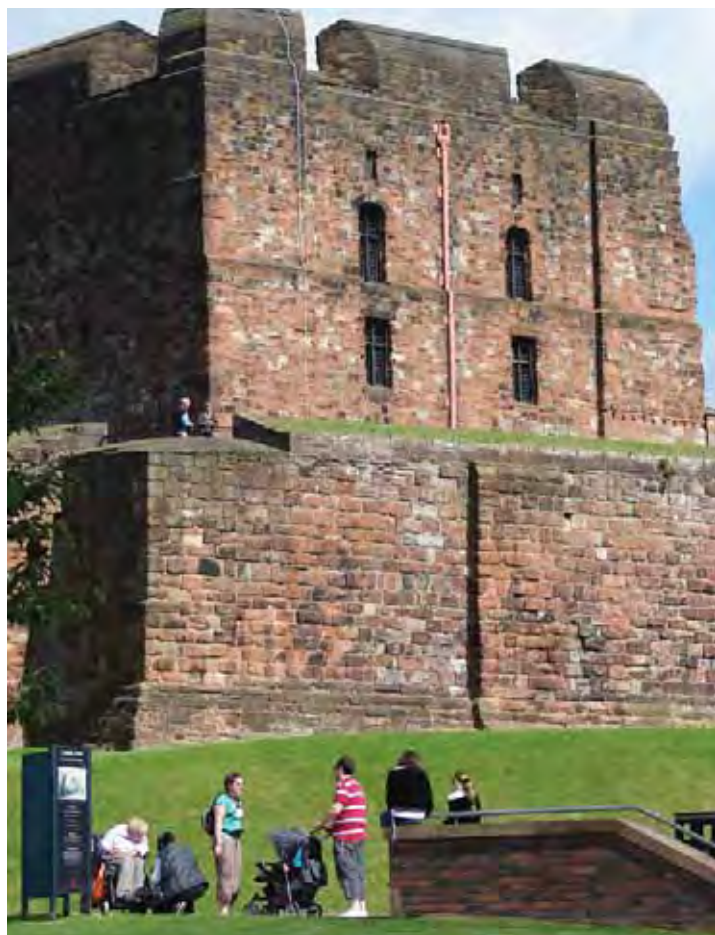


URBAN DESIGN GUIDE & PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK FOR CARLISLE

DOCUMENT GUIDE

The Urban Design Guide and Public Realm Framework provides comprehensive guidance on future development in the City and in particular, the future of Carlisle’s public realm. This document has been produced as part of the work of Carlisle Renaissance in conjunction with both the Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council and in consultation with stakeholders. It seeks to bring together many existing streams of work in a central and cohesive design document. It examines the City’s existing buildings, streets and spaces and sets out specific urban design and public realm guidance that aims to create a step change in the quality of future development and the design of Carlisle’s public spaces.

The document will provide a tool for those who play a key role in the development of the City and the decision making process, including Developers, Institutions, Local Design Practitioners and the Public. The document is given weight as a Supplementary Planning Document giving additional guidance to that outlined in the existing Local Plan. It will be used to inform and direct the standard, type and quality of the urban design and public realm within Carlisle, guiding Council Officers and Council Members in the approvals process and helping to secure considerable public sector investment together with private sector investment including developer contributions. This document is set out in 5 parts:



Carlisle Castle

part 1; introduction

1

Introduction and background to the project. The aims of the Urban Design Guide and Public Realm Framework and how the document is set out.

part 2; the vision

3

This section sets out the overarching ‘vision’ for Carlisle. It proposes a conceptual plan for the City and visionary aims which include;

- new development and public realm to stitch Carlisle Castle and the eastern and western districts back into the City Centre;
- new City squares and key streets that readdress the balance between vehicles and pedestrians;
- enhancement of City Jewels (the Castle, Historic Core, Market Square and the Citadel);
- new gateways to the City;
- reconnection of the City to its rivers and countryside.

part 3; urban design guide 7

Urban Design Principles

The Urban Design Guide begins by identifying key opportunity areas and a strategic framework for the City [p.9].

It sets out 8 general guiding principles for good urban design, these include:

- character [p.11];
- continuity and enclosure [p.13];
- a quality public realm [p.14];
- ease of movement [p.15];
- legibility [p.16];
- adaptability [p.17];
- diversity [p.18];
- sustainability [p.19].

Levels of Intervention

To ensure that the general guiding principles are implemented appropriately, specific character area guidance is given. The plan on [p.21] shows the Level of Intervention deemed appropriate for each area (high, medium, low).

Character Area Specific Guidance

In what follows, each character area is examined in detail. An aspirational statement sets out the projected vision for the area and detailed guidance on each of the 8 principles are outlined. Sketch designs and precedent images show how the urban design principles may be applied in practice:

- Rickergate [p.25-28];
- Caldew Riverside [p.29-32];
- Western Approaches [p.33-36];
- Citadel [p.37- 40];
- Retail Core [p.41-44];
- Botchergate [p.45-48];
- Historic Core [p.49-52];
- Eastern Approaches [p.53-56].

Movement

Finally, the Urban Design Guide examines movement issues in the City Centre. It introduces:

- the various parallel studies and key movement principles [p.57];
- proposes a detailed street hierarchy/ City Centre movement strategy that shows the long term movement vision for the City Centre [p.59];

This is accompanied by more detailed guidance on:

- improving the pedestrian environment [p.61];
- and creating a cycle friendly City [p.63].

part 4; public realm strategy 65

Public Realm Principles

The Public Realm Strategy sets out an aspirational framework for the improvement of Carlisle's outdoor environment. It proposes a network of high quality streets and spaces, including 4 City squares, pedestrian priority streets and new primary streets [p.67];

Public Realm Case Studies

A selection of public realm case studies explore potential solutions for the City's key streets and spaces. They explore the type of uses, aesthetics and public art interventions that may be appropriate and aim to provide aspirational benchmarks for the future development of the City's public realm. They include:

Spaces

- Court Square [p.71-74];
- Market Square [p.75-78];
- Historic Core - Cathedral Precinct and Castle Street [p.79- 82];

Streets

- Lowther Street [p.83-84];
- English Street Intersection [p.85-86];
- Botchergate [p.87-88];
- Bridge Street [p.89-90].

Public Realm Component and Materials

The final section of the document sets out detailed guidance and the materials palette for the public realm. Detailed guides to materials, design and application are given for all elements of the public realm: from surfaces and street furniture to water and planting [p.91-109].

Specific guidance is also given on:

- play [p.110];
- lighting [p.111-112];
- signage [p.113-114];
- public art [p.115-118];
- management and maintenance [p.119];
- implementation [p.120].

part 5; conclusions 121

Final conclusion and Carlisle's Renaissance.

part 6; bibliography 123

A list of references and further reading.

part 7; glossary 125

A glossary of key technical terms used in the document.

CONTENTS

part 1; introduction	1	part 3; urban design guide	7	part 4; public realm strategy	65	part 5; conclusions	121
		introduction	7	introduction	65	Carlisle’s Renaissance	
part 2; the vision	3	urban design principles	9	public realm principles	67	part 6; bibliography	123
the vision	3	character	11	public realm case studies	69	A list of references and further reading.	
repairing the City fabric	5	continuity & enclosure	13	court square	71		
		a quality public realm	14	market square	75		
		ease of movement	15	historic core	79		
		legibility	16	lowther street	83	part 7; glossary	125
		adaptability	17	english street intersection	85	A glossary of key technical terms used in the document.	
		diversity	18	botchergate	87		
		sustainability	19	bridge street	89		
		levels of intervention	21	public realm components	91		
		character area specific guidance	23	public realm standards	91		
		rickergate	25	colour palette	95		
		caldew riverside	29	surfaces	97		
		western approaches	33	surface detailing	99		
		citadel	37	accessibility	100		
		retail core	41	street furniture	101		
		botchergate	45	seating	103		
		historic core	49	bollards, railings & barriers	104		
		eastern approaches	53	litter bins, tree grilles & cycle parking	105		
		movement	57	pavillions, kiosks & structures	106		
		strategic highway issues	57	soft landscaping & sustainable urban drainage	107		
		city centre & integration with public realm	59	water	109		
		a city for people	61	play	110		
		cycling in the city	63	lighting	111		
				signage	113		
				public art	115		
				management & maintenance	119		
				implementation	120		

Part 1; INTRODUCTION

Carlisle's Renaissance

The City of Carlisle is changing. The physical fabric of the City is evolving and new investment is about to kick start the regeneration of the City Centre. With a renewed interest in the city, Carlisle City Council, as Planning Authority, have seized the opportunity to provide comprehensive guidance on future development and in particular, the future of Carlisle's public realm.

Background

In November 2005 English Partnerships in collaboration with Carlisle City Council and Cumbria County Council commissioned the preparation of a City Centre Development Framework and Citywide Movement Strategy which was published in January 2007.

The City's Council subsequently issued a Development Framework & Movement Strategy Policy Statement that set out the Council's policies with regards to:

- **stimulating and guiding investment** by the private and public sector in the City's physical environment and infrastructure;
- **establishing a physical environment** in and around the City Centre that supports economic growth;
- **improving accessibility to jobs, services and facilities** in the City Centre and throughout Carlisle.

The County Council also subsequently endorsed the outcome of the Movement Strategy by identifying a number of key **movement projects to be further investigated and worked up.**

It is essential that the Urban Design Guide and Public Realm Framework (UDG&PRF) recognises the necessity of implementing the Movement Strategy as a prerequisite to transforming some areas within the public realm. Fundamental studies which need to be carried out include;

- **South Western Inner Relief Route**
- **Eastern Approaches Route**
- **City-wide Transport Model**

These three particular issues are being addressed during 2008/2009 and without their implementation proposals for some areas, including Court Square/ English Street and Lowther Street, cannot be assessed for viability.



Aims of the Document

The Urban Design Guide and Public Realm Framework aims to outline the way forward for the City of Carlisle to create a step change in the quality of future development and the design of it's public spaces.

The document deals with both the process of bringing projects forward with the support of project champions, stakeholders and the wider public and the product in the form of design guidance.

This document seeks to bring together many existing streams of work to develop a central and cohesive design document. Importantly it has emerged from discussion with groups who are closely involved in the city, whether they live, work or play in the city and wish to invest in its future.

The guidance outlined aims to provide clarity for those who play a key role in the process of making decisions in the city and include;

- **Developers;** detailing what is required in terms of design quality and function;
- **Institutions;** defining direction for development within the city centre;
- **Council Officers;** providing guidance in the approval process;
- **Local design practitioners;** encouraging visionary and innovative design and precluding mediocre;
- **Public;** encouraging developments that will improve the quality of life.

This document is given weight as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) giving additional guidance to that outlined in the existing Local Plan for specific areas. It will be used to inform and direct the standard, type and quality of the urban design and public realm within Carlisle. This document expands upon policy CP5 of the Carlisle District Local Plan. It should also be used to inform design and access statements submitted alongside planning applications. This will also assist in the application of design as referred to in Planning Policy Statement 1.

Document Outline

This document falls into the following parts;

Part1; Introduction to the document

Part 2; The Carlisle Vision

Part 3; Urban Design Guide Urban Design Principles and character specific guidance

Part 4; Public Realm Strategy Aspirational case studies and detailed public realm guidance

Part 5; Conclusions

Part 6; Bibliography

Part 7; Glossary

An aerial photograph of a town, likely in the UK, featuring a prominent tall brick chimney on the left side. The town is densely packed with houses and buildings, interspersed with green trees. In the background, rolling hills and mountains are visible under a clear sky. The text "Part 2; THE VISION" is overlaid in a yellow-green font in the upper right quadrant.

Part 2; THE VISION

An aerial photograph of Carlisle, showing a dense urban area with numerous buildings and a large yellow crane spanning across the middle ground. In the foreground, a prominent building with a clock tower and a green dome is visible. The background features a large, green, wooded hill. The text is overlaid on the image, starting with a double yellow slash and ending with a double yellow slash.

// Carlisle is unique in the diversity of its offer. It offers high quality shopping, leisure, heritage and environment in an accessible package. Together, these elements have the potential to make Carlisle one of the UK's great liveable cities. The Vision seeks to preserve and enhance Carlisle's strongest assets and repair the weaknesses with visionary urban design and the highest quality, innovative public realm to create a revitalised City Centre. //

THE VISION



REPAIRING THE CITY FABRIC

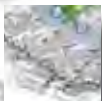
Carlisle City Centre is a patchwork of distinct character areas which have built up over time. Together these create a vibrant, attractive City Centre. However, over the years, the City fabric has started to show signs of strain, many buildings have fallen into disrepair and underuse and a lack of investment in the public realm has led to a degeneration in the quality of public space. Physical barriers to movement; the City Wall, rail line, river and busy transport routes have detached many of the City's assets from the City heart, discouraging movement across the City Centre.

The Vision seeks to repair the City fabric through quality urban design and inspirational public realm. Creating a high quality built environment is a key contributor to economic regeneration and aspirational guidance will help generate confidence to raise standards and expectations to create a successful, internationally competitive City.

Key visionary aims:



- The **City fabric** has been split along the historic City wall and where traffic dominates (Lowther Street, Castleway/Georgian Way and the Citadel). Over the years, the City Centre has turned its back on areas outside the central core, isolating the City Heart from key assets and City districts;



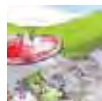
- Low quality areas, vacant plots and underutilised buildings are **holes and frayed edges** in the urban fabric which will be **repaired** and **patched** together by new high quality development;



- Inspirational, high quality **public realm 'patches'** will readdress the balance between people and vehicles and help to redefine a new image for the City;



- The disconnected east and west City districts will be **zipped back into the City Centre** through the creation of high quality, pedestrian focused streets along West Walls and Lowther Street/Botchergate;



- Key City assets: Carlisle Castle, Bitt's Park and the surrounding countryside will be **stitched back into the City Centre** by improvements to Castle Way and Georgian Way;



- Existing underutilised **City jewels** (Carlisle Castle, the Historic Core, Market Square and the Citadel) will be capitalised upon;



- **New City jewels** will create appropriate gateways to the City Centre;



- The River Caldew, **a hidden gem**, will be reconnected to the City through new top class development and public realm and used to connect the City to the surrounding countryside and Hadrian's Wall.





Part 3; URBAN DESIGN GUIDE

Introduction

Urban design is not just about the design of buildings. It is also the complex inter-relationship between different buildings and the relationship between buildings and streets, squares, parks and other spaces that make up the public realm. It is also concerned with the nature and quality of the public realm itself.

The Value of Good Urban Design

Recent studies show that good urban design has measurable, **economic benefits**. It can improve the image of a place, stimulating inward investment and the wider regeneration of an area. In **addition, it can bring significant social and environmental benefits**, which include: a sense of civic pride, greater social inclusion and interaction, improved safety and access to goods and services for the community, enhanced heritage and ecological value, increased energy **efficiency and reduced waste and pollution**.

Good urban design brings people together and will encourage a vibrant mix of self-supporting uses and activities within the City Centre. It will help create a place which is greater than the sum of the individual parts and allow an urban life and culture to evolve out of a collection of buildings and spaces.

URBAN DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to support the regeneration of Carlisle City Centre by providing guiding principles for good urban design that all those responsible for its physical improvement can sign up to. The principles and guidelines set out in this document will be taken into consideration by the City Council when reviewing planning applications.

Successful streets, spaces, neighbourhoods and cities tend to have characteristics in common and these form the basis of Carlisle City Centre's Urban Design Principles. These eight principles will be used to guide future development in the City Centre.



Character

Reinforce the distinct identity of the City Centre



Legibility

Create a City Centre that both residents and visitors can understand and find their way around



Continuity and Enclosure

Create streets and public spaces that are coherently and attractively defined



Adaptability

Create a City Centre that can adapt to change



A Quality Public Realm

Create public spaces that are safe, comfortable, well maintained, welcoming and accessible to everyone



Diversity

Create a City Centre with variety and choice



Ease of Movement

Make the City Centre easy to get to and move around in, particularly for pedestrians

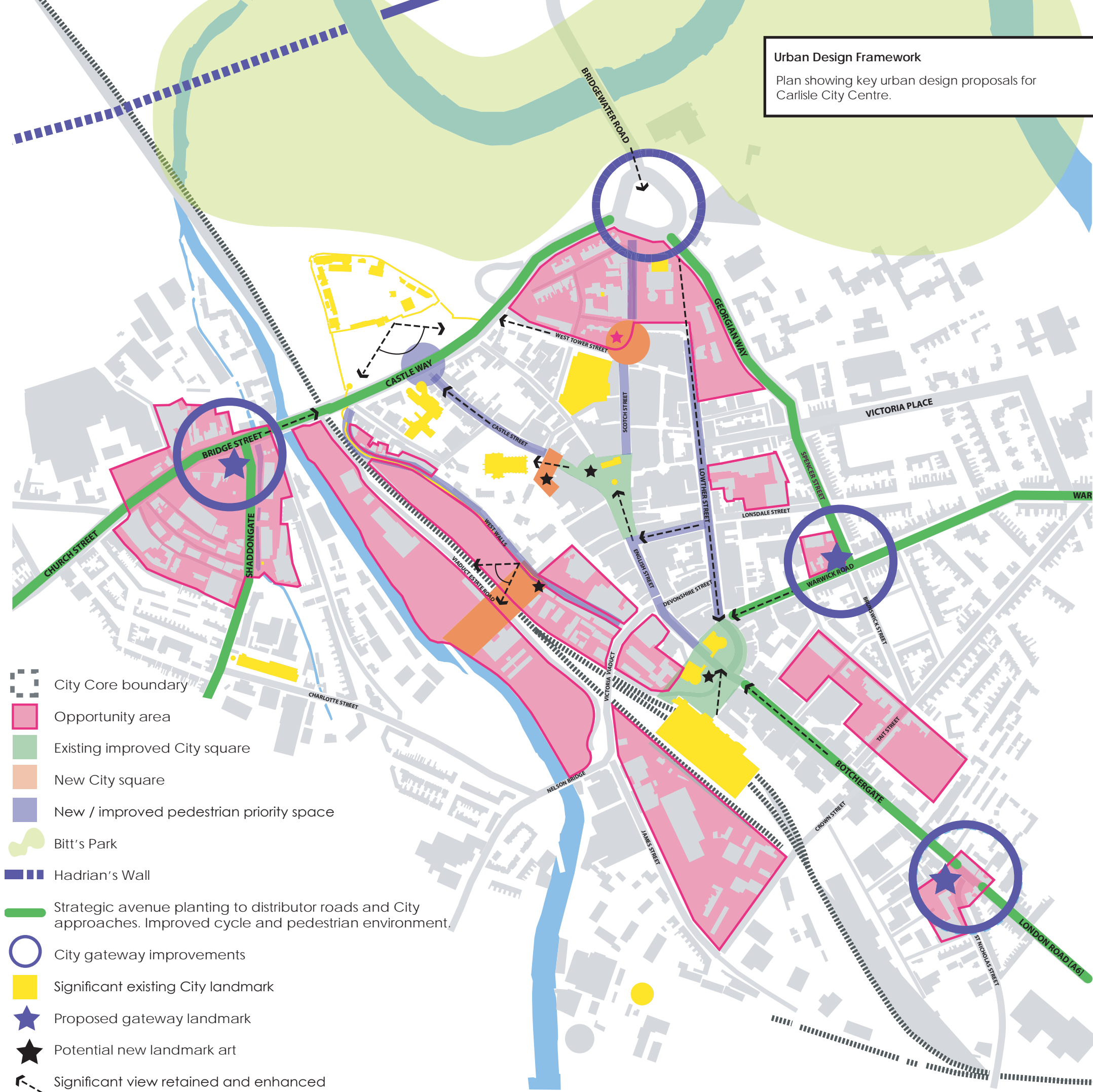


Sustainability

Create a social, economic and environmentally sustainable City Centre for the future

Urban Design Framework

Plan showing key urban design proposals for Carlisle City Centre.



CHARACTER



The appearance of the built environment defines an area's identity and character and creates a sense of place. Many areas of the City Centre have a well-established character that needs to be protected and enhanced.

No site is a blank slate. It will have shape and there will be adjacent development and a history which make it a distinctive place. This context should be established for each site and responded to in order to build something that is recognisable and special to Carlisle City Centre. High quality contemporary design that has evolved from its context is encouraged.

Places that are distinctive are memorable and popular. A common element within an area will distinguish it from adjoining areas and create a sense of place. The use of red sandstone is one such example in Carlisle City Centre.

Character Areas

Eight distinctive character areas have been identified in the City Centre and these must be recognised and enhanced through any new development or improvement.

Local positive characteristics such as a building line should be reinforced with all new development. However, innovative design that responds to its context in layout and detail is encouraged as long as it reinforces the overall character of the area.

Where characteristics of an area are poor, they should not be used as an excuse for poor design. Poor characteristics will include buildings that back onto the street for example.

Anchors to the Past

Carlisle City Centre has a rich medieval, Georgian and Victorian heritage. It is fundamental to expressing the character of the City Centre that any building or structure that contributes rather than detracts from either the continuity of the built fabric, local distinctiveness, historic interest or townscape merit is retained. Distinctive buildings should not be demolished unless there is a compelling case to do so and definite proposals to replace with them with development that will substantially improve the area. A new development could be part of the City's fabric for many decades or longer. It is therefore vital to make sure it is not only appropriate for its context but that it actively enhances its surroundings.

Opportunities may arise that allow some interpretation of Carlisle's origin as a Roman town, for example, through public art, public archaeology or interpretation.

Style, Scale and Context

'Anywhere' type development and standard designs duplicated and brought in from elsewhere erode a sense of place. The design of buildings and spaces should respond to both their context and the character of the City Centre. Pastiche should be avoided however, as poor imitations can weaken the character of a place more than anything. Responding to scale, massing, proportion and the use of local materials and colours are the primary means of reinforcing an area's character.

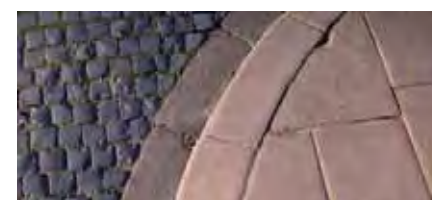
An area should be visually interesting if people are to enjoy being there. Variety in architectural style can contribute to an area's identity and responding to local context should not restrict innovative contemporary design. "Respecting the best of the past provides a powerful justification for gracing our surroundings with the very best of the new" (English Heritage, Power of Place, 2000).

Visual Character

Landmarks and vistas create the kind of interest that helps enliven and define the character areas. New development should be designed and planned to make the most of vistas along streets and the City Centre as a whole. Existing important and valuable landmarks and views should be protected and enhanced.

One distinctive characteristic of the City Centre is an interesting and varied roofscape. Although the skyline is generally 'flat', the slight variation in the roofscape between individual buildings is most pronounced at street level and this will be encouraged with new development.

There are few tall buildings in Carlisle which has allowed the Cathedral to remain a dominate feature of the skyline over time. Proposals for new or replacement tall buildings over 6 storeys, or taller than the Cathedral, are generally discouraged unless the need can be justified and the impact fully understood. Taller buildings will not be permitted in the Historic Core, Western Approaches, Retail Core or Citadel character areas.



CONTINUITY AND ENCLOSURE



Every building is just one part of the fabric of the City Centre which is held together by the network of streets and spaces. Well enclosed and connected spaces allow people to use and enjoy the City Centre conveniently and in comfort. The street forms the interface between the public and private realm.

Developing and protecting the urban fabric or structure with strong spatial continuity and a good sense of enclosure will benefit the City Centre over time. It will help remove gap sites and inappropriate developments and severance caused by overly wide roads.

Continuous Frontages and Boundaries

Continuous street frontages and well defined open areas stimulates activity and brings a greater sense of security to the public realm. The effective treatment of the boundary between the public and private realm is essential to good urban design.

Public spaces are safer and easier to understand when defined by buildings which face onto them with active frontages, especially at ground floor level. Streets must never be defined by blank walls and dead frontages in the City Centre. Service areas and car parks should generally be located behind off street to avoid breaking up and deadening the street frontage.

Permeability

A key element of good urban design is the recognition that pedestrian 'through movement' is an essential characteristic of a successful place. Where people

pass through an area they provide activity, security through natural surveillance and passing trade for shops and businesses. The continuity of existing pedestrian routes will therefore be preserved and enhanced and cul-de-sacs discouraged.

New development should respond to and connect well with established street form. Where the traditional street structure has been interrupted, the opportunity to re-establish a permeable network should be considered. Similarly, new routes where none have existed before are encouraged to 'knit' new development into the City Centre.

Fronts and Backs

A clear separation of public and private space should be created by having buildings front onto the street. Buildings with a clearly defined front and back provide better security and privacy, animate the public realm and help people orientate themselves. Entrances to buildings should therefore be from the street and easily defined as such by visitors. Private enclosed areas to the back should be secure.

Defining the Street

Building lines within the City Centre should be clearly defined to create a largely unbroken urban edge to the street. Projections and setbacks from this line, such as bays, foyers and entrances can be used to aid legibility and add variety to the townscape. Existing historic building lines must be respected with infill development.

A strong degree of enclosure should be provided for all streets in the City Centre. Building heights

should generally be scaled to the proportion of the street. This results in wider primary routes requiring taller buildings. A good street height to width ratio (as measured from building line to building line) will range between 1:1.5 and 1:2.5. Below 1:1, spaces begin to feel claustrophobic and above 1:4, the sense of enclosure progressively diminishes. Street trees are an effective means of creating secondary enclosure where it is difficult to create it primarily with built form.

Where buildings are set back a significant distance from the street, they should still have a significant presence to that street. Although such development is to be discouraged, it should be scaled to relate to the street and incorporate suitable boundary treatment such as railings and trees, which contribute to the enclosure of the street and relate to the building line. This would only be appropriate for edge of centre development.

Street Planting

Carlisle City Centre still benefits from the foresight of previous generations who provided a great legacy of mature trees in a number of areas. Thoughtful landscaping and planting can enormously enhance the continuity of street form and the comfortable enclosure of public spaces, as well as delivering important environmental benefits.

Street tree and other planting will be encouraged where it will enhance the character of an area, particularly where there is an historic precedent for it.

A QUALITY PUBLIC REALM

The term 'public realm' means any part of the City Centre that can be experienced by everyone, from buildings to bollards. Everything in the public realm has an effect on the City Centre's image and character.

A key principle is that 'people attract people'. Places which feel good will encourage people to use them and places which are well used stand a better chance of being well cared for. The aim is to produce friendly, vibrant public places where people feel welcome to visit, socialise and go about their business and leisure in comfort and safety.

Buildings define spaces and good architecture is obviously important. However, concentrating on the quality of those buildings alone ignores the fact that it is the public realm above all that most people will experience up close. Quality in the public realm is an investment in the whole City Centre and its future.

Streetlife

Public spaces should have a clear function and must be pedestrian friendly to be successful. They should act as comfortable focal or meeting points as well as places to pass through. Where new public spaces are planned, it is essential to give full consideration to its use, relationship to adjacent buildings and longer term maintenance.

A street is more than just a road. A road is simply a channel for traffic, whereas a street may still carry traffic, but is first and foremost a social space at the interface of the private and public domains. Spaces that function as lively streets are therefore preferable in the City Centre and even those that carry large volumes of traffic should be redesigned as great streets.

Space to Breathe

The quality of public open space in the City Centre is more important than the quantity. Too often open space is ill defined and poorly maintained because it is simply left over space.

The creation of a clear network or sequence of quality open spaces throughout the City Centre will provide a focus for many of the character areas and consequently a sense of ownership.

Activity, Natural Surveillance and Safety

Keeping the public realm animated by the presence of people throughout the day and night helps reduce crime and the fear of crime. Buildings should always offer active frontage to overlook and animate the public realm and provide 'natural surveillance'.

A welcoming public realm is comfortable to be in at any time for people of all ages, gender and background. Street lighting is fundamental to perceptions of public safety and is therefore more than just a highway requirement to be met.

The more animated that spaces are by people and activity, the safer they will feel and the less need for intrusive and expensive security systems such as steel shutters and CCTV there will be. Such systems can have a detrimental impact on the townscape and can increase fear even when the actual risk of crime is low.

Visual Richness

Vibrant spaces with a variety of uses and richness of detailing will welcome and attract the widest range of people. Imaginative means of enlivening the public realm encompassing public art, lighting, water features, street cafes and entertainment will be encouraged in the City Centre.

Streetscape & Street Furniture

The integrated management of the quality and maintenance of the public realm is encouraged. At present, the public realm is not treated as a single unified entity, but as a set of unrelated components that are managed separately leading to clutter and overlap of responsibility.

As a general rule, quality comes from simplicity – 'less is more'. Nothing should be placed in the street unless it is unavoidable or highly desirable.

A few of the City Centre's streets still retain their original finishes and detailing and these should be conserved. All materials that appear in the public realm should be selected with reference to their context to ensure they are appropriate for both place and function. Surfaces should complement surrounding buildings and streetscape, thus defining and unifying spaces.



EASE OF MOVEMENT

Movement of all kinds is the life-blood of cities and Carlisle is no exception. The movement network must operate in a way which brings the City Centre to life, yet high levels of traffic can impact negatively on quality of life and perception of place. Future development in the City Centre should therefore reduce both the need to travel and dependence on the car.

Transport planning should acknowledge that streets have vital social, economic and amenity roles in addition to that of being channels for vehicles. A well designed urban structure will have a network of streets and spaces that can accommodate these roles as well as the traffic.



Through Movement

Maintaining access to the City Centre for all groups is vitally important for its success, yet excessive through traffic can have a detrimental effect without any benefit. Through traffic should therefore be restricted to public transport and the infrastructure to accommodate this provided.

Traffic should not be allowed to dominate the public realm, but at the same time should not necessarily be excluded all together. Traffic essential for access and servicing should be 'tamed' in order that the street can be shared successfully with pedestrians, cyclists and buses.

Public Transport

The creation of nodes of activity near public transport stops and the rail station will encourage sustainable transport patterns. Making journeys by public transport should be safe and easy. Clear information, accessible stops and safe pedestrian routes to and from will help achieve this.

Walking and Cycling

Walking is the main means of movement in the City Centre for short journeys. The quality of the streets must encourage walking and a pedestrian friendly environment is an essential ingredient of attractive, inclusive places and is likely to support their economic success.

It is vital that streets in the City Centre are safe and comfortable for pedestrians to cross. Crossings are more convenient and comfortable for pedestrian when at ground level rather than on footbridges or subways.

Cycling provides a healthy and environmentally friendly alternative to the car and should be encouraged in the City Centre. Dedicated cycle infrastructure should be provided on more heavily trafficked routes and new development should provide good facilities for cyclists, including secure parking and changing facilities. Signage depicting permitted cycling routes and speed limits for responsible cycling should be incorporated throughout the City Centre.

Existing cycle and walking routes between the City and the Hadrian's Wall World Heritage Site are currently weak. Carlisle's potential as a key milestone on this route can be strengthened by clearer routes through The Sands area and Bitts Park. The car park at The Sands offers potential to be remodelled to express this route very clearly.

Parking

Parking fulfils a valid need for accessing the City Centre but requires careful consideration to support good urban design. Limited on-street parking can assist in reducing traffic speeds, stimulates activity and attracts passing trade. Surface parking areas should be provided in ways that do not affect established building lines such as courtyards within the block. The use of underground parking should be considered on key sites and multi-storey car parks are acceptable in appropriate locations, but should always provide an active ground floor use onto the street.

Accessibility

Environments that facilitate greater equality of access promote prosperity and fairness. The City Centre will not perform to its full potential if some areas or facilities are perceived to be too difficult to access, particularly for those whose movement and/or sensory perception is impaired in some way.

New development and public realm improvements must be designed to allow access for all.

LEGIBILITY

Good urban design can help create a city centre that is easy to understand and find one's way about. Streets, buildings, vistas, visual details and activities should be used to give a strong sense of place and to provide an understanding of destinations and routes. A legible urban environment is the sum of many of the urban design principles.

Routes

The routes people take are a key element in the way the City Centre is perceived. Careful consideration must be given to the sequence of experiences the City Centre offers residents and visitors when moving through.

A clear hierarchy of streets should be established to enable people to orientate themselves in the City Centre. For example, primary routes should generally be wider with taller buildings which enables people to 'read' the City Centre without the need for signage and maps. On such primary routes, people would naturally expect to find a bus stop for example and would not look for one on a more intimate and quiet lane.

Gateway features on key routes can create a memorable sense of arrival to the City Centre and to places within it.

Landmarks

Gateway and other landmark elements in the urban environment should not only be thought of as physical objects, although these often the most common. They are any kind of reference point that people single out as being memorable that helps orientate themselves.

Aspects of the City Centre a visitor might encounter as landmarks include public art or a unique lighting scheme, traffic signals, a strong element of urban character such as a busy shopping area, a distinctive building or a striking vista.

Some landmarks are distant ones, often visible from many angles and places, such as the Civic Centre, whilst others are local reference points such as a public house on a corner.

New development should reinforce the legibility of its local area and the City Centre by including local features that relate to local circumstances. Some of these will include fine grained details that provide interest to pedestrians, others more striking elements to provide interest to those passing in vehicles. These should always remain appropriate to their context.

Focal Points

Public spaces are key to the legibility of the City Centre. The best are active areas where people gather and meet and such focal points should be emphasised, given clear definition and purpose. The vitality of street life and the relationship of buildings to the proportion and nature of the street is fundamental to the creation of a sense of place which welcomes residents and visitors.

Junction are 'nodal points' where people decide their route and come to meet. Street junctions should be designed as active spaces and places, not characterless traffic interchanges. Landmarks at nodes reinforce their function by giving good reference points to aid orientation and navigation.

Corner buildings higher than surrounding buildings can serve to emphasise junctions and add to the character of the local area. Strong corners give definition to streets and become easily identifiable minor landmarks. Wherever possible corner buildings should have an active ground floor use in the City Centre.

Views

Protect key views and create new Vistas and landmarks to help people locate themselves in the City Centre and create links within and beyond the immediate area. New development should protect important existing views, whilst taking opportunities to create new memorable ones.

Signage

Character areas are the larger areas of the City Centre recognisable as having a particular identity which assist people as they pass through and by them.

The provision of good signage and guidance at key points is important in aiding orientation. Direction signs will always have a role in helping those unfamiliar with the City Centre find their way about, although good urban design should help reduce the need for signage in the first place. Street name plates are another often forgotten piece of street furniture, but are vital to help people locate themselves in the City Centre.

Public transport stops and car parks should provide maps of both the local area and City Centre to help people orientate themselves. As a piece of street furniture, signage should have a coherent design and be of a high quality in the City Centre.



ADAPTABILITY



Successful city centre's accept change and continually adapt to remain vibrant over time. Carlisle has benefited from the robust nature of much of the historic street pattern and building stock, which has proved able to respond to change many years after its construction.

Thoughtful and good urban design is required to achieve this flexibility. New developments and public realm improvements should be designed both to respect the existing context and to accommodate future change.

Public Realm

Streets and spaces that connect well to the City Centre's movement network and are relatively simple in design can accommodate and adapt to the widest range of uses and building types. This is why most of the City Centre's oldest streets remain vibrant.

Streets should be more than just access roads to buildings. They should be designed to link with the surrounding public realm. Individual buildings may come and go, but streets last a lifetime and longer.

Even key public spaces should be made easily adaptable for a range of functions such as markets, events and concerts.

Built Form

New development should be designed and developed to allow for changes in the future. This is supported by buildings having a clear relationship with the street and flexible internal layouts that are capable of being adapted to different patterns of use.

A fine grain urban structure is more adaptable to a coarse grain structure over time. 'Super' or 'mega' blocks that are out of scale with the traditional block size of the City Centre will be discouraged.

Individual Buildings

Within a smaller block, individual buildings should be made as adaptable as possible to ensure they can change over time. The Georgian townhouse is a good example of an adaptable building which can easily switch uses as circumstances change. Many have gone from residential to office or retail and back to residential over time.

In terms of residential development, the provision of 'lifetime' homes is encouraged. These homes are designed to be capable of straightforward adaptation as residents' needs change.

DIVERSITY



Housing, leisure, shops, places to work and meet should interrelate to form an identifiable and walkable City Centre that meets the needs of residents. City centre's which benefit from a mixture of good amenities have the means to support their own requirements and reinforce a sense of community. Retaining a good proportion of a city's spending locally is also of great economic as well as social benefit.

Physical Diversity

A robust and diverse street and block form allows for a wide range of building types to be accommodated in the City Centre.

A mix of building types and forms are encouraged within a block both to support a mix of uses and visual richness. A robust block form, such as the perimeter block, can also adapt well to change.

Mix of Uses

Providing a mix of uses, whether vertically in a building, in a block or simply along a street, creates vibrancy in an area. The City Centre should be seen as more than just a place to shop or work 9 to 5.

The evening economy also needs to be better integrated into the City Centre. The location of premises contributing to the evening economy do need to be carefully planned, particularly bars and clubs (A4 and A5 uses) which can create nuisance when within or adjacent to residential uses. Restaurants and cafes (A3 uses) should be encouraged throughout the City Centre, particularly in the Historic and Retail Cores.

Visual Diversity

The principle of diversity applies equally to the style and design of individual buildings. Respect for scale, massing (the shape and size of blocks of development) and a robust street form allows a wide range of architectural styles to be accommodated which is traditional throughout the City Centre. Provided good designers are used, this variety greatly enriches the identity of the character areas and assists legibility. New development should always ensure that it animates the public realm with a rich and diverse visual interest.

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainable development is concerned with the overlapping working of the economy, environment and society.

The vision for the City Centre encourages a sustainable and innovative 21st century approach to development that makes use of current best practice to make it more energy and resource efficient whilst encouraging economic development and social equity. Efficiency begins with the overall layout of the City Centre which should be efficient in the use of land by ensuring that the urban form is compact and of a density that maximises the potential of each site or area whilst protecting distinctive character. A variety of building types, uses, sizes and tenure will encourage the creation of a mixed and balanced sustainable City Centre.

Social and Economic Integration

A key ingredient in diversity and sustainability is a successful mix of tenures where rented, shared ownership and private can co-exist and complement each other in a variety of building types and public realm. The management and maintenance of any new development is fundamental to the sustainability of the City Centre. Tenants, owners and landlords have responsibilities to the wider community.

Good design can assist social inclusion by making social housing in new developments in the City Centre indistinguishable in terms of quality, appearance and site location to private housing.



Mix of Uses

Sufficient development density and mix of compatible uses lend support to many of the other urban design principles. It encourages long term sustainability by promoting more economic use of land, a critical mass of local population which in turn supports a rich mix of facilities and activities and an efficient public transport system. City Centre residents, workers and visitors should be able to walk to facilities such as a corner shop, primary school and public transport within a matter of minutes. Good urban design supports this by ensuring individual developments contribute to achieving this.

Reuse and Recycle

The reuse and recycling of existing buildings, particularly historic ones, is encouraged throughout the City Centre. Most existing buildings worthy of retention represent a significant amount of embodied energy and finding new uses where appropriate and renovation to modern standards is encouraged as opposed to demolition and reconstruction.

In addition, all new development should have a waste management strategy to ensure adequately sized storage areas, particularly for recycling, and access for collection is considered at an early stage.

Efficiency

Individual buildings should be efficient in their use of energy and water by incorporating energy and water saving devices, together with renewable energy technologies where appropriate and practical. Wherever possible, sustainable building materials and techniques should be employed during the construction phase, including waste reduction and recycling.

Reduce the Risk of Flooding

Reducing the risk of future flooding in the City Centre through sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) is to be encouraged in both new development and improvements to the public realm where possible to reduce the speed and quantity of surface storm water run-off. The incorporation of SUDS can also support increased biodiversity where water is kept at the surface.

Biodiversity

New landscape features and green spaces should ensure they have wildlife value wherever possible to support increased biodiversity across the City Centre. Individual buildings can also support increased biodiversity through the incorporation of green roofs and bird and bat boxes where possible.

It should be noted that a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required for pre-application work on any proposals that would impact sites of significant nature value.

Environmental Standards

Carlisle City Council are currently considering policies covering a range of environmental standards which will subsequently be applied to the City Centre. This will include the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 or above, the aspiration to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' for non-residential development and renewable energy production targets.

In addition, the application of a 'green space factor' for new development is being considered to maximise the amount of greenspace in the City Centre and minimise sealed areas. This is to create an attractive and healthy environment for residents, workers and visitors, promote biodiversity and minimise storm water run-off.



LEVELS OF INTERVENTION

This document accepts in principle the character areas set out in the DFMS. Following detailed analysis and identification of opportunities for change, the boundaries of some character areas have been amended. For example, the bringing of areas to the east of Lowther Street into the Retail Core.

To ensure the 8 Urban Design Principles are implemented appropriately in the various and different character areas, a simple three tier graded approach has been developed to guide the successful regeneration of Carlisle City Centre. These degrees of intervention determine the extent of development or conservation required.



Reinvention and Reconfiguration

- areas lack distinctive character or have fundamental issues in terms of urban design;
- they can accommodate a high degree of change in terms of land use and urban form;
- create a new identity within overall urban design principles.



Repair and Recovery

- areas with elements of distinct character and quality, but require 'repair';
- innovative and creative interventions possible to reinforce the area's character.



Conservation

- areas of reasonably intact and robust urban form;
- generally located in the Conservation Areas of the City Centre;
- innovative and creative interventions possible, but must respect context.

In addition, gateway sites have been identified on key approach routes to the City:

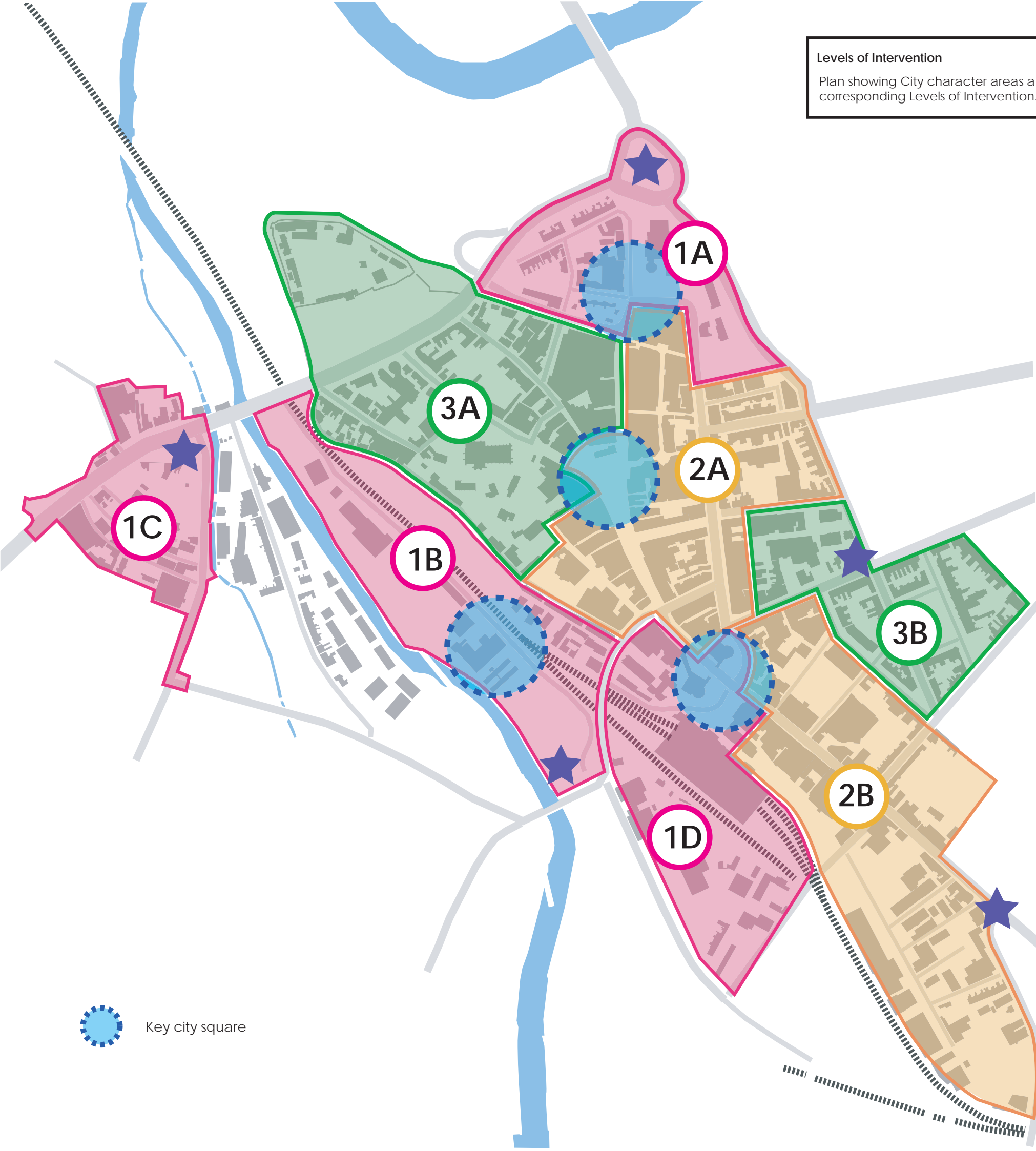


Gateway Sites

- key sites and approaches which create a sense of arrival in the City Centre;
- several are currently inadequate or leave a poor impression;
- opportunity to improve in line with urban design principles.

Intervention areas are illustrated on the plan opposite. These cross reference the amended character areas shown on the following page.

Levels of Intervention
Plan showing City character areas and their corresponding Levels of Intervention.



Key city square

CHARACTER AREA SPECIFIC GUIDANCE

The purpose of the Urban Design Guide is to provide general guidance on strategic issues and area design guidance for the City's individual character areas (see plan opposite), based on the detailed analysis carried out in the baseline study.

In what follows:

Key Issues

A summary of key issues outlines the current situation and depicts key issues that must be resolved by future development of the City quarters;

Vision

An aspirational statement describes the projected vision for the area with scenarios for future use, form and character;

Design Principles

The principles set out criteria to encourage positive intervention with specific guidance for the character area based on the 8 Urban Design Principles of:

- Character
- Continuity and Enclosure
- A Quality Public Realm
- Ease of Movement
- Legibility
- Adaptability
- Diversity
- Sustainability

Comparator Projects

Images of similar projects across the UK have been included to illustrate successful implementation of these principles in comparative City's that set a benchmark for Carlisle's regeneration.

Exemplar Projects









A number of exemplar projects look at how these principles may be applied to Carlisle. These are not final proposals but ideas to stimulate future development opportunities within the City.

Character Areas

Plan showing City character areas, as amended from the DFMS.



Character Areas

-  Rickergate
-  Historic Core
-  Western Approaches
-  Caldew Riverside
-  Citadel
-  Eastern Approaches
-  Retail Core
-  Botchergate South

REINVENTION & RECONFIGURATION

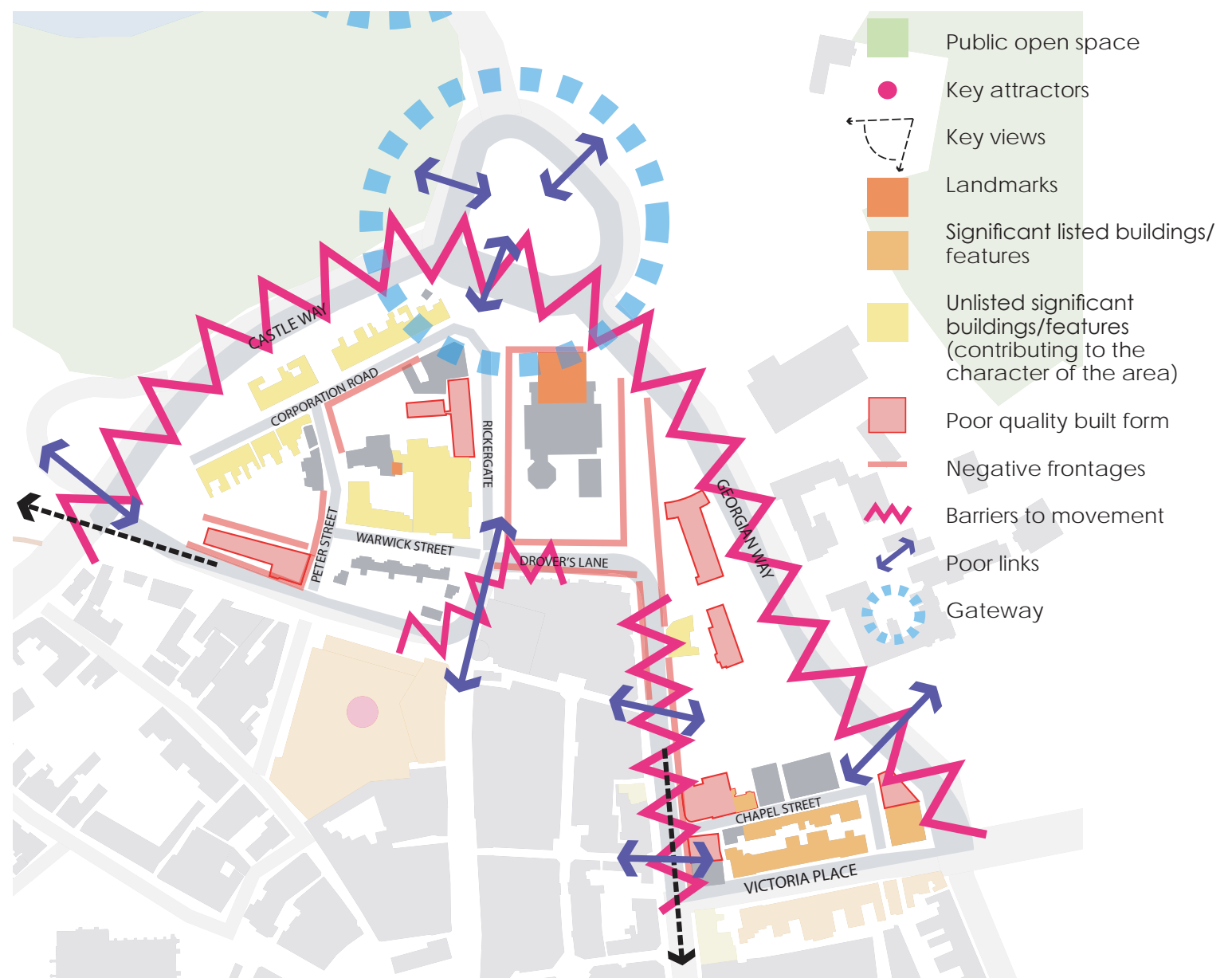
1A RICKERGATE

Key Issues

- Diverse building types, scales, characters and landuses of variable quality that lack a sense of coherency;
- The area lacks a distinct identity and function. It currently creates a weak edge to the Northern City extent and requires significant transformational change;
- Local community interest;
- Streets lack a sense of enclosure and definition. Low quality, weak frontages to West Tower Street and Peter Street detract from the significance of the Market Hall, Magistrates Court and Fire Station buildings;
- Castleway and Georgian Way sever Rickergate from Bitt's Park, northern residential areas and the education village to the east. Poor existing pedestrian links via subways;
- Poor legibility of the northern gateway and entrances to the Retail Core and Historic Quarter. Potential landmark buildings lack prominence and are devalued by poor public realm;
- No significant public space, despite being the location of key civic facilities;
- Unattractive street environment, dominated by traffic, car parking and street clutter;
- Traffic to West Tower Street and inactive groundfloor uses creates poor pedestrian links along Rickergate to the City Centre.

Vision

Transformational change in Rickergate will make this area of diverse architectural styles a vibrant and integral part of Carlisle's City Centre. A diversification of uses and substantial redevelopment will enhance and rejuvenate the area. Existing buildings of outstanding quality will work with new development and public realm to create a distinct character and identity. The primary routes will become mixed use streets, providing activity and amenities for residents, workers and visitors to the City. Public art, signage and lighting to existing subways will create dynamic pedestrian links to surrounding areas, reuniting the City Centre with its adjacent communities. Spectacular views to the Castle and Bitt's Park will be maximised with new public realm that embraces the green character on its fringes. Redevelopment of the area will include a new civic space at its heart that will become a focus for activity for the surrounding community and the City as a whole.



Degree of Intervention

The potential for substantial intervention within the Rickergate area is put forward in the Local Plan Inquiry Report in that the revised Regeneration Policy DP2 indicates that it is an area that is able to contribute to the regeneration of the economic, social and environmental capital of the City.

The Local Plan Inquiry Report is not prescriptive in future land use within the area but states that a detailed brief should be prepared. This is currently in progress. In drawing up such a brief the following principles should be considered.

Principles

Character

- Retain buildings of significant architectural quality that will not restrict the successful regeneration of the area to maintain a sense of local identity;
- In the vicinity of retained buildings, the scale and materials finishes of new development should reflect that of the surrounding context if appropriate;
- Otherwise, innovative and contemporary infill developments should be encouraged. The use of modern materials such as steel, timber, aluminium and glass should be explored;
- New landuses should improve animation at the street level. Mixed use office, retail, leisure and residential development should work in harmony with retained existing uses.

Continuity and Enclosure

- Generally, developments adjacent to existing buildings should respect their scale;
- New development should not hinder views or encroach upon the setting of significant character buildings. New additions should be sensitive to retained building heights and scale;
- New development should aim to redefine streets and create strong active edges to public space;
- Higher buildings up to 5 storeys may be sited along Lowther Street to create street enclosure in scale with Debenhams and Georgian Way;
- New development should respond to the surrounding strategic routes and create a strong edge to the City. Buildings should help emphasise the northern gateway;
- Active frontages at street level should be created to increase pedestrian activity and provide natural surveillance to enhance safety on key routes;
- Attractive views to Carlisle Castle and Bitt's Park should be maximised. New development should frame views and make the most of Rickergate's location on the edge of the City.

A Quality Public Realm

- Create a new City square that is fronted by quality architecture and animated by events and activities associated with rejuvenated uses. This innovative urban landscape will become an important node for play, leisure and interactivity;
- Rickergate will become the areas primary street.

New public realm and revitalised frontages and uses will assert its status, making it a hub for street activity;

- Soft landscaping and public realm improvements to Castleway will help reconnect Rickergate to Bitt's Park and the River Eden.

Ease of Movement

- Improve pedestrian links to Bitt's Park and the wider countryside from the City Centre. Improved street quality and safety along Rickergate and West Tower Street in addition to public art and lighting installations to subways will enhance these routes;
- Public transport should be better integrated at the new Rickergate Square. Activity to the squares edge will encourage sustainable transport use;
- Car parking should be rationalised and consolidated in the quarter. On street parking should be limited, with the majority provided at basement or above groundfloor level in new developments.

Legibility

- Rickergate should be defined as the quarter's primary street;
- New built form, public art and lighting should emphasise the a sense of gateway at the Eden Bridge crossing and Hardwicke Circus roundabout;
- Attractive views to Bitt's Park and Carlisle Castle should be maintained and enhanced;
- Strengthen views to key city landmarks;
- Improve signage and interpretation to aid navigation;
- Improve views and connections along Lowther Street;
- A major gateway landmark is

required in the area either with the retention of the Civic Centre or a new development;

- The potential impact from reflectivity should be carefully considered when selecting materials for new buildings.

Adaptability

- The new Rickergate square should be clearly connected to the City Centre through clear routes. A simple design will enable it to adapt to changing events and activities;
- New development should respect the overall fine grain of the City Centre.

Diversity

- Mixed use development will create a vibrant City quarter that can successfully integrate with retained uses;
- Rickergate offers opportunities to promote the 'full day out' by providing City living, retail, evening and daytime activities, with strong walking and cycling links to the countryside;
- New development should have visual diversity. A variety of scales, massing and architectural style applied in a thoughtful manner, will enrich the streets and create a distinct City quarter.

Sustainability

- New residential development should aim to build upon the existing community and seek to accomodate a positive mix of tenure types to create an inclusive community;
- Reuse and adapt existing buildings to innovative uses;
- Use sustainable materials, locally sourced where possible.
- Incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems.

REINVENTION & RECONFIGURATION

1A RICKERGATE

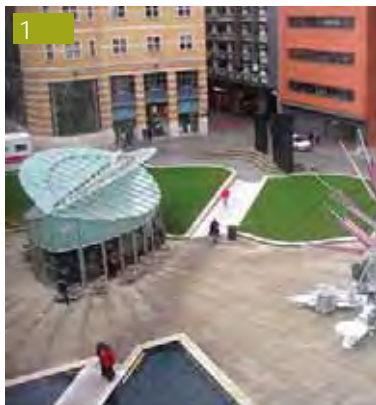


Rickergate Before

Exemplar Project Rickergate

Mixed use development centred around a new City square will create a rejuvenated City quarter. Active ground floor uses will spill out in the square, which will offer a place for recreation and relaxation for visitors, residents and workers.

Precedent Images



1. High quality public realm
5. Simple contemporary design

2. A place for public art
6. Gathering space

3. Quiet recreation space
7. Cafe culture

4. Dynamic evening environment



