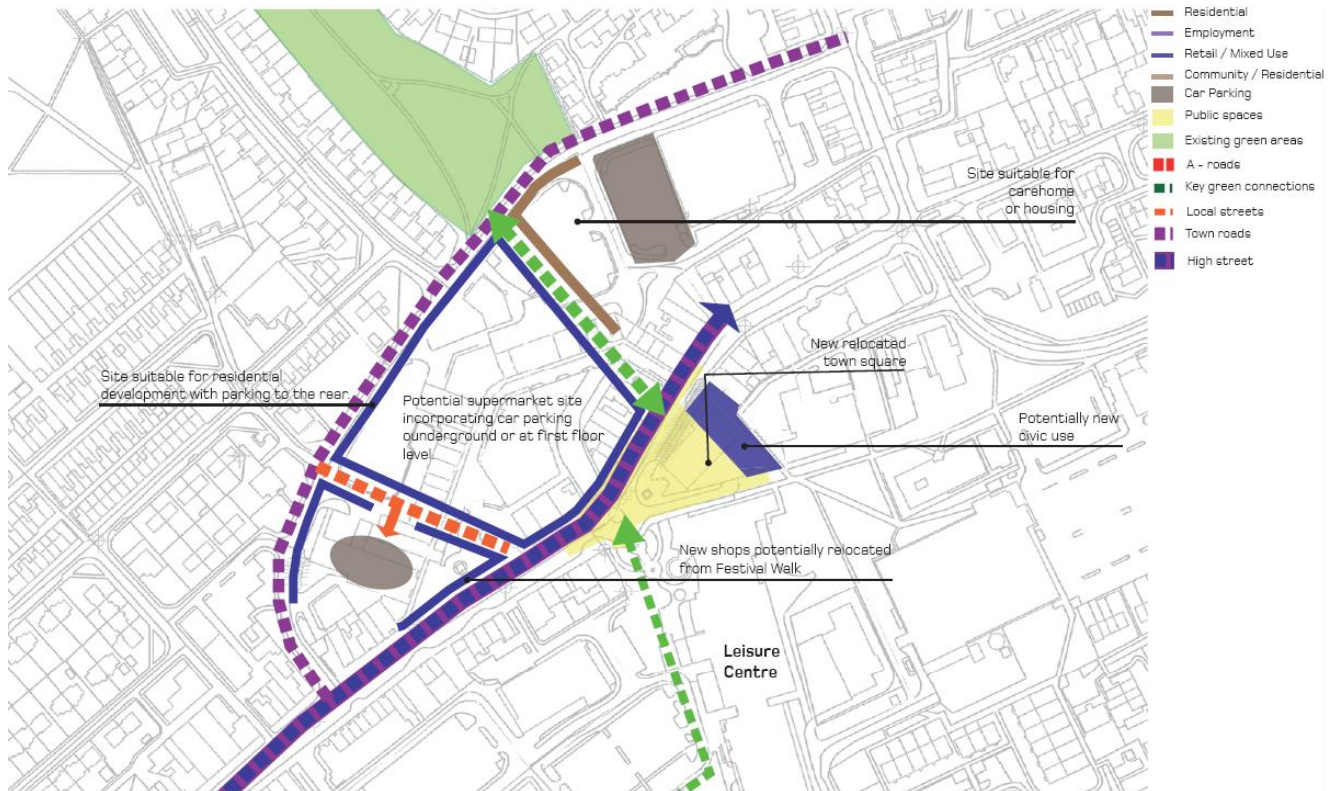
Figure 5.4: Festival Walk Option A: Shopping Centre



Festival Walk Option B: Food-Store

- Replacement of existing shopping centre with new supermarket and small number of additional retail units
- Retention of existing public space and bandstand
- Rear of site retained for car parking and servicing

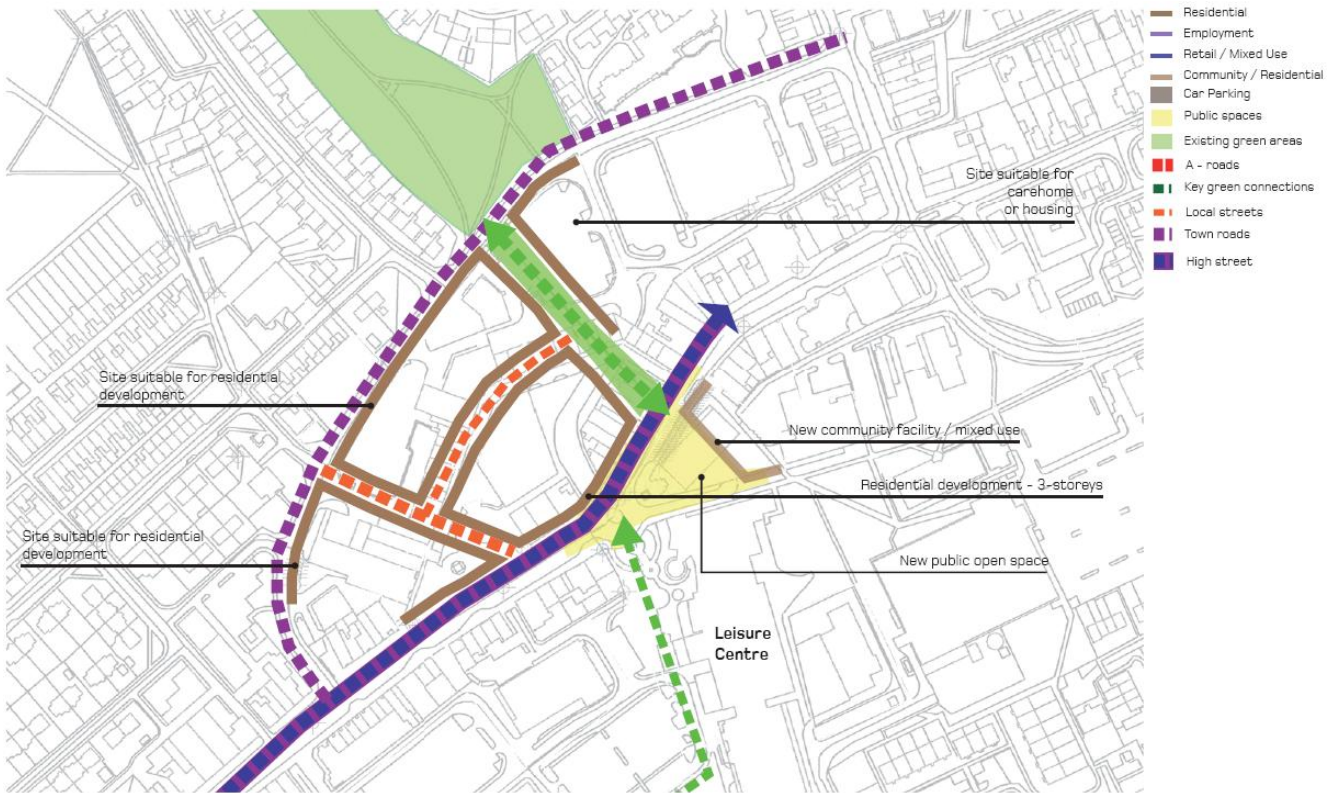
Figure 5.5: Festival Walk Option B: Food-Store



Festival Walk Option C Residential Led

- Residential redevelopment of Festival Walk with minimum active uses fronting high street
- (Retail activity refocused onto the former Gas Works site)

Figure 5.6: Festival Walk Option C Residential Led

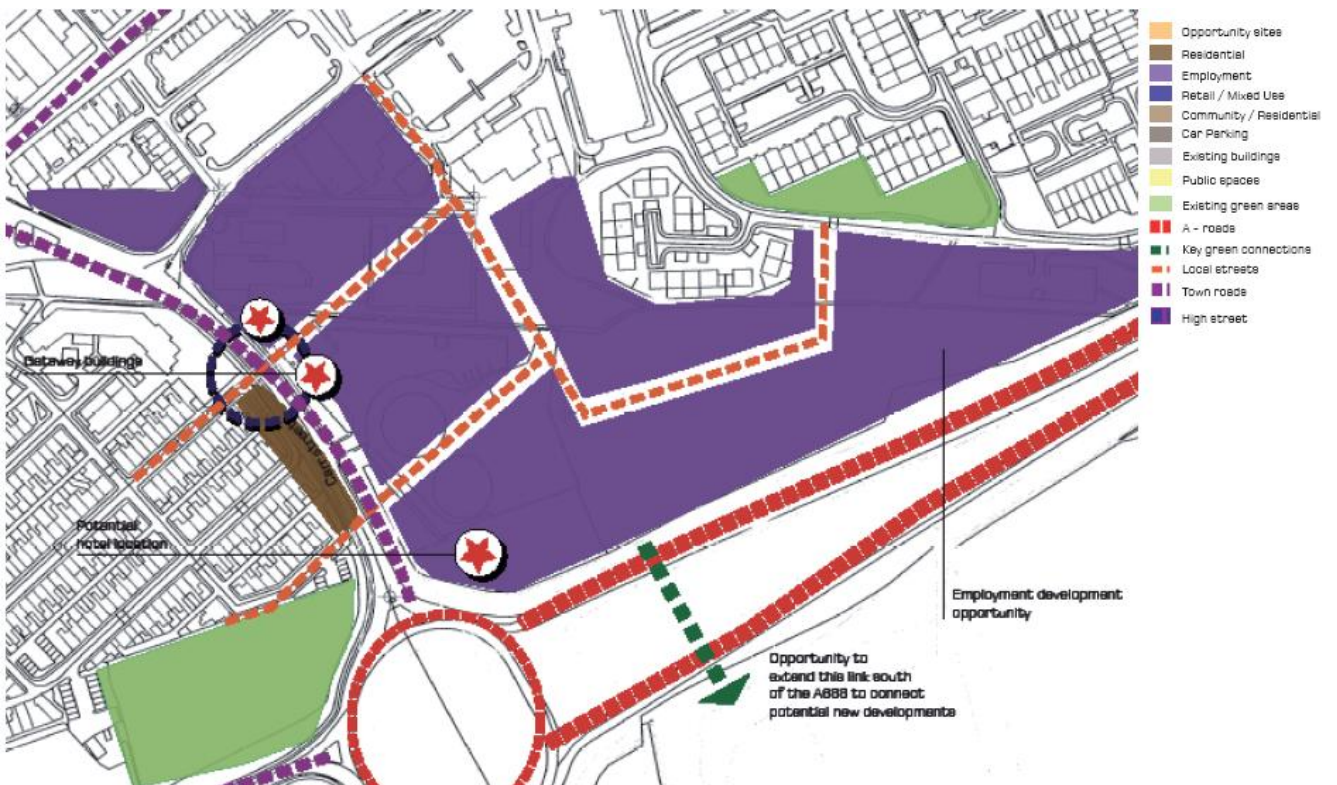


5.4.2 The Former Gas Works Site

Former Gas Works Site Option A – Employment led

- Redevelopment of site for employment uses
- Industrial/office workspace
- Possibility of hotel or office gateway landmark building

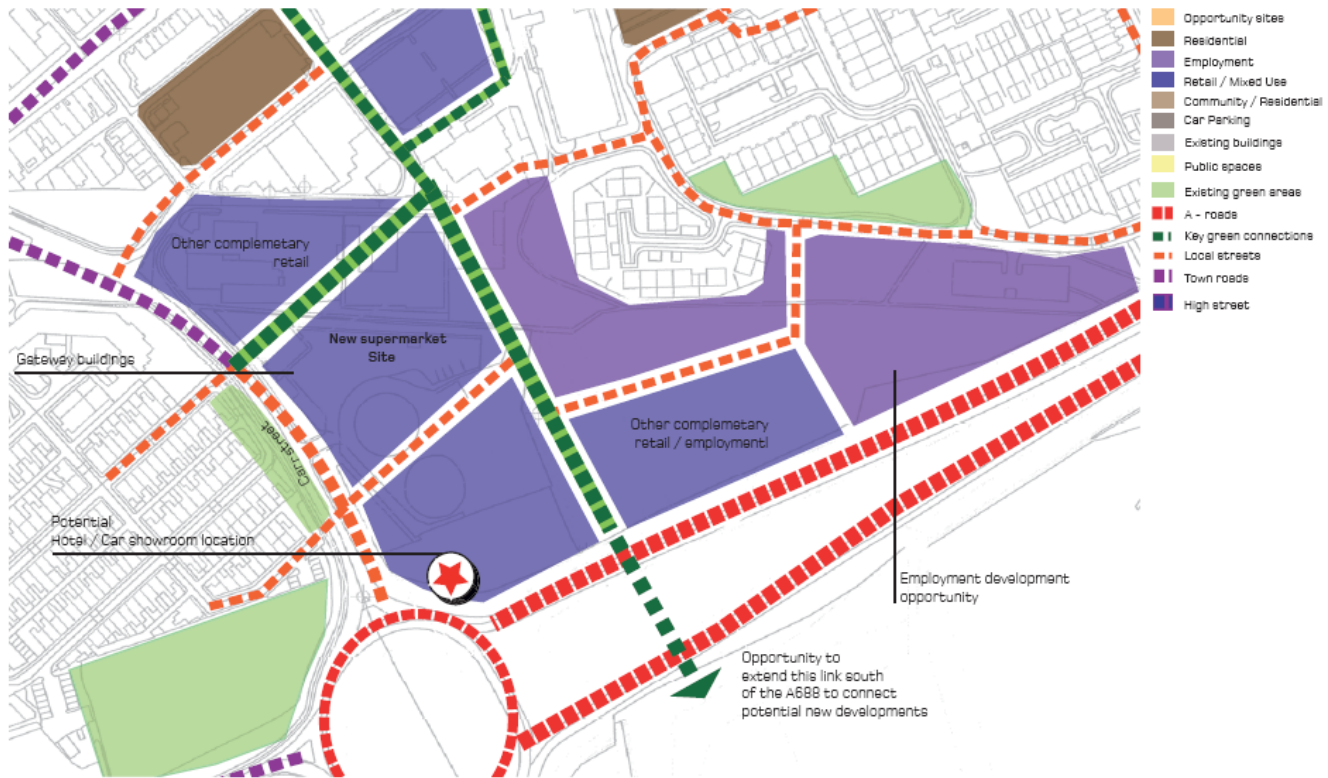
Figure 5.7: Former Gas Works Site Option A – Employment led



Former Gas Works Option C: Retail/leisure led

- Refocusing of town centre onto the former Gas Works site
- New large supermarket with additional retail units for comparison goods shopping
- Possibility of family pub and hotel

Figure 5.9: Former Gas Works Option C: Retail/leisure led

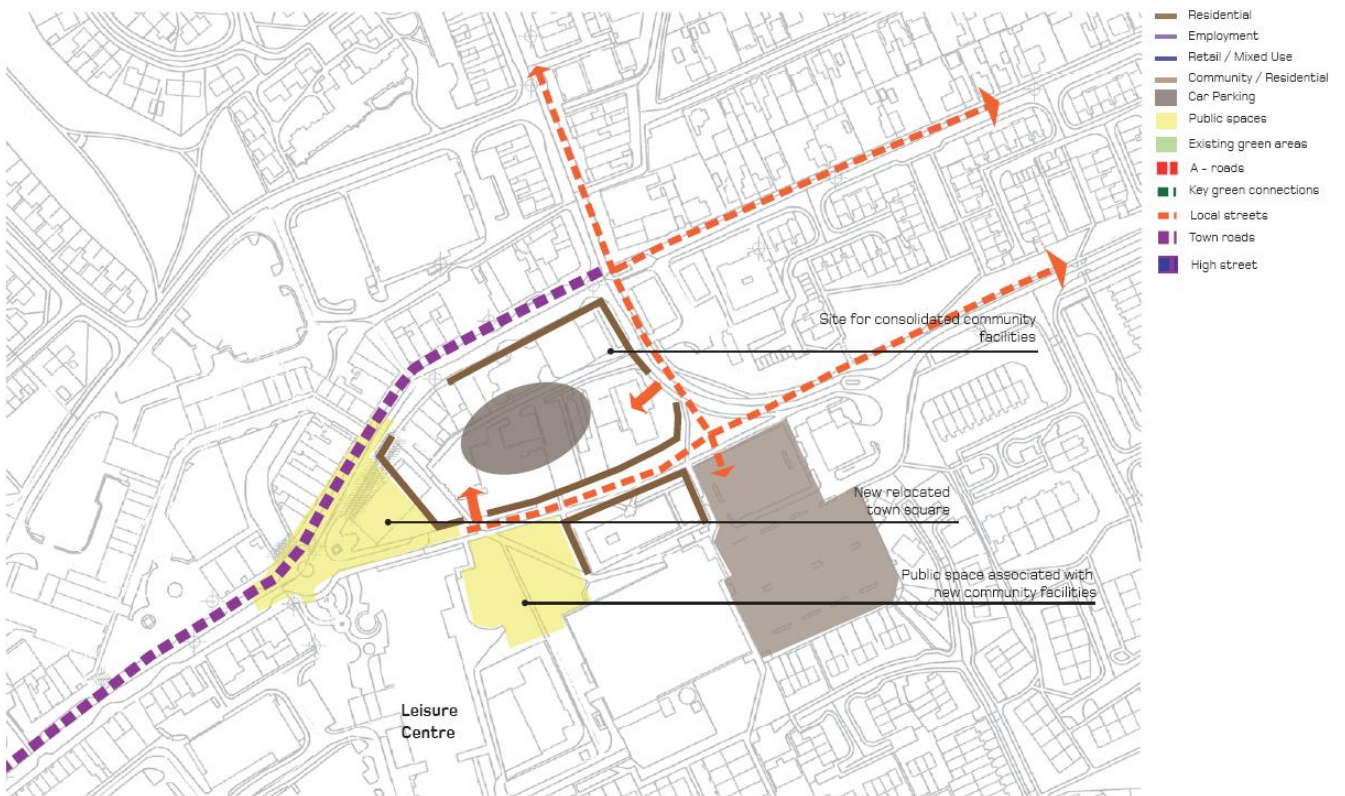


5.4.3 Cheapside

Cheapside Option A: Civic Quarter

- Replacement of existing health centre, library and surgery with new integrated service centre
- Inclusion of local government services
- Links to leisure centre through provision of healthy living style activities

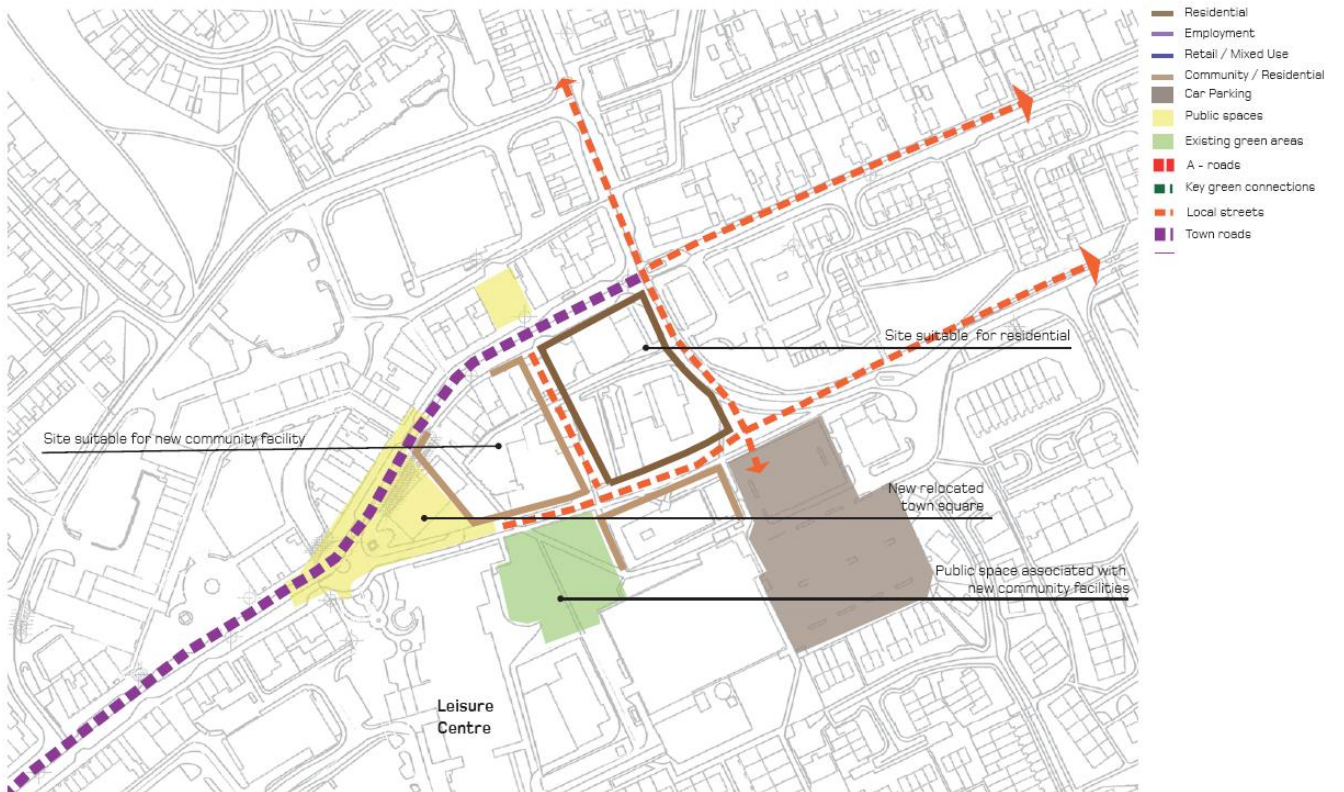
Figure 5.10 Cheapside Option A: Civic Quarter



Cheapside Option B: Mixed Use

- Redevelopment of site for smaller public service centre
- Partial development of site for residential use

Figure 5.11: Cheapside Option B Mixed Use



5.4.4 Summary

Areas of Change

Issues

The need to revitalise Festival Walk
Identifying the optimum use and approach to key development sites

Development Options

Festival Walk

- A – Shopping Centre
- B – Food Store led
- C – Residential led

Former Gas Works Site

- A – Employment led
- B – Residential led
- C – Retail

Cheapside

- A – Civic Quarter
- B – Mixed Use

5.5 Public Realm

With regard to public realm, the key issues concern the need to increase the functionality and usability of spaces. The existing square to the front of Festival Walk is under used and there is an opportunity to relocate this, through the process of redeveloping the Festival Walk shopping centre.

The issues for public realm are as follows:

- The need to make public spaces more functional and useable;
- How to enhance the quality of streetscapes and furniture.

Options:

- Relocate the existing public space at the front of Festival Walk to the site adjacent to the leisure centre;
- Implement a programme of environmental improvements
- Introduce a linear park linking the north and south of the town.

5.6 Access and Movement

Access and movement issues can be separated into the strategic and local.

At the **local level**, the issue concerns the level of vehicular restrictions that impede the movement of cars and delivery vehicles, and the limited movement patterns in and around the centre for pedestrians.

Issue:

- Lack of vitality caused by “over-engineered” streets and vehicular restrictions

Options

- Option 1: Town Centre high level of pedestrian and bus priority for part of or all day
- Option 2: Town Centre with car access permitted (with on street parking) for part of

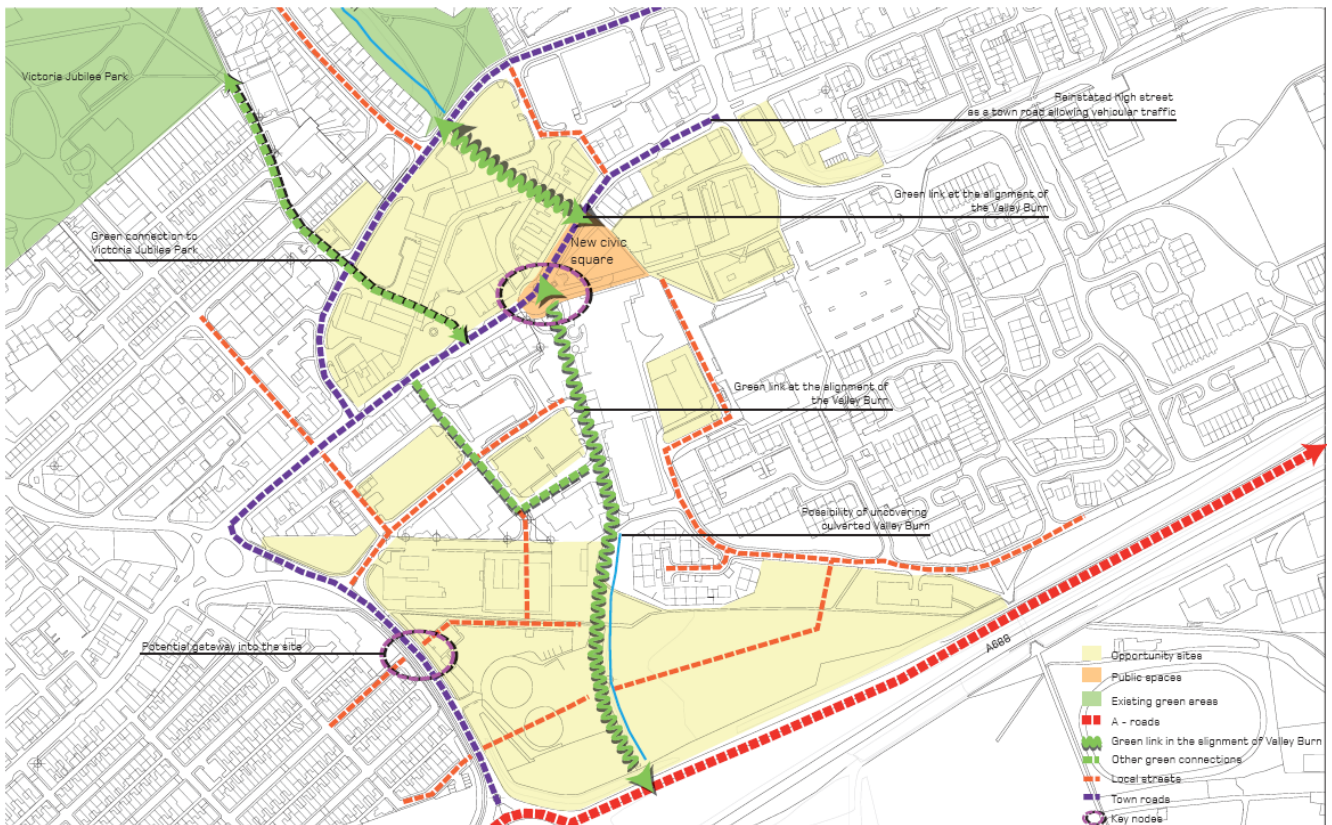
or all day (increase vitality with lower footfall)

In all cases:

- High quality town centre public realm, social space and diverse attractions
- Direct access to car parks from town roads, well signed
- Parking management strategy
- Public transport focus on High Street

Figure 5.12 below provides an illustration of the public realm and local transport and movement options.

Figure 5.12: Public Realm, Access and Movement Options



At the **strategic level**, it is important to understand the wider transportation patterns impacting on the settlement of Spennymoor. In this respect, we also consider it necessary to have regard to the possible future South Spennymoor extension and the need for integration with the wider development. We have therefore devised three strategic transportation options which reflect the need to integrate the town centre with South Spennymoor.

Issues:

- Future development south of the A688 is at risk of being unsustainable unless it is integrated with the Town Centre
- Lack of access routes to existing and emerging residential neighbourhoods.

Options:

- Option 1: Maximum Growth – integrate major southern urban extension
- Option 2: Medium Growth – integrate with more modest urban extension
- Option 3: Limited Growth – no major changes required to highway network

In all cases:

- Hierarchy of bypass, town roads, local streets and special links (foot, cycle, bus)
- Bishop Auckland – Spennymoor off-road cycle way extended through Spennymoor to Ferryhill

Figures 5.13 and 5.14 over the page provide illustrations of the medium and maximum growth scenarios.

(N.B. As these strategic options depend on development scenarios outside of the AAP boundaries, they are provided for contextual purposes in this Issues and Options report and will not form detailed proposals in the eventual AAP.)

Figure 5.13: Medium Growth Intervention – Transform Bypass

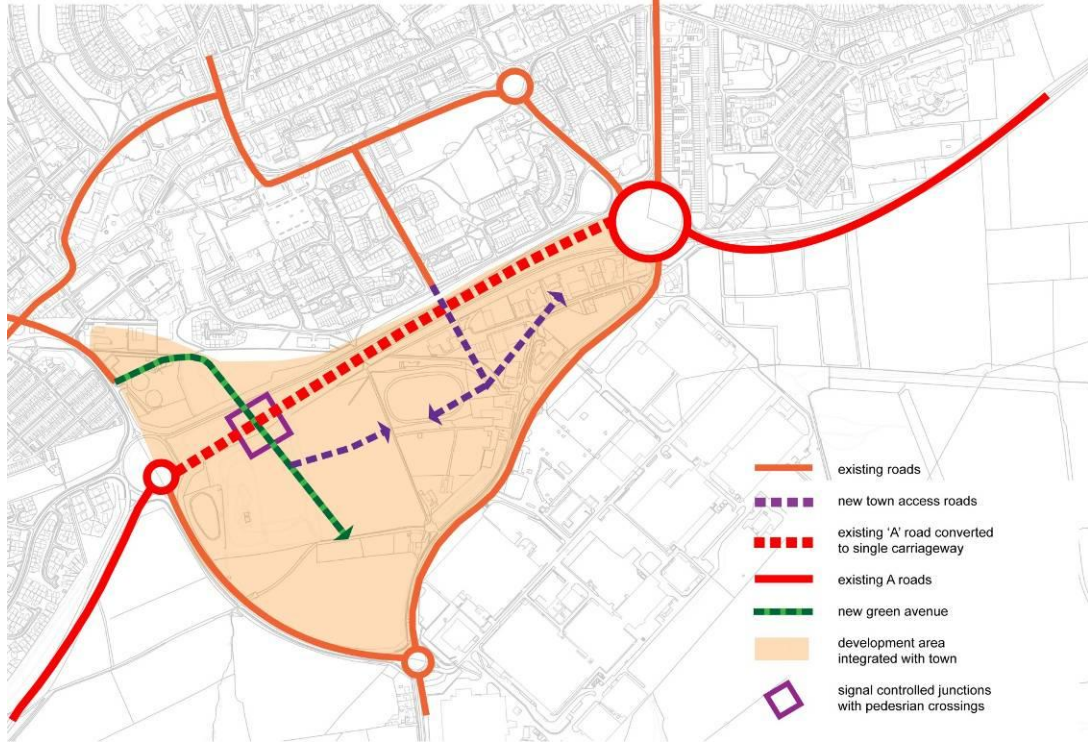
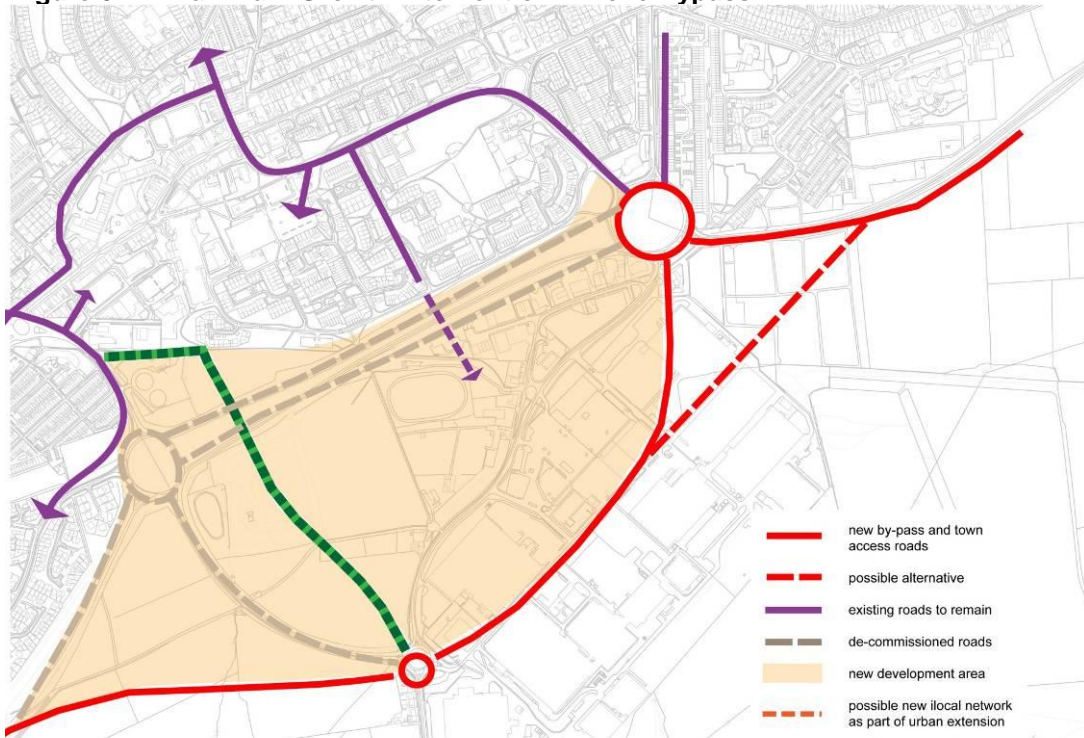


Figure 5.14: Maximum Growth Intervention – Move Bypass



5.7 Summary – The Options

	Issues	Options
Site Boundaries	<p>Does the town centre need to be expanded?</p> <p>Should retail activity be concentrated into a core area?</p>	<p>A. Expand town centre boundaries to include the former Gas Works site or retain existing Local Plan boundaries</p> <p>B. Introduce core and secondary policy areas or retain one policy area</p>
Sectors and Land Uses	<p>The town centre has a number of supermarkets and potentially more to be developed, is there an oversupply of grocery shopping?</p> <p>Town lacks identifiable areas of activity, for example comparable shopping and eateries and drinking establishments</p>	<p>A. Limit on the level of additional grocery retail development</p> <p>B. Zone parts of the town centre for specific uses to ensure protection of the shopping centre environment</p> <p>B. Promote areas of the town for mixed uses</p>
Development Sites	<p>Festival Walk is in poor condition, with a number of voids and is in need of renewal</p>	<p>A. Retail led mixed use</p> <p>B. Food Store led</p> <p>C. Residential led</p>
	<p>The former Gas Works site is a vacant site with a key strategic position</p>	<p>A. Employment led</p> <p>B. Residential led</p> <p>C. Retail</p>
	<p>Cheapside</p>	<p>Development of civic focus</p>
Public Realm	<p>The need to make public spaces more functional and useable</p> <p>How to enhance the quality of streetscapes and furniture.</p>	<p>A. Relocate the existing public space at the front of Festival Walk to the site adjacent to the leisure centre</p> <p>B. Implement a programme of environmental improvements</p> <p>C. Create north to south linear park.</p>

<p>Access and Movement (Strategic)</p>	<p>Future development south of the A688 is at risk of being unsustainable unless it is integrated with the Town Centre</p> <p>Lack of access routes to existing and emerging residential neighbourhoods.</p>	<p>A. Maximum Growth – integrate major southern urban extension</p> <p>B. Medium Growth – integrate with more modest urban extension</p> <p>C. Option 3: Limited Growth – no major changes required to highway network.</p>
<p>Access and Movement (Local)</p>	<p>Lack of vitality caused by “over-engineered” streets and vehicular restrictions.</p>	<p>A. Town Centre high level of pedestrian and bus priority for part of or all day</p> <p>B. Town Centre with car access permitted (with on street parking) for part of or all day (increase vitality with lower footfall)</p>

Stakeholder Questions:

Q6. Do you agree that the options represent the most appropriate scenarios for meeting the vision and objectives of the AAP?

Q7: Please indicate which of the options you prefer.

Q8: Please indicate if there are any other options that you think require consideration.

6.0 Approach to the Option Appraisal




The next stage in the process of developing the Area Action Plan will involve assessing the options to enable to prepare the Preferred Options Document. Our approach to assessing the options will involve focusing on the following four factors:

- Objectives (i.e. the proposed objectives set out earlier in this document);
- Delivery (i.e. the deliverability of the development proposals within a realistic timescale);
- Sustainability (which will draw on the Sustainability Appraisal work which accompanies the AAP process);
- Community objectives (which will include consideration of comments and representations made in response to this document).

We propose to carry-out a scoring matrix to demonstrate the contribution of each option to the various criteria, that will help to identify the preferred options. The table on the following page provides an example of the table structure that will be used.

Table 6.1: Approach to Option Appraisal

	Opt 1	Opt 2	Opt 3	Etc.
Objectives				
Enhances the retail offer through plugging key fascia gaps				
Expands the range of leisure activities and uses, including eating/drinking				
Develops the role of the centre as an employment and enterprise hub				
Expand the civic/public service role of the centre				
Improves access and movement patterns in and around the centre				
Promotes town centre living				
Creates a high quality, distinctive and attractive town centre environment				
Promotes sustainability and energy efficiency.				
Delivery				
Commercial Viability				
Identify and manage ownership constraints				
Market Attractiveness				
Funding Identified or Identifiable				
Technical and Infrastructure constraints identified and manageable				
Sustainability				
Enhances Environmental Quality				
Promotes Economic Sustainability				
Promotes Social and Cultural vitality				
Policy and Community Objectives				
Meets National Policy Requirements				
Adheres to the RSS				
Meets County requirements				
Is aligned with the LDF Core Strategy				
Meets the Community Strategy Objectives				
Total				

-  1 Negative Impact
-  2 Neutral Impact
-  3 Positive Impact



7. Next Steps

7.1 Consultation

The AAP represents one of the first steps in consulting on the proposed options. The questions set out in this document give you the opportunity to provide any comments for each section. Overleaf is space for you to feedback to us.

7.2 Stakeholder Questions

Q1: Do you think the issues and challenges described above are accurate and represent an adequate evidence base on which to develop an Area Action Plan for the town centre?

Yes No

Please explain:

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Q2: Are there any other issues and challenges you think are relevant?

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Q3: Do you agree with the vision?

Yes No

Please explain:

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Q4: Do you agree with the objectives?

Yes No

Please explain:

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Q5: Are there any other objectives that you feel require incorporating into this further?

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Q6. Do you agree that the options represent the most appropriate scenarios for meeting the vision and objectives of the AAP?

Yes No

Q7 Please explain and indicate which of the options you prefer.

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Q8: Please indicate if there are any other options that you think require consideration.

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Please use the space provided below for any further comments:

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Please return questionnaires to:

xx