

0 AS IT IS STAFFORD TOWN CENTRE



? What should happen to the market?

? Where will people park?

? What will attract me in to the town centre?

? What do I want to see improved?

? Should we provide some housing?

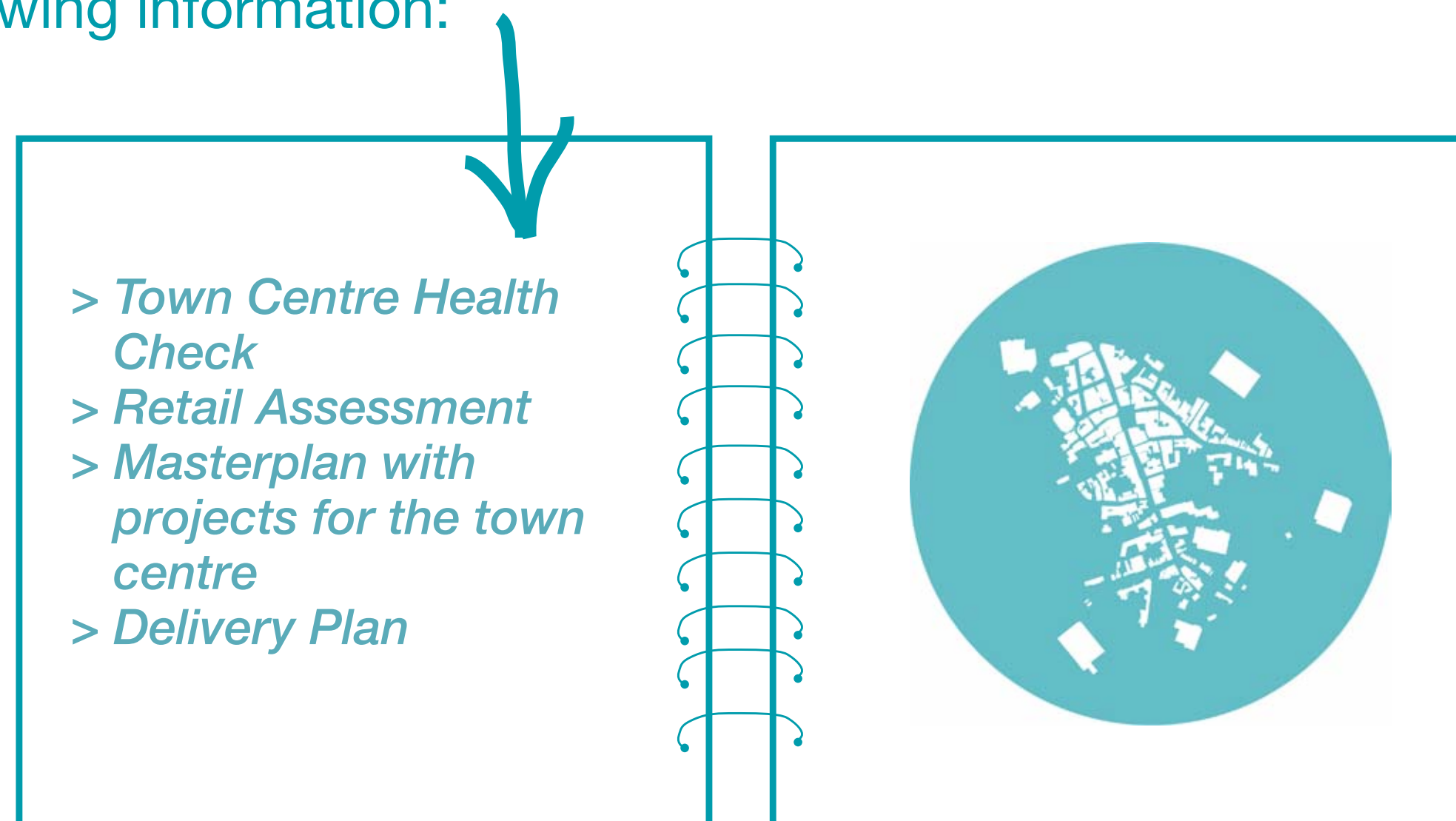
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INTRODUCTION

STAFFORD TOWN CENTRE

What's this all about?

Hello. We're URBED, a masterplanning and urban design consultancy. Together with property consultants DTZ, we've been appointed by Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councils to prepare a Town Centre Development Guide which will consist of the following information:



This exhibition contains a summary of the information we have gathered on the Town Centre so far, alongside our initial ideas for its future. We want to know how you think the town centre should develop in the future and have come up with a number of projects which we would like to get your views on.

The projects shown on the boards have been posed as **questions** to **promote debate** about how the town centre might develop, and should not be taken as fixed proposals. On boards 4-6 we propose 3 different scenarios for the northern end of the High Street. On the final 2 boards we propose a series of ideas for other sites across the town centre.

Why are we consulting?

We want to know how you think Stafford should change over the next few years. Back in June, we held a workshop with local businesses and stakeholders to discover what people thought of the town centre and what they wanted to see delivering. Further details on this session are on board **3** ►

Why do we need a Development Guide?

The guide will set out a strategy for how Stafford can respond and adapt to the challenges facing the town centre over the coming years. In particular the guide will propose a strategy for how the town can capitalise on the Riverside development whilst mitigating any impacts on the northern end of the town. We also have an aspiration to attract lottery funding for a new museum or gallery in the town centre, to attract more people to the town.

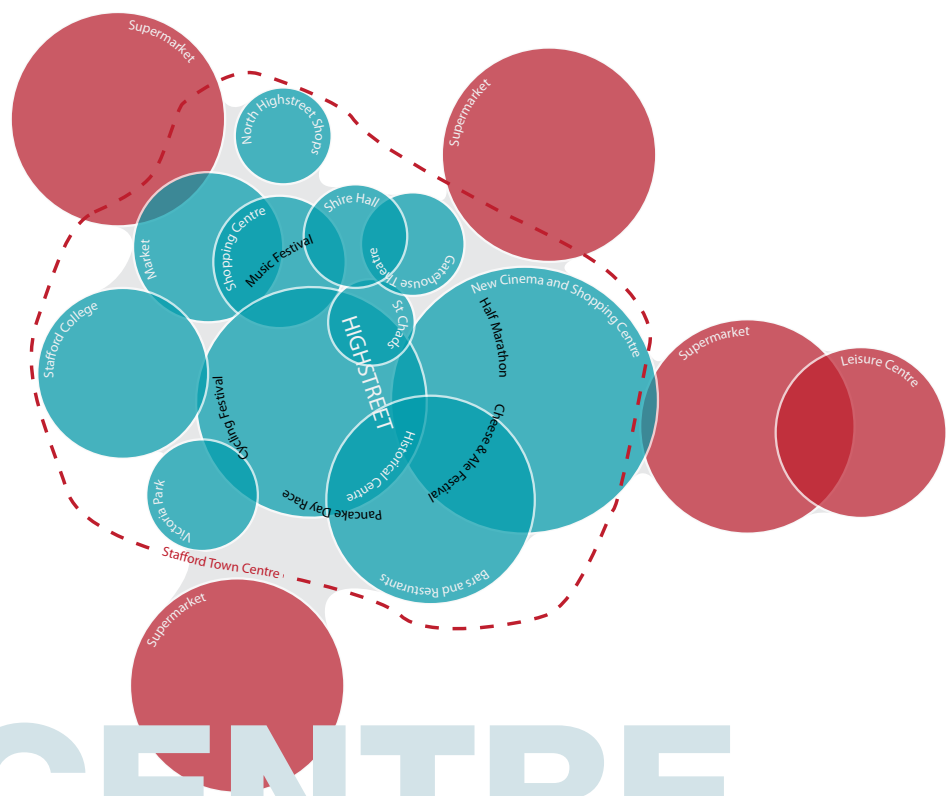


**GO TO
BOARD 2** ►

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ANALYSIS

STAFFORD TOWN CENTRE



What do we know?

1. Stafford is not doing badly, but it is not doing as well as it wants to?

Stafford is a reasonably prosperous market town that has weathered the recession well but is currently under performing. We compared Stafford to similar towns - Bedford, Gloucester, Shrewsbury and Worcester. The benchmarking analysis suggested that Stafford is currently under performing in terms of the size, value and performance of its retail core.

2. Why is this?

We addressed this question through our 4As analysis (looking at Attractions, Access, Amenity and Action). While there are some small issues with Access, Amenity and Action, our conclusion is that the problem lies with Attractions:

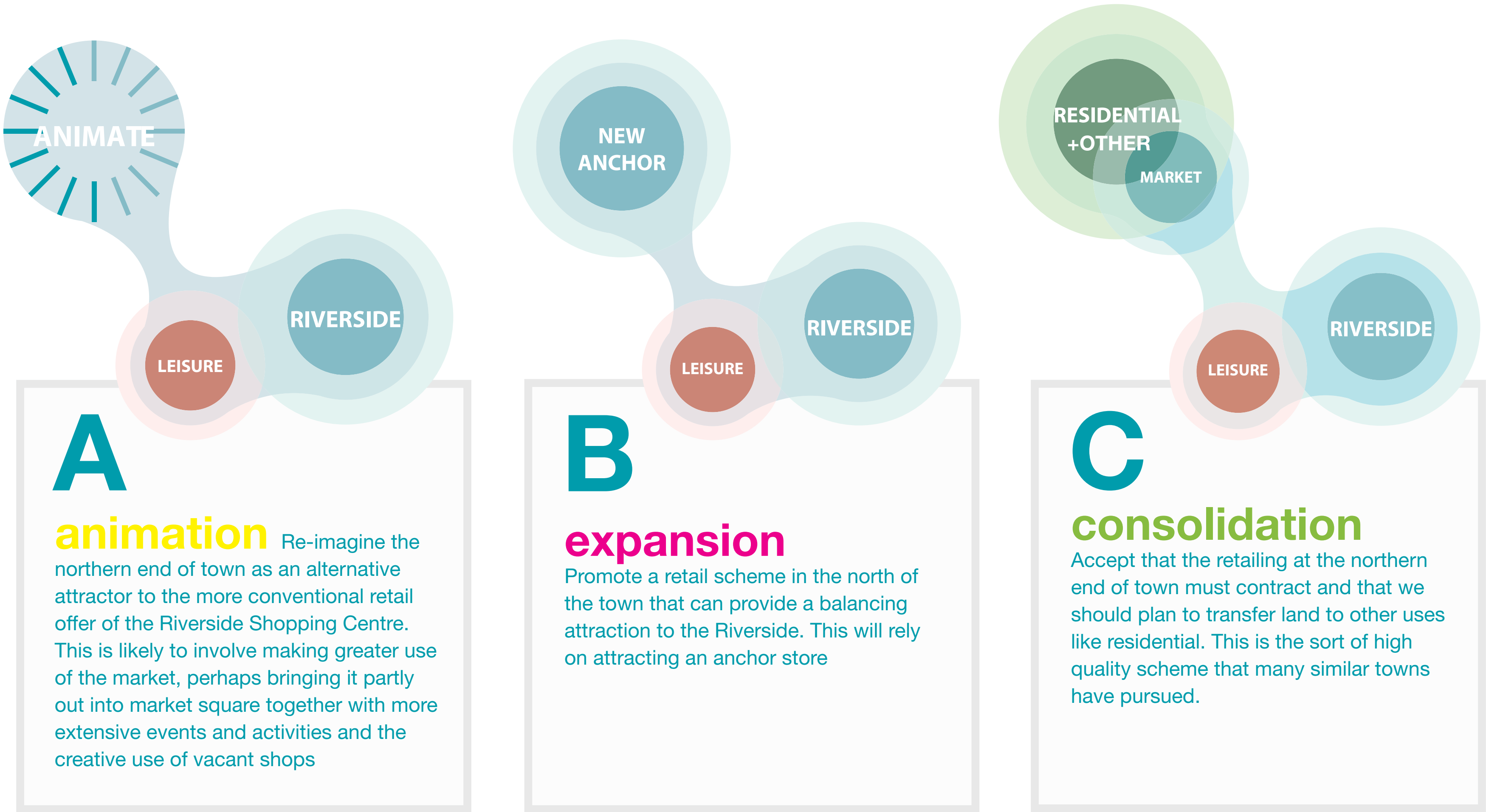
- A modest catchment:** Stafford’s catchment population is relatively small, the population of the town is modest and the catchment population is eroded by the influence of other centres. Although the catchment is relatively affluent, it is also very mobile and can take its trade elsewhere. The Castle and Chase are quite far away and no Cathedral or major Museum or Gallery result in limited tourist trade.
- Limited number of primary attractions:** which draw people in and cause them to choose Stafford over neighbouring towns.

3. Impact of the Riverside Centre

This will certainly elevate Stafford’s retail to a different league, but bringing Stafford on par with its competitors rather than putting it ahead of them. Whilst the Riverside will increase the number of people and amount of spending in the town centre we want to make sure that benefit will be spread across the whole town centre.

What is our diagnosis?

We need to rethink the northern end of town, partly to balance the impact of the Riverside development but more importantly to add to the attractions of the town so that it continues to improve its offer. There seem to be 3 potential responses to this:



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FEEDBACK

STAFFORD TOWN CENTRE

Workshop feedback

We held a round table workshop on June 25th at the Gatehouse Theatre to discuss ideas about the town centre. Here is a short summary of our findings:



Photos of participants at the roundtable workshop

	Theme	Observation	Next Steps
1	North end of the high street	The Guildhall and Gaolgate Street are under performing. The arrival of the Riverside and Morrisons developments will present opportunities	The masterplan needs to decide on how to mitigate the impact of the Riverside Development on the north of the High Street
2	A need to improve the market.	The market is currently performing okay with most stalls being occupied, however the building is dark and is not visible from the High Street.	A strategy to develop the market either through animation or a new scheme all together.
3	Stafford is 'alright'	Stafford town centre is a pleasant place for anyone to spend time and enjoy the good stock of heritage and open space.	The main problem is the town centre has a limited number of attractions to bring in tourist trade and loses out to other county towns and cities in the surrounding area. Develop ideas for a Lottery funded visitor attraction.
4	Night time economy	The night time economy is underachieving and could capitalise on the affluent catchment area around Stafford.	Consider how the night time economy could be developed. This should consider the impact of the new proposed cinema connected to the Riverside Development.
5	Parking provision	The town centre's overall parking provision is reaching capacity and with major redevelopment happening this shall only increase the demand.	Update on Parking Strategy for the town centre.

What's Good about Stafford?

- > the town is **compact** and **walkable**
- > the town **feels safe** during the **day and night**
- > strong public transport links
- > there are a number of good quality independent shops
- > good open space offer, especially with **Victoria Park**
- > large stock of **historical buildings** create a pleasant place
- > good **variety** of shops

Participants thoughts from the workshop

What's Bad about Stafford?

- > **heavy traffic** on Lichfield Road
- > poor quality shop fronts in the north of town
- > **limited parking** within the town centre
- > high business rates
- > low number of **offices and industries** within the town
- > lacking a **department store** at the northern end of town
- > Queensville retail park **draws trade out** of the town centre



Do you agree?

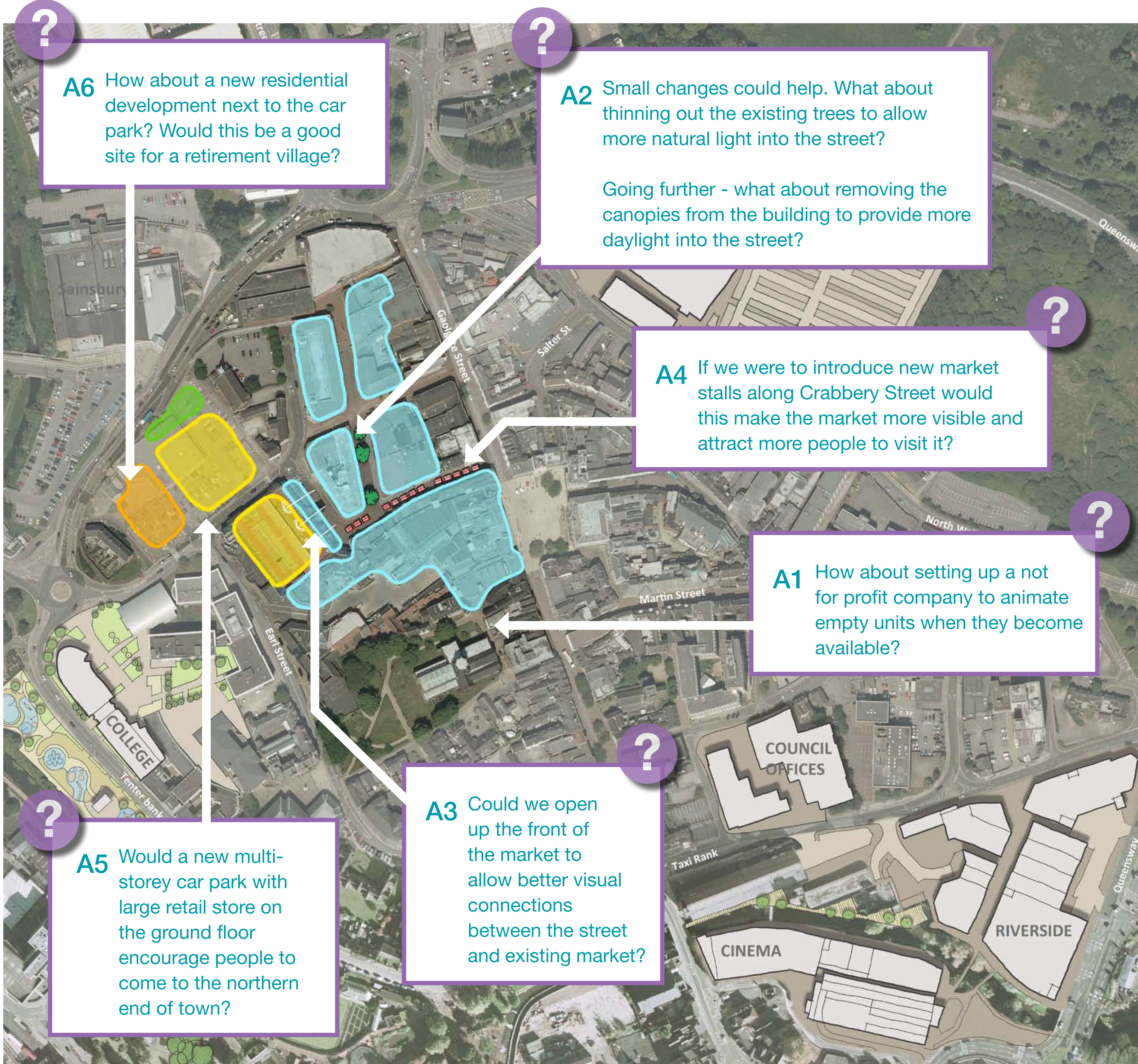
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BOARD 4



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OPTION ONE

North end of town



Our first option for the area around the Guildhall Shopping Centre and along Princes Street examines the idea of **animation**. Could a strategy be developed to encourage take up of any vacant units to ensure all shop fronts are fully occupied, providing an active frontage onto the street.

Can the **market** elevation on Chapel Street be opened up to bring more light into the market and improve its visual connection with the street; might new market stalls be placed along Crabbery Street to provide a stronger link between the market and the high street.

Would it be a good idea to introduce a new multi-storey car park on Broad Street, with a new retail unit on the ground floor?

COULD WE ANIMATE THE EXISTING AREA?



What do you think of this option?

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PROJECTS PROPOSED ON THESE BOARDS ARE INTENDED TO INFORM A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE TOWN CENTRE AND SHOULD NOT IN ANYWAY BE TAKEN AS FIXED PROPOSALS

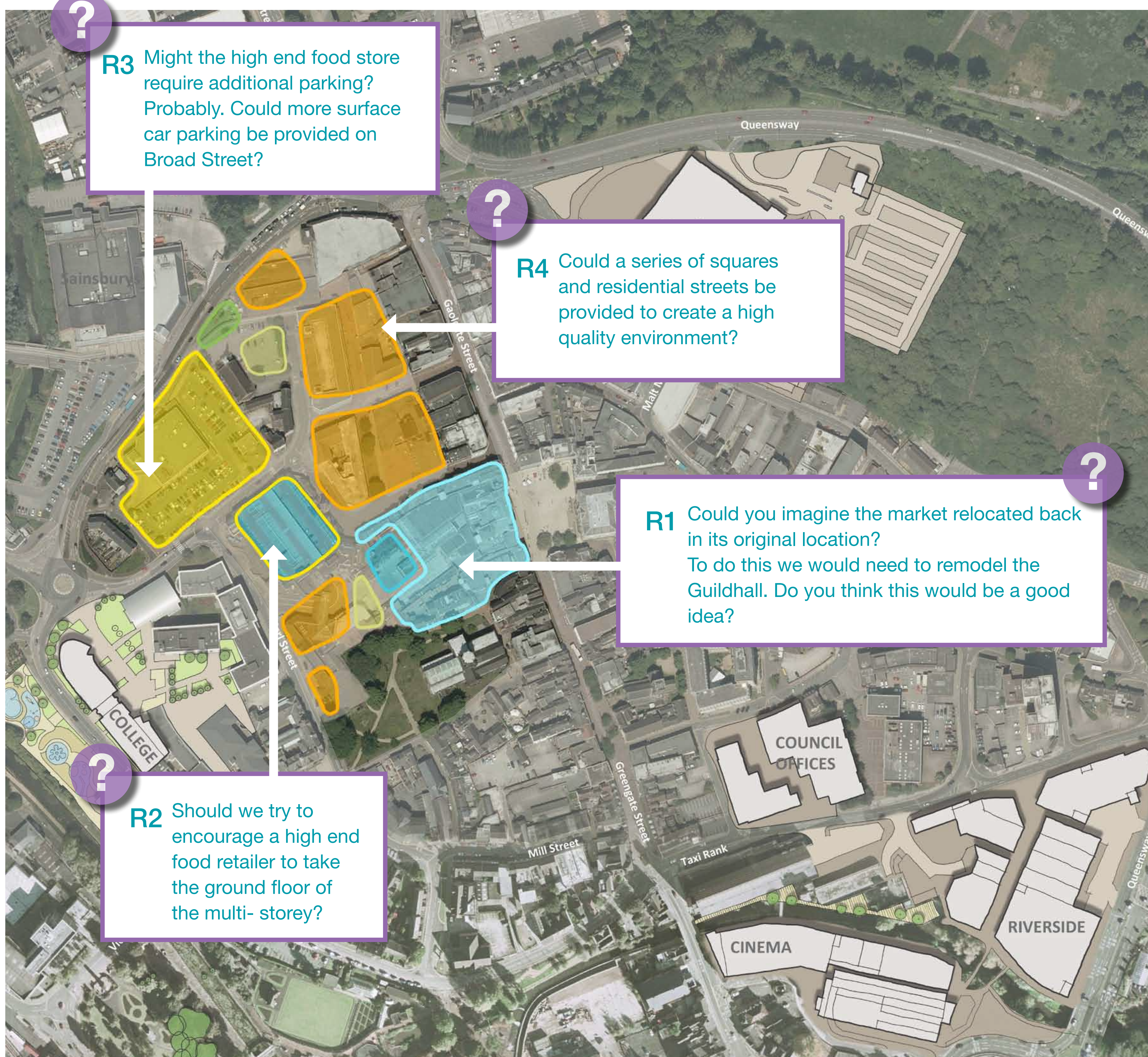
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BOARD 5



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OPTION TWO

North end of town



Key

- | | |
|--|---|
| A new retail unit? | New public space? |
| Remodelled existing retail? | Car parking? |
| A new housing site? | New building either built or under construction |
| Greenspace? | |

Our second option looks into **re-modelling** the Guildhall and surrounding area to provide a mix of different uses. This option explores the idea of moving the market back to the Guildhall.

This would free up the ground floor of the multi-storey car park to accommodate a new high end food store which could act as an attractor for the northern end of town.

Could a new surface car park be provided to the north of Broad Street to service the new high end food store and the town centre?

Could the other remaining sites be developed as housing or would these be more suitable for a new university campus?

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COULD WE RE-MODEL WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE?



What do you think of this option?

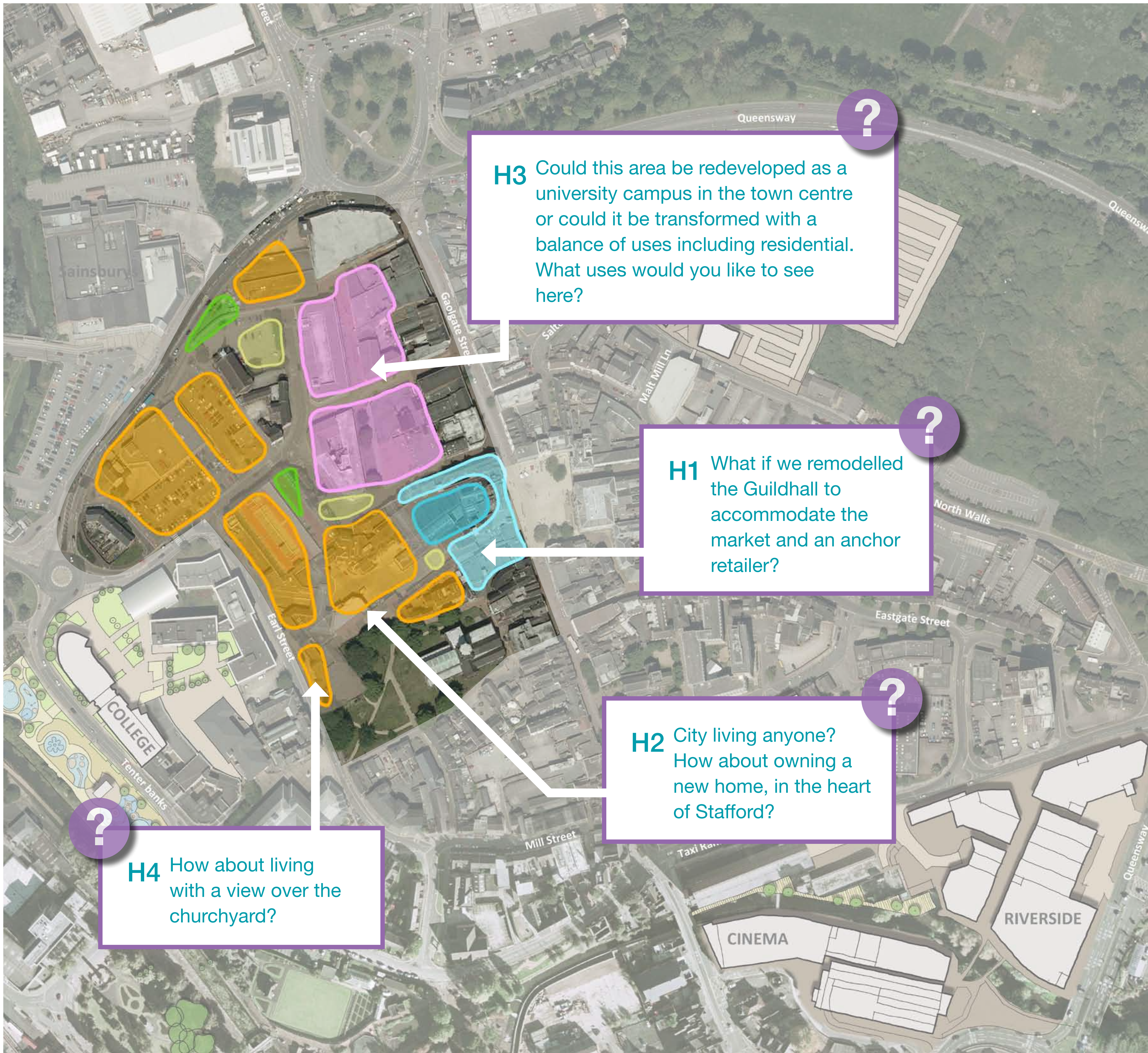
**GO TO
BOARD 6**



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OPTION THREE

North end of town



- Key**
- A new retail unit?
 - Remodelled existing retail?
 - A new housing site?
 - Green Spaces?
 - University campus?
 - New public space?
 - New building either built or under construction

Our third option explores what could happen if you consolidated the retail core of the town centre?

Could you develop a new residential quarter for Stafford Town Centre? Would people want to live there? Would you want to live there?

Can the **Guildhall Centre** be made smaller? Might it be possible to accommodate the market in the Guildhall and make way for high quality town-houses and apartments?

COULD WE CREATE A NEW RESIDENTIAL QUARTER?



What do you think of this option?

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GO TO
BOARD 7



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PROJECTS

what should we do?

We have come up with a number of projects which we think could benefit the town centre. Take a look at the sites below and tell us what you think:

V1 Could this be a new lottery funded visitor attraction? Could it be based on Anglo-Saxon history within Stafford?

V4 The Shire Hall - a new university building. Will this change who uses the Market Square?

L3 If these buildings became vacant how would you like to see them reused or redeveloped?

L1 Could this be developed as a 'gateway' site into the centre? What uses could see it transformed?

- residential scheme?
- or a new carpark?
- or more maybe more shops?

V2 What could investment do to the Ancient High House?

L2 Would a new building on the Superdrug site help to improve the High Street? If so what about housing above retail?

V3 Could the area inside the roundabout be redeveloped?

SEE BOARDS 4,5 & 6 FOR OPTIONS FOR THIS AREA

Key

- A new retail unit?
- A new housing site?
- Converted housing maybe?
- A visitor attraction?
- New building either built or under construction

A place to visit

How could we **attract more people** into Stafford. Would it be a good idea to put together a bid for lottery funding to finance a large gallery or museum at the Broadeye windmill or rejuvenate the Ancient High House?

? Do you have any suggestions for visitor attractions you would like to see?

A place to live

Urban living - how about it? Could you see yourself living in the town centre? How about a Townhouse or an apartment block centred around courtyards to maintain the feel of the town centre, but provide green spaces for residents?

? Would you like to see housing in the centre?

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PROJECTS PROPOSED ON THESE BOARDS ARE INTENDED TO INFORM A DISCUSSION ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE TOWN CENTRE AND SHOULD NOT IN ANYWAY BE TAKEN AS FIXED PROPOSALS

**GO TO
BOARD 8**

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PROJECTS

what could we do?

Can parking be improved in the town centre? If so what might we do? Tell us what you think:

P2 Could additional on street parking be provided along Eastgate if the buses are re-routed?

P6 Should money be invested into improving the streets connecting the new Morrisons store and Market Square?

P3 Could North Walls be altered to allow additional on street parking?

P4 This is the alignment of the proposed Bus Priority Corridor. How will this impact the other streets in the town centre?

P5 Would an environmental improvements project along the side of the river improve links between the High Street and Riverside development?

P1 If the existing buildings are demolished could this site be used for parking?

SEE BOARDS 4,5 & 6 FOR OPTIONS FOR THIS AREA

Key

- Proposed Bus Priority Route
- More on-street parking?
- New car park?
- Existing car parks
- New building either built or under construction

Public realm & Parking

How do we provide the option for people to drive to the town centre? Is parking provision a key requirement to ensure the town centre stays competitive with neighbouring towns. How do we make sure the town centre continues to be an attractive place to walk around and is not dominated by car parks?

- Do you have any suggestions for providing more parking in the centre?
- Tell us where you think would benefit most from public realm improvements?