

# Hucknall Town Centre Spatial Masterplan March 2022



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## PREFACE



**“Our priority is to build community pride and aspiration across Ashfield, and the Place Leadership agenda is focused on doing this. The initial works around Hucknall Town Centre will make a real difference to the way the town looks and provide a more positive experience for people visiting Hucknall. We want residents to be proud of where they live and see our town centres as a safe place to shop and visit. Increasing inward investment into the district is also key. The creation of skilled jobs can only help in inspiring young people in their career choices.”**

**Councillor Jason Zadrozny  
Leader of the Council**



**“As someone who not only lives in Ashfield, but chooses to run their business from Ashfield, I am very excited to be involved with the Discover Ashfield initiative and the development of the Hucknall Town Centre Spatial Masterplan.**

**The COVID pandemic has accelerated the shift away from retail dominated town centres and demanded a more complex mix of retail, leisure, food, drink, and events. This has created a wonderful opportunity for Hucknall to reinvent itself and become a vibrant, diverse, and resilient town centre that adapts to, and truly serves, its population and the wider area. The recent pedestrianisation of the high street is testament to the desire to create a welcoming town centre and share Hucknall’s unique history with visitors. To me, Discover Ashfield and this masterplan will provide the necessary framework for our community and businesses to look ahead and seize opportunity, and make Hucknall a fantastic place to live, grow a business, and visit.”**

**Martin Rigley  
Board Chair for Discover Ashfield**



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# Chapter 1 – Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose of the Masterplan

1.1.1. The purpose of the masterplan is to deliver innovative change to Hucknall Town Centre. The plan will help towards supporting sustainable growth, creating new public realms, revitalising existing buildings and services, and improving the streets for pedestrians. The plan also seeks to capitalise on future aspirations in relation to culture, transport, and urban regeneration. The masterplan will also play a critical role in the following:

- Raising the profile of the Town Centre both regionally and nationally.
- Encouraging and guiding investment towards the Town Centre.
- Highlighting opportunities for development and improvements through urban regeneration.
- Accentuating the unique culture and heritage of Hucknall and ensuring it can be enjoyed and explored by residents and visitors alike.
- Realising the potential to provide a framework in supporting investments and improvement schemes for active travel and public travel across the Town Centre.
- Supporting and informing the existing planning frameworks such as the Ashfield Local Plan Review 2002 and the emerging Ashfield Local Plan

## 1.2. Relationship with Previous Hucknall Masterplan

1.2.1. This iteration of the masterplan builds upon the successes of the Hucknall Town Centre Masterplan published in 2009 and aims to modernise the approaches and delivery of the masterplan to reflect current opportunities post pandemic, to respond to consumer behaviour and consider the changes in planning policy. Subject to consultation and the adoption process, this masterplan will supersede the 2009 document.

1.2.2. Since the previous masterplan was published in 2009, Hucknall Town Centre has undergone significant transformation with a variety of projects that enhanced the area and public realm. Some of the headline projects include:

- The Hucknall Town Centre Improvement Scheme (HTCIS) was a £13.5 million scheme which created an inner relief road to reduce congestion on Torkard Way and allowed pedestrianisation of the northwest part of High Street. This project was completed between 2016-17.

- Formerly known as the Byron Cinema, the Arc Cinema project completely renovated and rebranded the previously desolate building. The building features state of the art cinema equipment and reopened in 2020 for residents and visitors to enjoy.
- Hucknall has benefitted from an outdoor market for a considerable amount of time. The market was relocated from the Market Place to High Street to increase encouragement. The market continues to be the districts most successful market, running on Fridays and Saturdays.
- As part of the HTCIS, flood alleviation measures were put into place to reduce the likelihood of flooding and minimise its impacts.
- The nightlife of Hucknall has become noticeably more vibrant since the completion of the HTCIS. Several new venues such as: Cow Shed, the Hideout@Hucknall and the Byron's Rest have given Hucknall a new lease of life.
- The Hucknall conservation area was officially designated on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The designation seeks to protect the historical character of Hucknall's Town Centre.

The Local Authority is actively working on securing additional funding to expand the transport connectivity across the district, regenerate the Town Centre, and improve the leisure and cultural offering.

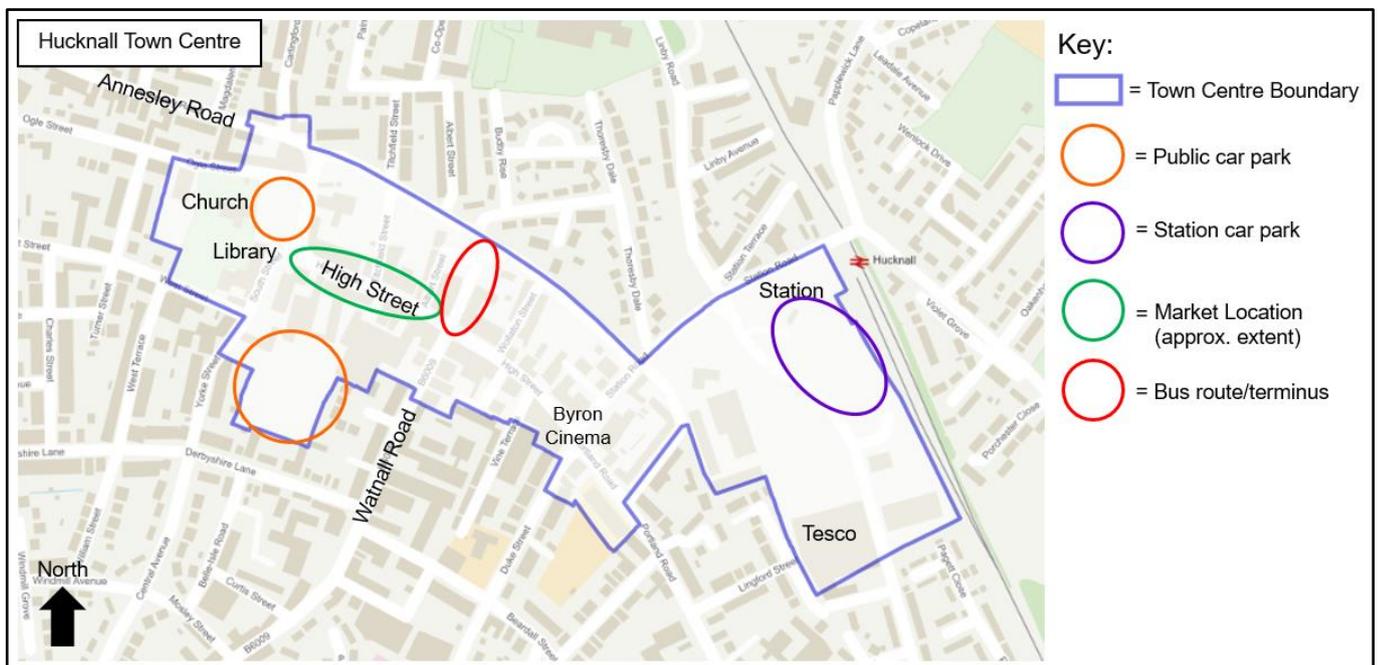
### **1.3. Hucknall Today**

1.3.1. As of 2020 Hucknall has an estimated population of circa 36,000. The town holds a competitive position in the district and the county as it is located between Nottingham and Mansfield. The proximity of the M1 to Hucknall also provides easy transport to Sheffield and Leicester.

- Between April 2011-2021 Hucknall has seen the most growth in the Ashfield District in terms of land uptake with 44% (percentage of development per area in respect of gross hectareage).
- Hucknall borders Nottingham City Council, making the town a hotspot for commuters to the city.

- In 2019 the Hucknall Conservation Area was published; a large area of the conservation area is located within the town centre. This has put a greater emphasis on design and preserving the character of Hucknall.
- Hucknall is a traditional town centre with a mix of national and independent retailers and a weekly outdoor market. The Town Centre is well used by the residents.
- The centre benefits from strong transport links via train, tram, and bus services. Parking in the centre is also convenient and reasonably priced. The town centre is contained by residential areas (Figure 1).
- The structure of the town centre has changed from a simple goods transaction to a complex mix of retail, leisure, food & drink, events, commercial uses, residential uses, health, education, and nightlife.

Despite economic uncertainties since the 2008 recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, Hucknall Town Centre has a low vacancy rate. The town does still face challenges however, there are a number of opportunities in the Town Centre which would allow the town to thrive and build on the success of the previous masterplan



**Figure 1: Hucknall Town Centre Context Map**

## 1.4. Hucknall in the past

- 1.4.1. Originally known as Hochenale in the Domesday Book, Hucknall is a historic town that has history dating back to the 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> century.

- The town achieved considerable prosperity during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and became a hub for the textiles industry. Hucknall became a colliery town in 1861. The final mine closed in 1986 after the collapse of the coal mining industry in Britain.
- The Hucknall airfield, known as RAF Hucknall, was constructed in 1916 and was taken over by Rolls Royce for flight testing in 1927. During World War II the airfield showcased the first flight of the P-51 Mustang.
- Hucknall is the birthplace of many notable people including renowned poet Lord Byron, composer Eric Coates and Countess Ada Lovelace.
- Hucknall became the northern terminus for the Nottingham Express Transit (NET) tram system in 2002, the town is also part of the Robin Hood Line, the rail network that runs from Nottingham to Worksop.

## Chapter 2 – Masterplan Vision, Objectives and Strategy

### 2.1 A Vision for Hucknall

- 2.1.1. The Town Centre of Hucknall has improved over recent years and whilst it has a relatively low vacancy rate of 11.6%, there remain further opportunities to continue the success of the previous masterplan so that the Town Centre may continue to thrive. A vision for Hucknall can assist with this.

#### **A Vision for Hucknall**

**Hucknall Town Centre will be an attractive, vibrant, accessible, unique, and resilient place where people are proud to live, learn, visit, work, and invest.**

**New development will be of high-quality design and respond to the town's heritage, distinct character, and culture.**

**To strengthen connections and key destinations across the Town Centre that are easy to navigate. Walking, cycling and public transport will be enhanced to reduce the need for car travel**

## 2.2. Objectives

2.2.1. To ensure that the vision for Hucknall can be made a reality, it is important to set out clear objectives.

- **Solidify the Identity of the Town Centre** – A Town Centre should have a unique selling point supported by a diverse mix of uses to entice visitors and create a positive identity. This can be achieved through heritage, local culture, art, consistent high-quality design, placemaking and public realm.
- **Improve Accessibility and Legibility into and within the Town Centre**– A Town Centre should be accessible to all, and a variety of transport modes should be made available and affordable. Sustainable and active transport methods such as walking, cycling and public transport should be prioritised and encouraged through the transport hub. Legibility can be enhanced through the implementation of key nodes, the enhancement of gateways, well designed public space, buildings, highways & footpaths, and waymarking.
- **Create a Vibrant Night-Time Economy** – The vitality and viability of Town Centres can be improved by having activities that extend beyond daytime shopping hours. A diverse range of leisure, eateries and small convenience stores can increase footfall and appeal to a wider variety of residents and visitors.
- **Provide Opportunities for Town Centre living** – Mixed tenure residential uses are key to providing a diverse and vibrant area. A Town Centre can offer attractive and high-quality living accommodation by reclaiming underused or vacant land, or the space above retail units into apartments.
- **Create a Sustainable and Resilient Town Centre** – Considering contemporary issues such as climate change, inflation and an ageing population, Town Centres should play a vital role in minimising inputs of energy and outputs of waste, making optimal use of land, creating spaces that can adapt for the future, and developing services that are appropriate and well used. A town centre should be able to meet the needs of the present without compromising the potential needs of the future.
- **Provide a Home for Nature and Local Wildlife** – Green and blue infrastructure such as: gardens, parks, trees, water bodies and landscaping can provide habitats for wildlife increasing the opportunities for enhancing biodiversity, mitigate the impacts of climate change, and provide great physical and mental health benefits for residents and visitors. Green and

blue infrastructure are also an important component in creating an attractive, resilient, and sustainable Town Centre.

- **Enhance Perception of safety and Design Out Crime** – The feeling of safety is paramount to resident and visitor wellbeing and the overall perception of the Town Centre. Safety can be enhanced through high quality design that seeks to create lively, well-lit spaces that are served by natural surveillance and supported by digital innovations.

## 2.3. Strategy

2.3.1. The vision and objectives set out what the Local Authority envisage for the future of Hucknall Town Centre. The strategy will set out what actions will take place to fully take advantage of the vision and objectives.

- Building up the Town Centre as a destination with a diverse range of services such as leisure, cultural and arts attractions, and a vibrant nightlife.
- Introducing mixed tenure residential uses into the Town Centre by utilising vacant first floor areas above commercial units. These units need to support a diverse range of occupants and needs.
- Developing a distinctive and attractive environment that respects the local heritage through the creation of well-designed buildings, high quality public realm and legible streets.
- Improving access to the town centre by maintaining and improving existing roads and transport services and supporting and prioritising the development of sustainable transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport that is accessible and convenient for all residents.
- Introducing a consistent approach to signage and waymarking across the Town Centre to encourage exploration and participation within the centre and to encourage active travel.
- Maintaining existing public realm and landscaping to a high standard and creating new high quality public realm for residents and visitors to use and enjoy.
- Upgrading existing housing, shopfronts, and office provision to create high quality and visually appealing spaces for people to live, work and visit.
- Retaining existing distinctive features that give sense of place to the town and aid in navigation.

## Chapter 3 – Masterplan Themes

### 3.1. Six Themes

3.1.1. In order to effectively deliver the masterplan and its vision, six interdependent themes have been developed. Each theme represents a key function of a Town Centre, or a complementary element required to support its function. The themes are:

- A desirable place to live
- A desirable place to work
- A desirable place to visit
- A desirable place to shop
- An attractive and distinctive place
- An accessible and well-connected place

3.1.2. Each theme has its own aims and actions that are designed to guide development proposals and investment in Hucknall Town Centre and culminate together to create the overall masterplan vision.

### 3.2. Creating a Desirable Place to Live

3.2.1. Hucknall has the potential to provide high quality living, creating a place that is accessible, safe, resilient, and attractive. This can be achieved by:

- Providing balanced tenure housing such as apartments and space above existing retail units that are able to attract a diverse population and a range of needs.
- The provision of services to support daily needs such as: GP's, dentists, convenience stores, and easy access to facilities that are just outside of the Town Centre.
- Provide services that support an ageing population and people with disabilities.
- Bring underused or vacant properties back into use.
- Improve the accessibility of the Town Centre to support edge of town and suburban living.

### **3.3. A Desirable Place to Work**

3.3.1. Located in close proximity to Nottingham City, Hucknall must become a competitive area to work so it is able to thrive, this can be achieved through:

- Create local employment sites and opportunities.
- Create and support employment that require a diverse range of skills and qualifications.
- Re-establish underused or vacant properties into employment and training use.
- Upgrade existing office space to ensure high quality working areas.
- Encourage and support existing and new businesses operating within the Town Centre.
- Create flexible working spaces e.g., bookable rooms and resources, coworking office spaces.

### **3.4. A Desirable Place to Visit**

3.4.1. Hucknall needs to be able to offer a unique experience through its architecture and heritage, its streets and spaces, its arts and culture, and its businesses. This can be attained from:

- Create diverse and unique opportunities for night life and an evening economy.
- Attract a wider range of shops and businesses into the area.
- Attract and highlight niche and independent businesses to provide a unique selling point to the Town Centre.
- Improve and enhance existing attractions to encourage longer stays.
- Continue with the development of successful regular events to increase and retain footfall.
- Incorporate heritage and history into the public realm and building design.
- Support 'passive' educational opportunities e.g., plaques, statues, monuments, signs, murals, pop up exhibitions etc.
- Promote nearby National Trust and heritage properties such as: Hardwick Hall, Clumber Park, Papplewick Pumping Station and Newstead Abbey.
- Creation of a 'cultural zone' around arc cinema

### **3.5. A Desirable Place to Shop**

3.5.1. Hucknall is the second largest district centre in Ashfield and has several independent and national retailers. Hucknall faces significant competition from other retail centres outside the district, namely Nottingham which is the leading retail centre in the sub-region. The following can be implemented to improve Hucknall's shopping experience:

- Attract a wider range of shops and businesses to the area.
- Create a diverse mix of leisure, cultural uses, and eateries to support retail and lengthen duration of visitor stays.
- Improve existing shopfronts and associated signs and advertising.
- Develop niche and specialist offers to suit a range of budgets.
- Affordable and accessible parking to facilitate shopping visits.
- Create stronger links in key shopping areas to facilitate ease of movement and encourage active travel into the centre and to introduce public realm improvements to give a greater sense of place in the centre.

### **3.6. An Attractive and Distinctive Place**

3.6.1. Hucknall has its own unique culture and history which gives the town its identity. Projects need to be able to express Hucknall's identity to create an attractive and distinctive place, such as:

- Celebrate and highlight local characters and iconic figures e.g., Lord Byron, Ada Lovelace, Eric Coates.
- Create a distinctive identity for the Town Centre that supports the masterplan vision.
- Develop a network of pedestrian routes to encourage the exploration of the town.
- Improve the existing public realm to create attractive and safe areas of enjoyment.
- Develop green and blue infrastructure to support physical and mental health and local wildlife.
- Create unique and iconic gateways into the Town Centre e.g., landmark buildings.

### **3.7. An Accessible and Well-Connected Place**

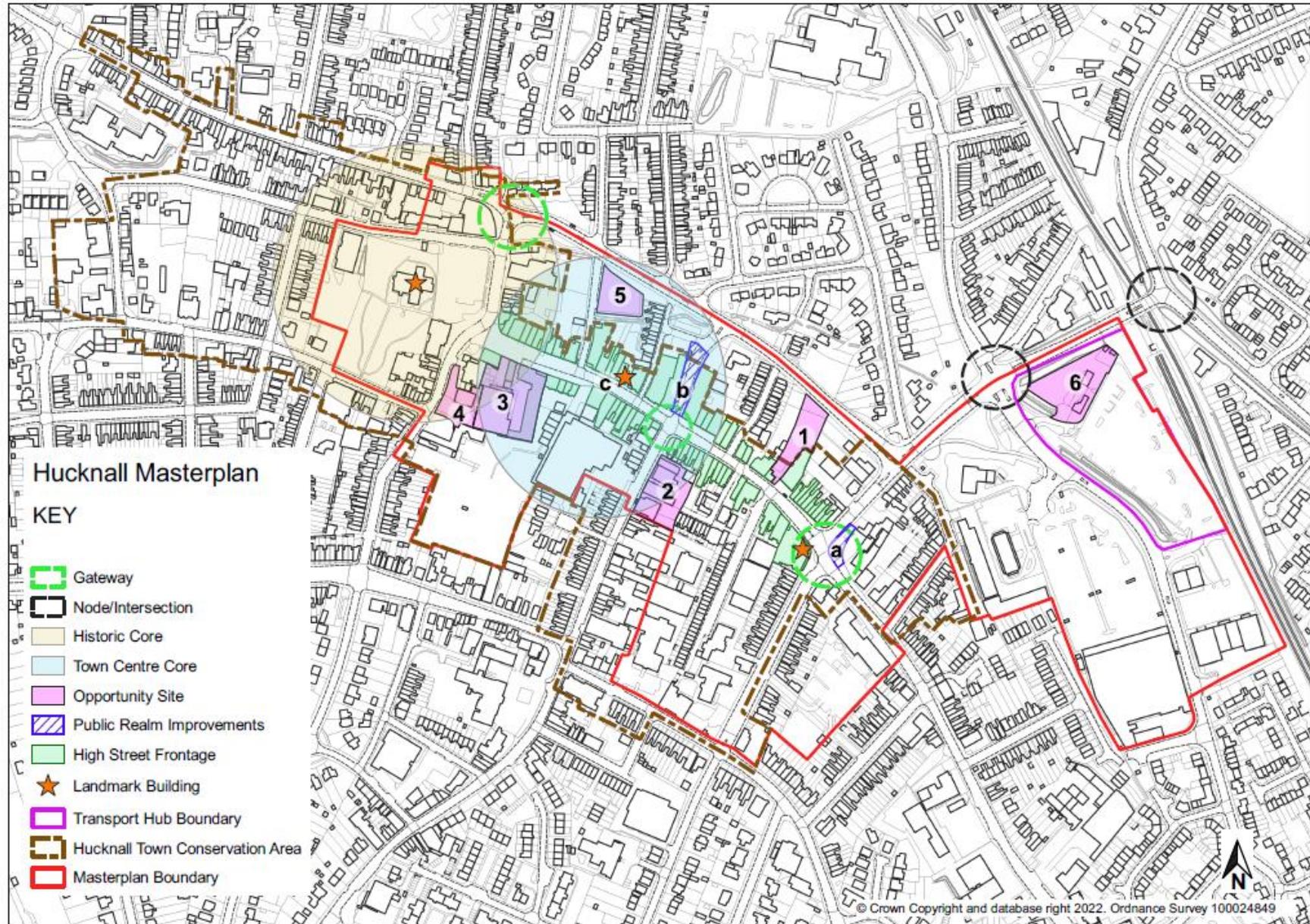
3.7.1. Hucknall needs to be connected so it is safe and convenient for pedestrians and cyclists to move around. The centre also needs to have an effective and attractive public transport system with an efficient highway network. This can be achieved by:

- Supporting the transition to sustainable interconnected transport methods such as walking, cycling, and public transport.
- Ensure future developments align with and make use of existing or proposed transport infrastructure both around Hucknall and at a wider district level, including digital innovations.
- Maintain affordable car parks for parking provision and reducing on street or illegal parking.

- Create navigable pedestrian routes throughout the town to connect different sectors and encourage walking or cycling.
- The creation of an integrated transport hub and the improvements and reorganisation of bus facilities so they benefit from natural surveillance to become a safe space.

### **3.8. Specific Projects / Priority Areas**

3.8.1 As part of the masterplan, the Local Authority has identified 6 priority areas, 3 public realm sites and a transport hub within the Town Centre and outlined changes the Local Authority would like to see. This does not mean alternative development is not possible or restricted, but any development should contribute to the overall vision, objectives, and strategies of the masterplan.



**Figure 2:** Specific Projects/Priority Areas plan

3.8.1. **Priority Area 1 – Car Park at the Rear of 24-26 High Street and Torkard Way**

<b>Current Use</b>	Car Park
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Car Park
<b>Relevant Planning History</b>	<p>Application Reference: V/2016/0739</p> <p>Proposal: Retention of Existing Car Park and New Vehicular Access</p> <p>Decision: Conditional Consent</p> <p>Decision Date: 27/01/2017</p>
<b>Relevant Planning Constraints</b>	None
<b>Opportunity</b>	Proactive opportunity to improve safety of car parking provision, improve the pedestrian and cycle accessibility to the Town Centre.



**Figure 3: Priority Area 1 Layout**



**Figure 4:** Priority Area 1: Existing access into the car park to/from High Street.



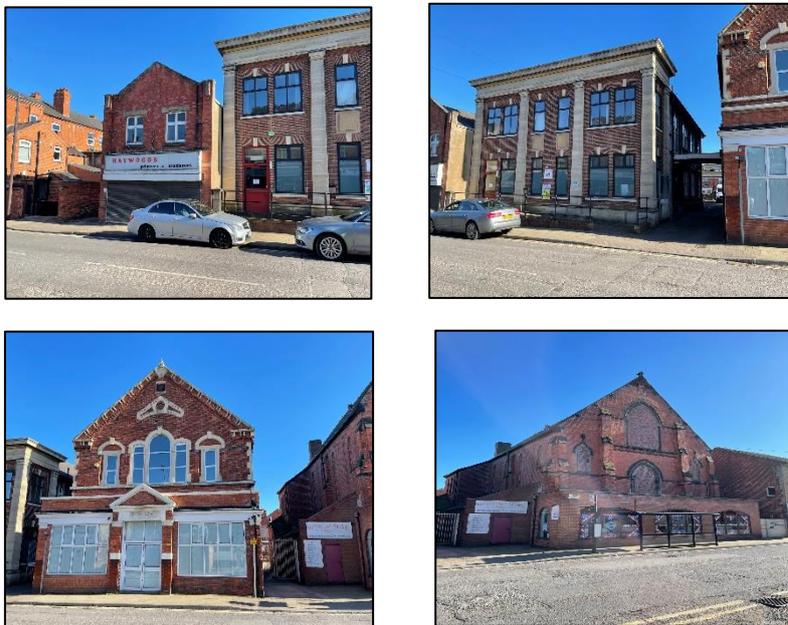
**Figure 5:** Priority Area 1: Existing barrier between car park and Torkard Way. The introduction of bollards could provide easier access for all into the town centre from this route whilst still restricting vehicle movement.

### 3.8.2. Priority Area 2 – Watnall Road

<b>Current Use</b>	4 buildings in various uses including a printer (at No 1 Watnall Road), a vacant Council office building, the former public hall, and a former church which is currently in use as a bed shop.
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Vacant buildings have potential to be used for a variety of town centre uses which may include opportunities associated with skills development.
<b>Relevant Planning History</b>	Application Reference: V/2022/0032 (Former Public Hall)  Proposal: Change of Use from Mixed Commercial Use to 4. No HMO's Consisting of 1. No 6 Bedroom Unit, 2. No 4 Bedroom Units, 1. No 5 Bedroom Unit  Decision: Pending  Decision Date: N/A
<b>Relevant Planning Constraints</b>	All 4 buildings are within the designated Hucknall Conservation Area.
<b>Opportunity</b>	Reinforcing the positive contribution these buildings make to the character and appearance of the conservation area. There are opportunities for bringing back into use the vacant buildings for a range of town centre uses including facilities for training and skills development business support, retail, leisure or food and drink. Potential for any vacant upper floors to be converted to other uses.  Opportunities for improving signs and alternatives to roller shutters on existing buildings to improve the character and appearance of the conservation area.



**Figure 6:** Priority Area 2 Layout



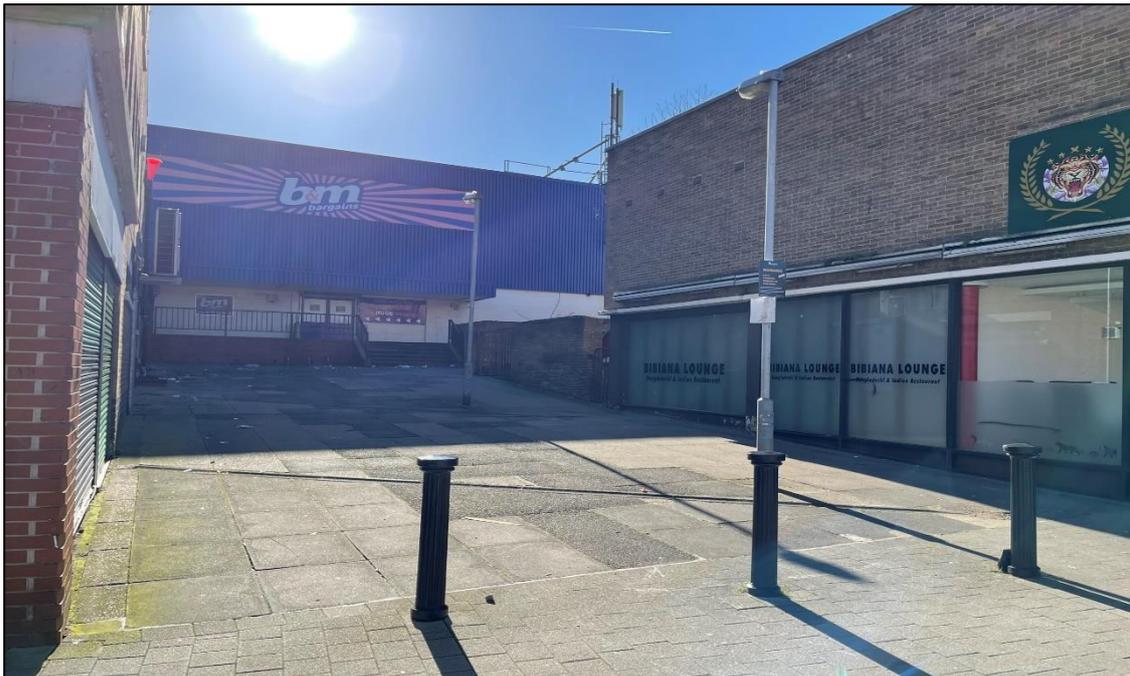
**Figure 7:** Priority Area 2: Existing building frontages, which individually and as a group contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Alternative roller shutter design would further enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area in this location. The buildings could be used for a variety of town centre uses.

### 3.8.3. Priority Area 3 – B&M & The Post Office, Chapel Street

<b>Current Use</b>	Retail (and post office sorting office)
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Retail and/or another suitable town centre use
<b>Relevant Planning History</b>	None
<b>Relevant Planning Constraints</b>	All buildings within this priority area are within the designated Hucknall Conservation Area
<b>Opportunity</b>	<p>To improve the appearance of the public realm from the high street to the existing retail store to improve the sense of place and the perception of safety, particularly after dark. To improve the frontage of the retail stores from Piggins Croft car park, improving the demarcation of space for pedestrians and vehicles and to encourage pedestrian movement into the high street.</p> <p>There are also opportunities to repurpose this site, along with the adjoining post office building to improve the compatibility of uses and accessibility in this location. This would however require detailed discussions about the operational logistics of moving the current uses to an alternative site.</p>



**Figure 8:** Priority Area 3 Layout



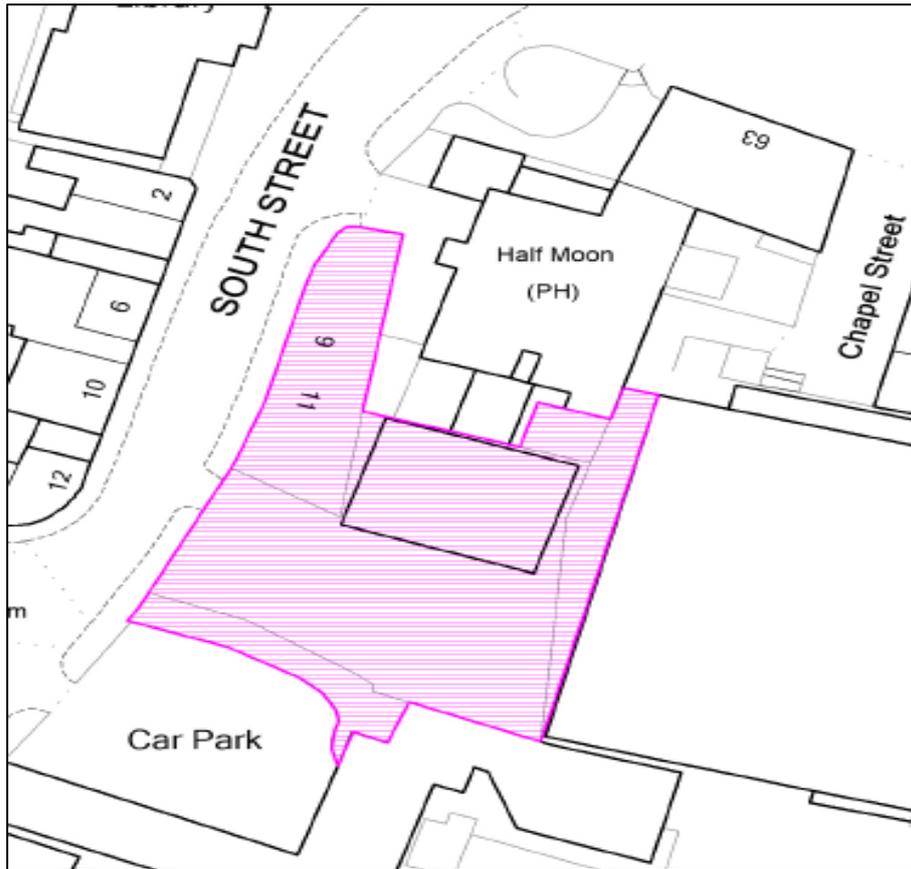
**Figure 9:** Priority Area 3: Access to B&M from the high street. A new gateway could improve public movement, accessibility and encourage active travel whilst providing opportunities for improving the public realm and waymarking within the town centre.



**Figure 10:** Priority Area 3: Main access to the store from Piggins Croft Car Park, service areas and pedestrians mix along this frontage. A new gateway would improve accessibility into the town centre as the existing walkthrough is not accessible by wheelchair, suitable waymarking of the town centre may also encourage active travel.

**3.8.4. Priority Area 4 – Car Park and Storage Building off South Street and Land Between South Street and Half Moon Public House**

<b>Current Use</b>	Storage, car parking and overgrown, underused land.
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Retail and / or another suitable town centre uses including residential
<b>Relevant Planning History</b>	None
<b>Relevant Planning Constraints</b>	The land is within the designated Hucknall Conservation Area
<b>Opportunity</b>	<p>To utilise the current under used car park and storage area, accessed off South Street for redevelopment to maximise the use of the site compatible with the town centre location. A variety of uses complimentary to the Town Centre location would be supported including food and drink, leisure, retail, offices, and residential.</p> <p>There are also opportunities to utilise under used land alongside South Street and the Half Moon Public House to increase the size of the site and improve the appearance of the street scene in this location. The site is currently boarded up but requires redevelopment as part of a comprehensive site with the adjoining car park and storage.</p>



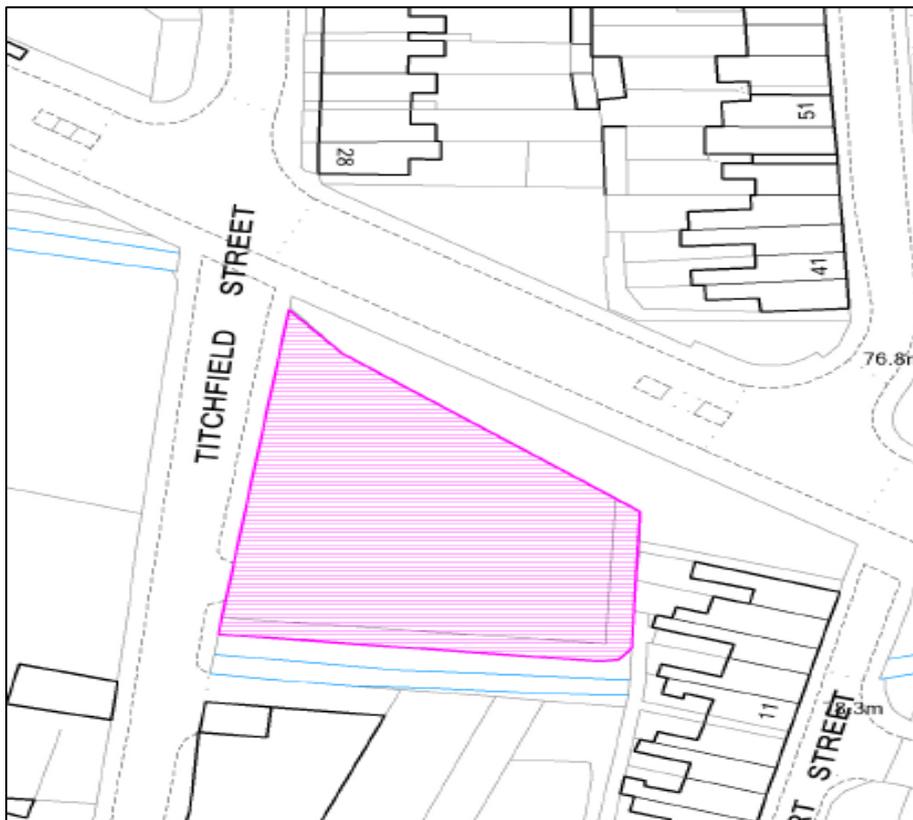
**Figure 11: Priority Area 4 Layout**



**Figure 12: Priority Area 4 from South Street showing the existing access and car park with a storage building. The site could provide several town centre uses and sits within a prominent and attractive position within the centre.**

3.8.1. **Priority Area 5 - Derelict Land, Titchfield Street/Torkard Way**

<b>Current Use</b>	Vacant / derelict land
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Suitable town centre use or community garden
<b>Relevant Planning History</b>	None
<b>Relevant Planning Constraints</b>	A portion of the area is within flood zones 2 & 3
<b>Opportunity</b>	Brownfield site within the boundary of the town centre masterplan area. Close to the high street and other amenities and located in an area primarily characterised by residential development. Close proximity to bus stops along Titchfield Street which have direct access to the intended transport interchange. Highly sustainable location and attractive location with existing low stone walls characteristic of the area and an open, green frontage onto Torkard way with opportunities for further greening as part of the redevelopment of the site.



**Figure 13: Priority Area 5 Layout**

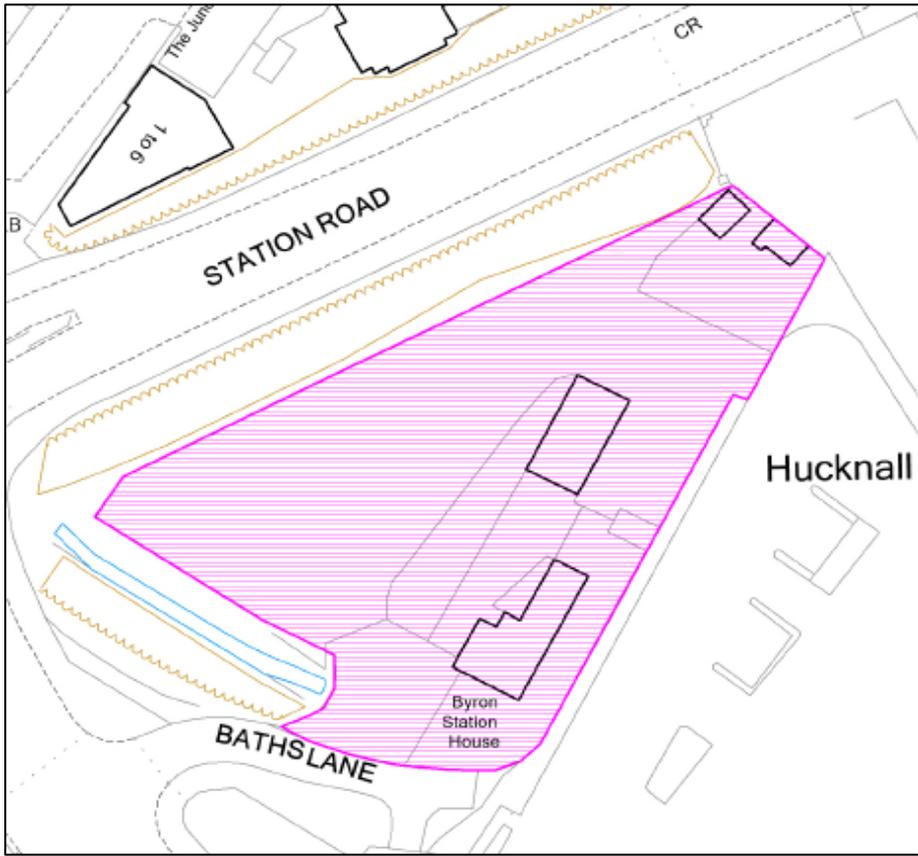


**Figure 14:** Priority Area 5 from Torkard way, showing the junction with Titchfield Street where the two bus stations are located and which provide direct pedestrian access to the town centre. The site is also in an attractive and competitive position within the town centre with many opportunities of development.

### 3.8.2. Priority Area 6 – Land off Ashgate Road

<b>Current Use</b>	Residential property on site with large storage area and offices
<b>Proposed Use</b>	Transport related
<b>Relevant Planning History</b>	None
<b>Relevant Planning Constraints</b>	A portion of the area is within flood zones 2 & 3
<b>Opportunity</b>	Brownfield site within the boundary of the town centre masterplan area in close proximity to the Hucknall tram and mainline rail station, car parking area and bus stops that currently serve the 141 buses to Nottingham and the C2 connect bus around Hucknall. Existing access to the site off Ashgate Road but no direct access from the site to the tram and train car park.

Opportunity for the site to become an improved transport interchange, offering improved departure and arrival information for passengers, small scale retail and food and drink provision for passengers, WC facilities, cycle hire, significant additional car parking to support improved transport connectivity and better opportunities for active travel on Station Road.



**Figure 15: Priority Area 6 Layout**



**Figure 16:** Priority Area 6: Existing access to the site off Ashgate Road. The site has the potential to revolutionise Hucknall’s transport offering to encourage public transport use. The site also provides many opportunities to improve the public realm for the area.

3.8.3. 3 areas of public realm improvements have also been identified on the map as follows:

- Corner of Portland Road and Station Road, opposite Byron Cinema
- Watnall Road between 28 and 40 High Street (Peacocks) and 44 and 46 High Street (Weatherspoon’s); and
- Highstreet.

#### **Corner of Portland Road and Station Road, opposite Byron Cinema**

3.8.4. This is a prime gateway location, opposite the newly refurbished Byron Cinema which currently hosts some raised landscape beds with mature trees, benches, bollards, and a number of utility service boxes. The mature trees in this location add some much-needed biodiversity interest to this part of town and help create a sense of place. They also provide a pleasant visual break in street scene.

3.8.5. There are opportunities through the masterplan to improve the public realm to create good quality public space for users of the town centre. Opportunities to encourage wildlife will be a key component in this location.



**Figure 17:** Public realm at the corner of Portland Road and Station Road, opposite Byron Cinema as seen from Duke Street, the introduction of a variety of green and blue infrastructure could improve Hucknall's Biodiversity.



**Figure 18:** Public realm at the corner of Portland Road and Station Road, opposite Byron Cinema as seen from High Street.

**Watnall Road between 28 and 40 High Street (Peacocks) and 44 and 46 High Street (Weatherspoon's)**

3.8.6. This area of public realm is currently perceived as a 'dead space' between two large units in the town centre (Peacocks and Weatherspoon's). There are two bus stops located here, one on either side of Watnall road with real time display information about arrivals and departures. The area also has some street lighting and also bin storage. It's not the most attractive part of the town and doesn't create a feeling of safety or being beautiful in design terms.

3.8.7. Watnall Road is one of the main gateways into Hucknall Town Centre and whilst there is no direct motor vehicle access onto this part of Watnall Road from the High Street, it does form part of the Towns bus circuit route which allows buses to access the bus stops located on either side of the road here. They are linked to the

station, and this is an existing, regular service which provides access to and from the town for residents and visitors alike.



**Figure 19:** Watnall Road looking toward Torkard Way showing the bus infrastructure in this location. The improvement of the blank facades of the buildings either side of the road could be explored to provide a more attractive public realm.



**Figure 20:** Watnall Road from Torkard Way, looking towards the town centre.

3.8.10 There are significant opportunities not only for improvements in the public realm in this location but also to strengthen the interconnected active travel and transport focus which this masterplan will seek to enable. Possible opportunities for the public realm here include:

- Alterations to the blank facades of adjacent buildings to incorporate one or both of the approaches set out below:
  - i. Murals: Which could be of local, historic links to the town and surrounding area. This could build upon the history and culture already seen in the town centre and would be a way to engage local artists in regenerating this part of the town and capitalising on expanding the towns cultural offer.
  - ii. Green or living walls: can add biodiversity, texture, colour, and interest to blank spaces and also help create a sense of wellbeing within an urban environment as well as assist with the climate change agenda. This has been done on a number of Transport for London (TFL) underground buildings such as Edgware Road station and the TFL document 'Delivering Vertical Greening (2012)'<sup>1</sup> provides details of the costs, approach and benefits to adopting his type of feature within the urban environment.



**Figure 21:** TFL's green wall on the corner of Edgware Road underground station and Marelybone Road, London.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2012-10-15\\_delivering\\_vertical\\_greening.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2012-10-15_delivering_vertical_greening.pdf)

- Installation of further public cycle hire facilities including cycle racks to encourage alternatives to the use of the car and build upon the use of public transport as a means of travel in the town. Public cycle hire facilities would also reinforce the connection between the town centre and the integrated transport hub in this location.
- Improved waymarking and signposting to the town centre and facilities and buildings of interest. There could even be an opportunity for a heritage or culture trail to take a tour into and round the town incorporating historical sights and buildings to and from the transport hub. Digital waymarking could also be explored that can provide live information within the Town Centre.

## Highstreet

- 3.8.11 The length of the high street is located within the Hucknall Conservation Area and there are a number of interesting buildings which make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the town centre located within the Masterplan boundary area (see figure 2).
- 3.8.12 Whilst there are a few vacant properties in the town centre, the high street seems to have been quite resilient to the impact of the recent pandemic compared to other towns in the UK.
- 3.8.13 The key opportunities along the high street in relation to the public realm largely involve the appearance of shopfronts. The Council will only encourage appropriate design (include signs and security measures) which are sympathetic to preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 3.8.14 Good examples of traditional shopfronts in the town centre are shown in figure 22 below.
- 3.8.15 The Town Centre exhibits a variety of shopfronts. Traditional internal shutters are more appropriate over external box shutters, which are not desirable as these detract from the character of Hucknall Town Centre and the conservation area. Some examples are set out in figures 23 and 24 below:



**Figure 22:** This shop frontage keeps its windows open even when closed. The minimal roller shutters allow for a more open design which allows the street scene to be attractive even when shops are closed.



**Figure 23:** external box shutters are not desirable and detract from the character of the Town Centre and create an unattractive street scene.



**Figure 24:** Boots exhibits both internal and external roller shutters, the internal shutters still allow for visibility into the shop and consider the town centre character, the external shutters in contrast are not as inviting and do not consider the Town Centre street scape.

## Integrated Transport Hub

- 3.8.16 Hucknall boasts significant opportunities for the development of an integrated transport hub around the train station. There is already the provision of a number of car parking spaces, an informal bus interchange, taxi rank and electric vehicle charging points. There are opportunities to improve upon and add to the transport offer in this location with the incorporation of site no 6 in the masterplan. The interchange could also provide extra shelters, comfort facilities and refreshment provision to encourage public use.
- 3.8.17 There are regular circular bus routes from the train station to the town centre linking to the bus stops on Watnall road between 28 and 40 (Peacocks) High Street and 44 and 46 High Street (Weatherspoon's).
- 3.8.18 Developing a formal integrated transport hub in this location or with the train and tram interchange would help to improve connectivity to and from the High Street, as well as to key employment destinations in the vicinity including Harrier Park and Top Wighay for example, on the edge of Hucknall and beyond into Nottingham City. This would also help to take vehicles of the highway and help to create some

capacity on the surrounding road network, helping to alleviate some of the infrastructure capacity constraints within the town and contributing to addressing the climate change agenda and improving air quality.

- 3.8.19 There are opportunities to incorporate a public cycle hire scheme with a network of drop off and pick up points around the town which would help to strengthen the network of cycle facilities across the town and encourage alternatives to the use of the car.

## Chapter 4 – Masterplan Delivery

### 4.0 Stakeholders

4.0.1 Delivery of the masterplan will need to be supported by a wide range of public and private bodies including stakeholders, delivery partners and agencies. While the Local Authority is expected to perform a key role, other agencies will be involved with facilitating, funding, and delivering projects. Partners may include, but are not limited to:

- Nottinghamshire County Council
- Nottingham City Council
- Community Organisations
- Landowners
- Developers
- Other public sectors bodies such as English Heritage
- Transport Bodies such as Nottingham Express Transit (NET) and East Midland Railway (EMR)

The delivery of the masterplan will also require support through planning mechanisms such as:

- Local Development Plan Policies
- Supplementary Planning Guidance
- Development and Design Briefs
- Action Plans

### 4.1 Key Roles of Ashfield District Council

- **Leadership** – The Council has led in developing this masterplan and will lead in its delivery.
- **Partnerships** – The Council will work closely with private and public sector bodies to support development.
- **Communication** – The Council will interact with local residents, businesses, and stakeholders to ensure that these parties are consulted on the masterplan before its publication, and on relevant developments and changed before they are implemented.
- **Funding** – The Council will explore opportunities of funding to support the delivery of the masterplan.
- **Regulation** – The Council can apply a range of regulatory tools to manage development and services within the Town Centre.

- **Service Provision** – The Council directs many other services within the district (waste collection, street cleaning, parking etc.) which can be adjusted to support the objectives of the masterplan.

## 4.2 Funding

4.2.1 Whilst the masterplan does not identify and projected costs, it is important to identify potential funding sources in the early stages of the development process. Project delivery is expected to be secured by using a combination of public and private sector investment. These funds might include:

- Section 106 Agreements/ developer contributions.
- Government funding can create substantial funding for development, schemes and grants will be sought where possible and appropriate bids put into place.
- Private sector investment and funding may be available depending on project, cost benefit analysis and incentives.
- The masterplan will generate self-sustaining funding by instilling confidence amongst investors.

4.2.2 Throughout the lifespan of this masterplan, avenues of funding may evolve or change so funding opportunities must be reviewed at regular intervals.

## 4.3 Measuring Success

4.3.1 The masterplan is not inflexible or prescriptive, and will be subject to changing economic conditions, changing priorities and unforeseen circumstances as seen with the COVID-19 pandemic. Timescales and projects are subject to change. The masterplan does not resist or object to alternative development coming forward, but these should contribute to the overall vision and objectives of this masterplan.

4.3.2 The successful delivery will result in the completion of the masterplan objectives.

4.4.3 Timelines associated with specific project can be used as markers to measure the success of the masterplan.

## 4.4 Next Steps

4.4.1 There will be further consultations on individual projects such as planning applications for development as they come forward and we will review at regular intervals.

4.4.2 The Council will pursue feasibility studies, undertake design and planning work for individual projects, and bid for funding to enable project delivery.

4.4.3 For further information about the Spatial Masterplan, project delivery or governance arrangements, please visit our website: [www.ashfield.gov.uk](http://www.ashfield.gov.uk), or call the Forward Planning Team on 01623 457381 / 457382 / 457383 or email [localplan@ashfield.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@ashfield.gov.uk).