

# Deloitte.

Real Estate

## Chorley Town Centre Masterplan

Opportunity & Delivery



August 2013

# Acknowledgements

This report was produced with input from:



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Chorley Library, Union Street



Chorley Little Theatre, Dole Lane



Runshaw College, Market Street



Chorley Fitness Health Club

# 1.0 Introduction

Chorley is a vibrant and prosperous market town, that despite the economic downturn has continued to provide a good range of facilities in the town centre for both residents and visitors.

However, like many similar sized market towns Chorley in 2013 stands at a crossroads – there is a need for new investment, a new impetus and a continuing evolution of the town centre. Without it there is a danger that the town centre could suffer, principally as a victim of the wider malaise affecting town centres and the high street rather than necessarily because of the local market within which Chorley operates.

This report forms the second stage of the Chorley Town Centre Masterplan. The plan sets out the future development of Chorley Town Centre, providing a deliverable framework for investment at key development sites to ensure the viability and vitality of Chorley Town Centre going forward. As this report forms the second stage of the commission it should be read in conjunction with the Stage 1 baseline document.

The baseline report set out some clear messages about Chorley and how it can best respond to the competitive environment within which it is operating and will continue to need to compete.

Those messages can be summarised clearly and succinctly:

- National trends point to more closures on the High Street – particularly in the multiple rather than the independent sector. Chorley has not been immune to this but importantly the independent sector has remained resilient and provides a 'backbone' to the town centre retail offer.

- Town Centres will need to diversify if they are going to continue to attract consumers – that means an offer that is distinctive and of high quality, a place that residents and visitors wish to visit on a frequent basis for a variety of reasons. As our analysis has shown Chorley does well in some areas in this respect – but it could do even better. It has an excellent market for example but lacks the supporting food and drink offer you might find in a comparative town. The Civic and public service function is good – but it could be better, and public spaces /public realm is substandard – again when compared to the best.

And Chorley should aspire to be the best – the best historic market town in the north west – a town that residents feel proud to use on a daily basis and a town that a wider catchment of people will enjoy visiting.

Our strategy for Chorley Town Centre is therefore founded on that core objective – to be the best in your marketplace. What does that mean in practice? Our Stage 2 report provides the detail in regard to key projects that we think can make a difference built on the following principles:

- Reinforcement of the retail offer ensuring that the town centre remains resilient and supportive particularly to the independent retail sector;
- Allied to retail, deliver opportunities for new businesses to set up and prosper – in the food/drink sector, the arts sector and community uses. This will add 'richness' to the town centre offer;

# 1.0 Introduction

- Support the core town centre with great public spaces and attractive streets - by investing in public realm ,car parking and the centre itself to ensure that the whole town centre offer is enhanced.

Our strategy manifests itself in three core projects and an allied public realm programme. These are the cornerstones of the strategy but should not be seen as the only actions required. There will be others and these should be pursued where they can support the vision. The cornerstone projects are, however, designed to ensure that actions taken support the strategy and will result in real progress. The three projects seek therefore to address Market Street, the Civic Quarter and the Flat Iron – absolute priorities for investment

# 1.1 Summary of Chorley Town Centre Health Check

## Chorley as a Place to Shop

Chorley is a busy market town and has a footprint of 450,000 sq.ft (81,834 sq.m) split across 263 units.

Chorley Town Centre is predominantly focused on comparison shopping with several national multiples present, a large proportion of independent retailers and as such has remained relatively resilient over the past 5 years. Convenience retailing is dominated by an in-centre EH Booths and a standalone Morrisons foodstore which is located in an out-of-centre location on Brooke Street.

Chorley's current retailing role seeks to serve a very localised catchment area and it directly competes with those larger centres which include Manchester, Blackburn, Wigan, Bolton and the Middlebrook Retail Park. Whilst there are only a small number of vacant units in Chorley the overall quality of units and retailers is low and there has been little significant additional investment in the centre.

## Chorley as a Place to Live

Market evidence has shown that the residential market in Chorley is relatively stable. Those fluctuations in house prices and the volume of sales recorded is seasonal. The average house price in Chorley stood at just short of £150,000 in January 2013 and this mirrors those prices experienced pre-recession.

In summary:

- There is a higher than average proportion of the population of Chorley who own their property outright;
- There is a higher than average proportion who own their property with a mortgage;

- There is a lower than average social rented sector; and
- There is a lower than average proportion of private rented residents illustrating a less transient population.

## Chorley as a Place to Work

There are relatively limited office uses within the Town Centre, those that do exist cater mainly for municipal uses including the Runshaw College and Chorley Council. Buckshaw Village which is located just outside of Chorley offers a broader range of employment space.

## Future of Chorley Town Centre

Our baseline findings conclude that the role of the Town Centre is changing. There is a need for Chorley to consolidate its current retail offer in order to strengthen and cement the core of the retail offer contained in Market Walk which has a number of high street multiples present, builds on the high presence of independent shops and its strong market asset.

Town Centres offer much more than a retailing function. They are places to shop but also places to live, places to meet, places to undertake leisure activities.

Increasingly so we are seeing the evolving role of a Local Authority in becoming the custodian of the town centre providing both the stewardship and taking the lead in direct investment and control of the high street, creating opportunity and growth.

## 1.2 A Changing Market: Evolving Role of Town Centres

### Key changes in an evolved Town Centre Composition:

- Leisure activities with more bars, restaurants, food-to-go outlets and community spaces opening in vacant units.
- Support of the e-retail channel with click and collect points and safe drop boxes for customers to collect their online orders as well as satellite stores opening for customers to make online purchase.
- Secondary and tertiary space will also be converted into residential space as it is of less use to retailers and other businesses due to the low levels of footfall in these areas.

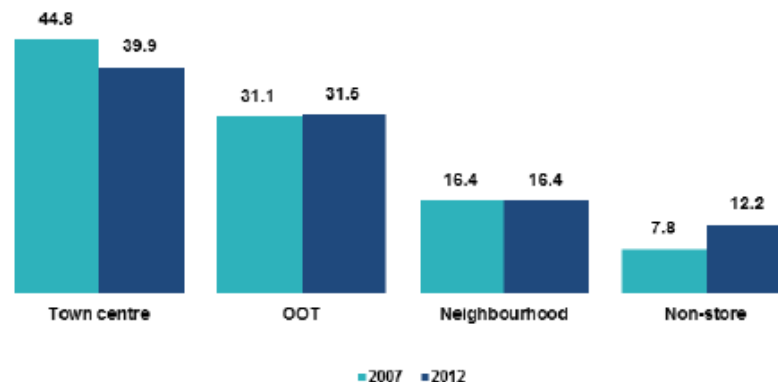
### Implications for Chorley Town Centre

- A consolidation of the current retail offer and a strengthening of the 'retail core'.
- Opportunity to attract a 'flagship retailer' in order to enhance the retail offer currently underway.
- A coordinated approach to possible future out of centre retail to ensure the Town Centre remains 'fit for purpose'.
- Using footfall data to improve dwell time and increasing awareness of what is on offer – providing a mix which is what local people want and need.
- A need to fit 'Click and Collect' within the town centre and the development of wireless technology to enhance this.
- Promotion of the wider area more, to encourage further investment in jobs, and in the town centre, to persuade residents to spend their money in the area and support the town further.

Forecast growth (%), 2017 on 2013



Location share of expenditure (%), 2007 and 2012e



Source: Verdict Research

Note: non-store includes online and mail order home shopping

## 1.3 Our Vision for Chorley Town Centre

Chorley is a highly accessible town centre, but once you have arrived and either parked or exited the station we want you to be able to walk – through great spaces, along tree lined and well lit streets past lively shops and building frontages and where appropriate through the town centre residential neighbourhood. You should be able to browse, linger or if in a hurry get quickly to what you need. The town centre needs to work for its changing consumer base.

### Stimulating the Economy

The masterplan therefore is founded around some key principles. Most critically the masterplan is designed to support business by stimulating economic activity without which any plan will be rendered meaningless.

In particular the plan has to work for the independent business and retail sector, a differentiator for Chorley and a fundamental part of the strategy. The masterplan will therefore manifest itself strongly in Market Street and Chapel Street – two of Chorley's key streets. In addition it will focus on the Civic Quarter and the Flat Iron – the two most important 'focal points' for the town. By playing to the towns strengths and reinforcing them we aim to deliver a town that will be best in class.

The projects and areas for concentrated investment have been chosen to stimulate footfall, encouraging people to stay for longer, and increasing the spend throughout the town centre. This is driven through: creating a broader and higher quality offer and environment which the whole town centre will respond to and benefit from. The report also details the wider public realm strategy which seeks to knit together these key areas in order to provide a comprehensive Town Centre offer.



### Greater Independent Offering

The relative resilience of the town centre can be largely attributed to the strength of Chorley's independent sector which accounts for 3 units to every 1 high street unit. It's status as a regional market town also reinforces this resilience. This hive of independent activity needs to be further nurtured with a drive to increase the quality of this important sector. There are some pockets of high quality independent offerings and some interesting outlets which serve a varied offer.

CBC has identified this key strength and is working with the independent business'. It has had some early wins in leveraging this sector and is promoting new fit for purpose accommodation on user friendly leasing terms on Market Street which is scheduled to start on site in Autumn 2013. The response to the demand assessment for the proposed units was very encouraging with interested noted from both start ups and maturing business who are looking for larger modern units.



## 1.3 Our Vision for Chorley Town Centre

We would encourage the establishment of a forum which is specifically focused on nurturing the independent sector within Chorley, building on the engagement arena created by the Town Centre Team. This should provide targeted business support which includes advice on e-tail entry and marketing alongside ensuring that suitable premises are available to the sector. As part of the Inward Investment Strategy CBC should proactively seek the trading up of space for business as they become established and need less support, becoming capable of occupying property on traditional lease terms. Ownership of retail property will provide the strongest control for CBC to ensure such progression occurs.

## 1.4 Developing a Town Centre Masterplan

The Masterplan proposals have been developed from a range of existing information provided in the Town Centre Audit, which was assimilated and built upon, through stakeholder engagement, to create a robust baseline. In summary, we believe that the Town Centre has a number of key assets:

- A compact and walkable town centre;
- High level of independent traders;
- Strong market asset;
- Key heritage buildings;
- Good public transport linkages;
- Established residential neighbourhoods within the town centre; and
- Strong character areas in terms of grain and urban structure.

### Key Issues include:

#### Heritage

Chorley has some significant areas of high quality townscape close to the town centre, which should have a positive influence on perceptions of the town centre. However, these are undermined by poor quality streetscape materials.

Chorley has a lively programme of activities which bring life and interest to the public realm.

#### Built Form

Streets have gaps formed by service yards and clearance sites, which adversely affects the perception of the town as a coherent centre.

Chorley Town Centre has distinctive landmarks, but they are located mostly in the northwestern sector, away from the ring road and railway station.

The town centre is clearly defined on its eastern flank, where the ring road is a barrier to movement; elsewhere, the transition to the town centre is less well defined and within the town centre itself, the southern part is poorly connected to the centre core.

The grid of streets which criss-cross the town centre provide a consistent and permeable range of routes for pedestrians; however, streets are less consistent, and therefore less successful on the western and southern edges of the town centre.

The town centre is poorly defined as a place, and lacks a sense of arrival.

#### Accessibility

The arrivals points of car parks, the railway station, bus stops and interchange, are well signposted from the town perimeter. However, provision for cyclists is less coherent.

#### Ring Road

The dual carriageway A6 (Shepherds Way) efficiently diverts cars around the town centre, so that many drivers are not aware of Chorley Town Centre, or its potential attractions. The road is a barrier to movement from the eastern edge of the town centre.

#### Car Parks

Many of Chorley's car parks are well kept but poorly designed, lacking pedestrian friendly features, convenient signage, and an attractive environment.

#### Wayfinding

Finding ones way to Chorley, and walking around the town centre as a visitor, is generally easy, but important features of the town are ignored, and some areas are less easy to find.

# 1.5 Movement

## Walking routes

Pedestrian movement in most of the town centre core is convenient and easy. However, getting there from the edge of town can be difficult, due to inconvenient road crossings, unattractive and cluttered streets and alleys and poorly lit routes.

Footfall is currently focused around the northern part of the town between arrival points and the main retail heart, and does not penetrate to the southern areas of the town along Market Street.

## Public Realm

The Town Centre's public realm is leaky, and by that we mean that there are few places for people to stop and dwell.

The public realm is lacking in character and quality and is incoherent. There are too many materials present within the streetscape.

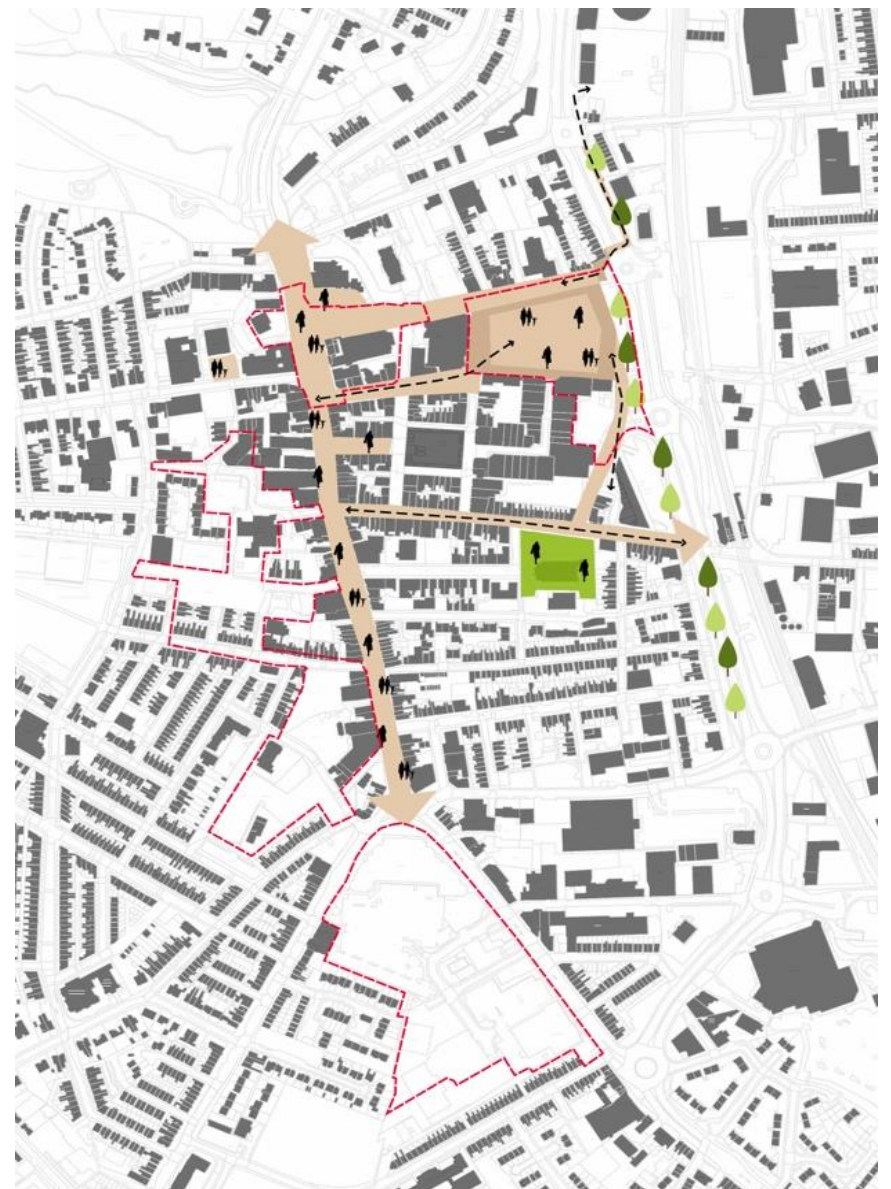
The green space in the town is limited to St Georges Church.

# 1.6 Developing a Town Centre Masterplan – Key Plans

## Opportunity Sites



## Public Realm Framework



# Opportunity Areas

## 2.0 South Market Street / Fleet Street

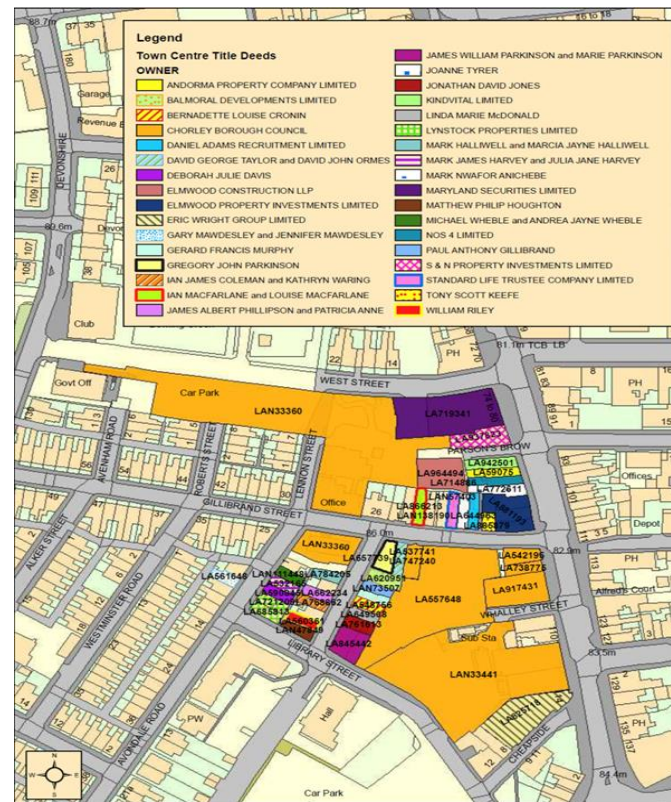
Market street is critical to the realisation of the plan. There is an opportunity through a comprehensive project to improve the weak retail offer of southern Market Street, with the purpose of pushing the retail core northwards. This will help reinvigorate Market Street, playing to the independent sector, reinforcing community uses and manage the contraction of the retail offer, a first for many towns.

In addition the development area can deliver a high quality residential development which will knit together and critically, showcase the hidden assets currently located in the back streets of Chorley, having the potential to provide additional community uses in a bespoke building.

There is a short term opportunity for the council to develop retail units geared towards the independent sector at the corner of Fleet Street / Market Street which will enhance the retail offering and provide quality space into this currently secondary location.

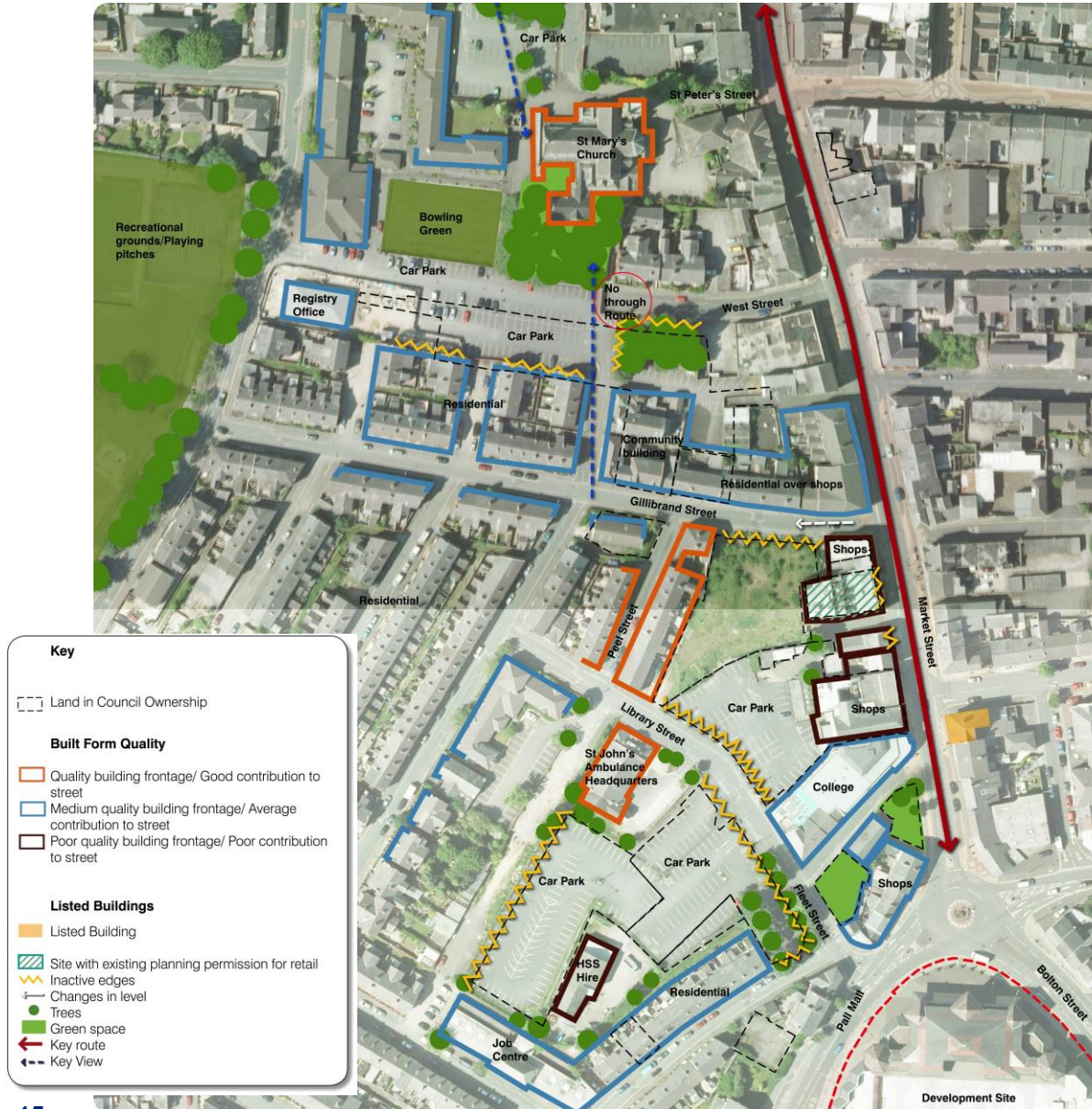
Through the development of a series of open spaces, through public squares and landscaping, Chorley can reconnect the back street gems that currently sit unnoticed behind Market Street. This includes Chorley Little Theatre and St Mary's Church.

This site will need the involvement of a number of third parties who will be required to facilitate the residential elements of the scheme and the production of a detailed masterplan which will provide for a phased yet comprehensive plan for the area.



The total site area measures in the region of 3.6 hectares. The area has a complex ownership schedule, Chorley Council owns a large proportion of the sites which will be central to the redevelopment and this should include the redevelopment of two Town Centre car parks which are currently underutilised.

## 2.1 Key Issues



The existing site contains a fractured urban grain in that many of the tight terraced blocks have been removed and replaced with underused surface car parks, whilst a number of key community facilities exist and are concentrated in close proximity to Market Street.

These terraced areas are visually and in part physically separated from Market Street. Further, the environment along Market Street has become degraded, and has resulted in a number of secondary retail uses.

To the north, there are similar surface parking areas to the rear of Market Street, which are focused around key buildings such as Chorley Little Theatre and St Peter's Church. The area benefits from distant views out to the open countryside, to the east.

## 2.2 The Opportunity

These areas have the potential to be comprehensively remodelled to introduce a new medium density residential community connected into the Town Centre. It is imperative that the overall design of the housing creates a step change in the quality of residential development and creates a new, highly sustainable neighbourhood character area.

Introducing new residential development into these areas would help to increase the town centre population and complement the established neighbouring uses and existing planning consents in the area, as well as providing a boost to existing and new uses along Market Street.

A number of options have been developed to explore the opportunity which include introducing a community building as a complementary use. A community building in this location will act as a community hub, connecting Market Street to the proposed residential sites. (See Tibby's Triangle as a case study). The options have been developed to include the existing college and job centre buildings within the proposals, which can be extension of any development.

Public realm improvements to the existing car parking area around St Mary's Church and Chorley Little Theatre will improve the setting and environment, transforming it into a new public space for Chorley that has the potential to significantly enhance the existing assets. This space should retain some car parking provision, and be flexible in its potential use.

As detailed in the public realm framework (section 5), Market Street has been highlighted as a key street for targeted public realm improvements. Re-surfacing and opening up of the street with better quality materials, street trees, street furniture and lighting would make significant positive changes to the street scene.

It is intended that vehicle movement will be restricted, consideration should, therefore, be given to creating an equal level of pedestrian/vehicular priority. Options for narrowing the carriageway, creating surface shared spaces at key junctions and widened pavements to improve the pedestrian environment, will create the potential for active ground floor use to flourish and bring activity and life back to Market Street.

Public realm improvements to Market Street should also consider remodeling of the Market street/Pall Mall/Bolton Street junction.

The development of the food retail store in this location will form a major pedestrian draw to south of the town along Market Street, as well as a parking destination and for encouraging people to walk into the town, northwards along Market Street. In order to facilitate this movement, a key opportunity will involve the re-design of the junction to retain its roundabout function, but widen pedestrian footpaths and crossing points, and provide a uniform surface to increase pedestrian priority (such a solution has already been implanted with Poynton, Cheshire (see case study 3.4).



## 2.3 Proposals Option 1 – Residential and Community Buildings Scheme



### KEY

-  Existing key building
-  Existing green spaces
-  Trees
-  Proposed key building
-  Proposed residential block
-  Street
-  Spaces
-  Private gardens
-  Area with permission for retail/residential
-  Development subject to review of car parking requirements. Some parking to be re-provided on street and within spaces

- Re-develop some surface car parks for residential use.
- Residential square to create a focal point for the new community.
- Enhance the public realm around St Mary's Church and Chorley Little Theatre to become a public space.
- Community building with a frontage to Market street and residential area.
- Public Realm improvement to Market Street including narrowing the carriageway, creating surface shared spaces at key junctions widened pavements to improve the pedestrian environment.

## 2.4 Proposals Option 2 – Residential Only Scheme



### KEY

-  Existing key building
-  Existing green spaces
-  Trees
-  Proposed key building
-  Proposed residential block
-  Street
-  Spaces
-  Private gardens
-  Area with permission for retail/residential
-  Development subject to review of car parking requirements. Some parking to be re-provided on street and within spaces

- Re-develop some surface car parks for residential use.
- Residential square to create a focal point for the new community.
- Enhance the public realm around St Mary's Church and Chorley Little Theatre to become a public space.
- Key buildings (Apartments) to define the public realm.
- Public Realm improvement to Market Street including narrowing the carriageway, creating surface shared spaces at key junctions widened pavements to improve the pedestrian environment.

## 2.5 Proposals Option 3 – Residential and Community Buildings Scheme



**KEY**

- Existing key building
- Existing green spaces
- Trees
- Proposed key building
- Proposed residential block
- Street
- Spaces
- Private gardens
- Area with permission for retail/residential
- Development subject to review of car parking requirements. Some parking to be re-provided on street and within spaces

- Re-develop some surface car parks for residential use.
- Residential square to create a focal point for the new community.
- Enhance the public realm around St Mary's Church and Chorley Little Theatre to become a public space.
- Community building with a frontage to Market street and residential area.
- Re-development of Job Centre and College buildings for additional residential.
- Public Realm improvement to Market Street including narrowing the carriageway, creating surface shared spaces at key junctions widened pavements to improve the pedestrian environment.

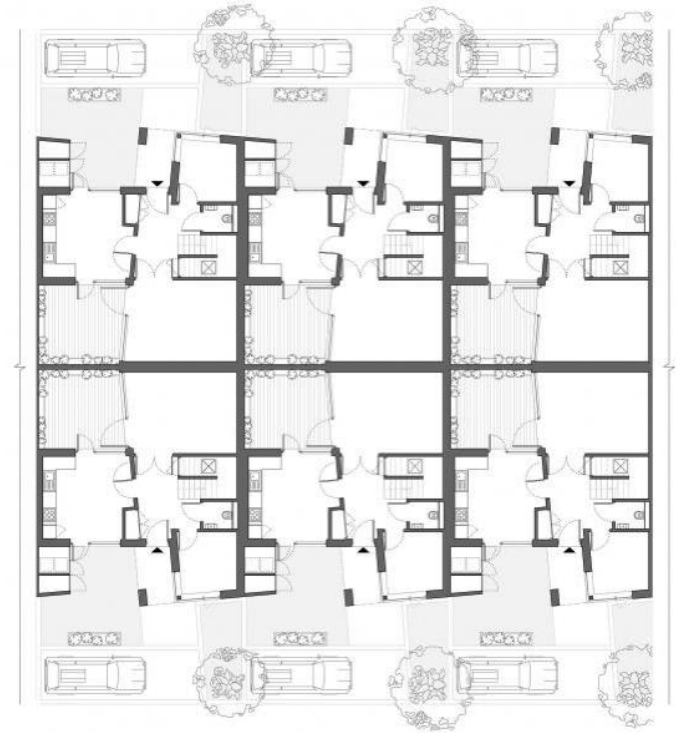
## 2.6 Residential Ambition – Tibby's Triangle Southwold, Suffolk



An example of good quality housing in town centre/ back of high street locations. The community building bridges the high street and residential locations.



## 2.7 Residential Ambition – Newhall, Harlow



An example of medium density housing which responds to small plot sizes and minimum back to back distances.

## 2.8 Delivery Actions

### South Market Street / Fleet Street – Opportunity 3

Timing	Short / Medium term – 1-3 years
Stakeholders	Chorley Council, Homes and Communities Agency
Key components	Creation of a residential community which will link the back streets of the Town Centre creating a network of amenity spaces which reinvigorate a number of hidden assets.
Role of the Council	Act as lead facilitator of the masterplan and procuring party.
Impact	Managed contraction of the high street through the creation of high quality residential and linked amenity spaces.

The South Market Street / Fleet Street residential project presents a unique opportunity for Chorley to create a vibrant high quality town centre residential community which benefits yet enhances the existing amenities.

Early engagement with the HCA and potential development partners has demonstrated the unique opportunity for the site which could transform some underutilised existing assets of the Council, manage the contraction of the high street and expand the sustainable residential community through the creation of a series of development parcels and linked public spaces.

High level appraisals of the indicative schemes indicate that such proposals should be capable of producing a viable scheme which should be implementable in the short term. The appraisal result provide for positive residuals, before any third party land acquisition.

We have not taken account for any loss of revenue from the removal of the existing car parks. Experience of other towns and projects suggests that rather than losing revenue from the removal of the space, the demand is diverted into the remaining available spaces.

#### Key Actions

##### 1. Establish a key Project Delivery team led by Chorley Council

This group should include the wider stakeholder group including the Homes and Communities Agency whom have indicated its appetite to pursue a pilot scheme for the Agency. Any residential led scheme should be a joint commission of both parties.

##### 1. Engage with a design team to produce detailed site masterplan.

A comprehensive yet phased masterplan should be produced for the site which considers the detailed viability and deliverability of the proposed scheme in further detail. Such a masterplan should establish the development platform and we would suggest that the masterplan becomes adopted by the Council.

##### 2. The masterplan should cover:

1. Site Density
2. Key linkages
3. Design Guide
4. Site Assembly
5. Viability
6. Procurement options

##### 3. Soft Market Testing

We would encourage the on-going testing of the opportunity with the residential development market to ensure the scheme is positioned in the market place correctly.

##### 4. Investigate the role of Community Buildings into the site

The scheme may be capable of providing a community facility which has been cited as needed in the stakeholder engagement. Investigation into creating a sustainable facility in this location should be explored along with the community assets strategy to ensure appropriate usage throughout the town centre.

# 3.0 Civic Quarter

## Opportunity

This site offers the opportunity to develop a Commercial development block which is suitable for a whole range of town center uses and extends the Civic Quarter which encapsulates the Town Hall, wider Civic buildings and Chorley Parish Church of St Laurence by providing suitable public space.

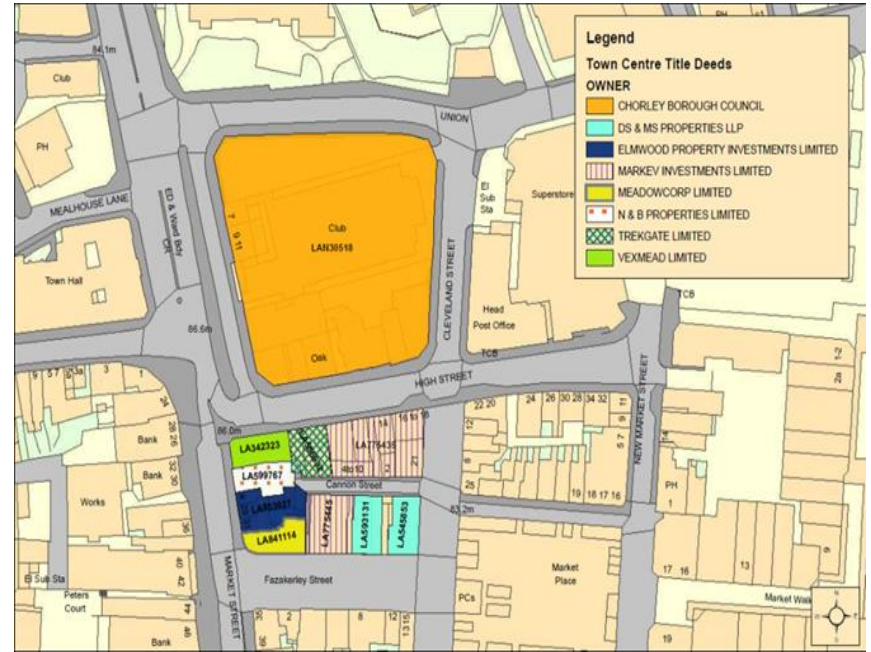
The site holds a key knuckle position linking the retail heart to Market Street and the existing Civic buildings to the west. In addition the introduction of public space in this location would frame both St Laurence Church and the Town Hall and provide a public space currently lacking in the centre.

The block is capable of providing circa 4,500 - 6,000 sq.m in a medium density scheme.

We have considered a number of uses for this block and whilst many town centre uses could be appropriate, the redevelopment of this block provides a credible opportunity site for clustering employment uses for which there is currently a lack of quality space available in the centre, providing both jobs and footfall into the town centre. Active ground floor units should continue the retailing/leisure connection from High Street to Market Street.

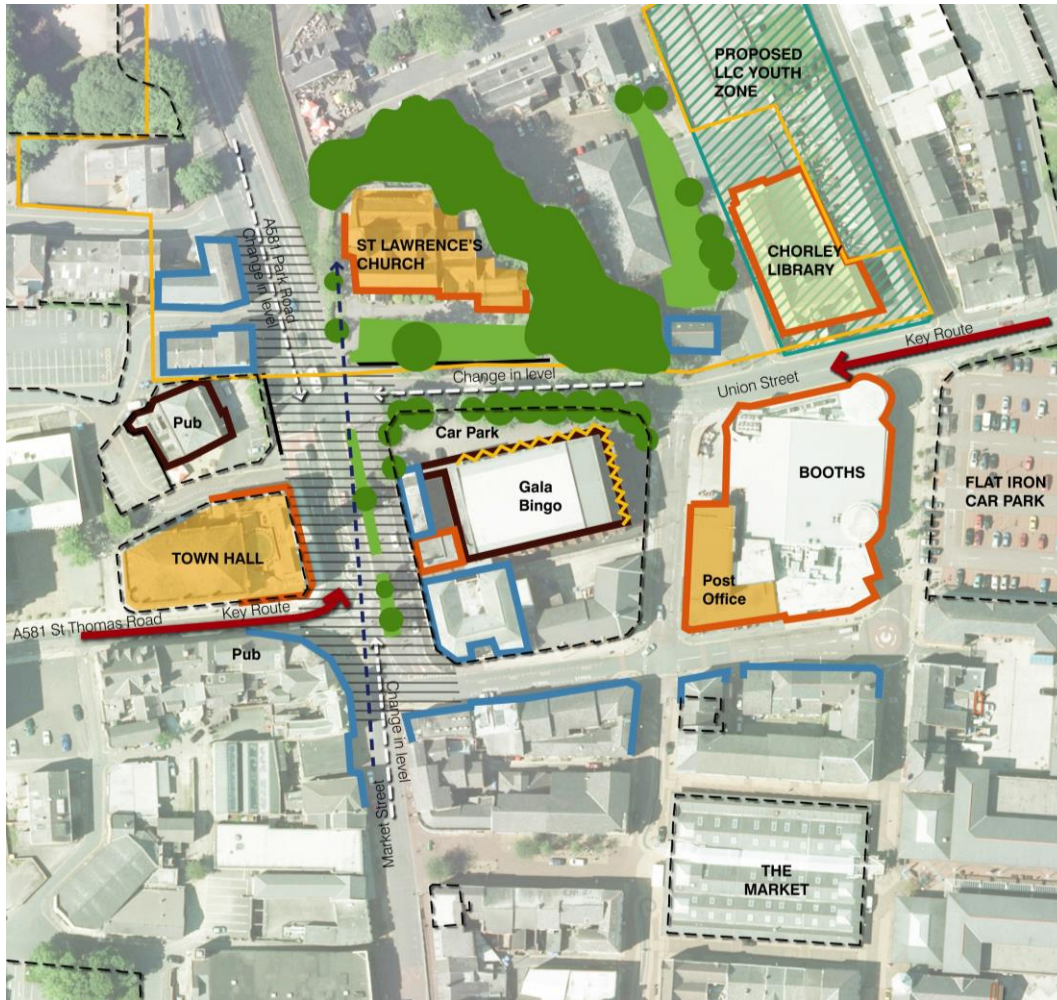
## Site Description

This site includes the Gala Bingo block (which footprint measures 3,927 sq.m) and its immediate environs. The Gala Bingo block falls within the ownership of Chorley Council however there is currently a long lease interest held by Northern Trust as well as a number of short leasehold interests.



The site is adjacent to the Town Hall and Chorley Council offices and there are a number of buildings of architectural interest in the vicinity. There are various options available to controlling the vehicular movements through the created Civic Square with the most pragmatic being an extension of the shared space environment which aims to provide equal priority for both vehicles and pedestrians and this will mirror the opening up of Market Street to allow for better circulation between all elements of the Town Centre.

## 3.1 Key Issues



The issues in relation to this site are a consequence of a confused movement strategy. The highways arrangement in front of the Town Hall currently causes conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, and creates a confusing and illegible layout for vehicles albeit this has undergone recent improvements.

A significant lack of public space has been identified in this area in particular, the civic heart of Chorley.

There is a poor relationship between important buildings and heritage assets. The site is located in close proximity to several key cultural assets and historic buildings, including the Town Hall, Library, St Lawrence's Church and conservation area.

**Key**

- Land in Council Ownership
- Built Form Quality**
  - Quality building frontage/ Good contribution to street
  - Medium quality building frontage/ Average contribution to street
  - Poor quality building frontage/ Poor contribution to street
- Listed Buildings**
  - Listed Building
  - Locally important building
- Proposed LLC youth Zone
- Inactive edges
- Changes in level
- Trees
- Green space
- Key route
- Key View
- Wall
- Confused traffic arrangement/ area of conflict
- Conservation Area



## 3.2 Opportunity

Due to the wider opportunity of the surrounding area, the initial site area has been extended to include the wider Gala Bingo block and surrounding streets. It sits amongst some of Chorley's prime historic assets, the Town Hall: library and St Lawrence's Church, the importance of which are not fully recognised within the public realm at present.

The potential exists to provide a new Civic Square and green space on this site, in the civic heart of Chorley. An aspiration for a new green space has been highlighted by the council, a point confirmed by an initial baseline analysis which indicated that the town centre lacks any significant public space.

A number of options have been developed to explore the possibility of delivering this public space and varying amounts of associated development including office, retail and restaurants, to enclose and activate the space.

To create a true civic space for Chorley, we believe that establishing a relationship with the Town Hall is vital.

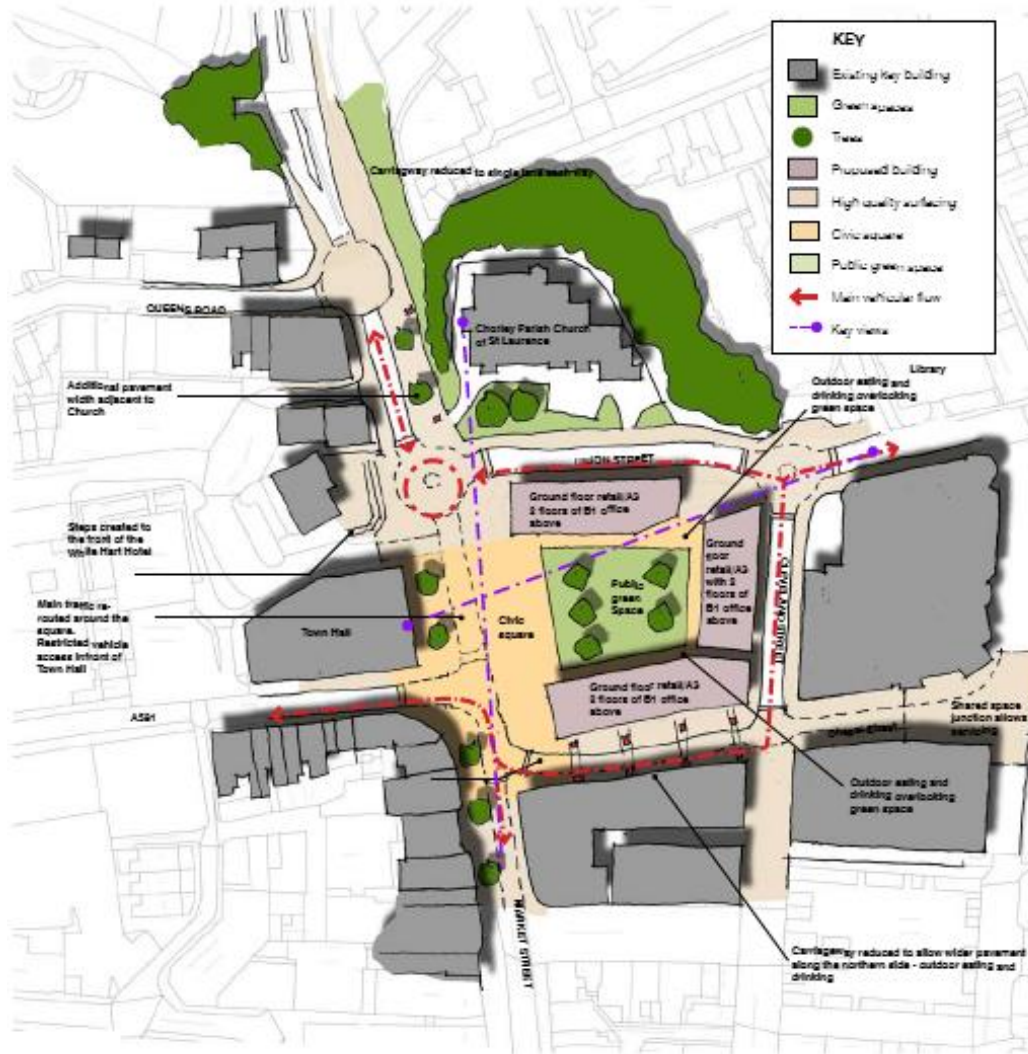
The introduction of pedestrian priority measures in front of the Town Hall is particularly important given that the site forms a knuckle for pedestrian movement accessing Market Street from the retail area, and visa versa.

There are a number of options for the flow of vehicular movement through the Civic Square, varying from:

- a) Full pedestrian space - vehicles allowed, but only for specific times (alternative access via Cleveland Street);
- b) Shared Space - vehicles allowed throughout the day and evening but minimum definition of vehicular carriageway (channels and change in texture);
- c) Improved pedestrian environment - vehicles allowed within a defined carriageway (minimal kerb upstands).

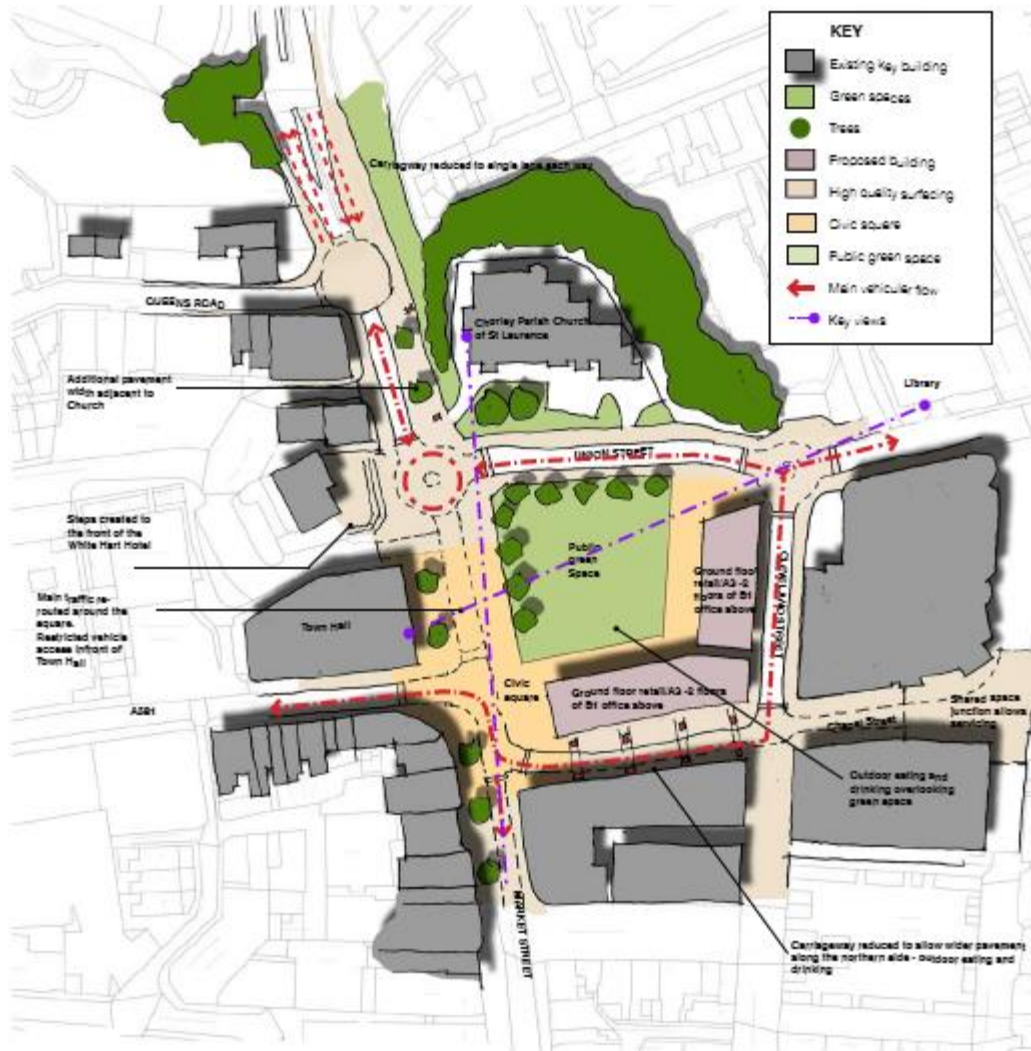
Option B would be the most pragmatic yet enhancing option available and this should be investigated further as an extension to the proposed Market Street enhancements .

## 3.3 Proposals



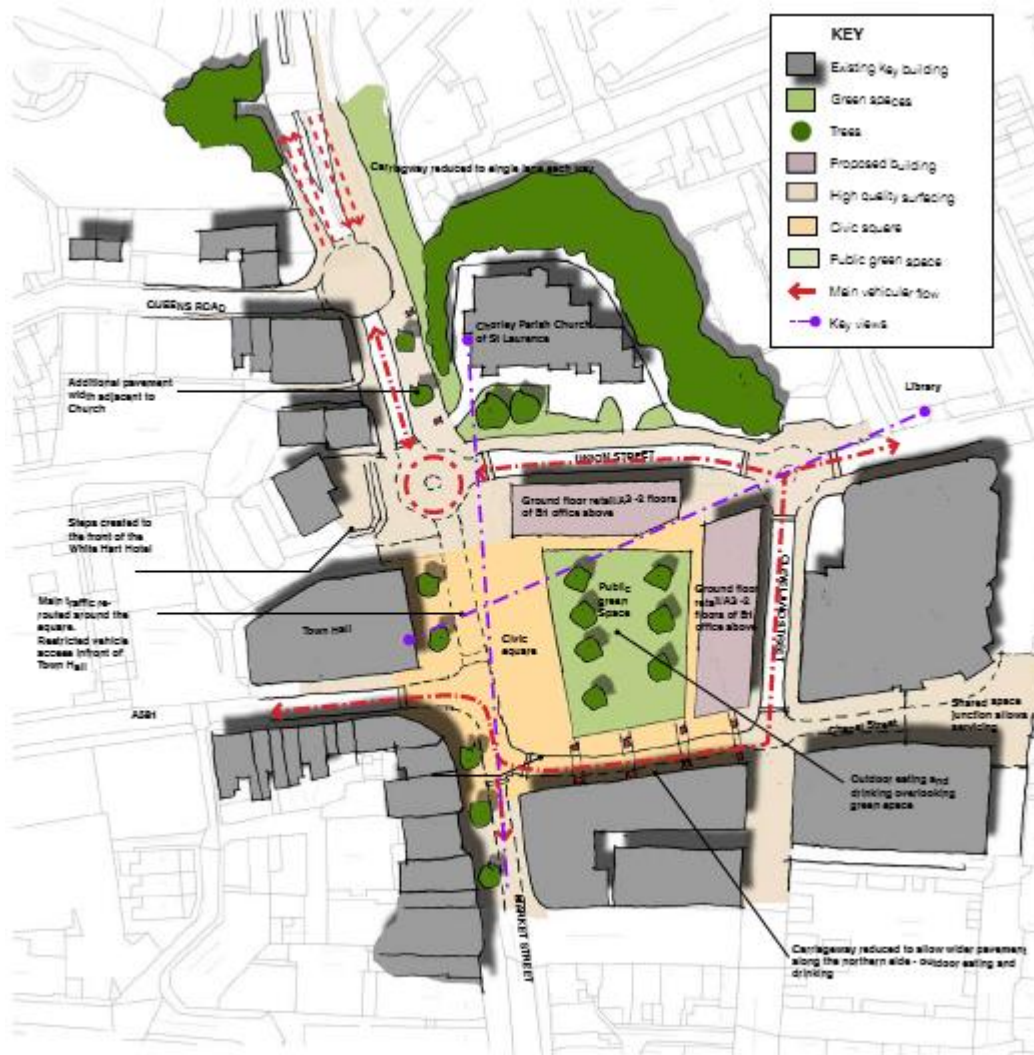
- Complete re-development of block and surrounding streets.
- A new Civic Square in front of Town Hall and Public green space.
- Retail located to the south of the block to create a relationship between the proposed green space and the existing green space around the Church.
- Key view axis responds to heritage features.
- Carriageway reduced to allow wider pavement along the northern side - outdoor eating and drinking..
- Extension of shared space in front of Town Hall.
- Carriageway reduced to single lane each way along Park Lane.

## 3.4 Proposals



- Complete re-development of block and surrounding streets.
- A new Civic Square in front of Town Hall and Public green space, connecting with St Laurence Church.
- Retail located to the south of the block to create a relationship between the proposed green space and the existing green space around the Church.
- Key view axis responds to heritage features.
- Carriageway reduced to allow wider pavement along the northern side - outdoor eating and drinking.
- Carriageway reduced to single lane each way along Park Lane.

## 3.5 Proposals



- Complete re-development of block and surrounding streets.
- A new Civic Square in front of Town Hall and Public green space.
- Green space enclosed to provide south facing aspect.
- Key view axis responds to heritage features.
- Restricted vehicle access in front of Town Hall, to include extension of the share space.
- Carriageway reduced to single lane each way along Park Lane.

## 3.6 Delivery Outline

The Civic Quarter block should play a critical role in cementing the commercial viability of the town centre moving forwards. The block is capable of providing a significant volume of development for the centre for appropriate town centre uses. Bringing forward development on this block is ambitious and challenging given both current economic conditions and the complex ownership structure. However, this site is one which could provide significant opportunity and further resilience.

The scheme will take time to position in the market place and unsurprisingly we have not been able to demonstrate current demand for all of the uses at this time which is not out of kilter with other towns like Chorley. More will need to be done to anchor the scheme which is likely to require some public sector occupation.

It should be noted that some town centre uses such as family leisure and hotels, are not considered near term opportunities and indeed these uses benefit from clustering and can create under utilised day time activity which would not maximise this site's opportunity.

We have undertaken high level viability testing to understand the time frame for delivering new development at this site and the factors which need to be in place. Current market conditions remain challenging in bringing forward commercial schemes in sub regional towns. No speculative development is taking place outside of the South East, with pre let thresholds at a minimum of 60% of the floorspace to be delivered. Office rentals would need to make a step change to support new quality accommodation.

Therefore to deliver such a scheme the Council along with the site stakeholders would need to make the same step change in their approach to delivery and the development should be seen as a second stage of development benefitting from the investment made at the other key sites.

To date Chorley has not had a credible development site for employment use capable of delivering the volume of development in the heart of the town centre and as such Chorley is not currently an obvious choice for commercial development.

The establishment of the inward investment function will help change the brand and positioning of the town and with this the profile for Chorley as a location for regional business for both the private and public sector.

We would encourage further investigation into the demand for a shared business centre which could accommodate the public sector partners as well as being capable of providing space for the private sector.

### Meanwhile Uses

Parts of the site are currently underutilised and would benefit for the introduction of meanwhile uses. Such a beneficial use could include retail collection lockers and associated collection car parking. The site should also undergo surface treatment from the agreed Chorley palette of materials.

The delivery of the shared space scheme to the main entrance of the Town Hall will help establish the change intended for the town centre and cement the vision for the new connected town centre.

## 3.7 Delivery Actions

### Civic Quarter – Opportunity 2

Timing	Medium Term – 3-5 years
Stakeholders	Chorley Council, Northern Trust
Key components	Key development block largely targeted at employment uses with active ground floor uses. Cementing the Civic Quarter with the creation of public space to link the smaller spaces together and the retail heart to the civic heart.
Role of the Council	Act as lead facilitator of the promotion of the opportunity and carry out the ‘meanwhile’ works, which may include leading site assembly.
Impact	Key development block for the town centre which is able to respond to commercial demand. Creation of deliverable site for modern employment space for the town and establishing the cluster of municipal uses into a Civic heart,

As stated any redevelopment proposals would need to be occupier led and therefore we have assessed that the scheme is most likely deliverable in the medium term but it is essential that enabling actions should be undertaken now.

There is a noticeable absence of medium scale modern employment space within the town centre boundary which could largely be due to not having a site capable of delivering such floorspace and the lack of actively seeking such an occupier which we understand the Council has considered.

#### Key Actions

The site has two purposes in the form of creating a flexible commercial scheme and in connecting the Civic Quarter to the retail heart which is likely to be undertaken on a phased basis.

- 1. Establish a key Project Delivery team led by Chorley Council**  
 This group should include the wider stakeholder group including Northern Trust and the Town Centre Team representatives, to establish the owners long term ambitions for the site and explore the potential for any joint opportunities.
- 2. Undertake the meanwhile use actions** to add to the vibrancy of the town centre.
- 3. Create the Opportunity Prospectus**  
 Creation of the prospectus to use to market the site to both potential end tenants and development partners, linked to the inward investment strategy.
- 4. Engage with a design team to produce detailed scheme proposal and costing for both the public realm and the development block.**  
 The team should produce options for the site and a detailed public realm scheme which will connect to the Market Street improvement proposals.
- 5. Develop a Site Assembly Strategy**  
 Development of a strategy to simplify the ownership of the site, this could be either with a joint venture partner or through the Council taking on the development lead.
- 6. Implement the Wider Public realm works for the site**  
 The Civic Quarter public realm works to Market Street would create the vision for both Market Street, the new development block and its connection to High Street and the retail heart.

## 4.0 Flat Iron Car Park and Environs

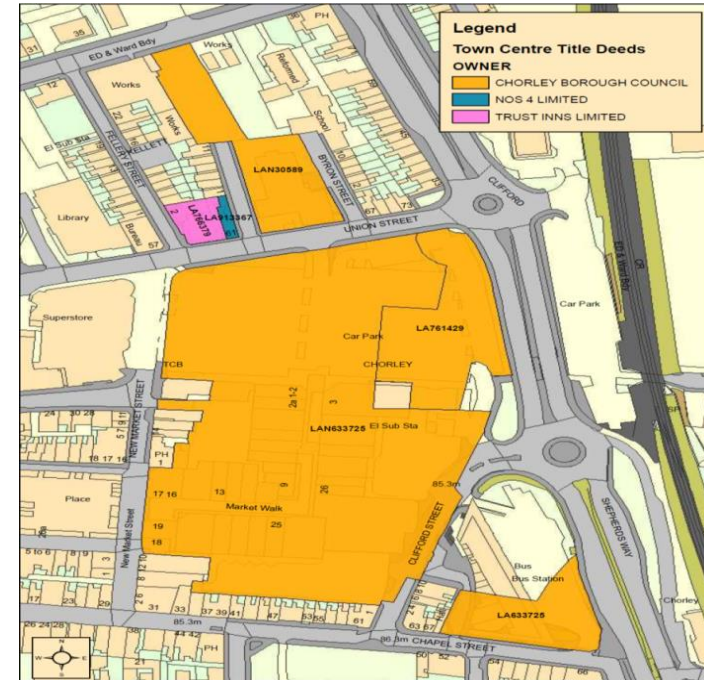
### Opportunities

The Flat iron sits as the retail heart of Chorley Town Centre, with Market Walk being occupied by a number of high street retailers. It benefits from a unique feature in the open-air market which takes place on Tuesdays on the Flat Iron itself and seeks to complement the covered market which takes place 5 days a week.

There is the opportunity to further frame the market uses through the creation of a space which outside of market days can operate as a standalone event space for use by CBC or external parties. Similarly, Market Walk has the opportunity to be extended (extant planning permissions exist on site) and there is also some discussions in relation to Chorley Council taking ownership of this site to help drive and control demand.

Public Realm works are proposed to enhance the space, widening pavements and introducing landscaping to allow the Flat Iron to visually be more than just a parking space. In addition to the proposed improvements works, there remains the opportunity to increase the retail footprint of Markets Walk with the extant permission for which the current owner is seeking tenants for albeit we expect there to be a change of ownership in the coming months as the portfolio (which includes Market walk) has been placed under offer.

Any such development will be occupier driven and will not come forward until there is an agreement for lease in place. We understand that discussions have been undertaken with a number of interested parties and the subsequent change of ownership should allow these tenant discussions to progress. This location in the retail heart would be ideally suited to respond to the 'click and collect' opportunity associated with a major retailer or service provider including the introduction of locker collection points.



### Site Description

The Flatiron car park measures approximately 2 acres (0.8 Ha). The majority of the site falls within the ownership of Chorley Borough Council. There are single ownerships located to the north of Flat Iron which include Trust Inns Limited (59 Union Street) and No's 4 Limited (61 Union Street).

There is an existing covenant on the Flat Iron car park associated with the Booths development which stipulates that 130 car parking spaces must be kept available to facilitate the shoppers and this has been acknowledged in the potential future development of this site





## 4.2 Proposals Public Realm Option

Creation of a new flexible Space for use as an Outdoor Market, Car Park and Events - improved pedestrian connections with Union Street and the Bus Station



## 4.3 Market Street

**BEFORE** - View of Flat Iron Market from Union Street



**AFTER** - View of Flat Iron Market from Union Street

### The Public Realm Opportunity

A remodelled public realm opportunity would create enhanced pedestrian spaces around the edge of the market/car park space, along Union Street, the southern edge of the car park and along Clifford Street. Moreover, the pedestrian pavement along the side of Booth's will be widened to form a wider piazza space that allows strong pedestrian linkages through to New Market Street. This will not only enhance environment of this gateway site and the market setting, but also enhance pedestrian connections between key facilities (council offices and library), arrival points (car park and bus station) and streets (Market Walk, Clifford Street, and New Market Street). Potential exists for the new retail planning permission to be integrated into the overall design of the space. Planting will be enhanced and increased around the edge of the car park/market space, to screen the impact of parked vehicles.

Union Street could be remodelled to decrease vehicular speeds and widen the pavements to enhance the pedestrian environment. The plan indicates a shared space/square to create a quality setting to the existing statue and existing tree to the front of the Council offices, which will serve to slow traffic. A new pedestrian crossing point could be provided between the library and the piazza space.

In terms of the car park/market space, the treatment of these areas are largely restricted by virtue of its role and function i.e. there will be limited vertical elements on the basis as this would require the removal of market stall space, or indeed, parking spaces. However, the provision of a uniform surface treatment, and street trees along the entrance road would serve to break up what is a large open space - parking spaces will be defined with changes in material texture and colour; moreover the provision of a dynamic pedestrian link between the Council offices and Market Walk will improve pedestrian connectivity and break up the long linear expanse of parking areas.

Consideration should be given to removing the vehicular exit point adjacent to Booths (New Market Street), given the potential for the access road to be incorporated into the plaza. Notwithstanding this, the exit point could be integrated into the layout.

## 4.4 Case Study– Klagesmarkt, Hannover



### Case Studies – Castle Square, Caernarfon

This provides a good quality example of a widened piazza/ green link along the edge of a multifunctional car park/ market space.

## 4.5 Delivery Actions

### Flat Iron – opportunity 1

Timing	Short term – 1-3 years
Stakeholders	Chorley Council, Booths, Market Walk
Key components	Largely public realm improvements to create the setting of the outdoor market and the creation of a multi use events space.
Role of the Council	Act as lead developer of the works and custodian of the events schedule
Impact	Creation of events space and focal point for the town and framing the important historic market setting

The Flat Iron sites offer a relatively straightforward delivery plan for the proposed improvement works, that would see the creation of a much needed opportunity space to cater for events within the town an enhanced arrival point. The improvements would also provide the market with an improved staging area and yet would still allow the site to provide for the car parking as required.

There is the opportunity to bring forward the extant permission/s of additional retailing linked to Market Walk and we would advise the Council to closely monitor the proposed sale of the Centre so as to undertake early engagement with the new owner as to the plans to further invest in the Centre which would benefit from the enhanced sitting that the improved space would bring.

### Costs

High level costs for the improvement to the Flat Iron and environs have been provided in Section 5.8.

### Key Actions

- 1. Establish a key Project Delivery team led by Chorley Council**  
 This group should include the wider stakeholder group including the Market Walk owners, Booths and the Town Centre Team representatives.
- 2. Engage with a design team to produce detailed scheme proposal and costing**  
 The team should produce options for the site and a detailed scheme for the agreed design and implementation plan.
- 3. Establish complementary events programme**  
 This programme should target key events where car parking will not be affected.
- 4. Continue to monitor the disposal of Market Walk**  
 Close liaison with the new purchaser to assist with the delivery of the proposed extension of the centre and key tenant discussions.
- 5. Click & Collect Introduction**  
 Explore the introduction of a click and collect hub which could be locker collection point in the first instance.

# Public Realm Framework

## 5.0 The Vision

Chorley's vision is that of a Historic Market Town, and, as the baseline information indicates, whilst it has many assets, they are currently not working together as a coherent whole i.e. in a synergistic manner.

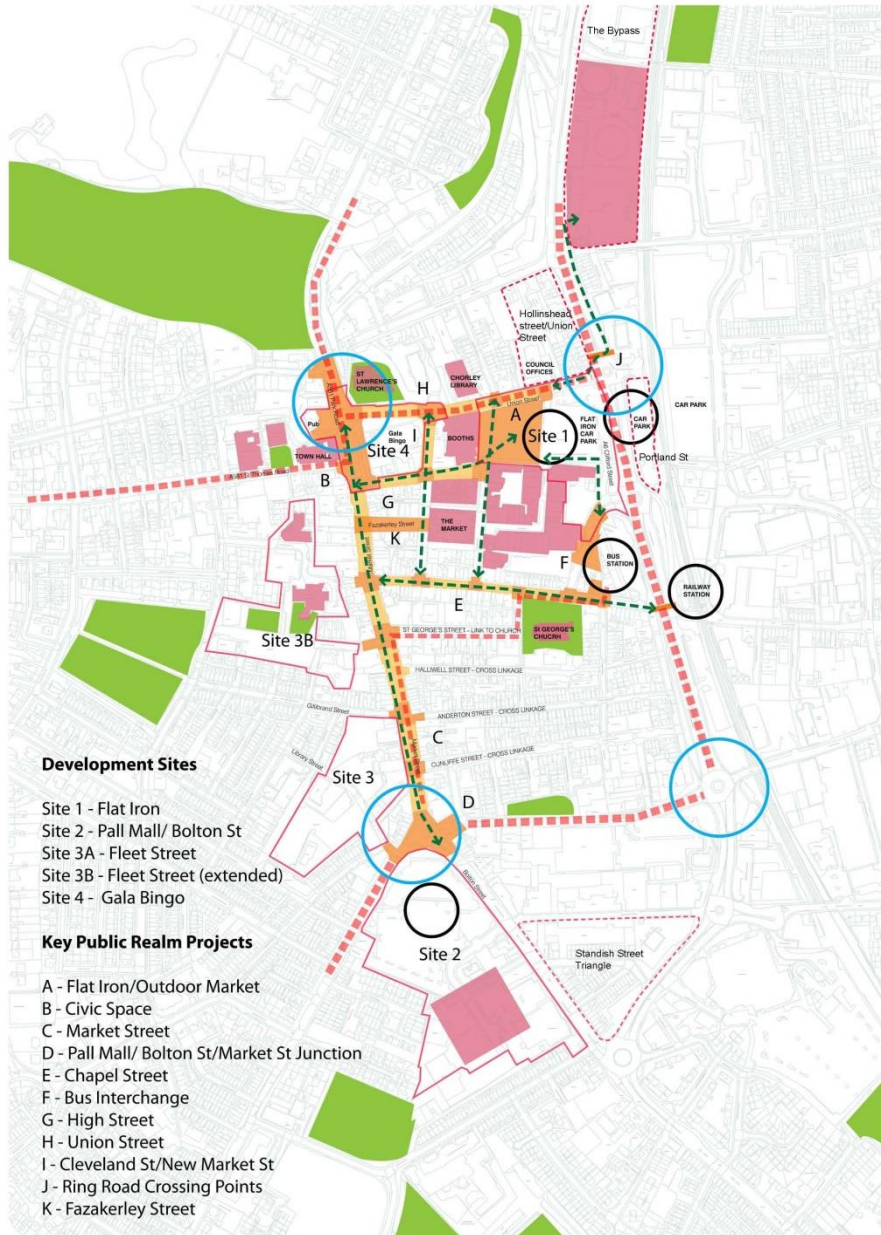
The strategy plan indicates how the sum of the parts can be greater than the whole; working together to deliver a stepped change in the physical environment, which, coupled with site specific land use interventions, in the form of key development projects, will help to deliver the long term vitality and viability of the town centre.

The plan not only indicates new uses, neighbourhoods and destinations, which complement the existing town centre offer – taking advantage of a consolidated retail market and under utilised surface car parks – but is linked by a network of high quality streets and spaces where the pedestrian dominance and movement is enhanced. Areas of 'pedestrian friction' are created and people are encouraged to stop and dwell within new squares and green spaces – located at key heritage destinations within the town centre.

The vision comprises three key components: -

- a) An alteration to the movement framework of the town including the creation of street typologies.
- b) The creation of a public realm framework based on a clear hierarchy of streets and spaces; and clear strategies for planting, lighting and artworks.
- c) Suggestions in relation to the urban design principles of the key opportunity sites including new buildings, and uses to provide the activity and frontage to enliven the public realm.

# 5.1 Public Realm Framework



## The Movement Framework

### Minimising the Impact of the Car and Facilitating Pedestrian Safety

The public realm within Chorley will be transformed to facilitate pedestrian movement/safety and social interaction. This will be achieved by creating a series of street typologies, where the design of the carriageway is altered to give back space to the pedestrian.

The geometry of the streets and spaces will be re-designed to reduce the negative impact of vehicles on the pedestrian by controlling vehicle speeds.

In order to create a legible movement framework, where both pedestrians and vehicles understand and use the streets appropriately, different types of street geometry are proposed which vary depending upon level of vehicle flow and highway classification of the particular street.

## 5.2 Street Typologies

### Shepherds Way

Forms the Outer Ring Road around the Town Centre. Its, large street widths and heavy traffic flow create a barrier to pedestrian connectivity between the Town and the rail station / eastern neighbourhoods and long term opportunity areas of Portland Street. Pedestrian crossing points should be re-designed to facilitate pedestrian movement. Street planting and lighting should help to define this strategic vehicular route.

### Union Street

Connects traffic from the Ring Road, to the A581, but also contains pedestrian movement between key arrival points and destinations to the north of the town. The street should be re-designed along key junctions/intersections with other streets, reducing the dominance of vehicular traffic and enticing footfall into the retail area. Street planting and lighting should help to define this **dynamic gateway approach**.

**Market Street provides a pedestrian** connection between the northern and southern areas of the town. It is already open to two way vehicular traffic at its northern and southern ends, with through traffic restricted. The southern stretch between the big lamp and St George's street comprises northerly bus flows. The street will soon be opened at the northern end to vehicular traffic flowing south for a trial period. By virtue of its street width, level of enclosure, its connectivity and pedestrian flow, it should form the key north/south pedestrian street, but the re-designed geometry (and pedestrian dominance) will vary along its length, providing equal pedestrian priority to the north and increased priority to the south (based on the number of traffic flows within each area). The provision of shared spaces at key junctions will have the benefit of further slowing traffic. With the introduction of widened.

pavements and narrowed carriageways to the south, and pedestrian dominated surfaces to the north, active ground floor uses would be allowed to flourish and embrace the streetscape – an example being New Street in Brighton and Poynton, Cheshire (see case studies).

### High Street/New Market Street, Cleveland Street (southern section) and Fazakerley Street

All provide streets which link the existing retail area with Market Street. Currently, the majority of these streets are pedestrian only and could be re-surfaced with better quality materials, street trees, street furniture and lighting (where practical).

**Chapel Street** should form the main green connection through to St George's, with the introduction of substantial street trees where practical, subject to utility constraints. Chapel Street would be considered as an equal priority between vehicles and pedestrians (with the potential to allow some traffic along its western stretch, all be it within a pedestrian dominated environment, given that is currently pedestrian only, on the basis that there will be enhanced vehicular connectivity with Market Street (for the benefit of commercial units enclosing both streets). Remodeling of all of the above streets will create the potential for active ground floor use to flourish and embrace the streetscape – an example being New Street in Brighton (see case study).



## 5.3 Key Spaces

In order to create the 'pedestrian friction' highlighted within the vision, the potential exists to provide a new Civic Square and green space associated with Site 4. The introduction of pedestrian priority measures at this point is particularly important given that the site forms a knuckle for pedestrian movement accessing Market Street from the retail area, and visa versa.

## 5.4 Case Study – Poynton, Cheshire



# 5.5 Case Study – New Residential Square, Street, Somerset



## 5.6 Case Study – New Road, Brighton



## 5.7 Materials

The 2008 Town Centre Audit by Landscape Projects indicates that there is over 12 different combinations of paving materials palettes, including tarmac, concrete and natural stone materials already existing with Chorley Town Centre.

The wide range of materials give a haphazard impression, one of a poorly coordinated public realm.

Based on this, our approach will be to create a coordinated public realm with a distinct character through subtle manipulation of the traditional materials palette.

The use of high quality materials, especially those that are perceived as a pedestrian, is critical in the transformation of key streets and spaces from a highway to a more pedestrian friendly environment.

Use of natural stone in both pedestrian and trafficked areas will send a strong message to drivers moving through a shared space that traffic is to be slowed down. An example of this can be found in Poynton, Cheshire at the A road junction in the Town Centre which is fully paved in granite. (see case study 2.4)

Unit paving (flags and setts) with its joint patterns and variations is read as smaller in scale and more distinctive than amorphous bituminous materials, both visually and acoustically. The effect is similar to narrowing spaces: car drivers pay more attention and slow down. However natural stone or high quality concrete paving can be combined with bituminous surfacing, to reduce overall costs if necessary.

Key areas such as gateway spaces, junctions and pedestrian crossing points should be distinguished from the main carriageway by the use of distinctive unit paving. Bitumen can be used on well legible intermediate stretches of carriageway.

### Key Principles:

- Create a distinctive character for the area through subtle manipulation of the traditional materials palette;
- Preference for natural materials to respond to existing, for example York Stone;
- Minimise barriers to pedestrian movement;
- Slow traffic along Market Street and Union Street and at key spaces;
- Emphasise key junction/gateway spaces;
- Reduce/minimise vehicular priority through shared surface or minimal kerbs and clearly defined pedestrian crossing points
- Emphasise pedestrian priority movement;
- Subtle integration of car parking;
- Focus of high quality treatment on key pedestrian routes.

## 5.7 Materials

The following provides the type of materials which could be typically used within the different aspects of the public realm, based on their varying use and durability.

### Pedestrian Only Areas & Footpaths

In order to uphold the vision of Chorley as an Historic Market Town, within pedestrian areas (only) natural stone should be used, and could include the following elements:

- York Stone
- Sand Stone

Use of non standard units sizes can create a contemporary character to the street. Sawn finishes can also be used to create variety and tactile finish.

Suitable areas include: Parts of Flat Iron and parts of the new square to the front of the Town Hall, as well as footpath areas within all the streets identified for improvement within the public realm strategy.

Colour of York stone according to location- it can reinforce local distinctiveness. Grey and light buff tones are used.

Stone setts – these are useful for detailing in association with areas of York stone, and they may also be used for smaller scale areas of paving.

Granite setts can also be used to define carriageway edges and drainage channels – particularly where there is vehicular movement.

Recessed access covers to utilities should be provided and the paving taken as close to the cover as possible. Wide areas of mortar should be avoided; any mortar should match the colour of the paving .Angled cutting by access covers may look neater than straight cutting.



Above: York Stone Paving in Sheffield



Above: York Stone Setts

## 5.7 Materials

### Pedestrian Only Areas, Footpaths & Shared (Pedestrian Priority) Surfaces

Granite could be considered as an alternative within pedestrian only areas.

Granite should be used within servicing, shared surfaces and vehicle zones within Pedestrian Only Areas, on the basis of durability. Suitable streets include: Chapel Street (western side), New Market Street, Cleveland Street (south), Market Street (northern area where vehicle movement will be lower).

Granite could be used as an alternative to York/Sand Stone within footpath areas of all the streets identified for improvement within the public realm strategy.



Right: Granite used within pedestrian footpath



Above: Granite channel and setts to servicing areas



Above: Granite channel and setts to servicing areas

## 5.7 Materials

### Street where Pedestrian Priority Should be Increased

Within streets where pedestrian priority should be increased, asphalt with stone chippings can be used within the main carriageway. However there should be a narrowing of carriageways, kerb-to-kerb, but also visually between the kerbs by introducing stone paved channels and/or median strips. Rumble strips: cropped stone (granite) setts paving: rumble effect slows cars down.

Suitable streets include: Chapel Street (eastern side), New Market Street, Cleveland Street (south), Market Street (northern area where vehicle movement will be lower).

Below and right: Asphalt within the carriageway, but granite setts to channel.





## 5.7 Materials

### Street where Pedestrian Priority Should be Increased

Within streets where pedestrian priority should be used to narrow carriageways, which will serve to slow vehicles and provide refuge areas for pedestrians.

Again, granite provides the most suitable material, based on durability.

Suitable streets will be dependent on carriageway width, but this may be feasible along the southern side of Market Street, where vehicle flows are higher.

Below and right: Granite used within the median strip at Hennet and Poynton



## 5.7 Materials

### Street where Pedestrian Priority Should be Increased - Junctions and Courtesy Crossings

Key junctions, spaces and courtesy crossings serve to break the long linear lanes (within shared pedestrian areas) by introducing strips across the road. Crossings to be in feature material (granite stone within the carriageway on the basis of durability) to increase awareness and slow traffic, creating places that feel more like squares than junctions, thus providing a sense of place.

Below and top right: Granite used within the median strip at Hennessey and Poynton



Below: Granite used at a key junction at Poynton



O'Connell Street, Dublin  
Heavy traffic > 300 buses  
per hour  
setts 180 mm deep, various widths/  
lengths, typically 126 mm wide.

## 5.7 Materials

### Gateway Junction

Right: Public art features are used to define the beginning of the Shared Space Principles at Poynton.



# Highways and Car Parking

## 6.0 Site Highway Considerations

### Flat Iron Car park and Environs

The details of the proposed interventions around the Flat Iron car park have been discussed with highways officers at Lancashire County Council. The design principles which have been adopted are consistent with proposals currently being considered elsewhere within Lancashire and Highway Officers have confirmed that the proposals would not have any material effect upon the operation of the highway network in this area.

The proposals could result in the permanent closure of the existing left turn only exit from the car park. This would have little or no impact on internal circulation within the car park itself with general operation of the car park remaining unchanged.

There will also be no material change in the quantum of car parking provision, whereas the quality of the actual parking provision will be enhanced, as will pedestrian amenity.

The enhanced pedestrian amenity will include an improved route from the public transport hubs along the A6, linking better into the retail core. This will be achieved alongside ensuring that the current access requirements of service traffic and bus services are retained.

### Market Street South – Pall Mall / Bolton Street junction

This site is being largely directed by the re-emerging development proposals by ASDA Stores Ltd. External to the ASDA site boundary however, the interventions within the public realm will enable better pedestrian connectivity whilst still ensuring a high throughput of vehicular traffic.

The junction where Bolton Street meets with Pall Mall will become a new gateway into the town along Market Street, where pedestrians and cyclists will be given much more priority over the motor vehicle.

The design principles have been implemented successfully within Poynton Town Centre which is considered an exemplar scheme in this instance as the ultimate aims and objectives of the scheme were similar to the Chorley Town Centre vision.

The operation of the proposed junction layout will require further appraisal work, as agreed with Lancashire County Council, however it should be noted that prior to the Poynton scheme being implemented the main carriageway (A523/A5149) carried on the order of 26,000 vehicles per day which included a large proportion of heavy goods vehicle movements. Since the completion of the scheme no significant highway capacity issues have been experienced. LCC is currently delivering a shared space scheme in Preston and as such development expertise in the shared space arena, understanding of the principles and the culture change which is needed to embrace such a change in traffic management approach is been developed

It is acknowledged that the proposals would be a departure from the committed junction proposals to be delivered as part of the ASDA planning permission. It is therefore recommended that ASDA, and their consultant team, are approached at the earliest opportunity to discuss the future vision for the Town Centre and how the proposals would complement the foodstore development.

## 6.0 Site Highways Considerations

### South Market Street / Fleet Street

This site will see the introduction of new residential properties along with community uses and some ancillary retail offers. In the northern parts of this site, some lesser used car parking sites have been identified for re-use as development plots. This nominal loss of car parking can be addressed by displacement parking demand being catered for in other adjacent areas of the town, including the new car parking at the ASDA foodstore.

The proposed interventions being proposed along Market Street will acknowledge the council's desire to open up this road to one-way (southbound) vehicular traffic at the northern end. This can be achieved whilst still ensuring that pedestrians and cyclists feel that the space belongs to them, which will include wider footways and calmer traffic conditions brought about by removing the feeling of this street from being seen as a highway.

On-street parking along Market Street can be retained, and enhanced. The presence of on-street parking will enable the street to be used by people with a purpose to be there, rather than simply passing through. There are sufficient alternative routes within the highway network in order to ensure that Market Street is used appropriately.

A scheme of improvement works to Market Street is programmed to commence in late 2013 with the intention that the scheme is delivered on a temporary/trial basis. The scheme proposes resurfacing and improvements to the pedestrian environment and incorporating areas of on-street car parking. It is considered that in its current design the temporary scheme is provided as a trial and as such would not comply with the wider approach for Market Street, as part of the wider vision, in respect of the proposed street geometry and the parking solution proposed

Whilst there are no issues with the temporary scheme, the proposals will require further development when promoting the wider Town Centre proposals.

### Civic Quarter

This site comprises a proposal to redevelop the Gala Bingo site and deliver a mixture of town centre uses as well as an improved public green (space) within the Town Centre.

The interventions within the public realm aim to reduce the carriageway space along the Town Hall frontage, providing a more civilised space which connects the Town Hall with the rest of the town.

The reduction in road space will facilitate the introduction of wider footways and deliver a more pedestrianised environment which would tie into the wider masterplan proposals and create a more pedestrianised corridor along Market Street.

The proposals could be further expanded to create a fully shared surface environment fronting the Town Hall where pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic will interact and give-way to each other. In this instance careful consideration will be needed in terms of surface treatment to ensure that requirements of mobility/visually impaired users are incorporated into the ultimate design.

The scheme also proposes to reduce the carriageway width of the highways which form the boundary of the site including Union Street, Cleveland Street and High Street. This will assist in achieving a more active frontage to the new uses and create additional spaces for potential outdoor eating and drinking areas. As the development block will be re-shaped, it is possible to ensure that sufficient vehicular capacity is achieved as well as ensuring sufficient geometry for vehicles to pass each other along the reduced highways bounding the site.

## 6.1 Car Parking and Town Centre Vitality

Town Centre performance is impacted by a range of factors including car parking provision. Car parking is in turn influenced by a range of factors which are listed in the table below

Factor	Optimal Requirement
Cost of charging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low charges will encourage people into the town centre, rather than driving further to out of town centres that offer free parking.</li> </ul>
Method of payment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Payment methods must be easy to understand and straightforward</li> </ul>
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Must be within close proximity to town centre that can be easily reached</li> <li>Optimal accessibility will include access by car and on foot and well signed.</li> <li>Space and access routes leading to and within the car parking should be easy to navigate for modern day vehicles</li> <li>No barriers such as main roads, train lines etc</li> </ul>
Opening hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening hours that reflect the business sectors operating in the town centre</li> <li>Early and late opening for office workers and leisure economy</li> </ul>
Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Car parks that offer good safety with CCTV, lighting, parking attendant</li> </ul>

These factors need to be addressed to:

- improve accessibility;
- increase the number of trips made by visitors, shoppers and businesses;
- increase dwell time; and ultimately
- improve economic performance of the town centre.

For example people may opt to pay higher charges if there is a car park that offers convenient payment options, which is safe and accessible. Whilst it has been documented well that car parking charges effect the vitality of a town centre research also states that whilst it is indeed a factor it is by no means the biggest influence

The overall strength of the high street has been documented to be the biggest factor. This is evidenced in Manchester where central parking can be as much as £18 for a 4 hour stay yet the centre is ranked third in the UK by retail consultants Javelin Group (2013/14).

A report by Yorkshire Forward stated that the relationship between parking and economic performance is actually weak, but generally positive. The report goes on to support the theory that it is the broader retail, commercial, leisure and /or tourism offer which are the primary factors affecting a town's competitiveness.

The Portas Review recommended free, controlled parking schemes. However, free car parking is never 'free' at the very least there is a management cost associated to cover maintenance and effective management. Indeed the Portas Review has been heavily criticised in this respect as merely providing free parking is not the answer to revitalisation of the high street.

Shoppers are tempted to out of town locations but not purely because of free parking, but also due to the town centre's current offer/vitality. Car park users primarily want safe, well connected and convenient parking locations and are willing to pay for these.

Parking can provide a much needed revenue stream which supports other functions be it private or publicly owned. Car parks need to demonstrate that they are fit for purpose, safe facilities and are good value for money (commensurate with the wider offer of the town/city centre).

Car parking strategies can encourage the number and frequency of trips but it is only one of a number of factors effecting town centres. It should be considered collectively when considering town centre development, strategy and vitality.

## 6.2 Car Parking Implications

### Chorley Town Centre Car Parking

There are approximately 1,408 publicly available car parking spaces provided across Chorley town centre in various long and short stay car parks.

Chorley Council operates all Pay and Display car parks. Charges apply to all vehicles parked between the hours of 8am and 5pm Monday to Friday inclusive and 8am and 1pm on Saturdays. No charges apply during the evening, on Saturday after 1pm and all day on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Holders of official disabled permits may park for up to four hours free in any space throughout the car park.

It is apparent that the Flat Iron car park is by far the most popular car park within Chorley town centre.

It is also apparent that there is a significantly higher demand for short stay car parking within the town centre rather than long stay parking.

The results of a car parking analysis carried out between 17<sup>th</sup> November 2012 and 19<sup>th</sup> January 2013 suggest that on average there is 49% spare capacity within the town centre which would equate to an apparent overprovision of approximately 696 spaces.

At the same time, the proposals to provide 435 spaces at the proposed ASDA store which will also cater for town centre shoppers will have implications on car parking usage across the town centre.

This does not suggest that 696 spaces can simply be removed to accommodate the wider Town Centre proposals.

Careful consideration will need to be given to which car parking spaces will be removed to ensure that any nearby facilities or services are not compromised by the reduction of parking availability close by.

It has been determined that up to 381 car parking spaces could be removed as part of the proposals which could include;

Parking on the West side of Town	161 spaces
Fleet Street short stay:	56 spaces
Fleet Street long stay:	164 spaces.

The Fleet Street car parks in particular have been identified as car parks within the Town Centre as having the greatest degree of spare capacity throughout the study period.

The loss of publicly available parking within these areas is not considered detrimental to the wider car parking provision and following the completion of the foodstore any displaced car parking will be able to utilise the further provision delivered as part of the ASDA scheme and the additional on street car parking to be offered on Market Street.

As part of the new uses and facilities being proposed as part of the masterplan options, based on current car parking policy set out within the Joint Lancashire Structure Plan, it has been calculated that an additional parking demand for 207 publicly available spaces will be generated. This will be exclusive of residential car parking provision which will be provided as additional private car parking for residents use only.



## 6.2 Car Parking Implications

The table on the right provides a summary of how the current Town Centre parking supply will be affected by the wider proposals. This table incorporates the number of spaces which will be removed as part of the masterplan options, the additional car parking demand required as of the proposed new uses to be delivered and the effect of the additional 435 spaces to be provided as part of the proposed foodstore scheme.

It can be seen from the table that following the removal of the 381 spaces and the additional demand for 207 spaces resulting from the proposed land uses based on the existing level of usage across the Town Centre there would still be up to 128 publicly available parking spaces. This figure also includes additional provision of up to 20 on-street parking spaces which should be used for collection and short stay trips increasing the vitality on Market Street.

The resultant car parking availability does not take into account the impact of delivering a 435 space car park as part of the ASDA foodstore scheme. This will provide additional public car park provision which will benefit Town Centre visitors on linked trips.

It is therefore considered that there will be no detrimental loss in publicly available car parking across the town centre as a result of the masterplan proposals.

It is also recognised that following the investment into Chorley town centre and delivery of the masterplan options the town centre would become more attractive and potentially attract additional visitors and investment. It has already been demonstrated above that the additional car parking demand of the proposed new uses described in the masterplan options can be catered for within the existing town centre provision which excludes the additional parking provision which will be delivered as part of the proposed foodstore. The foodstore scheme will deliver additional spaces which will be available for use by town centre visitors as well as foodstore customers which will cater for any initial growth in visitor numbers.

**Chorley Town Centre Car Parking Supply Summary**

	Item Total	Adjusted Town Centre Supply	Occupied	Available
<b>Existing Town Centre Car Parking Provision</b>	1408	1408	712	696
<b>Total Parking to be Removed</b>	381	1027	712	315
<b>Additional Parking Demand for Proposed Commercial/Retail/Community Facilities</b>	207	1027	919	108
<b>Additional On-street Parking Provided</b>	20	1047	919	128
<b>Proposed ASDA Car Parking Provision</b>	435	1482		
<b>Total Residential Parking Required</b>	193	Additional private residential car parking to be provided as part of the masterplan.		

Furthermore, it is also anticipated that many foodstore trips will be linked with trips to the town centre which are already being undertaken. These “linked” trips will reduce traffic demand across the town centre as well as demand for additional car parking provision above the existing provision as a number of visitors would be combining their foodstore shopping trip with their usual trip to the town centre.

## 6.2 Car Parking Implications

Assuming that two thirds of the future foodstore car parking provision (292 spaces) would be utilised, and fully occupied, solely by foodstore shoppers only (making no assumptions for “linked” trips) this would leave an additional 143 spaces for town centre users.

Based on the future car parking occupancy levels previously identified of 919 spaces an additional 143 spaces would cater for a growth in parking demand of approximately 15%.

On the above basis, the future car parking provision to be delivered as part of the proposed foodstore as well as the spare provision demonstrated within the town centre is envisaged to cater for future growth in visitor numbers.

In terms of parking control methods, maintaining the existing method of Pay & Display would represent the most cost effective solution at present, however, there are clearly alternative measures of control which could be implemented across the town such as pay on exit. However, these measures will require an element of physical control such as an entry/exit barrier system and large payment units.

These facilities can occupy additional space and amount to additional street furniture which can clutter the pedestrian environment.

It should also be noted that the results of the car parking survey indicate that there is significantly higher demand for short stay car parking within the Town Centre with the long stay car parks generally showing a greater level of spare capacity. In this instance, pay on exit car parking management systems can prove more expensive and less efficient, particularly if consistency is required across each public car park. It is therefore recommended that investment is made into the existing system with improved ticket machines and promotion of the alternative payments such as pay by phone/text.

This method would allow visitors to **pay for parking remotely** and should they wish to stay for a longer period they could simply extend the parking period without returning to the vehicle which would encourage longer stays within the town centre.

### Highway Authority Discussions

Meetings and discussions were held with Lancashire County Council (LCC) Highways, including a meeting on 17 May 2013 and a follow-up meeting on 8 August 2013. The key points arising from this process were as follows:

- The consultant team expressed a desire to introduce a gateway feature at the southern end of Market Street, in the form of a shared-space roundabout arrangement
- LCC acknowledged that consideration of the use of shared spaces would be something worthy of further study.
- Any proposals to alter the current intentions for the design of this junction and the surrounding highways should be explored with all interested parties, including the foodstore developer which holds a current planning consent with an agreed highway impact mitigation plan for the area.
- A thorough technical assessment of any future interventions across the town should be carried out, particularly examining highway capacity considerations associated with the introduction of shared spaces

## 6.3 Highways and Car Parking Summary

### Summary

In conclusion, whilst the above interventions and masterplan proposals can be shown to be sound in traffic and transport terms, the council should consider undertaking detailed traffic and car parking study to aid successful implementation. This should comprise occupancy surveys across weekdays and at weekends, including driver questionnaires to identify trip purposes in order to ensure that undue commercial pressure is not exerted upon potential developers, requiring them to deliver extra parking if this is simply not required.

The Pall Mall/Bolton Street junction proposals in particular would require further traffic analysis in order to demonstrate that the proposals will be operate successfully and satisfy ASDA that the scheme would complement their foodstore proposals.

Car parking is not the sole influence on town centre performance and should only be considered as a holistic package of measures used to secure and enhance town centre vitality. It is, however, a contentious issue the importance of which appears to escalate as an issue the lower the regional role of a centre.

Parking issues which should be addressed as part of the town centre strategy for Chorley include the following:

- Provision of modern, safe car parking facilities
- Convenient parking payment methods
- Improved connectivity between parking areas, station and core town centre
- These issues need to be addressed in a strategic manner as each will have a mutual benefit to the other

# Planning Implications

## 7.0 Planning Policy Implications

This report forms part of the wider emerging Chorley Local Plan, which although not adopted is at an advanced stage and would be a material consideration for any future planning decisions

### Planning Policy Allocations

Three opportunity sites have been identified, all of which fall within the Chorley Town Centre boundary (as defined by the Chorley Local Plan Policies Map (Publication version 2012)). This forms part of the wider Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document which is currently undergoing a period of Post Examination modification (until 26<sup>th</sup> August 2013).

Although the most recent Development Plan Document has not yet been adopted – it is at an advanced stage and would be a material consideration for any future planning decisions.

### Retail Uses

Within the Town Centre there are a number of relevant policies (as contained within the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy from July 2012) and within the Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 (Publication version). Of most relevance are:

**Chorley Local Plan Policy EP5** defines a number of sites within Chorley Town Centre for potential retail development, this includes:

- *EP 5.1* Flat Iron Car Park
- *EP 5.2* Bolton Street / Pall Mall
- *EP 5.3* 5-9 Gillibrand Street
- *EP 5.4* High Street / Cleveland Street

**Chorley Local Plan Policy EP6** highlights that for those areas within the Primary Shopping Area and Primary / Secondary Shopping Frontages a number of ‘town centre’ uses will be acceptable, and this includes;

A1 shops, A2: financial and professional services, A3 restaurants and cafes, A4 drinking establishments and A5 hot food takeaways.

On this basis, given their Town Centre location, any future retail development is likely to be supported by the Council, depending on the capacity parameters set out within the Central Lancashire Retail and Leisure Review (from 2010). This will be of most significance for Opportunity Site 1: Flat Iron Event Space / Car Parking Improvement and for Opportunity Site 2: Civic Square.

For Opportunity Site 1: Flat Iron Car Park the recent planning permission (ref: 12/01169/FULMAJ) offers an opportunity to think more strategically in relation to the future redevelopment of this site and the retailing function that this will have.

### Residential Uses

This relates specifically to those proposals for Opportunity Site 3: South Market Street / Fleet Street. Whilst there are a small number of specific housing allocations (of 50 units or fewer) within the Town Centre / and direct periphery. The suitability of this opportunity site will be determined by undertaking detailed survey work in relation to accessibility and highways impacts. It will also require the phasing of sites within this area and some site assembly.

Whilst the 5 year housing supply statement as published in May 2012 identifies that there is a **5.89 year housing supply**. This area would class as a ‘brownfield windfall’ site.

Chorley Council have adopted their Community Infrastructure Levy with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2013, as a result payments will be required in accordance with their charging schedule based on floorspace and use

# Phasing & Delivery Summary

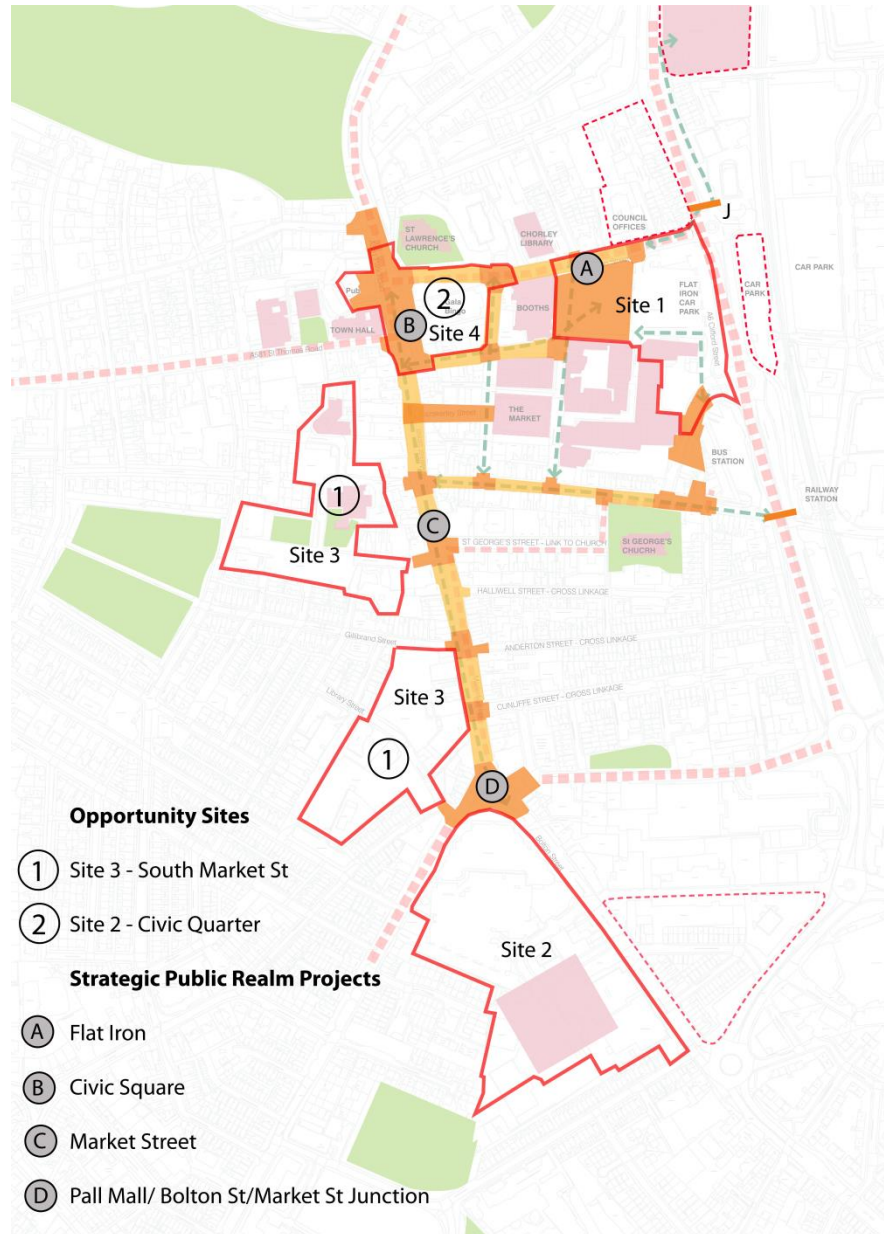
## 8.0 Phasing

We have set out below the anticipated timeframe for the delivery of the key opportunities and public realm works. The phasing is ordered to achieve the maximum benefit from the proposal which have the least complexity to delivery.

This is by no means a fixed plan and the Council will need to remain flexible as to respond to opportunity as it presents itself. This will largely dictate the timescale of the implementation of the other suggested public realm intervention sites.

Opportunity Site / Public Realm Project	Timeframe for Delivery			Phasing	Comments
	1-3	3-5	5+		
<b>Flat Iron Event Space / Car Parking Improvement</b>	✓			1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capable of starting once design is agreed.</li> </ul>
<b>Civic Square / carriageway improvements</b>	✓			2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Would set the quality of the vision and establish the linkage of this key employment quarter with the retail heart and commences the change of Market Street.</li> <li>Demonstrates the commitment to the Civic Quarter development.</li> <li>Sets the principle of comprehensive development in a phased manner.</li> </ul>
<b>South Market Street / Fleet Street</b>	✓	✓		3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is much work to do to get this site 'market ready' but the opportunity has real credibility and is capable of delivery in the short term.</li> <li>The Council investment into the Gillbrand Street retail should set the tone of the quality of design proposed for this area of change.</li> </ul>
<b>Market Street / Bolton Street / Pall Mall Junction</b>	✓			4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The revisit of the planning application provides a timely opportunity to rework the junction proposal and to provide a more appropriate high quality, low engineered solution to act as the gateway to this area of change and wider Market Street improvements.</li> </ul>
<b>Market Street – Shared Space</b>	✓			5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The opening of Market Street pilot by the Council provides for real time testing of the proposal although the pilot should be launched at the same time as the design proposals for the shared space as not to damage the overall perception of the proposal.</li> </ul>
<b>Civic Quarter Development</b>			✓	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site assemble and identification of end occupiers are the main constraints which will dictate the timescale for the development of this site.</li> <li>The development framing, public realm works of the Civic Square and Market Street shared space proposals will be critical to demonstrating the vision of the Council in establishing the Civic Quarter.</li> </ul>

# 8.1 Phasing Plan





## 8.2 Delivery Summary

The Stage 2 report has set out in detail the core plan for the revitalisation of Chorley Town Centre. There are some bold moves in the plan – but not too many of them.

By focussing on the bold moves and the cornerstone projects set out in the plan we firmly believe that the vision for the town centre can be achieved.

These moves are designed to have different yet complementary time frames for implementation, with the later phases benefitting from the investment and development which has been made before it.

The Council will be a key enabler and critically the custodian of the plan. This is important – and it will become both an illustration of best practice and an exemplar for others around the Country. With the Council in the lead – as an investor as well as a leader the town centre will become critical to the economic success of the borough, the vibrancy of the local economy and the wellbeing of the resident population.

Through any investment made the Council should consider how through such, it is able to increase revenues which could be ring fenced and used to leverage further investment in the town centre.

The plan creates a new framework within the town centre which can continue to prosper – not just as a retail centre but as a community hub, a home to business, a place to live and a great place to be, both as resident and a visitor.



## Real Estate

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