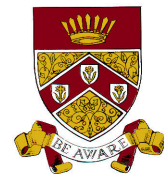


# Chorley Town Centre Strategy

## Consultation Draft

March 2006



This information can be made available to you in larger print or on audio tape, or translated into your own language. Please telephone 01257 515281 to access this service.

આ માહિતીનો અનુવાદ આપની પોતાની ભાષામાં કરી શકાય છે. આ સેવા સરળતાથી મેળવવા માટે કૃપા કરી, આ નંબર પર ફોન કરો: 01257 515822

ان معلومات کا ترجمہ آپ کی اپنی زبان میں بھی کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ یہ خدمت استعمال کرنے کیلئے براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے: 01257 515823

## **How to Make Representations**

This draft Strategy has been prepared for consultation and community involvement. Representations can be made in any of the following ways:

**By post**      Planning Policy Section  
Development and Regeneration Unit  
Chorley Borough Council  
Council Offices  
Gillibrand Street  
Chorley  
Lancashire  
PR7 2EL

**By fax**        01257 515211

**By e-mail**    [planning.policy@chorley.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@chorley.gov.uk)

For representations to be considered they must be received by the Planning Policy Section no later than 5pm, Wednesday 26 April 2006.



# CHORLEY TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY

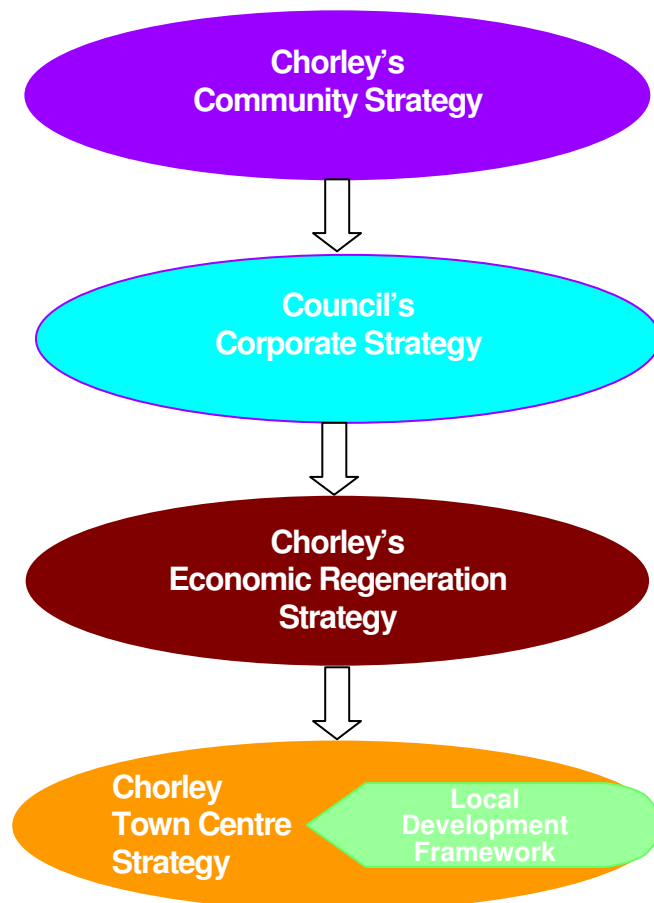
## INTRODUCTION

1 This Strategy has been prepared to provide a co-ordinated framework for action and investment allowing the Council to work with existing partners and also forge new partnerships. The basic principle underlying this Strategy is to realise the full potential of Chorley Town Centre and so improve its vitality and viability. This principle reflects two of the priorities identified in the Community Strategy and being carried forward in the Council's Corporate Strategy to:

- Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic developments in the Central Lancashire sub-region; and
- Develop the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live and visit.

This Strategy also draws upon the findings of the Economic Regeneration Strategy for the Borough, which identifies Chorley as a Contemporary Market Town with a distinctive town centre.

2 Those proposals in the Strategy that concern the development of land and the use of buildings will be taken forward in Chorley's new development plan – the Local Development Framework.



- 3 To achieve the aim of realising its full potential and so benefit the local community, local businesses and those who visit the town centre, the Strategy proposes to build on the unique character and strengths of the centre by a combination of activities including town centre management, environmental improvements and regeneration, promotion and marketing.
- 4 The key elements of this Strategy are:
  - A Town Centre Diversification**
  - B Town Centre Environment**
  - C Accessibility and Movement**
  - D Business Promotion and Support**

## **STRUCTURE OF THE STRATEGY**

- 5 This Strategy comprises:
  - Background
  - Chorley's Town Centre Role
  - A Vision for Chorley Town Centre
  - A series of Strategic Objectives designed to help meet this vision.
  - A set of Priority Elements to focus the key measures and actions required to achieve the strategic objectives
  - A list of Actions and Projects, which seek to achieve the objectives and include a set of Priority Actions and Targets for immediate attention. The Actions and Projects include existing, ongoing and planned projects, as well as new proposals.

## **BACKGROUND**

- 6 The Council appointed consultants White Young Green in May 2005 to undertake a study of Chorley Town Centre and of the wider retail and leisure needs of the Borough.
- 7 Their report (Chorley Town Centre – Retail and Leisure Study) provides a detailed evaluation of how the town centre can evolve through to 2015 and meet retail and leisure requirements of the Borough. **Key Messages arising from the study are that:**
  - Chorley is a vibrant and vital town centre, however if it is to maintain its role, it cannot afford to stand still;

- There is a strong, loyal catchment of shoppers;
- There is a need for the town centre to establish a clear identity and Unique Selling Point such as specialist shops and markets;
- Chorley Town Centre is in transition and in need of positive and consistent promotion and town centre management;
- There will be significant additional convenience (food) expenditure available within the Borough's population totalling £39.2m by 2015 that could be spent in the town centre. Although the new Booths store will absorb a significant proportion of this increase what is left will be sufficient to support additional supermarket floorspace of up to approximately 5,000 sq m gross;
- There is sufficient projected growth in comparison (non-food) expenditure in the Borough over the next 10 years to support approximately 9,400 sq m gross of additional non-food floorspace within Chorley Town Centre;
- There is a need to broaden the range and choice of shops;
- There is a need to tackle areas of poor quality townscape and public realm and the need for environmental improvements to take advantage of the unique character of the town centre and benefit its image;
- There is a need for new leisure/evening facilities. Growth in the evening economy would be stimulated by improvements to the cultural facilities, quality restaurants, cafes, pubs and the attraction of more tourists;
- There is a quantitative need for a 6 screen cinema;
- There is scope to improve accessibility (pedestrian links) and the operation of car parking;

## **CHORLEY TOWN CENTRE'S ROLE**

- 8 Chorley Town Centre operates in a very competitive retailing environment, because of the number of larger towns located in close proximity to the Borough. Preston City Centre is the major shopping destination in Lancashire and is easily reached from Chorley. Bolton, Blackburn, Southport and Wigan Town Centres are also only a short drive, bus or train ride from Chorley. Chorley Town Centre faces considerable competition from these larger centres, which offer a wider choice of comparison retailing and have some of the larger national stores. Further afield, Chorley Town Centre also faces competition from Manchester City Centre and the Trafford Centre, which can both be reached within an hour from the Borough. The out of centre Middlebrook Retail Park at Horwich also sells a wide range of comparison as well as convenience goods and attracts shoppers from the Borough.
- 9 The White Young Green Study Report recognises that Chorley Town Centre is the major retail destination within the Borough, acting as a Market Town Centre for comparison and convenience shopping serving the local population. It is home to a fairly wide range of shops and services and a

significant number of the national chains are represented, complemented by a large number of independent stores. However many local residents shop outside the Borough.

- 10 The Study Report highlights that Chorley Town Centre has improved its position between 2001 and 2004 in the national ranking of Town Centres (Management Horizon Europe's UK Shopping Index, 2003/2004). The Lancashire Shopping Study 2003 also indicates that Chorley appears to be trading well, particularly in comparison to other small towns within Lancashire, which have a far lesser role in serving the non-food shopping needs of the County's residents. The study indicates that Chorley Town Centre has the seventh highest non-food turnover in Lancashire at £79.7 million. The town's average sales density is calculated at £4,295/sqm, which is greater than some of the larger centres and which ranks it third overall in the County.
- 11 The town centre is also well known throughout the North West for its markets, which include the open Tuesday Market, the Covered Market and various specialist markets that are held from time to time, such as the French Market and the Staffordshire Pot Fair. A wide range of goods are on offer in the markets ranging from locally produced fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, fish, bread and cakes to plants, clothing, household wares and gift items.
- 12 The town centre environment varies from traditional streets with a mix of shops and other uses to the more modern Market Walk shopping development, with several national chain stores. The majority of the town centre is pedestrianised which has enhanced much of the centre by excluding vehicular traffic. The opening of a major new Booths supermarket has also improved the town centre.
- 13 The national average for street level vacancies in town centres is 9.2%. For Chorley Town Centre the vacancy level represents 8.2% of the total floorspace. However in some parts of the town centre vacant and/or poorly maintained premises detract from the street scene.

## THE VISION

- 14 "To assist in improving the vitality and viability\* of Chorley Town Centre so that by 2016 it provides a place to successfully do business and visit through a unique offer of attractions". (Source: Chorley Borough Council).

**\*A key objective of the planning system is to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres. Vitality refers to the liveliness and vibrancy of a centre and viability to its commercial well being.**



15 This will involve:

- Improving Chorley's retail trading position relative to nearby cities and towns;
- Increasing resident spend on shopping and leisure activities in Chorley Town Centre; and
- Achieving enhanced value and enhanced quality goods and services on offer.

16 Chorley town centre is well placed to achieve this vision. It offers a conveniently located, compact centre, with a strong market tradition, fine built heritage and contemporary development and, with a diverse range of well-known national names, specialist independent shops, leisure and cultural opportunities, this environment provides a safe and attractive setting for shoppers, workers and visitors.

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

17 The following strategic objectives are derived from this vision:

- improve the vitality and viability of the town centre by increasing its retail and leisure attractions to customers, businesses and investors;
- continue to improve and promote the safety, security and accessibility of the town centre to all its users;
- encourage and facilitate improvements to the physical environment of the town centre and ensure high standards of maintenance
- raise the profile of the town centre and promote it as an attractive, lively place that people will want to visit, shop and return to;
- further encourage all businesses and agencies involved in the town centre to work closely together to achieve improvements.

## PRIORITY ELEMENTS

18 **Four Priority Elements are identified because there are a number of inter-related opportunities running through each strategic objective. The Priority Elements help to focus on the necessary key measures and actions required for the town centre.**

- A** **Town Centre Diversification** - Broaden Chorley Town Centre's economic base particularly in relation to stimulating the expansion of the evening economy, increasing the clothing and footwear offer and encouraging new small independent specialist retailers mainly implemented through the Local Development Framework.

- B Town Centre Environment** - The physical fabric of the town maximises its contribution to the future competitiveness of the centre through significant enhancement and general maintenance.
- C Accessibility and Movement** - Build upon the current high levels of accessibility and address specific issues such as the current car parking system and pedestrian linkages within the town centre.
- D Business Promotion and Support** - Strengthen the town centre's role through stronger links with the business community and a greater level of support.

## **ACTIONS AND PROJECTS**

- 19 The Actions and Projects are identified in the Key Action Plan at the rear of this document including key delivery partners, costings and timescale. Areas of environmental improvement and development opportunities are shown on the Key Action Plan Map. Priority Actions and Targets for immediate attention are identified from the Key Action Plan and listed separately.

## **TIMETABLE, IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW**

- 20 The Strategy will be a 10-year plan until 2016. The Strategy will be reviewed every 3 years.
- 21 Detailed consideration of the feasibility of individual Actions/Projects and partnership arrangements will be taken forward as part of the implementation of the Strategy

## **MEASURING AND MONITORING PERFORMANCE**

- 22 The Actions and Projects within the Strategy will be monitored annually, and measures and targets will be developed to assess performance.

## **BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS**

- 23 The types of intervention the Council will take will vary depending on circumstances but it may include:
- land purchases and sales and possibly joint venture agreements
  - commissioning of technical work, use of statutory powers and where necessary compulsory purchase
- 24 There are Actions and Projects, which will require financial commitment. The principal needs for financial resources are likely to be in relation to:
- acquisition/demolition costs

- environmental improvement schemes
- grants for shop front improvements and the like
- provision of signs and other forms of information
- staff resources committed to town centre management
- investment in the markets
- promotion/business support
- maintenance of public spaces

## **CONCLUSION**

25 This Strategy has been prepared to provide a co-ordinated framework for action, investment and partnership working. To realise the full potential of Chorley Town Centre and so improve its vitality and viability, the strategy proposes over a 10 year period to build on its unique character and strengths by a combination of activities including town centre management, environmental improvements and regeneration, promotion and marketing.

## COUNCIL CONTACTS

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