

PART 4:

# The Climax Plan



Looking north-west across the Knowledge Quarter with the River Mersey and the Waterfront in the left hand top corner

# 4:1 Vision

In which we describe the vision for the Knowledge Quarter and introduce the idea of a Climax Plan as an end state vision for what the area could be like in 20 years so that we can set a course for current policy to work towards this.

In the first three parts of this report we have described the current state of the Knowledge Quarter. It is an area that contains many of the city's greatest assets; its universities, its cathedrals, the hospital and many important cultural institutions. It is also an area of the city that has retained much of its traditional character particularly the Georgian neighbourhood in the south of the area. It is an area that has a buzz of life generated by the universities, the cultural uses and evening economy.

These positive aspects of the area have, however, become embattled. The Knowledge Quarter is cut-off from the city centre by a Shatter Zone, the legacy of a failed road scheme. It is bounded to the north and soon to the east by more major roads and its urban fabric has been eaten away by decline and poor quality development over the last fifty years. The heart of the Knowledge Quarter around Hope Street has therefore shrunk and become disconnected from the rest of the city. This needs to be fixed if the area is to play its full part in Liverpool's recovery.

## Vision

The Regeneris Prospectus for the Knowledge Quarter sets out its potential role in the regeneration of Liverpool. The Prospectus stresses the concentration of knowledge and economic activity already focused in the area and the potential for expanding this as a driver to the wider regeneration of the city. The Prospectus usefully sets out the criteria that the quarter will need to meet to achieve its potential. This has formed the starting point for our masterplanning work. As we described in the introduction the Regeneris criteria are:

**A distinct sense of place:** Creating a clear and recognisable quarter of the city.

**Clear but permeable boundaries:** Ensuring that people know when they are entering the quarter but that they find this is easy to do.

**Communicating a strong knowledge identity:** Emphasising the presence and roles of the universities.

**Visual and physical linkages within and between:** Ensuring that the quarter is easy to move around.

**Open and inclusive spaces:** Creating a series of attractive public streets and spaces.

## Facilitating and encouraging social

**interaction:** Developing places and uses where people can meet and interact.

**A role for iconic architecture:** Using iconic design to create an atmosphere of quality and a sense of place to compliment the two cathedrals.

**Welcoming young people:** Promoting an area that is exciting and attractive to young people.

**High quality teaching and working environments:** Ensuring that the quarter provides a high-quality working environment for the universities.

**Strong name recognition:** Bringing this together into strong and recognisably branded location.

These themes provide a good starting point for the Knowledge Quarter Vision. It needs to create a strong and distinct identity with excellent connections to the rest of the city and a lively and inclusive public realm where people can meet and interact. This vision is developed in the remainder of this report. In the final section we look at a series of immediate infrastructure and public realm projects that can take the first steps towards realising this vision. However, before taking the first steps it is important to know where you are going. We have therefore developed the idea of a Climax Plan as an end state vision for the development of the area.



► Aerial view of Renshaw Street



► Aerial view of Islington

## Climax City

Cities are often compared to complex eco-systems like forests. These evolve through stages and adapt to their environment to reach a relatively stable and steady state. In this state the individual constituents are renewed and refreshed without disturbing the harmony and integrity of the whole. Ecologists terms this the 'climax state'.

The natural climax vegetation of Merseyside, like most of England, would be broad leafed deciduous forest. Leave any piece of land alone, and over time it will regenerate itself, first with grasses and flowers, then with scrub and woodlands, and eventually with the climax forest, which will continue to renew itself and last for centuries - or until cut down.

There are similarities in the way cities develop. Evolving from villages into densely variegated places, teeming with life which achieve some sort of natural balance. Liverpool last reached such a 'climax state' in the 1930s, as described in Part One of this report.

Unlike the steady state forest of course, cities are shaped by human agents and subject to their whims and mistakes. There were elements of the climax city people wished to eradicate – congestion, overcrowding, unclean air and architecture that had fallen from fashion. In Liverpool, gap sites created by wartime bombing stimulated a clean sweep approach to the husbandry of the urban ecology, ignoring the

complexity and interdependency of its systems. Coupled with Liverpool's problems of wider civic decline, the result has been a city which in terms of vitality falls far short of its rich climax state as described in the early sections of this report, a fact demonstrated visually by comparisons between the historic and modern figure ground plans earlier in this report (page 9).

In developing proposals for the Knowledge Quarter we recognise the gap between the ideal of what the area could become and the reality of current funding capacity and the immediate scope for action. Like politics, planning is about the 'art of the possible' – reaching as high as can be achieved at any one point. We have therefore developed the concept of a 'Climax Plan' for the area, to suggest an ambitious but achievable vision for what the Knowledge Quarter could become over a period of fifteen to twenty years.

Many proposals are already close to fruition or at the design stage. Others are some years away, and a few may initially be seen as highly radical. What the plan does do is illustrate the vast potential to build upon and repair the urban structure of the area with new design, to reconnect it both internally and to the rest of the city, to encourage a lively and friendly public realm, and a create a thriving network of connected streets and attractive spaces. We therefore set this climax state as our destination as described on the following pages before plotting our course to achieve this plan over a number of decades.



► An 1859 aerial drawing of Liverpool developing towards its 'climax state'.



► 'Climbing the hill'



► Areas historically blighted by highway projects

## 4:2 Opportunities & Constraints

In which we describe the process of building up the Climax Plan, starting by overcoming the topographical constraints of the area and the Shatter Zones that surround it and expanding the core of quality along Hope Street.

In order to build up the Climax Plan we have started with an assessment of the opportunities and constraints in the area. These are the main drivers of the spatial vision and are dealt with in turn in this section. We look first at the topography of the area and how it can be exploited before looking at the way in which a series of Shatter Zones disconnect the Knowledge Quarter from the surrounding city. The strategy is therefore to expand the core of quality in the Knowledge Quarter until it creates a seamless link with the surrounding areas. On the following page we expand this further to improve internal and external connections, repair the townscape of the area and reinforcing the quarters's sense of place.

### Climbing the hill

**Constraints** - The Knowledge Quarter covers a relatively flat shelf of land between two steep ridges. The first steps up from the old Pool of Liverpool and the arrows show the streets which are a sharp climb into the area. The Knowledge Quarter is divided from the city centre by this natural barrier. Topography also separates the Knowledge Quarter from neighbourhoods to the east.

**Opportunities** - Hills can't be moved, and we can do nothing to avoid the steepness of the streets on either side of the Knowledge Quarter. However, this also presents opportunities for views into and across the area. Much more could be made of the locations where these views are best, notably around the cathedrals and from Kensington and Edge Hill. The topography also creates opportunities to emphasise the role of landmark buildings as happens with the cathedrals and the Victoria Building clock tower. These help to orientate visitors and act as magnets drawing people up the hill.

### Bridging the Shatter Zones

**Constraints** - In addition to topography, the Knowledge Quarter is cut off from the city and the area to the east by Shatter Zones, areas of poorly defined buildings, open spaces and vacant sites that are unpleasant to walk. These include Crown Street and Grove Street that have become a notorious red-light district since their clearance. They also include the areas affected by a series of road schemes. The planned north-south road that would have divided the Knowledge Quarter from the city centre has long been abandoned. However, its legacy remains in a string of vacant and underdeveloped sites. The New Islington Road to the north has been built and creates a barrier between the quarter and Everton while the road to the east, the Hall Lane Bypass, is yet to start on site.

**Opportunities** - These Shatter Zones create important opportunities to transform the area and to improve its connections with the surrounding city. The Shatter Zones include the main opportunities for new development which is the most effective means of transforming these areas. Until that time they provide opportunities



► The Shatter Zones that surround the Knowledge Quarter

for environmental improvements and pedestrian crossings to reduce the barriers that they present. This is particularly important to LJMU because these Shatter Zones currently divide its two campuses.

**A: To the west:** The zone to the west is for the most part relatively narrow. It is well located adjacent to the commercial core and public transport hubs. Parts of it to the south will be straightforward to 'bridge' with new development and a more welcoming public realm. A series of sites on the west side of Roscoe Street offer development opportunities tailored to integrate the Ropewalks and Hope Street cultural quarters. These could be reinforced with new pedestrian linkages, such as a connection from Oldham Street to Colquitt Street. Generating a better interface between the medical and University Campus areas and Lime Street Station will be possible with redevelopment of the unsightly Mount Pleasant car park and the Copperas Hill area.

**B: To the north:** London Road, the St. George's Plateau/William Brown Street area and the LJMU

City Campus have underused sites and poorly configured highways around them that offer future development potential. Better integration of the Byrom Street complex into the city centre, and a high profile civic presence along a key approach, are strategic regeneration gains that reconfiguration of Islington and the inner ring road system could unlock.

**C: To the east:** The Shatter Zone to the east is a different challenge. The proposed Hall Lane Bypass route offers an opportunity to create a better defined and more accessible public realm along this key city centre interface; however, if crudely designed proposals with insufficient crossing provision and poor spatial definition are implemented, the road will simply add further to the acute strategic severance problem. Frameworks being adopted for both, the Royal Hospital and University Campus, will address their relationship with the new Hall Lane and it is important that future developments of the Archbishop Blanch School and Mount Vernon sites help integrate Edge Hill and Kensington to the Knowledge Quarter.



► The Hope Street core and quality destinations

### Expanding the Core of Quality

**Constraints** - As we have said, the Knowledge Quarter retains a strong core of activity and townscape character. The Hope Street area between the two cathedrals is the most consistently high-quality part of the area in terms of townscape, vitality and prestige. This core is relatively small although there are other adjacent areas shown in light yellow on the plan above where there are strong remnants of quality. However, visitors have little choice but to cross less attractive areas to reach the core of the area so that it feels dislocated from the city's other attractions.

**Opportunities** - One of the key opportunities must be to consolidate and then expand this core of quality, spreading the sense of quality eventually across the whole of the Knowledge Quarter. In the relatively short term, it is realistic to envisage the perception of quality reaching north to the restored Victoria Building and Foresight Centre, and to the Mount Pleasant



► Short & medium expansion of the Hope Street core



► Medium & longer-term expansion of the Hope Street core

Campus of John Moores University. Similarly, expanding perceptions of the core to Abercromby Square and Catherine Street is viable with pro-active public realm intervention and careful development control (middle plan).

As the LJMU Arts and Design Academy becomes established and Clarence Street and Brownlow Hill are transformed into a thriving learning environment, the quality core will expand further north still, linking to the hospital redevelopment and down the hill to the city centre. There is also the potential to use of St. James's Gardens to draw activity south, towards the pole of activity at Windsor Street and the city's cosmopolitan cultural showcase along Princes Boulevard. Drawing the vitality found at the Hope Street junction of Falkner Street east through Canning to the Women's Hospital and beyond will help connect the hospital via the tranquil gardens of Falkner Square into the core of the Knowledge Quarter (third plan).



#### ► Repairing townscape

### Repairing townscape

**Constraints** - The extent of fundamentally weak townscape quality across the area is identified in the Knowledge Quarter Prospectus as a strategic constraint on growth. Our study has highlighted the specific locations and causes of this environmental weakness. The most high profile areas with a negative sense of place include:

- Brownlow Hill west of Ashton Street and east of Duckinfield Street;
- Grove Street-Crown Street between Falkner Street and West Derby Street;
- Myrtle Street local centre;
- The area between Lime Street and Russell Street-Seymour Street;
- The area between London Road and Islington, particularly around Norton Street;

- The area around the Royal Hospital; and
- Under and around the Hunter Street-Churchill Way flyovers.

**Opportunities** - Much of the poorest architecture from the 1960s and 70s has now reached the end of its economic life. A desire to establish a stronger sense of place in the weak zones of the Knowledge Quarter is also a chance to showcase the best qualities of the city, and encourage intelligent new architecture and sustainable urban design. The plan above therefore shows opportunities for infill development to repair the urban form of the area. Some of this may be brought forward as briefs released to the market by Liverpool Vision, others may be secured through planning briefs and guidance for the area.



#### ► Reinforce Sense of Place

The predominant building height throughout the area should match the existing. This is likely to be 5-6 storeys in the western part of the area behind the station, dropping down to 4 storeys in the Georgian areas and rising again through the University towards the hospital. There is scope for taller buildings within this structure such as the tower that we have proposed in the Liverpool University campus and the other in the hospital. These need to be positioned to ensure that they don't intrude on any of the key views identified earlier in the report and are positioned to create landmarks along key vistas.

### Reinforce Sense of Place

**Constraints** - The Knowledge Quarter has a wealth of architectural assets, but some of its best buildings are in critical condition. Examples of important buildings at risk include:

- The Cooperative Building, London Road;
- The Wellington Rooms (former Irish Centre), Mount Pleasant;
- St. Andrews Church of Scotland, Rodney Street; and
- St. Luke's Church, Berry Street.

Other important buildings and strong townscapes have a degraded setting. Streets and spaces whose condition, public realm treatment and/or development context let down quality built environments include:

- Abercromby Square (north side is surfaced with black bit-mac, some buildings are in need of light face-lifts);
- Anglican Cathedral (poor pedestrian environment, weak linkages);
- Berry Street (neglected gap sites between east frontage and Roscoe Street);

- London Road (quality frontage marred by weak condition, backland gap sites, insensitive infill and cluttered public realm);
- Metropolitan Cathedral (ugly concrete steps to Brownlow Hill, underuse of space around the cathedral above the crypt); and
- Rodney Street (cheap and cluttered surfacing, traffic blight, poor lighting).

Public art from artists of local, national and international renown is abundant around the Knowledge Quarter, but this aspect is underplayed at present, and again the setting of art works is often weak.

**Opportunities** - Intensive action to secure the future of landmark listed buildings around the Knowledge Quarter is vital.

Strong townscapes let down by poor public realm should be prioritised for early treatment.

The recent high quality public realm treatment around Hope Street is an exemplar scheme, and deserves to be rolled out along Rodney Street, Hardman Street and Mount Pleasant to consolidate the core of quality.

A sample list of the work of famous artists on permanent display on streets and buildings around the Knowledge Quarter is impressive. It includes works by:

- Banksy: Rat mural covering the derelict Whitehouse Pub;
- Tracey Emin: 'Roman Standard' sculpture outside the Oratory;
- Jacob Epstein: Liverpool Resurgent sculpture on Lewis's Department Store;
- Dame Elisabeth Frink: Risen Christ sculpture above the Anglican Cathedral West Door;
- Barbara Hepworth: Sculpture outside University Senate House, Abercromby Square; and
- George Herbert Tyson Smith: Sculpture from former Gerrard Gardens Tenement, Hunter Street.

Promoting this tradition of excellence in public art can be a wonderful focus for the Knowledge Quarter, which can come to be seen as a magnificent outdoor gallery to complement the city's world class displays of art at the Tate Gallery, Walker Art Gallery and Victoria Museum and Gallery.

The range of architectural talent who have shaped the area is equally impressive – a sample list of famous architects includes work by:

- Alfred Waterhouse: The famous architect of London's Natural History Museum, and Manchester's Town Hall was from Liverpool, and has left a strong legacy in the Knowledge Quarter in the Victoria Building, Royal Infirmary and North Western Hotel.
- Sir Giles Gilbert Scott: The designer of the iconic Battersea and Bankside Power Stations, and the celebrated K6 GPO Telephone Box, built his finest work here, the Anglican Cathedral, where he is buried.
- Sir Edwin Lutyens: New Delhi's visionary architect bestowed his magnum opus on Liverpool with his design for the Roman

Catholic Cathedral. Funds ran out after WWII when only the crypt was complete, leaving his vision "the greatest building never built", but even this is a sensation.

- Sir Frederick Gibberd: Influential modernist who trained with Le Corbusier designed the Metropolitan Cathedral to site on the Lutyens Crypt.
- Maxwell Fry: Trained at Liverpool and sometime design partner of Bauhaus émigré Walter Gropius as well as Le Corbusier at Chandigarh, the University Campus contains some of the Wallasey born architect's lesser work (Mechanical Engineering and Veterinary Science buildings).

The final part of the strategy must therefore be to revive the public spaces of the area and the tradition of commissioning the best artists and architects to create an exceptional character in the Knowledge Quarter. This can already be seen happening with practices like SEW working on Myrtle Street or Camlin Lonsdale with Mouchel Parkman who led the environmental improvements projects for Hope Street and the Metropolitan Cathedral steps.

### Making connections

**Constraints** - In addition to the severance caused by the Shatter Zones there are numerous places where highway infrastructure makes pedestrian access difficult, unwelcoming and dangerous. Examples of this include Myrtle Street, Falkner Street, Smithdown Lane and Crown Street all of which have been severed by development or highways engineering. It also includes the exposed overhead walkways to Byrom Street and strategic points like Brownlow Hill, Mount Pleasant and the interface of Kensington and the hospital.

**Opportunities** - In addition to the development of the Shatter Zones there are opportunities to reopen key traffic routes and to make existing routes more attractive and easy to use for pedestrians and cyclists. This is dealt with in more detail in the following section.

**Overcoming blight** - The other impact of road proposals is the blight caused by past road schemes. It is now possible to re-configure



these areas improving pedestrian access and unlocking development sites, such as the junction of Seymour Street and London Road. Careful thinking about strategic damage done by excessive highways land-take will yield many more such development opportunities.

Accessibility around LJMU's City Campus and the William Brown Street area is critically compromised by traffic-dominated environments around the ring road. In the short term it is possible to improve the pedestrian experience in this area. In the medium term it may be possible to send some traffic to the east and north of the campus, allowing redevelopment sites to open up along Islington and around the World Museum/ Picton Library/Walker Art Gallery complex. In the long term as part of the Climax Plan the city should be looking to a more comprehensive reconfiguration of this area as Birmingham have done with the removal of Masshouse Circus.

#### ► Making connections

##### ► Georgian houses along Abercromby Square



##### ► The Victoria Building on Brownlow Hill



## 4:3 Rebuilding Connections

In which we describe the way that the Knowledge Quarter has become isolated from the city centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods because of a number of broken and poor quality links. We look at each of these links in turn and consider how they might be repaired.



► Key blocked historic routes within the Knowledge Quarter

The disconnectedness of the Knowledge Quarter is one of the most important issues to arise out of our analysis. Despite being in the heart of Liverpool the quarter feels isolated and cut off from the city centre and the surrounding neighbourhoods. It will never achieve its full potential while this is the case. The lack of permeability makes part of the area feel deserted and unsafe and unable to sustain an active street life or uses such as shops and cafes. It is also one of the reasons why so few people travel to the universities on foot and cycle despite the numbers of students and staff living in the surrounding areas.

It is therefore worth focusing for a moment on the repairs required to the street grid of the area. The street grid is the starting point for all masterplans and getting this right is the first step in agreeing the Climax Plan. The Knowledge Quarter was once very well connected, the problem is the way that many of its historic

connections have been blocked. This includes a number of important historic routes as well as key pedestrian links to the station, city centre, Kensington and Smithdown.

These broken connections are shown on the plan to the right and the aerial photograph to the left. On the following page we examine each of the links and ways in which they could be reopened:

- Bedford Street South
- Crown Street
- Dansie Street/Dover Street
- Fairclough Lane
- Falkner Street
- Hope Place
- Paddington
- Richmond Row
- Smithdown Lane





► Lost link - Bedford Street South

**Bedford Street South** should connect the University of Liverpool Campus with the adjacent residential district of Canning.

It is severed by the poorly sited Eleanor Rathbone building, built in anticipation that Myrtle Street would be a major highway of motorway standard, a scheme subsequently abandoned.

The University's Masterplanning Framework proposes that in the medium to long term the Eleanor Rathbone Building should be removed allowing the street to be reopened. This will benefit the University by giving better access to the amenities of the Myrtle Street local centre. It will improve access to the show-piece green space of Abercromby Square, especially for residents of the communities to the south.

This linkage will reinforce activity levels along the campus spine to the new University Square and the hospital.



► Lost link - Crown Street

**Crown Street** was a strategic distributor of traffic running north-south around the city centre, on a route that followed a level contour beginning from the Princes Park Gates (as Kingsley Road) along to Boundary Place and then to Shaw Street.

During the ill-fated Crown Street clearances of the 1960s and 70s, the street was severed by developments for three public sector institutions - the Smithdown Lane Police Station skid pan, the corner of the University of Liverpool Veterinary Science buildings, and the Royal Liverpool University Hospital.

This had unintended consequences, exacerbating the traffic bottlenecks along Low Hill and at the Holt Road-Edge Lane cross roads, and leaving an important thoroughfare stripped off built form and vitality.

The Framework may not propose making this a major traffic route but the opportunity to support pedestrian and particularly cycle traffic from the Princes Park and Granby area is a valuable one. The redevelopment over the coming years of the Hospital Precinct and University Campus should include the Crown Street axis as an important element; the same applies should the Smithdown Lane Police Station ever be remodelled.



► Lost link - Dansie and Dover Street

**Dansie Street** and **Dover Street** have been separated for many years by a wall along the western boundary of the University of Liverpool Campus. This is a powerful physical and psychological symbol of the lack of interaction between the higher education world and the inner city community.

To the University of Liverpool's credit a gate in the wall has now been cut to allow free pedestrian and cycle access into the campus.

Opening the route unlocks a strategic as well as local opportunity, as this route is potentially the most direct pedestrian-cycle desire line between the University Campus and Lime Street Station.

To achieve this strategic opportunity another fenced site will require opening up, but no major physical impediment or building is blocking progress to link the route to Russell Street.

Any future remodelling of the Royal Mail site at Copperas Hill should include a continuation of this direct desire line route to the Skelthorne Street entrance to Lime Street Station.



► Lost link - Falkner Street

**Falkner Street** is known as one of the finest streets in the city, at the heart of the prospering Hope Street Georgian core. Its junction with Hope Street is a thriving location for pavement cafes and quality restaurants, close to prestigious boutique hotels, theatres and the Philharmonic Hall.

Less well known is that it continues for almost a mile east to Smithdown Lane, in the heart of a deprived inner city community. It is physically severed to all traffic including pedestrians in two locations, by the fenced curtilage of a Radburn layout social housing estate around Grove Court, and by the boundary of the Women's Hospital. In neither case is the route blocked by buildings.

Its reconnection as a quality pedestrian-cycle green route would be relatively straightforward physically, and open up significant strategic opportunities over time to permeate the prosperity at the Hope Street end into the adjacent Canning and Smithdown communities.

This lost route avoids steep level changes and is on a strong desire line for cyclists and pedestrians accessing the city centre and Knowledge Quarter from the Allerton Road and Smithdown Road arterial approach. Its strategic potential makes its reconnection an essential project if the city is serious about supporting sustainable movement patterns.



► Lost link - Fairclough Lane

**Fairclough Lane** followed a desire line route south-west into the city centre from the top of Low Hill and the start of Kensington. Sacred Heart Church is built on its alignment.

The lane was severed by the Royal Hospital precinct in the 1960s and 70s. It should be re-established in pedestrian-cycle form as an important element of the new masterplan.

This will help reconnect an area of deprivation and socio-economic need with the employment opportunities of the hospital, campus and city centre Knowledge Quarter.



► Lost link - Hope Place

**Hope Place** is a beautifully scaled street of tall Georgian townhouses that retains an air of grace and tranquility even though situated on the threshold of the vibrant central core. It contains the Unity theatre.

Regrettably, its eastern half is 'lost' within the gated Radburn layout Philharmonic Court development of 1970s student residences, although it appears again at its junction with Catherine Street.

It would be relatively simple to reconnect Hope Place as a pedestrian cycle link along its entire route, either through the existing buildings or as part of any future redevelopment.

This would further help draw the economic activity around Hope Street east towards the Canning community, and generally support the strong permeability already evident around the grid of Georgian Streets here.



► Lost link - Paddington

**Paddington** is the historic continuation of Brownlow Hill, focused on the landmark C18th church of St. Mary's Edge Hill and aligned directly through Holland Place, the fine triangular space at the heart of the Georgian village.

From there the route continues across Marmaduke Street as Gladstone Street, towards Botanic Gardens and the iconic Littlewoods Building.

It is currently 'lost' under the 1960s Archbishop Blanch School, but its anticipated relocation under the Building Schools for the Future programme is a golden opportunity to recreate it.

The strategic advantage of a strong and legible pedestrian-cycle desire line between the heart of the Knowledge Quarter and the Liverpool Digital complex, supporting the functional connectivity of the Science Park sites each end of this axis, makes the case for protecting this route overwhelming.



► Lost link - Richmond Row

**Richmond Row** was the key pedestrian 'desire line' route between the Pier Head/Town Hall area and the communities ranged along the top of Everton Brow, including Anfield and Breckfield.

It has been virtually eradicated by post-war development, but a right of way still exists along the north side of the LJMU Byrom Street Campus; taking account of this latent route in the proposed reconfiguration of the campus will help establish stronger links to the city centre and adjacent communities of Marybone and Everton.



► Lost link - Smithdown Lane

**Smithdown Lane** follows the 'lie of the land' along the foot of the higher ridge, running parallel to Crown Street. It follows an old desire line bringing north-south travellers in a continuation of Smithdown Road across the flat plateau around the central area.

It is now very poorly defined following two uninspired cycles of development imposed by 1960s clearances, which included the costly failure of deck-access social housing, now also demolished. The lane is reduced to a barely discernible track at the south end, through an open space on the site of the historic Crown Street Station, the original start of George Stephenson's Liverpool-Manchester railway.

As with the Crown Street and Falkner Street routes, reconnecting Smithdown Lane as a strong pedestrian cycle route will tap into the south Liverpool source of many city centre Knowledge Quarter trips. A safe, legible link here will encourage trips by sustainable modes. It will also assist interaction between the medical and educational institutions and the communities around Lodge Lane and Picton.

## 4:4 Knowledge Network

In which we describe the way that all of the issues explored in the baseline have been brought together into the Climax Plan. This starts with the reestablished street network, the opportunities for infill development to repair the urban fabric of the area and a framework for public realm improvements to green spaces, urban spaces and streets.

### Re-establishing a clear street hierarchy

The rebuilt connections set out in the previous section allow us to establish a clear street hierarchy for the area. This includes a network of main roads, 'high streets', 'secondary streets' and quiet 'tertiary streets'. Reopening key connections will allow traditional high streets like Myrtle Street and Falkner Street to reestablish their role. This needs to determine the location of local shops and active uses as well as making the area more legible and easy to navigate. It should also determine the level of public realm treatment and traffic management.



► Re-establishing street hierarchy

### Repairing the urban fabric

Based on the need to repair the townscape as described above and drawing on the various masterplanning exercises in the area, we are able to 'stitch back together' the urban fabric of the area with new development. This will establish clear urban blocks, with strong building lines along street frontages. Bringing dysfunctional sections of the Knowledge Quarter back into productive use will help attainment of critical mass in terms of activity and economic momentum.



► Repairing and filling'

### Creating a network of green spaces

The green spaces distributed around the area will be complemented by additional provision, and enhanced by stronger connectivity to each other and their surroundings. This plan highlights an indicative 'Green Infrastructure' for the area, and has informed the final Climax Plan.



► Green spaces

### ...and a network of 'urban' spaces

Alongside the streets and green spaces, hard landscaped 'urban' spaces are essential points of interaction within the Knowledge Network. Liverpool's fundamental structure of streets with intersections configured as 'Places' has inspired our vision. New spaces and radically improved 'nodes' at junction points will provide assistance for people to move and meet.



► 'Urban' spaces

### The Golden Spine

Hope Street's powerful axis between the two cathedrals via the LJMU Mount Pleasant Campus already provides a clear spine at the heart of the Knowledge Quarter. Extending its influence north to the Victoria Museum, the Ashton Street Campus spine, the Royal Hospital and Liverpool Hope University's Everton Campus and gallery connects other major activity generators. Mirroring this to the south draws the community knowledge hub around Toxteth TV and Library into the life of the Knowledge Network.



► The Golden Spine

### Crossings and connections

The aim is to ensure that each side of the 'Golden Spine' a system of circuits provides seamless links around the Knowledge Quarter, to the city centre and surrounding communities. The Climax Plan envisages improvements to the parallel Rodney Street/Clarence Street route, and the east-west links of London Road/Pembroke Place, Brownlow Hill, Mount Pleasant/Oxford Street and Hardman/Myrtle Street. It also takes account of lower-order parts of the network. Crossing points and public environments along these routes are designed to be as people-friendly as possible.



► Crossings and connections

## 4:5 Climax Plan

The Climax Plan shows how Liverpool's Knowledge Quarter could develop over a twenty year period with careful long-term intervention. This is an idealisation of a creative but deliverable end-state towards which individual projects can aim. Some of these projects can proceed in the near future, while others are long term prospects. Some are relatively simple, some will require radical ambition and resources. Together they will contribute to the creation of a world class international Knowledge Network. In this section we 'zoom in' to look at the component parts of this vision.



► 3D model of the Knowledge Quarter with proposed buildings in beige and existing building stock in grey

## Civic Forum & LJMU City Campus

The plan shows LJMU's City Campus integrated with the rich cultural and learning resources around the St. George's Hall and William Brown Street 'Civic Forum'. Changes to the Byrom Street complex accurately reflect those now being drawn up by the University's masterplanning team.

Changes in the surroundings are conceptual and will require considerable ambition, including the removal of the TGWU building, and the remodelling of the over-engineered 1960s traffic infrastructure that severs the LJMU facilities and communities of Scotland Road from the city centre.

The rewards for such vision will be immense. The thousands of students and staff gathered at Byrom Street each day can play a far more active part in city centre life. The unique complex of World Museum, Picton Library and Walker Art Gallery can establish a high profile presence on the northern gateway to the Knowledge Quarter.

A series of valuable development sites are unlocked, offering definition to the Islington ring road. Existing sites around Norton Street are set in a more desirable context.



## Lime Street Station Approach

The collection of strategic sites around the mainline station present a rare opportunity for 'thinking big' – rapid national and international rail connections adjacent to Liverpool's learning, medical and cultural institutions make this a location that can attract the most prestigious end users. This prospect will happen only if the current process of low quality ad-hoc piecemeal development is taken in hand, and a more coherent vision implemented.

Key is making Brownlow Hill the 'bridge' between the city centre and the two higher education campuses at Mount Pleasant and the University of Liverpool. The other vital aim is a strong built fabric between Lime Street Station and the central part of the University Campus, focused along Dansie Street.

Our plan shows a concept of how sites like the Mount Pleasant multi-storey car park, the former Dairy, and Copperas Hill might be rebuilt to achieve these ends when the time comes, along with smaller infill developments. Two high level

organising design principles are suggested to extract the maximum potential sense of place.

The first is the 'Cathedral Axis', which opens a strong visual link to the Metropolitan Cathedral, complemented by new pedestrian routes. This would make a radical difference to the legibility of people movements from Lime Street to LJMU's Mount Pleasant Campus and the Hope Street area. *(Our layouts for LJMU sites are purely indicative, to emphasise the power of the Cathedral Axis, and are subject to detailed planning initiated by the LJMU estates department).*

The second is the opening of an eastern entrance to Lime Street Station, whose impact would be most powerful if combined with a deck over the dead space of the walled cutting, providing a focal point public space and interchange at the top of Copperas Hill. This radical scheme would have a potential 'big bang' effect on perceptions of the Knowledge Quarter, transforming access and activity.





## New Islington

A simple block structure is shown respecting the strong underlying grid pattern still evident around Islington, reflecting the thinking already undertaken in preparation of the Planning Framework for the area.

The northern edge shows how a more ambitious attempt can be made over time to reconfigure underused landscaping and highway space around the ring road, to create a far more attractive northern edge to the city centre, and improve interaction with adjacent communities, as well as Liverpool Hope University.



## The Hospital

Our plan shows the outline plot of the new hospital building currently in planning, which will occupy a distinctive triangular site on West Derby Street. It also outlines the adjacent Apex Project University Medical School, proposed for the south side of the same street. This is the interface between the intimately co-related medical and teaching activities of the Hospital and University. As such it is one of the most important place making opportunities in the entire Knowledge Quarter, and will be a focus in the immediate future. The plan shows the agreed route of Hall Lane bypass route.

Less detail is available as to what may emerge on the site of the existing main building, so an indicative block structure is shown that reinstates

the latent Crown Street and Fairclough Lane pedestrian axial routes, the latter focused on the landmark Sacred Heart Church, and provides a new green recreation space for the northern part of the Knowledge Quarter. This layout helps overcome the current acute severance between Kensington and the city centre, and the lack of strong north-south linkages through the University-Hospital precincts to Everton and north Liverpool.

# Liverpool University

An Urban Design Framework has been prepared for the University of Liverpool Campus, in discussion with key partners on the Knowledge Quarter steering group.

It sets a fifteen year vision for change around the University, to guide development coming forward in the estate strategy. A core principle is rediscovery of the role of a Civic University, integrated with and influencing the life of Liverpool as an international city.

Major areas of change are around the underdeveloped central section of the campus, between Oxford Street and Brownlow Hill, along Crown Street, and along the southern interface with Myrtle Street and Grove Street.

The Metropolitan Cathedral is again used as an organising entity, with redevelopment configured to frame stunning views along a diagonal axis.

A strong interface with neighbouring communities is another fundamental, with the southern face of the campus turned outwards to offer a strong relationship to the important local centre at Myrtle Street.

We also have shown the Great Newton Street and Paddington edges reconfigured to interact with residential areas alongside.

Within the campus, a clear spatial hierarchy is established, from lively public squares to intimate semi-private quadrangle gardens.



► Indicative illustration by URBED of the new axis within the University Campus area. This is part of the Urban Design Framework (2008) by URBED.



# The Anglican Cathedral & Hope Street

A number of gap sites and underused areas have blighted the western edge of the area below the Anglican Cathedral since clearance for the inner ring road and other comprehensive development plans in the 1960s and 70s.

Planning permission is now in place to repair the Great George Street approach. We have shown indicative layouts for repair of other sites along the route of the abortive Russell Street-Berry Street road scheme.

Plans are also evolving for sites along Hope Street; simple concept schemes for these are shown on the Climax Plan.

An opportunity exists to create a fine new public square by lowering part of the boundary wall in front of Blackburne House and opening up sightlines and access to this high quality public building from the improved spaces along Hope Street and Mount Street. This will allow expansion of the street market and festival activities, now a regular feature of this area.

The plan also shows the proposed 'Bridge of Hope' over St James Cemetery to the eastern entrance of the cathedral. This will create an important landmark in the area, tying the cathedral more closely into the Knowledge Quarter.



► Indicative illustration by URBED of a redeveloped Blackburne Square and the space today, above.

# Falkner Square

Investment interest in this part of the city has increased dramatically in recent years. We show how underused land in the area could be more productively developed, whilst preserving and enhancing the powerful Georgian character that is so valued by residents and visitors.

A redefined local centre at Myrtle Street is envisaged, with a revived residential and commercial frontage and stronger north-south linkages along Bedford Street. This retail and leisure hub will act as a lively interface between the University Campus and established local communities.

A public space at the Chatham Street junction forms a sequence on a green link bridging Abercromby and Falkner Squares.

Improved access to the Women's Hospital can be achieved by extending a pedestrian and cycle linkage along the historic line of Falkner Street, and help permeate the prosperity and quality at the Hope Street end to the inner-city communities around Smithdown Lane and Lodge Lane. This route will support legible movement between the Knowledge Quarter and the Smithdown Road /Allerton Road corridor.

The eroded edge of the city centre along Upper Parliament Street can be repaired by development on the remaindered clearance sites each side of the elegant Falkner Terrace, again creating a friendlier face of the Knowledge Quarter to the communities of Granby to the south, and giving a better setting to the hospital for visitors.



► Indicative illustration by URBED of the proposed development on Myrtle Street. This is part of the Urban Design Framework (2008) by URBED.