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CHORLEY MARKETS STRATEGY 2017 - 2026





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Introduction

Chorley is synonymous with its markets and more recently the red/white gazebos adorning the Flat Iron market each Tuesday. Chorley is currently a convenience town with the exception of Tuesdays when it is very much a destination town drawing visitors from across the region and from further afield on coach trips. The Covered Market in Market Place is also a well visited facility which is open 5 days a week and has evolved in recent years to become ever more enclosed with stalls becoming more permanent in nature. Specialist Food & Craft markets are currently held in Fazakerley Street on one Saturday each month.

There are a number of opportunities presenting themselves for the development and expansion of Chorley Markets in order for them to continue to be a primary destination for future visitors to Chorley Town Centre whilst enabling them to better serve the needs of their customers. Some major changes are being proposed for Chorley Town Centre over the next decade and the markets need a clear path of how they are to be best integrated into these plans. Markets are an important part of Chorley's identity and it is crucial to the town's future success that they are embraced in any future plans whilst also being further developed to reinforce their position in the town's retail hierarchy. The proposals outlined below are bold and ambitious but will result in a more resilient market service for the future.

Summary of Proposed Changes

1. Fazakerley Street public realm improvements are completed to accommodate more outdoor stalls
 - To accommodate the temporary relocation of the Flat Iron market
 - To provide a better facility for specialist markets and street events
2. Chorley Flat Iron market temporarily relocates to the pedestrianised area of the town centre
 - To accommodate the construction of the Market Walk extension / reconfiguration of Flat Iron
 - Also to include the lower end of High Street for casual stall allocation
3. Chorley Flat Iron market potentially could relocate to the new Town Square, alongside the new pavilion, if it is determined that it doesn't stay in the pedestrianised area permanently
 - Some relocations would be required in order to complete the public realm improvements to the pedestrianised areas and High Street
4. Potentially Chorley Covered market relocates to a new indoor location within Market Walk
 - With direct links to the bus station and high daily footfall
5. Potentially the former Covered Market site (Market Place) is redeveloped to provide a new permanent covered structure anchored by several fixed unit food & beverage establishments and public toilets
 - To enable regular speciality markets and small events to be held under cover (not indoor)

The above proposals will give Chorley, Lancashire's Market Town, 4 distinct areas for different style markets to be held:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Weekly 1 day outdoor market (Town Square) | – General merchandise |
| 2. Daily indoor market (Market Walk Market) | – Quality traders & food hall |
| 3. Weekly specialist market (Market Place Covered Market) | – Strict criteria on quality/knowledge |
| 4. Weekly street market – (Fazakerley St Market) | – General merchandise |



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Rather than marginalising the markets as the town centre develops they will become a key feature of the Chorley townscape providing facilities for different market types in a variety of purpose built locations.

Flat Iron Market

The market consultants, Quarterbridge, were engaged in 2015 to assist in evaluating the future expansion of Chorley Markets and any opportunities the proposals for the Market Walk extension may present. Part of their scope included the evaluation of alternative sites on which to locate the market during the construction phase of the extension. As a result the use of street locations, primarily consisting of Fazakerley Street and Market Street (north), were considered to be the most appropriate setting for a temporary location.

Since the inception of the Quarterbridge report a Public Realm Masterplan update has since been commissioned by consultant landscape designers, Planit, and part of their proposals recommend the creation of a new Town Square on the current site of Gala Bingo/Oak House. This site was briefly considered within the Quarterbridge report but, as it was 'not within the Council's gift' at the time, was discounted as unachievable in the short term.



Proposed new Civic Square (from Market Street)

The Public Realm report since recommends the Civic Square becomes a multifunctional civic space which could accommodate all or part of the Flat Iron weekly outdoor market as we seek to expand it in the future. This new square will be a key town centre space using high quality materials and a design befitting of a thriving market including a new pavilion. It is part of a wider scheme of town centre wide public realm improvements which will redefine pedestrian flow throughout the town centre with the provision of more green and open spaces. This includes improving the pedestrian links through to the Covered Market in Market Place and Fazakerley Street; connecting the new Civic Square to the centre of town and vice versa.



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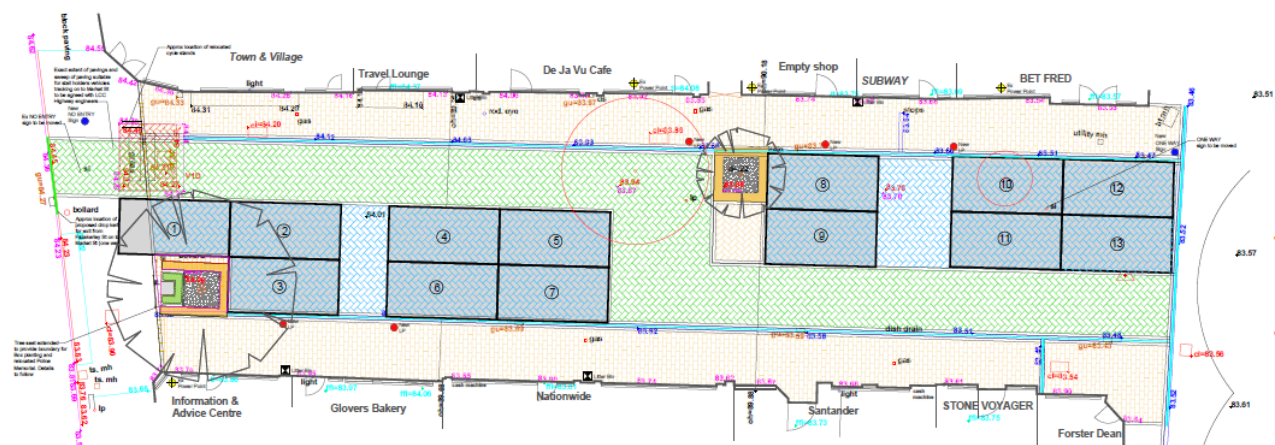
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Proposed new Civic Square Pavilion

Short Term (early 2017)

The initial phase of the redevelopment of the Flat Iron car park may require the Flat Iron market to move across to the bypass side (as was done for the resurfacing works in 2015) to enable works to commence with the reconfiguration of the car park to the Booths frontage. At the same time the public realm improvement works in Fazakerley Street will be undertaken in preparation to accept an increased number of market stalls.



De-cluttering of Fazakerley Street

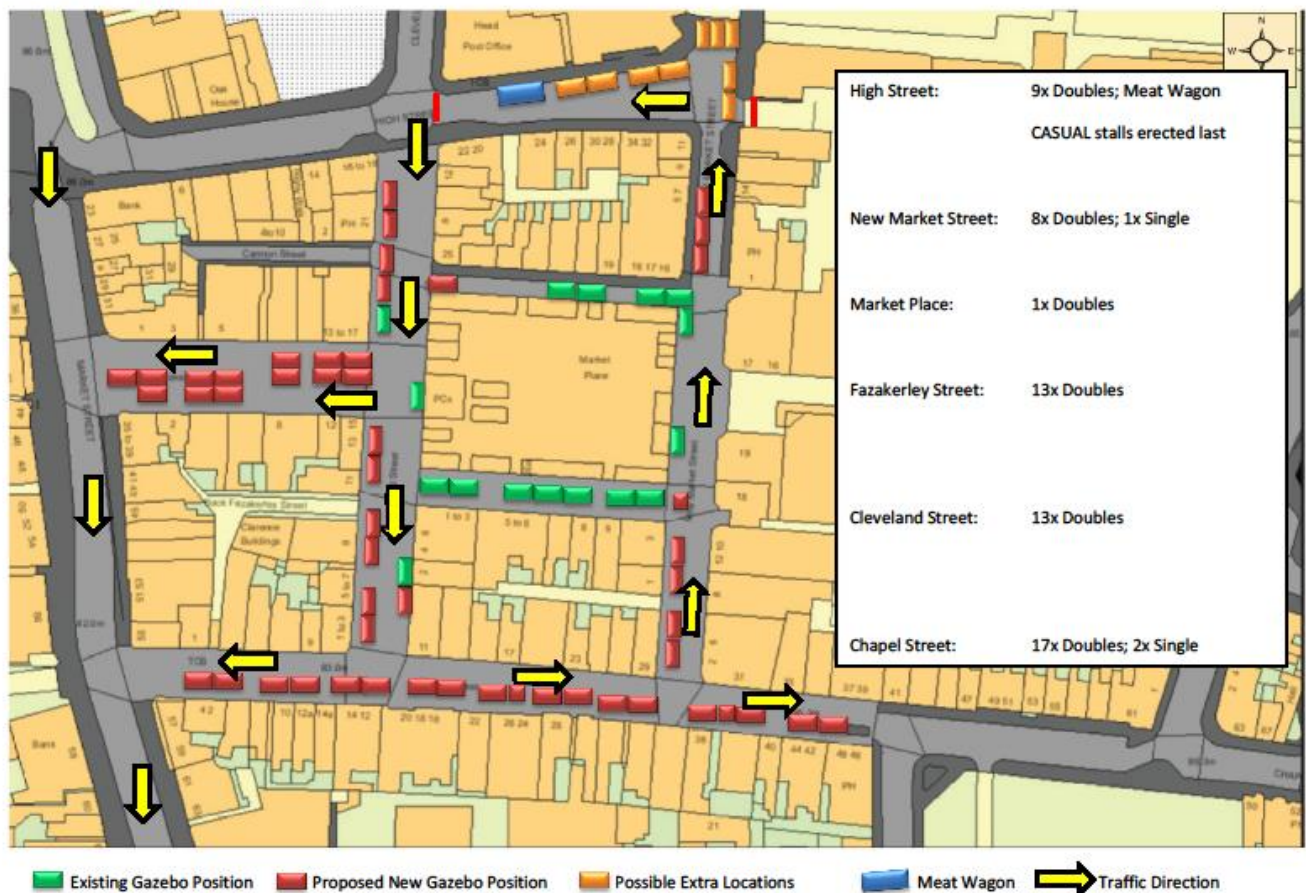


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Medium Term (2017/18)

The next phase will require the Flat Iron market to relocate, in its entirety, to town centre street locations, namely the pedestrianised areas Fazakerley Street, New Market Street, Cleveland Street, Chapel Street and also potentially High Street to enable the main Market Walk extension works to take place. These plans were consulted upon in October 2016 and the results can be found in Appendix A.

Chorley Street Market Proposal



Plans have been drawn up to accommodate up to 52 double gazebos and 3 single gazebos which will enable all current permanent Flat Iron gazebo trading positions to be offered an alternative position. The High Street location will accommodate casual traders and be erected last and dismantled first to allow access for businesses up to 8am and after 4:30pm.

Long Term (late 2018)

To enable the public realm improvements to be undertaken in the pedestrian areas in a later phase, the weekly outdoor market will need relocating either in part or whole to the proposed new Civic Square - whichever is determined to be of greatest benefit to traders and considered the best place to do business as the market seeks to expand and develop.



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Proposed new Civic Square (Market layout)

The remnant area for parking on the Flat Iron car park would be reduced in size, configuration skewed and not completely flat so unable to accommodate the full Flat Iron market in its current format once the works are complete. Therefore, in order to expand Chorley's weekly outdoor market it may require to be multi-located.

There are several options available to us as town centre proposals develop and come to fruition; which can be further assessed as and when they become available. All proposals on future locations will be consulted upon.

It is proposed to relocate the Flat Iron market in spring 2017 and directional signs will be installed on the Flat Iron site informing visitors of the new locations along with a marketing campaign to promote Chorley Markets.



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Market Walk Market

The existing Covered Market in Market Place currently contains a variety of stall types with shuttered cabins, open table-top stalls, stall space and external gazebos and pitches. It has historically always been in this location and as a consequence the building fabric and services to the stalls are an amalgamation of different structural additions over time and whilst it is somewhat vibrant, and has an ambience of a traditional bustling market, it is not fit for purpose in today's modern retailing world where permanency improves standards to meet and exceed customer expectations – especially the younger customer. In recent years neighbouring towns such as Bolton, Blackburn, Preston and Southport have all invested in their indoor markets, as their town centres have been redeveloped, and now Chorley has an opportunity to do the same.

One proposal is to create a new indoor market within the existing Market Walk development which could offer connections from the town centre through to the bus station. The public realm report identifies this as a key pedestrian gateway with proposals for further improvements made to Clifford Street including developing a green space to welcome visitors approaching from the bus station into Chorley, Lancashire's market town, through the market itself.



Proposed new Market Walk Market (Clifford Street entrance)

Internally the pedestrian links would be enhanced to form a thoroughfare (similar to the centre aisle in the existing Covered Market) and openings created to external space for food and beverage facilities. Depending upon final design options, accessibility and demand for stall units a first floor could also be opened up to add a further dimension to the trading opportunities. Site opportunities will be assessed as and when they become available.

One area of concern with many new market designs is the lack of ambience and this will be considered carefully, after consultation with existing traders and their customers, before any final design recommendations would be made.



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Market Place (Covered Market)

The Quarterbridge report recommends a covered area be created in Fazakerley Street for holding speciality markets and events; however in the public realm proposals we are now suggesting something slightly more substantial for the area where the current Covered Market is situated, subject to the existing Covered Market having been successfully relocated, for this purpose.

The new Covered Market proposed for Market Place will be a substantially framed unit providing shelter for a variety of activities which could be held underneath including the use of gazebos for market stalls. It will be bounded by a small number of permanent units which will incorporate the public toilets and a small number of kiosks to operate as food and beverage outlets along with pavement seating. It could regularly be used alongside Fazakerley Street for holding Speciality markets and small events such as: Antiques & Collectors Fairs (quality flea market), Next Generation (youth) Market, Up Market (luxury goods), Craft (cottage industry) Markets, Food & Drink festivals, Christmas Markets, outdoor theatre and other street performances.



Proposed new Covered Market (Market Place)

Fazakerley Street Market

As previously described above, the weekly outdoor market could enjoy new environs on the Civic Square but Fazakerley Street will also remain as an additional outdoor stall area for use each Tuesday. As this area has already been re-designed to specifically accommodate market stalls, it will continue to supplement the proposed new Covered Market in Market Place to accommodate speciality markets and events throughout the year as well as supplementary stall position for the weekly outdoor market each Tuesday.



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Precedents

Street Markets - Visits to other Lancashire towns (Ormskirk, Lancaster and St Helens) with street markets were undertaken to establish any operational requirements to consider and the potential impact on frontages.

Covered Markets – A similar multifunctional covered space has already been successfully introduced into Altrincham market place used for general goods and food and drink on different days of the week.



Food & Beverage



General Market

Next Steps:

The new town centre Public Realm Proposals and Masterplan document will be consulted upon in general terms and then more specifically as each phase develops. In the short/medium term the Flat Iron market will be temporarily relocated to enable the Market Walk extension works to commence and then as that phase nears completion a review of the temporary position will be undertaken and a plan developed, alongside traders, to determine where is the best place to do business in the long term and how that can be achieved.

Consultation on more specific Covered Market proposals will be held in the future when that phase of development is scheduled for delivery (currently phase 4).

Constraints

There are a number of assumptions made on site availability timelines for design, consultation, permissions, procurement and delivery; and the necessary funding being available.



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Appendix A

Consultation Results

A Survey Monkey Consultation took place between 4th October and 6th November 2016. The survey was accessed from the Town Centre Improvements webpage within the Council's site. The page had 1822 unique visitors during the consultation period.

222 participants took part (hand written surveys were input)

1. 91% of respondents have shopped on Chorley Markets in the last 12 months
2. 91% of respondents were shoppers/visitors; 3% market traders and 3% town centre businesses
3. 77% of respondents agree that the Flat Iron market should be temporarily relocated; 12% disagree
4. 70% of respondents think it is important to have the Flat Iron market close to other shops and markets
5. Other important factors mentioned include:
 - a. Maintaining good disabled access
 - b. Space to circulate around the stalls
 - c. Increased parking availability
 - d. Pedestrian safety
6. Which location is preferred (score 4 or 5):
 - a. Market Street 54%
 - b. Fazakerley Street 58%
 - c. Chapel Street 49%
 - d. Cleveland Street 41%Other areas: High Street, Portland Street car park, Astley Park
7. Flat Iron traders think the following are important (score 4 or 5):
 - a. Having good access for loading/unloading
 - b. Being close to toilet facilities
 - c. Easy access for the public
8. The day of the week people would most like to see an additional Market Day is Saturday.
9. Only 26% of respondents think the Flat Iron market should return to its original location compared to 52% who think other options should be considered
10. In relation to the Covered Market:
 - a. 64% of respondents feel that the fabric of the building is important
 - b. 62% of respondents feel that the facilities and access are important
 - c. 62% of respondents feel that the location is important
 - d. 70% of respondents feel that the type and mix of stalls is important
 - e. 76% of respondents feel that the quality of stall is important
 - f. 63% of respondents feel that the opening hours are important
 - g. 51% of respondents feel that a food & drink offer is important
11. How can the Covered Market be improved:
 - i. Needs more quality food & drink/ artisan stalls
 - ii. Introduce more seating areas
 - iii. Improve the quality of product available



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12. Of the other markets visited people rate Bolton the best and Preston the least inspiring.
 - a. Bury market is the most popular market not listed
13. 46% of respondents feel that our Specialist markets are OK but have room to improve and 60% of respondents would like to see them more regularly
 - a. People commented:
 - i. The number of stalls needs increasing
 - ii. The quality and differential needs maintaining
 - iii. Would work better not clashing with the regular market
 - iv. Weekends are the best time for them
 - v. Improve the marketing
14. Other general comments on Chorley markets were:
 - a. The markets are an important part of Chorley's heritage and should remain so
 - b. The changes are needed to modernise the offer but don't let Chorley be just like other neighbouring towns losing its character

Facebook

The consultation was promoted on the Council's Facebook page and reached 31,928 people with 794 clicks through to further information. Of these people 115 were aged 65+ signifying the wide reach of this format.



Comments on Facebook generally reflected the survey results in the opinion that the market should come off the Flat Iron and be relocated into the streets. A subsequent post showing the trial erection of gazebos into the pedestrianised streets generated a positive response but many commented on the restriction of movement when stalls were doubled up in Cleveland Street and Chapel Street, as a result of which the proposed plan now has only single width stalls apart from Fazakerley Street where it is designed to be doubled up.

Trader Questionnaires

Flat Iron and Covered Market traders were given questionnaires on the proposals and 34 were received back (25 Flat Iron and 9 Covered). The majority of Flat Iron traders just indicated preferred stall position off the plan (which were primarily in Fazakerley Street and Chapel Street) and left no comment. Others stated a preference to utilise other pedestrianised streets rather than Market Street. The Covered Market traders preferred to keep Market Street open to traffic but a few were concerned of similar product lines being in proximity to their business.