







The strategic goal of the Christchurch area of the masterplan is to build upon the successful civic public realm work already established on Earle Street around the council offices to the north. By setting the church in a public realm space and removing some of the barriers between the church and the council offices it is possible to extend the quality of the existing public realm area for greater use.

This part of the Vernon Way ring road allows vehicles to bypass the town or access the Tesco's site on the outskirts of the town with relative ease but it reduces the permeability of a number of sites within the town centre to the south of the church and causes significant severance issues for pedestrians and cyclists to the east of the town, especially on High Street, Forge Street and Chester Street.

If this area is to become a successful district of the town, the ring road alignment needs to act

as a gateway into the town from sites beyond the ring road. By improving the alignment of Vernon Way and providing accessible crossing points along its route the Christchurch area can be re-established as an important area within the town.

The masterplan proposals include the introduction of residential and leisure facilities along the newly aligned ring road edge to provide greater emphasis to the town's edge and prevent the townscape falling away at the edges.

Projects that are included within the Christchurch masterplan area are:

#### **Municipal square:**

Removal of the raised deck access to the south of the existing civic space, the library and court buildings to be refurbished to accommodate new ground floor uses and the inclusion of a

prominent new leisure facility to include a new restaurant, museum space, or gallery.

#### **Christchurch:**

Infill residential, leisure and office developments with active ground floor uses within the updated Christchurch block.

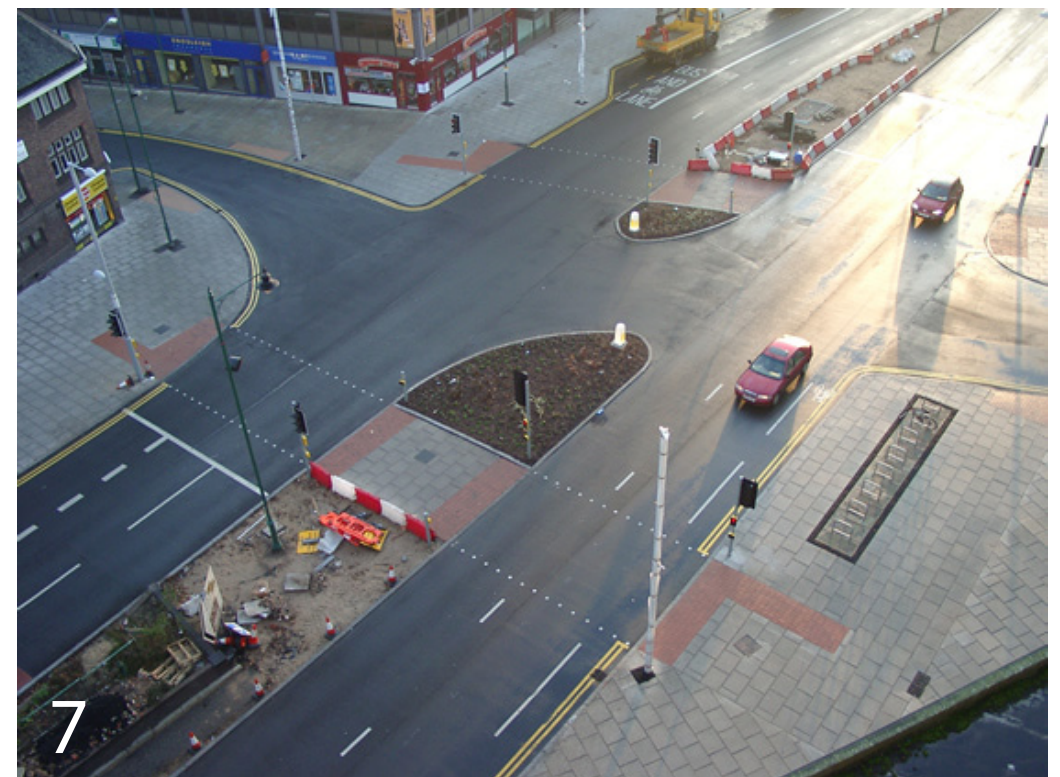
#### **Vernon Way:**

New edge of town centre retailing along a realigned Vernon Way

#### **High Street:**

A new night time destination with cafes, bars and restaurants with a mix of apartments and the introduction of enhanced public realm on Market Street, High Street and Edleston Road to improve routes into town from the proposed car park.







### 1. New Retailing

Large format retailing done sympathetically and mixed with housing.

### 2. Surface parking

The Council have a number of car parks that detract from the quality of the centre and have the potential for development.

### 3. Boulevard

The new Vernon Way should be pedestrian friendly with surface level crossings.

### 4. Leisure Space

Outdoor leisure space in a pedestrian priority shared surface zone. A model that could be explored in High Street and around the leisure quarter to encourage cuisine and other leisure uses to cluster.

**5. Supermarket,** Large format retailing does not have to be done in a standardised fashion. In Switzerland, Mpreiz and other large retail companies are innovating and creating dynamic architecture for towns and cities.

### 6/7. Vernon Way

The road today is wasteful and ineffective and cannot handle the capacity of traffic flow at peak times. In comparison, Maid Marian Way in Nottingham has been remodelled to deal with capacity issues and to overcome the severance caused by the original layout.



## Delivery and Phasing Plan

The major projects within the Christchurch area include improvements to the existing municipal square, to include the retention of the square, library and courts but with the removal of the raised deck area; alterations to the alignment of Vernon Way to allow significant additional retail and leisure with residential over the offices; widening of the bridge at the Vernon Way/Earle Street junction to permit better pedestrian access between town centre, with additional retail; improvements on the mixed-use leisure area along High Street; and development of the area surrounding the church itself to include a new residential and community building adjacent to the historic monument.

A variety of owners are involved in all five projects, including Cheshire County Council, Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council (CNBC) at the municipal square site, Hawkstone Properties and CNBC along Vernon Way and High St., CNBC and Railtrack at the Earle Street bridge site, and CNBC and the Church of England within the Christ church site. It is significant that CNBC owns parcels of land within all five project areas.

In broad terms the value generated by the development in terms of new retailing in particular should be sufficient to cover the costs of realigning Vernon Way, the public realm and bridge improvements. The starting point is therefore for the council to promote a public private partnership with the key owners and either work with them to bring a scheme forward or jointly appoint a developer. There may be a need for the Council to play a role in land assembly, possibly through CPO. The public realm and road improvements should either be procured as part of the development, through land receipts or via Section 106 contributions.

The timescale of all these project developments is envisaged to be between 0 and 5 years.

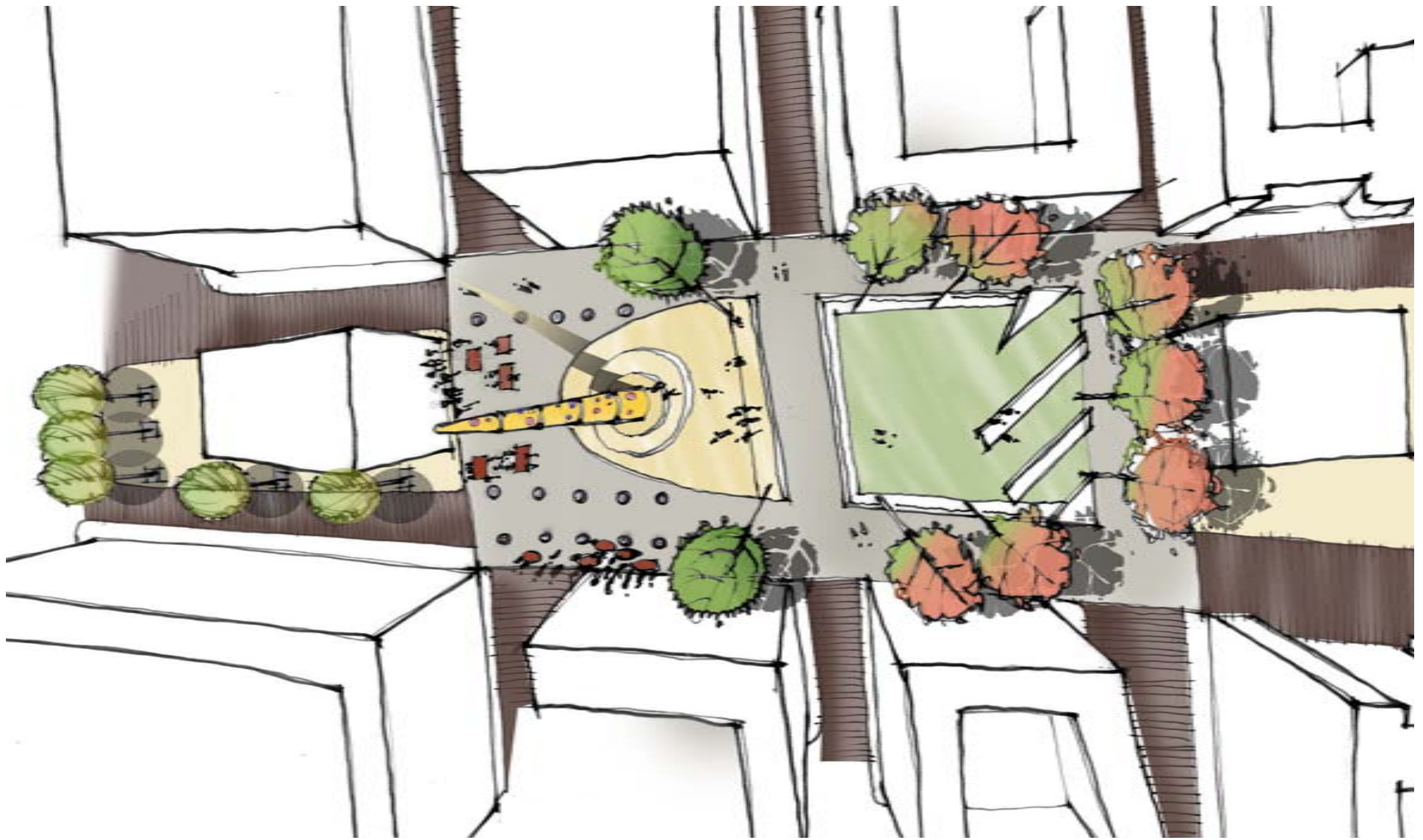
# CHRISTCHURCH





WEST ST./VICTORIA ST.





The retail core of the town is in the process of undergoing significant redevelopment over the next few years with the proposed introduction of the Delamere Place scheme. This scheme includes the repositioning of the bus station off Chester Street, the introduction of a large anchor store in the south west corner of the site. Following the completion of this scheme there will be a need to re-evaluate the retail and car park areas north of Victoria Street to ensure that they are able to compete. The masterplan therefore proposes the redevelopment of this area, facilitated by the relocation and expansion of the Asda store. This will include a mix of retail, leisure and residential uses to broaden the attractions of the town centre.

The masterplanning proposals for this area are based on reinstating the street grid of the town at this point so that the Victoria Street area is united once again with the West Street neighbourhoods. West Street will become an important boulevard running through the area and the grid will also allow a strong north-south route to be created through the area linking to the new shopping centre and the bus station beyond.

The main proposals for the Centres area are:

#### **West Street:**

New retail and residential development along the road to form a defining edge to the town, increased pedestrian presence between the

residential areas to the north and the town, and boulevarding of the road to create a strong visual identity to the town.

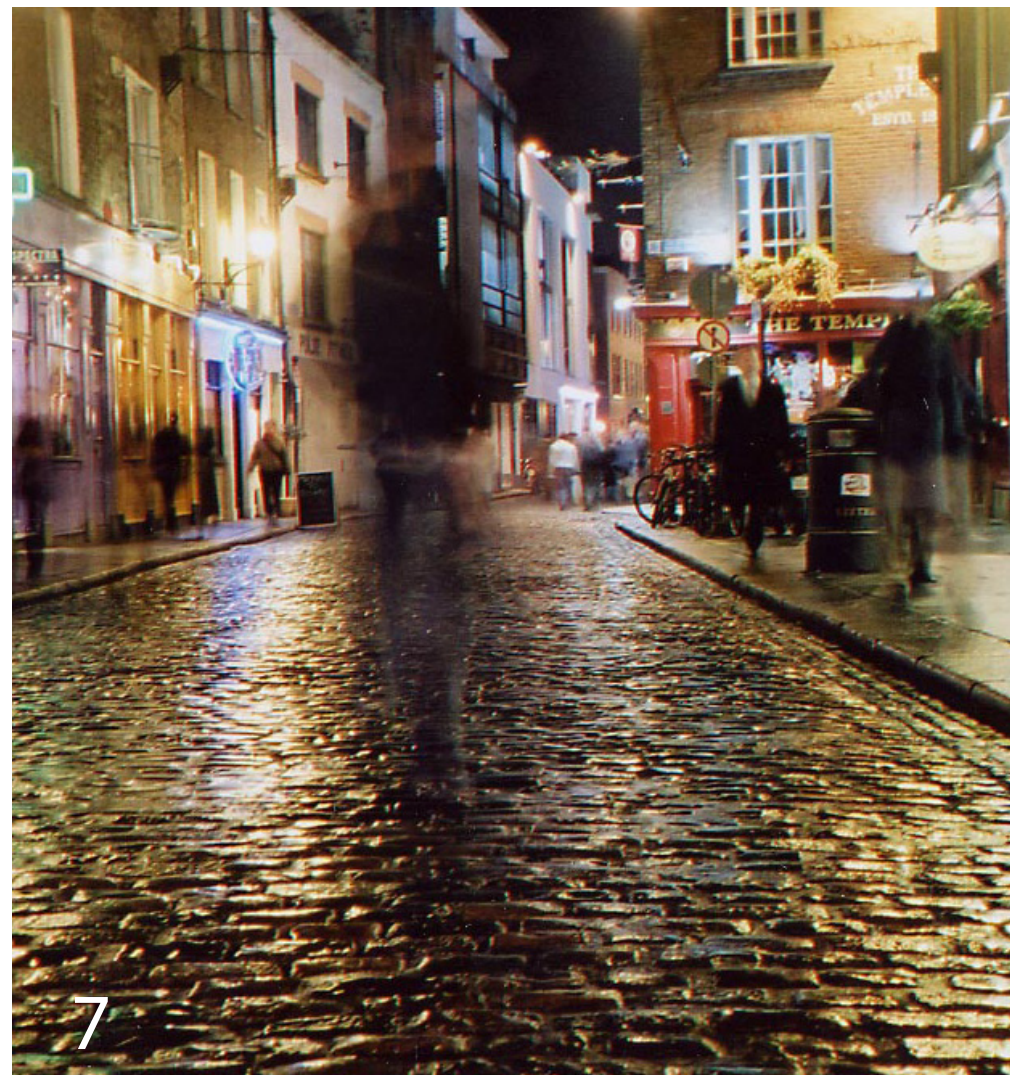
#### **New Victoria:**

A mixed use quarter strengthening the identity and grain of the area surrounding and emphasising key existing facilities such as the Limelight and the Lyceum. The scheme will be based on the two public squares.

#### **Market Centre:**

Remodelling of the area at a later phase to include retail improvements and the enhancement of the existing Lyceum square.







### 1. Bogey Square

The existing spaces in the area create character and interest. The masterplan seeks to recreate spaces such as these but with greater activity and connectivity to the rest of the town.

### 2. West Street

Active, animated and busy streets such as this one in Germany can be welcoming to pedestrians.

### 3. Side Streets

The network and intimacy of the Centres should not be lost. There is a need to open the area up and make it more accessible via a new grid of streets.

### 4. Urban Housing

Compact urban housing can create a pleasant town centre environment

### 5. Car Parking,

The area is currently dominated by multi-storey parking that would be tidied away into a multi storey car park releasing large areas of land for development.

### 6. Leisure Uses

Lyceum Square should be a magnet for leisure use in future. Removing the parking and careful public realm design could animate the space.

### 7. New Leisure Links

Intimate routes in Temple Bar in Dublin with predominantly leisure uses.



## Delivery and Phasing Plan

Three major projects are included within the masterplan area; West Street corridor proposals connecting the residential area north of the town to the retail centre, the New Victoria residential, retail and leisure developments along Victoria Street; the re-modelling/ redevelopment of the Market Centre to include improvements to the existing Lyceum Square with additional new council offices and multi-storey carparking facilities.

The West Street development sites are predominantly owned by Cheshire County Council and in current use for educational purposes. The New Victoria and Market Centre are within freehold ownership of CNBC with long leaseholdings to Asda and Threadneedle respectively.

The redevelopment of this area is possible because of the relatively simple land ownership and the controlling interest of the council. The sites north of West Street will come available as the county council uses are relocated. These should be packaged up and put out to the market. It is anticipated that the area south of West Street will come forward as a joint venture between the council and the owners. This is not likely to happen in the short term. However once the Modus scheme is complete it is likely that the owners of the Victoria Centre will need to renew their holdings and this will provide an opportunity to bring about major change in the area.





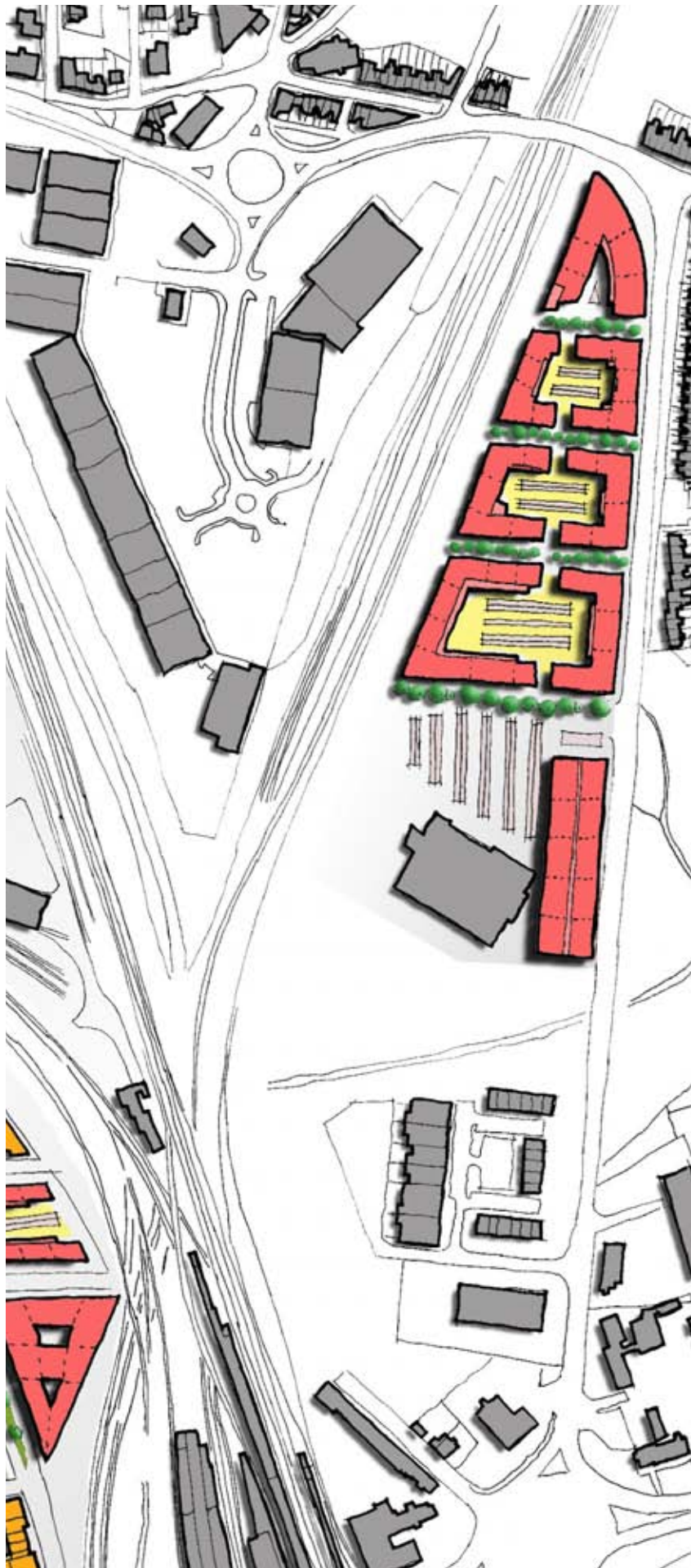
MACON WAY



Macon Way lies just outside the town centre but is an important gateway to the town. it is also one of the few areas of the town centre where there is potential market demand for office development. The masterplan therefore proposes to redevelop the low density employment uses between Macon Way and the railway for new office space.

There is a need to increase the amount of employment space within Crewe, particularly around the town centre. However at the present time there is no demand for town centre office space in Crewe. Macon Way is therefore proposed as a location for office development that is accessible from both the station and by road and could provide a business park like environment within easy reach of the town centre. Macon Way is currently the main vehicle route from the station into town and creates a poor impression to visitors. There is an opportunity to gradually redevelop the employment uses along the street to change these perceptions.

This would be part of a wider improvement scheme that landscaped Macon Way and linked it to improvements to the Valley Brook Park. At the southern end of the street there is the opportunity to create a landmark gateway feature as part of the redevelopment of the station.









1. Office development  
Striking office development can create a gateway to the town.

2. Vacant Site  
The uses associated with Macon Way in the past are not viable any longer and do not enhance the image of the town or its economic base.

3. Parkland  
However, the area does have parklands that are an asset and would enhance the setting for any modern development.

4. Commercial Space  
The area should be developed as office blocks working with courtyards so that a frontage is given to both Macon Way and the railway line whilst creating a tranquil inner space for workers to relax in.

5. Vista  
Public art and landmark architecture should be explored as methods of wayfinding and navigation. In either case the intervention must be mindful of the existing residences and the impacts on them.

7. Office leisure  
Internal spaces in the commercial blocks could explore leisure components for the benefit of workers.



## Delivery and Phasing Plan

The Macon Way site is proposed to house a new edge-of-town office development located to the east of the town centre. There are a number of land owners along Macon Way but some sites are already becoming available. However, a number of relatively modern buildings on-site are still occupied and contain substantial businesses.

The Council should prepare a brief for the site as a whole so that when sites become available they are not allowed to go to incompatible uses. The council should then appoint a development partner for the area who would fund land acquisition and if necessary CPO compensation in order to assemble a development site.

The landmark sculpture should be considered as part of the redevelopment of the station.

As well as office development, the masterplan includes the relocation of the police station from the Christchurch area to the Macon Way site. Many police stations in the country have been relocated in recent times in the hope that they can obtain better linkages to the local highway network and the Macon Way site has been identified within the masterplan as an area which will prove beneficial to the operation of such a facility. In order to begin the process of relocating the station it is important for Crewe and Nantwich Borough Council to begin the process of consulting the local police body on this matter.

Timescale - 0-10 years.





IDENTITY





The industrial road and rail infrastructure predominantly located on the outskirts of the town has greatly contributed to the perception of the town as having a poor image. Many potential visitors passing the edge of the town by rail or road have this opinion reaffirmed but the core of the town deserves to be held in higher esteem. Crewe is attracting significant investment interest, especially within the retail sector, but the image of the town amongst new investors and potential residents and visitors on a regional as well as national level is poor.

The railway services crossing close to the town form one of the busiest rail junctions in the country and should be seen as an opportunity to demonstrate the qualities of Crewe. By improving the environment on the outskirts of the town it will be possible to attract a greater number of visitors into the town and market the area as a modern, thriving urban area with plenty of opportunities for business, recreation as well as shopping activities.

Other measures are needed to re-establish the identity of the town as an area to support working, residential and leisure activities. Public realm proposals, including soft and hard landscaping, lighting and signage initiatives can build upon the existing high quality public realm features of the town. There are opportunities to promote the night time economy in the town through a lighting strategy, giving particular attention to the areas where night time leisure facilities have been proposed in the masterplan.

By improving signage quality in the town as part of a signage strategy, it is also possible to unify the area and provide legible support for new visitors to the town. This could include the design of a signage hierarchy for the area and the gradual renewal of existing signs. There is, however, no point in doing this if the town is not effectively marketed to potential visitors to the town. By combining these measures with an advertising campaign to promote the qualities of Crewe.



Thomas Heatherwick was behind the innovative and exciting public realm designs for the Blue Carpet in Newcastle



# DESIGN AGENDA





Despite having few listed buildings within its town centre, Crewe has inherited many historical buildings of high quality. It is important that any new developments take account of the existence of these buildings. To ensure that those working in partnership understand clearly the goal of promoting design excellence, a design and sustainability guide should be commissioned. This will help to encourage quality design rather than regulate for it. The guidance should become mandatory for all new development and would be applied through the direct control of CNBC on sites where it has a funding or land ownership interest as well as through the planning system.

The guidance will also be able to set out a strategy for the treatment of the public realm in the town centre to achieve design excellence and a consistency of approach in different areas and between public and private developments. The design process for one of the prominent sites within the masterplan, such as the Mill St. site, should be held as an architectural competition to create interest within the developer market for the masterplan as a whole. Contemporary design solutions are encouraged: Architectural pastiche (by which we mean buildings that are poor copies of historic styles) is not acceptable in any part of the town centre.

Materials to be used should be of a high quality, durable and look to knit together older and more recent developments to continue the distinctive character of Crewe. This would be achieved through the definition of a preferred design palette of materials for surface and furniture elements. Design justification will be required for materials which are not described within the design guide. Buildings should respond to the context set by surrounding buildings while prominent buildings should be designed to create landmarks in the town. Design briefs should be regularly produced for specific sites and all planning applications for new buildings will require a design statement: The design of all new buildings needs to address these issues and a design statement will be required.

