



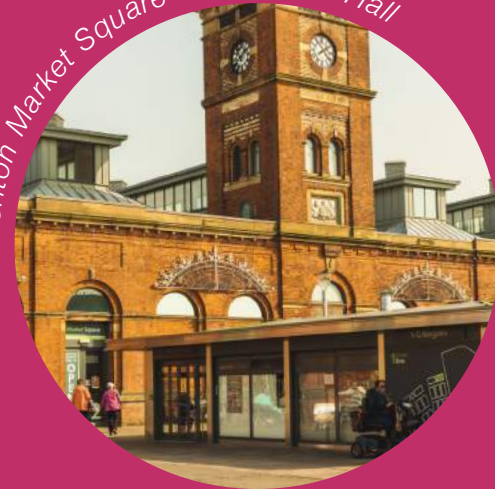
A Public Realm Strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne

Phase 1 - Market Square

A catalyst for further regeneration



Ashton Market Square and Market Hall



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“ We are looking to create a fantastic town centre for Ashton-under-Lyne.

We are creating a plan to breathe new life into Ashton, to bring more shops, people, and homes, and create a healthier town centre for all people.

”



Introduction



This Public Realm Strategy has been produced by Planit-IE on behalf of Tameside Council to devise a strategy to deliver improvements to the Public Realm within the Market Square at Ashton-Under-Lyne Town Centre.

Tameside Council has commissioned the production of a Public Realm Strategy for the Market Square in consultation with Stakeholders. This is a unique opportunity to consider the vision, heritage values and character of the Market Square within the context of the wider town centre. Environmental sustainability, diversity and inclusion, health and well-being, and accessibility are highly significant contributing factors in creating a sense of place and a unique destination for Ashton Town Centre.

Phase 1 Market Square

The Public Realm Strategy will focus immediately on the Market Square, Market Hall and connecting spaces. This is Phase 1 of an overall Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre.

The Phase 1 Market Square Strategy will include strategic plans, along with guidance and design principles to support the delivery of the Market Square vision. Future phases include the Market Fringes, Market Hall and Market Hall canopy, and will form part of the detailed design stage, up to RIBA stage 2. These areas will be excluded from the Levelling Up Fund and delivered at a later stage.

In the future a comprehensive public realm strategy will also include Stamford Street Central, Old Street and St. Michael's Square. It will incorporate proposals for Wellington Road and extend to Katherine Street, Penny Meadows, Oldham Road.

Public Realm Strategy themes

- Inclusive and accessible
- Townscape context
- Responding to heritage
- Connectivity and accessibility
- Sustainability
- Safer streets and spaces
- Culture and events
- Health and well-being
- Way-finding, lighting and signage
- Brand identity and public art

People and place focussed

Our approach is place and people focused, we started by getting to know the place in which we are working, and the people who know it best

It is about building strong relationships, identifying the priorities, gaining insight from the people and understanding of the essence of the place. This has enabled us to define the objectives, aims and ambitions of an effective Public Realm Strategy.



Catalysts for Change

There are actions happening to accelerate positive change in Ashton Town Centre that will support the economy and future growth of the town, here are the actions below:

Ashton Mayoral Development Zone

The establishment of an Ashton Mayoral Development Zone will significantly raise the profile of Ashton and Tameside, helping to position the opportunities that exist for future funding, investment and Greater Manchester support.

Mayor's Challenge Fund (MTF)

Proposals will be coordinated with concept designs for improved cycling infrastructure which have been developed under the Mayor's Challenge Fund. One of these projects is **Ashton Streetscape** (Albion Way and Wellington Road) which aims to achieve the following:

1. Segregated cycle tracks on both sides of the road.
2. A modified junction at the exit from the bus station and the Ashton retail park, to incorporate a new Cyclops arrangement, which provides segregated, signalised facilities for cyclists, to improve road safety for all road users.
3. Measures to slow and control vehicle speeds and provide enhanced priority for pedestrian users, potentially including a reduction in carriageway width, increased landscaping, different surfacing materials and the introduction of pedestrian crossing points.



Leveilling Up Fund 2021

The Council has gained further grant funding to continue this comprehensive transformation of the town centre and was successful in its £19.87m Leveilling Up Fund bid to support the next stage of regeneration.

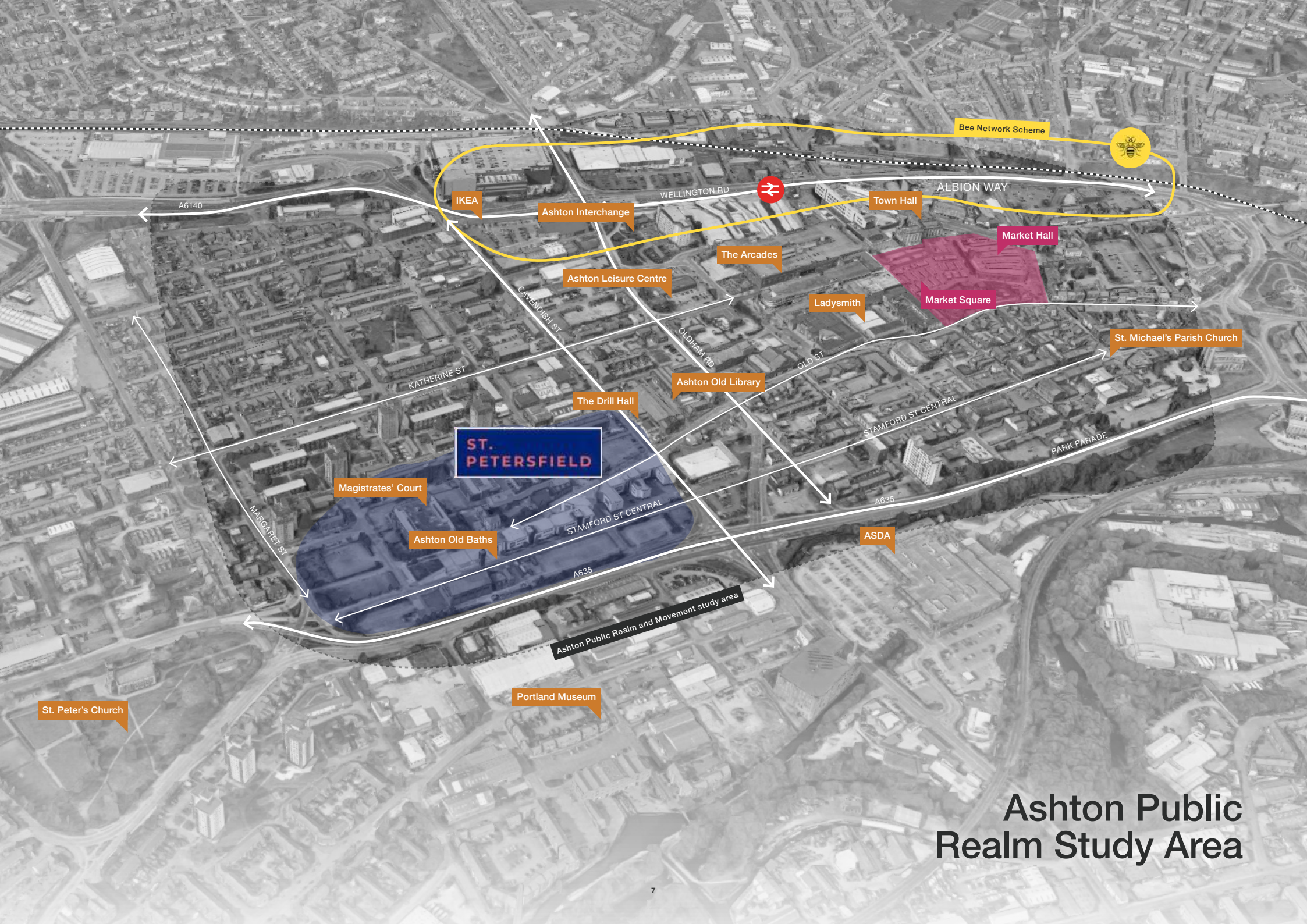
- A. Land remediation of the former interchange site
- B. Cycling and public realm improvements
- C. Restoration of Ashton Town Hall
- D. Further development of St Petersfield into a cutting edge business park for innovation and tech firms
- E. Residential, leisure and the delivery of a wider diversity of town centre uses with increased town centre living.

Wellington Road Proposals

The Wellington Road and Albion Way proposals are currently progressing and construction has started on-site. The strategy and design principles for Phase 1 Market Squares will integrate into wider proposals underway.



Visualisation of Albion Way proposals



Ashton Public Realm Study Area

ST. PETERSFIELD

Bee Network Scheme



IKEA

Ashton Interchange

WELLINGTON RD



Town Hall

ALBION WAY

Market Hall

The Arcades

Ashton Leisure Centre

Ladysmith

Market Square

St. Michael's Parish Church

KATHERINE ST

The Drill Hall

Ashton Old Library

STAMFORD ST CENTRAL

PARK PARADE

Magistrates' Court

Ashton Old Baths

STAMFORD ST CENTRAL

A635

ASDA

A635

Ashton Public Realm and Movement study area

Portland Museum

St. Peter's Church

MARGARET ST

A6140

CAVENDISH ST

OLDHAM RD

OLD ST

A snapshot through time

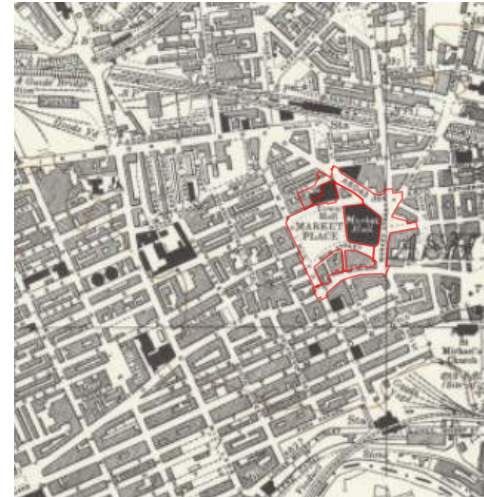
1824



In the early 19th century, Ashton started to develop from a village to a fast growing industrial town on the banks of the River Tame and the new ship canals.

The urban grain in the centre is dense with streets which are organised in a grid pattern. The town centre lays around the Church of St. Michael's, with the Market being relocated in 1828 into the present-time site.

1949 - 1970



Population growth has stalled and is around 50,000 inhabitants. The town expands in every direction towards the neighbouring towns.

The post-war era brought a great deal of modernisation and re-building in the town centre.

In the 1960s as part of Ashton's slum clearance programme, several rows of terraced houses were removed, leaving patches of vacant land in the town centre.

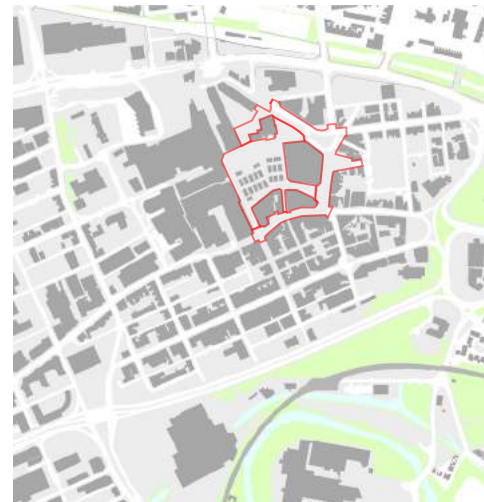
1850 - 1914



Rapid urbanisation resulted in wide expansion of urban fabric and further densification in the centre and along key roads. The Market Square becomes defined by development and by the construction of the Town Hall in 1840 and the Market Hall in 1867.

Construction of numerous terraced housing for workers as well as buildings for education and leisure, such as the Public Baths, Library and School.

1970 - now



Construction of the M60 to the west of the town and several connecting roads cutting through urban fabric.

Fragmentation of the dense town centre grain by the construction of parking lots and large retail and leisure centres such as the Arcades and the Ladysmith shopping centres, which has segregated the connection from Katherine Street into the Market Square.

Ashton Town Centre



Ashton was a small market town from medieval times until late in the 18th century.

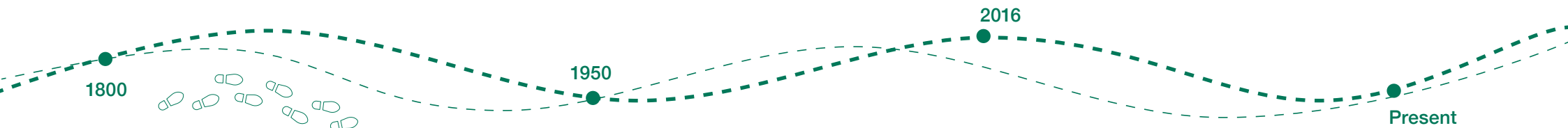
The original market was held near the Old Cross, close to St. Michael's church.



In 2016, a new design for Ashton Market Square was proposed where new kiosks and stalls were introduced.

These kiosks and stalls are valued by the market traders and liked by the public.

Unfortunately, in recent times the Market Square suffers from anti-social behaviour and decay, and the kiosks and stalls are no longer fit for purpose.



Ashton's new town centre was planned by The Earl of Stamford. The street plan was laid in grids on top of fields, and many of the main streets were named after Stamford's family members.



The current Market Hall building was built in 1867. Trading took place inside the hall, as well as on the thriving outdoor market square. In 2004, the Market Hall was devastated by a fire, after which the market was rebuilt and officially opened in 2008 with its original exterior walls.



Unfortunately, in recent times the Market Square suffers from anti-social behaviour and decay, and the kiosks and stalls are no longer fit for purpose.

A new Market Square needs to draw out from the traditional market qualities and community spirit that are cherished by the public, and make it fit for modern day trading and outdoor activities.

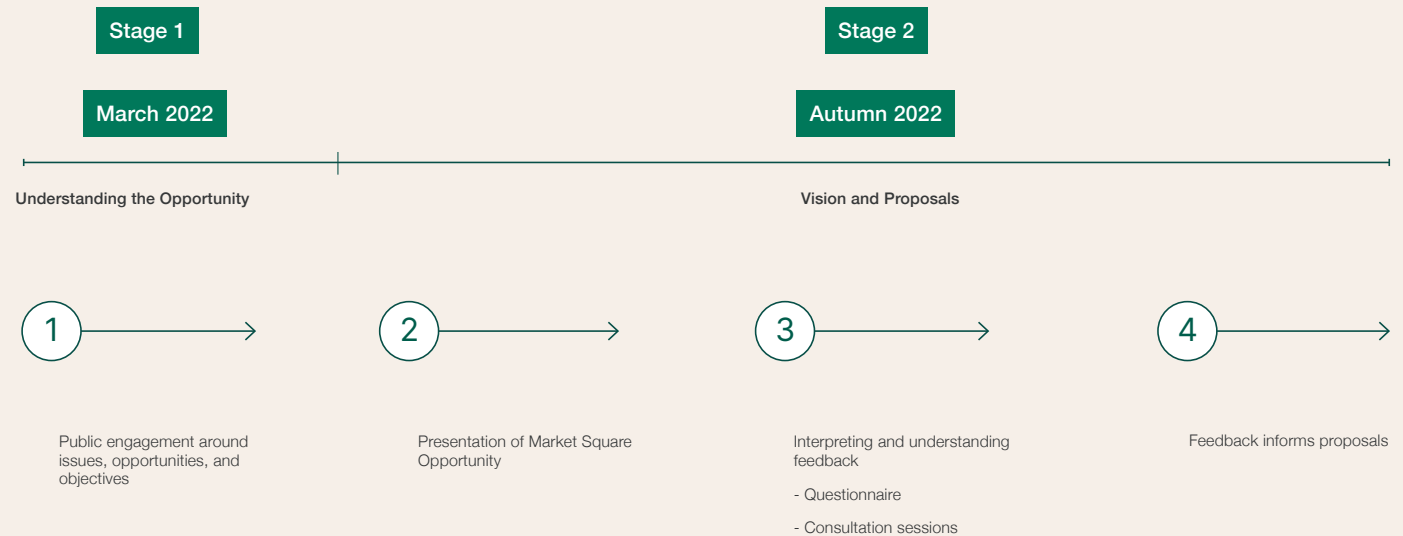
Public Realm Strategy Consultation

A two stage programme of engagement and consultation has been undertaken to run alongside the Public Realm Strategy.

The key messages and outcomes have informed and shaped the design principles and proposals outlined within this Public Realm Strategy.

A consultation statement has been prepared to support the public realm strategy, for further detailed information please refer to the consultation statement. Two stages of consultation were undertaken as shown below.

The findings have provided the project team with a deeper understanding of the needs and aspirations of everyone involved. The feedback has underpinned and shaped the design ideas for the Market Square, Market Hall and Town Hall.



Stage 1

Love Ashton engagement

The Love Ashton engagement event took place on Saturday 13th March 2022, at Ashton Market Hall, the feedback has shaped our plans.

Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council appointed Planit and Civic Engineers to undertake a Public Realm and Movement strategy for Ashton-under-Lyne Town Centre. We gathered the public's initial ideas and thoughts about how they wanted to see improvements in the town centre, the feedback has helped to shape our proposal.

Key Messages

- Market square is characterless-missing the vibrant atmosphere from the past. It should be an attraction and destination rather than a cluttered space.
- Generally unkempt, with deteriorating materials, and lack of greenery.
- Market stalls are unattractive, impractical and in bad condition.
- Safety issues in the square, related to anti-social behaviour, poor lighting and visibility.
- Accessibility from public transport should be improved, as well as connections to St. Petersfield and the rest of Ashton Town Centre.

Market stalls are unattractive and not practical

Make the area more of a community hub where meetings can take place forums and maybe even as a wedding venue.

Lack of greenery

Missing the once vibrant market stalls and atmosphere

Improve signage to the town

Residents need safe and attractive walks



Stage 2 Public Consultation

Consultation in Stage 2 focussed on the Market Square and took the form of workshops, briefings and meetings. The objectives of the consultation were to engage with key stakeholders and a wide variety of people and community groups to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and Market Hall.

The consultation went public with a Public Realm Strategy booklet, associated consultation boards for the public events and a questionnaire.

Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged which have been incorporated within the design principles.

“We’d like to see a better variety of trees. Could we have some the same as those in Library Square in Manchester? They have startling spring blooms.”



“It looks great, Ashton needs the investment... Ashton is ready to improve, Stamford street could be something really special again”.

“It is to be hoped that the mistakes made in developing the current Market Square can be avoided and an amenity of which Ashton can be proud can finally be realised.”

“The plans would be enhanced by a lovely sunken garden, with plenty of benches and colour.”



A number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged across the various consultation sessions, which must be incorporated into the next stage of proposals and are summarised.



Key Messages

Consultation in Stage 2 focussed on the Market Square and took the form of workshops, briefings and meetings. The objectives of the consultation were to engage with key stakeholders and a wide variety of people and community groups to develop a clear local picture and to gain an insight into issues, opportunities, and future aspirations for Ashton Market Square and Market Hall.

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Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged which have been incorporated within the design principles.

The following key messages have been incorporated into the design principles and proposals, as shown on pages 29 to 45.

Public Realm

- Play for all ages needed to attract all ages.
- Range of spaces to suit different needs, including safe spaces, quiet spaces, active spaces for play and recreation and a community hub, which should be free or cheap with passes (for students).
- Plenty of ideas for play related including Skateboarding provision for teenagers
- Provision needed for trade waste and site cleaning operation.
- Servicing access along Bow St for market traders at key times of the day
- Lighting in the evening is critical.
- Food and drink offer - night-time economy
- Mitigate westerly wind,
- Wayfinding and signage need improving
- Provision for Bike parking
- Accessibility for less able bodied and important pensioner trade
- Access for deliveries and own car to stalls
- Bus stop provision has been removed
- Outdoor seating for food stalls
- Access for people from public transport required from Wellington Road (bus routes along this road)
- Pop-up/temporary/seasonal events/offer in the market square.
- Mitigate westerly wind
- Need to establish intimate spaces and curate atmospheres of 'hustle and bustle', buzz.
- Improve drainage capacity
- Maintenance needs considering with provision and resources built in.

Kiosks

- The needs of kiosk traders must be considered.
- Fixed kiosks are required which can operate as a 'shop
- Protection from the weather, consider own canopy
- Designed for food is required
- Different sized kiosks to suit different traders– carrier for storage. 10ft by 10ft doesn't work for some uses.
- Industrial quality of finishes is required
- Intimate space – overlooked if the kiosks all face inwards, under the canopy.

Canopy

- Canopy no sides preferred for ease of cleansing and to minimise ASB Food and drink as a cluster along gallery side of canopy
- Storage to stop lots of unloading for market traders
- Outdoor seating for food stalls
- Shelter and protection from the elements - especially westerly wind and rain, summer shade - free standing roof rather than canopy

Future Vision

The aim for Ashton Town Centre is to breathe new life into the town centre and attract investment, and prosperity for years to come.

Ashton Town Centre will be known for celebrating its unique heritage and distinctive identity. A compact, well-connected, and sustainable place.

The Market Square will be the beating heart of the town; a modern market and public space enlivened by events, cafe culture and a vibrant evening economy. A friendly and welcoming place for future generations to enjoy. A destination where people can socialise and relax.



Diagram illustrating vision objectives

Ashton Town Centre

Our plans capture the essence of Ashton-Under-Lyne Town Centre by celebrating its history and unique assets. We have defined the opportunities and character zones to help shape a comprehensive vision for the future.

Key

-  Linking Ashton with the River Tame and Canal green infrastructure
-  Enhancing Ashton's cultural quarter and supporting the workforce
-  An emerging commercial district (St Petersfield)
-  Old Town Heart - creating a boutique retail offer, supporting the community and providing a high quality residential offer
-  Town Centre living
-  Extending the evening economy, enhancing the food and beverage offer
-  Consolidating the retail and arrival area
-  Identifying Ashton's heart
-  Supporting Ashton's workforce
-  Levelling Up Funding Zone Market Square to provide flexible spaces and events
-  Key Spaces
-  Key crossings
-  Key streets
-  Key linkages
-  Key junctions

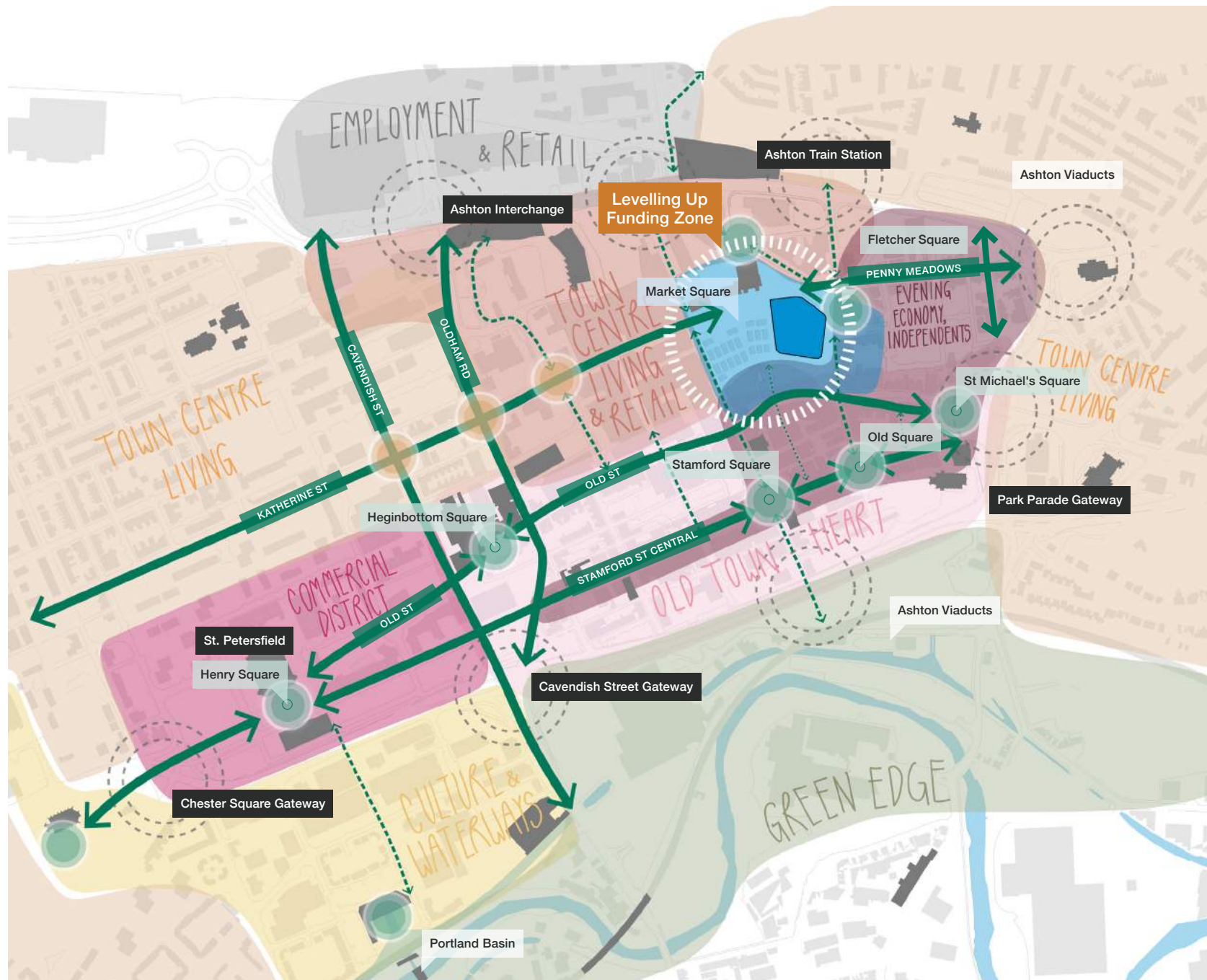


Diagram illustrating character areas and the overall vision

Sustainability Ambitions

Ashton Town Centre will be a thriving and sustainable community for people living there today and for future generations, not just from an environmental point of view, and will include economic development, cultural diversity and social equity.

Climate

A variety of principles will reduce carbon emissions. Improved movement and connections will encourage active modes of travel including a walking and cycling strategy.

Improving air quality and reducing pollution by creating a pedestrian priority zone, by reducing the amount of cars within the core of the town. An effective car parking and transport strategy will reduce carbon emissions and encourage walking and cycling. Cycle storage and electric vehicle charging points will support the strategy.



Grey to Green in Sheffield, a Sustainable Urban Drainage system which protects the local rivers from pollutants



Trees and planting in the streets to provide shading and absorb carbon emissions to create better air quality,

Diversity and Inclusion

Part of the town centre vision is to create informal playful spaces that encourage children and adults alike to play and interact. A variety of activities and events within the Market Hall and Square will cater for a range of demographics.

Environmental

A vital part of the Town Centre transformation vision is that of urban greening, planting street trees, and lower level shrubs to enhance aesthetics, help mitigate the effects of climate change and encourage biodiversity net gain.

Economic

Active edges enliven the streets and attract new visitors, establishments and relaxation. Encouragement of dwell in the town centre will allow users to recharge, and carry on exploring, boosting the local economy. A programme of events will attract visitors and local people. A compact core will encourage social and economic community. Providing a range of community facilities within close proximity to support the economy.



Cycling is encouraged with cycle storage and dedicated cycling routes

Social

A variety of seating opportunities are suggested to suit a wide range of users and encourage dwell by providing a variety of seating types and locations, all user groups can be catered for and encouraged to use and enjoy the spaces. Play and leisure facilities for children and teenagers will be provided for to allow for a vibrant mix and sense of community.



Improvements to Altrincham Market and the surrounding public realm has been a catalyst to attract a range of businesses to boost the economy

Ashton Market is the beating heart of the town.

A modern market for everyone, a destination attracting locals and visitors, hosting a range of entertaining events.





The Study Area

The public realm strategy defines a long term vision for Ashton Town Centre. This document focuses on the Phase 1, Market Square as the first steps of regenerating the Town Centre.

The plan illustrates the area included within the Market Square Levelling Up scope with immediate plans for detailed design and delivery. To ensure a comprehensive design approach the areas that immediately surround the levelling up area will be designed to RIBA Stage 2. The time-scales for delivery will be confirmed at a later stage. The works outside Tameside One and Clarendon College are considered as part of the overall design of the Market Square.



Diagram illustrating the Short term public realm interventions and the longer term interventions

- Market Square Levelling Up scope site boundary
- Detail design TBC past RIBA Stage 2
- Works outside Tameside One and Clarendon College ('Clarendon Link') by Tameside MBC, 2022

Challenges and Opportunities

The regeneration of the Market Square presents an exciting opportunity for Ashton Town Centre as a new modern market town offering space for different types of events. Our plans consider the Market's strengths and weaknesses.

Challenges and Opportunities

The Market Square includes the impressive Market Hall and Town Hall also. The public realm has the potential to enhance the market and the cultural and leisure offer in the town centre.

Revitalising the Market Hall to connect the inside with the outside Market Square will encourage footfall and create a space for a variety of events. The Grade II Listed Town Hall will be refurbished and its heritage celebrated. Activities will spill out into the Market Square and encourage footfall and future investment.

Tameside One College and Clarendon Sixth Form College are within easy reach of the Market. The proposal to regenerate of the Market as the heart of the town will encourage students, young people and adults to visit and spend time in Ashton.

1. Improve visual connectivity
2. Enhanced transport hub connections
3. Town Hall activity encourages footfall
4. Opportunity for play, for families and students
5. Generous Market Square size creates opportunity for events
6. Opportunity for ground floor uses to engage with the street / public realm
7. Re-orientate market stalls to simplify space
8. Improve anti-social behaviour
9. Potential to create defined entrance to Market Hall
10. Opportunity to enhance existing food offer inside and outside

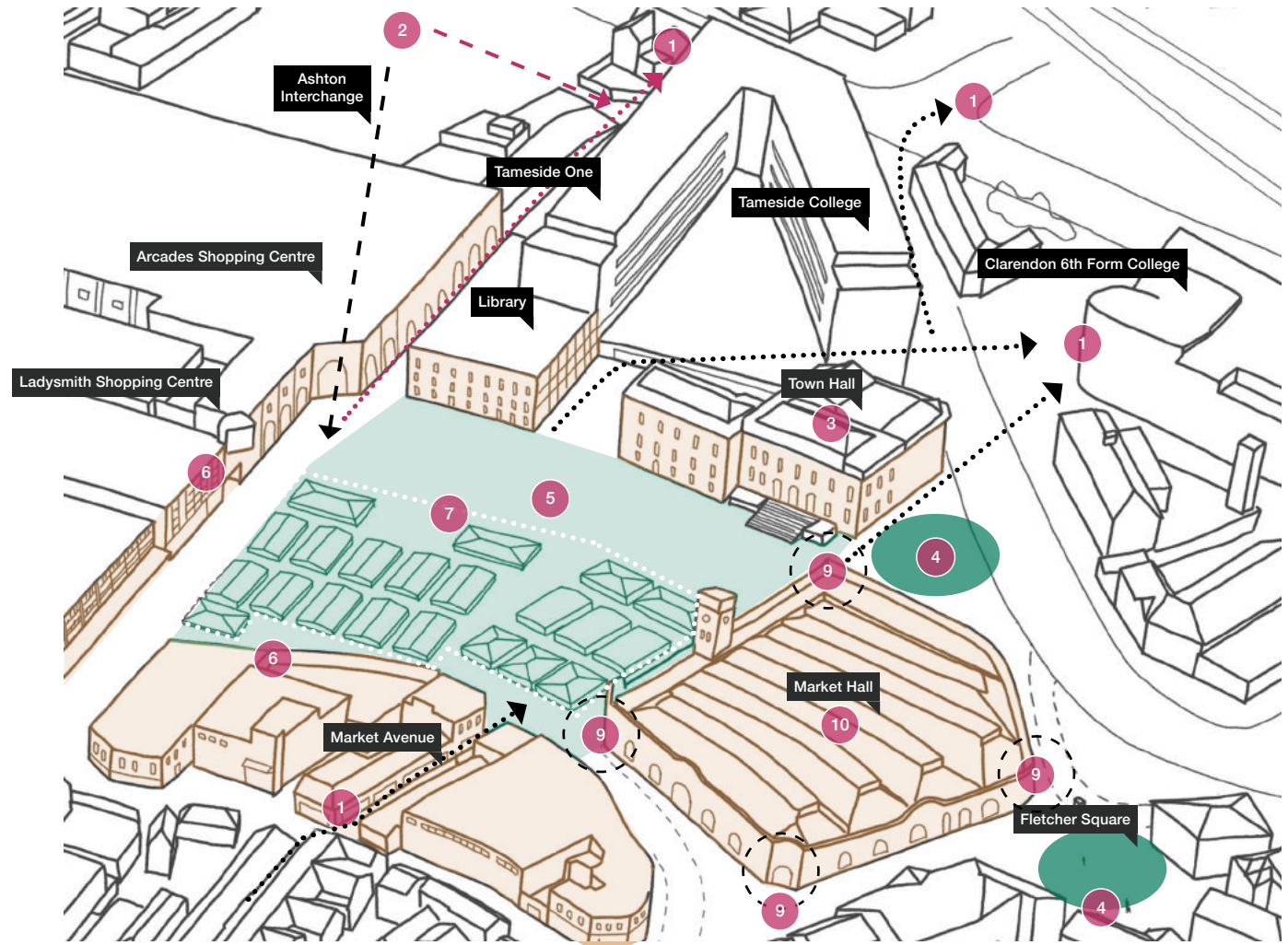


Diagram illustrating the key challenges and opportunities

Key Considerations

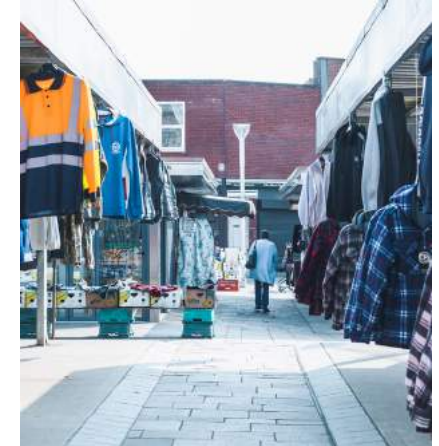
- Improve and reduce visual impact of the stalls and kiosks, to open up the views and create a backdrop of the Town Hall and Market Hall buildings.
- Discourage anti-social behaviour by improving the quality of spaces and natural surveillance.
- Provide Seating and lighting in key locations and routes.
- Consolidate entrances to the Market Hall.
- Improve the Market Quarter's identity through signage, and wayfinding to key destinations.
- Remove clutter in the streets and spaces
- Add smart technology and innovative solutions for refuse.
- Provide green spaces and streets.
- Opportunity to manage people and cars (and emergency vehicles and servicing) with bollards



Access to the Ladysmith Shopping Centre is hidden by stalls



Potential to improve the public realm to create a friendly and attractive route around the Market Hall



Limited visibility through market stalls and kiosks



Numerous entrances to the Market Hall is confusing for visitors



Uses surrounding the market are not attractive to visitors discouraging dwelling time. Empty stalls are not and encourage anti-social behaviour



Street clutter and furniture restricts movement through the Market

A Modern Market Vision



Active edges around the Market Square will encourage footfall and activity

The vision includes the following key design elements:

- A flexible space to support a programme of entertainment and cultural events to attract visitors into the town centre.
- Accessible. A robust and durable single unified surface to meet modern accessibility standards. Incorporate access and servicing requirements.
- A layout to encourage permeability of visitors through the space, considering connections to the surrounding streets.
- Increased outdoor informal seating, and dedicated seating areas for eating and drinking to support and enhance spill out from the market hall.
- Inclusive and welcomes everyone. Uses to meet the needs of all ages and incorporating interactive play elements.
- A new canopy to provide a designated under-cover area for markets to include flexible, durable market stalls and kiosks
- New trees and planting to create an attractive environment and improve air quality and carbon sequestration.
- Improved way-finding, street furniture and lighting for encourage safety and reduce anti-social behaviour.
- Public art to be incorporated to celebrate the heritage and story of Ashton.
- An improved waste management system, improved public toilet facilities, and designated storage for stallholders.

A welcoming high quality modern Market Square



Supporting the day and night time offer with outdoor, weather proof seating



Celebrate the Market Hall



Add attractive planting and trees, creating amenity to increase dwelling time in the square



Improve visibility, future proof connections and enhance legibility in the square



Facilitate walking and increase footfall



Umbrellas with integrated lighting provide flexibility to assigned stalls for vendors.



Umbrellas with integrated lighting provide flexibility to assigned stalls for vendors.



Flexible, specialist stalls could be hosted in the Market Square

Spatial Design Principles

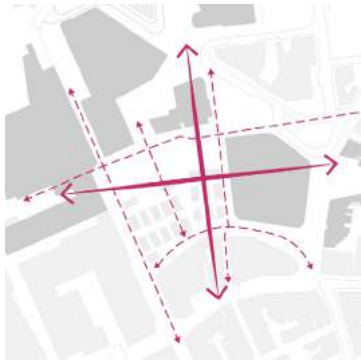
The following diagrams illustrate the spatial moves that underpin the proposed options for the Market Square that inform a series of design principles for the Market Square as shown on pages 29, 30 and 31.

Key

- Key landmark axis
- -> Key route axis
- ▤ Prevalent wind
- ▨ Shady areas
- -> Sun path
- Ashton Arrival
- ⋯ Pedestrian circulation
- Vehicular movement
- ▬ Frontages

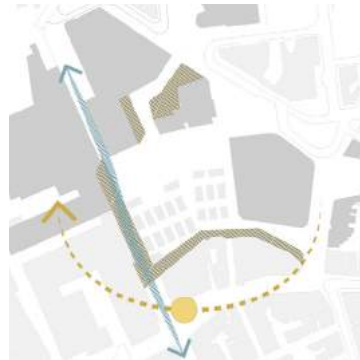
Market Square spaces:

- Canopy
- Flexible events space including informal play
- Town Hall spill out
- Market Hall canopy
- Arrival space
- Through route from Clarendon Sixth Form College and Tameside One



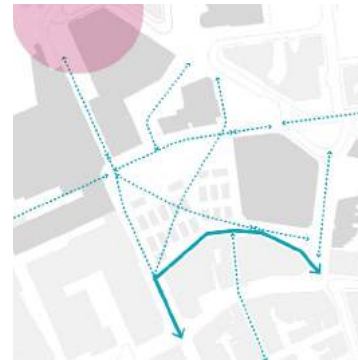
Spatial Character

The Town Hall and Market Hall define a strong axis, influencing the Market Square's geometric layout. The geometry sets out clear zones within the space. The canopy will be positioned to retain these established axis, informed by the landmark heritage buildings.



Weather Conditions

Spaces in front of the Town Hall and Market Hall benefit from sunlight, spill out and seating areas should avoid overshadowed areas. The prevalent wind direction funnels through Warrington Street and designs should respond to this. The weather proof canopy will be located in southern the overshadowed areas to maximise the sunshine in the north of the square.



Access and Circulation

The current stall positions and orientation conflicts with the flow of movement and restricts permeability. The proposals will improve flow and circulation through the space. The canopy and kiosk layout will allow for permeability through it and allow east west and north south connections. Servicing access to the canopy and kiosks will be retained from Bow Street.



Frontages and Uses

A variety of uses activate the frontages that surround the Market Square, shaping the character and function of the space. Uses are split between civic, retail and leisure. Design proposals will consider active frontages along main routes and spaces to positively contribute to the Market Square. The canopy position will allow for spill out from the Town Hall and Market Mall



Spaces

The Market Square will be designed to be a flexible space, consisting of zones that connect. A large space in front of the Town Hall will be reserved for events, with a series of connecting smaller spaces providing places to socialise, relax and play. A weather proof canopy will be located to retain the most appropriate position for flexible events.

Understanding Scale

Scale plays a major role in influencing the life and character of the space. The following case studies demonstrate how the potential of public spaces can be maximised to create lively, vibrant places for everyone.



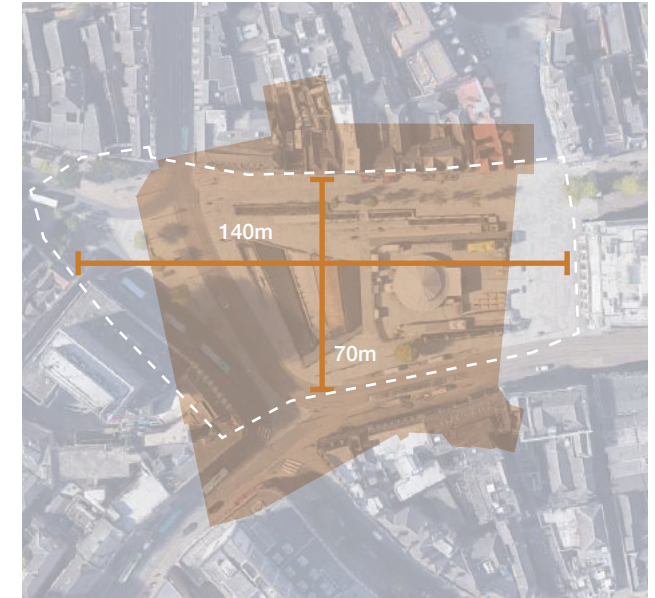
Albert Square, Manchester



Area: 8,000 sqm



Nottingham Old Market Square



Area: 13,338 sqm



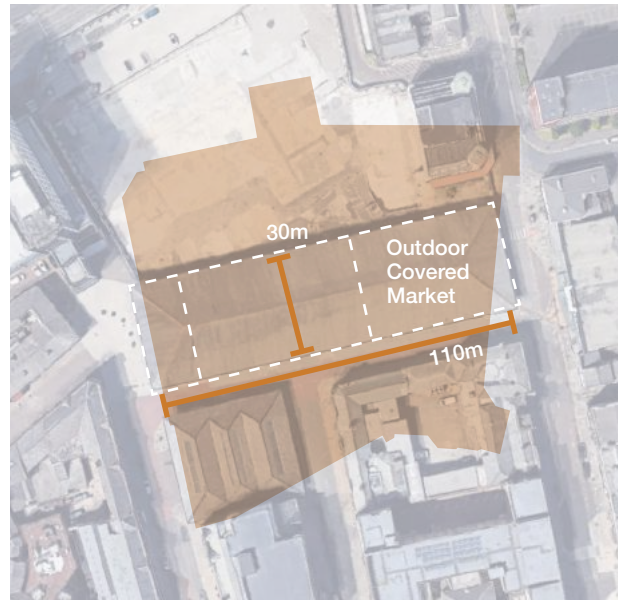
Torvehallerne Norreport, Copenhagen



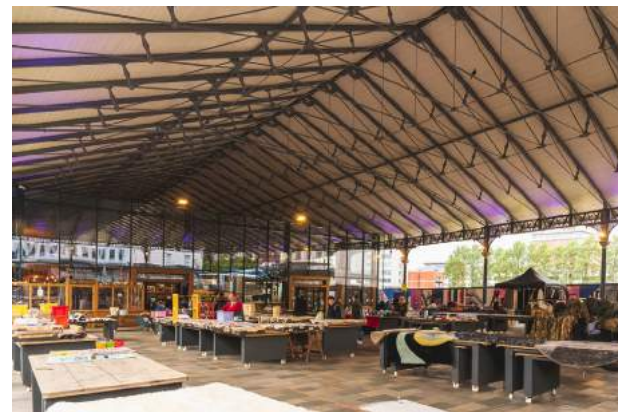
Area: 9,616 sqm



Preston Flag Market



Area: 3,430 sqm



Great Yarmouth Covered Market



Area: 5,504 sqm



Human Scale

Human scale is fundamental to the design of successful public spaces.

Spaces should be allowed for one person to retreat to, as well as areas large enough to comfortably accommodate busy and vibrant events, perhaps multiple types of events.

A distance of 1.5m allows for easy conversation and interaction between a small group of people whilst at a 30m distance we are still able to perceive facial expressions.

1 person



Crossrail roof garden, London



5 people



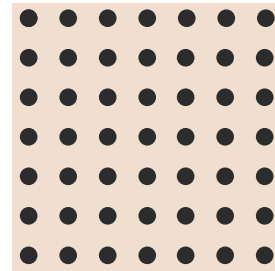
Harvard plaza, Massachusetts



50 people



Kings Cross Granary Square

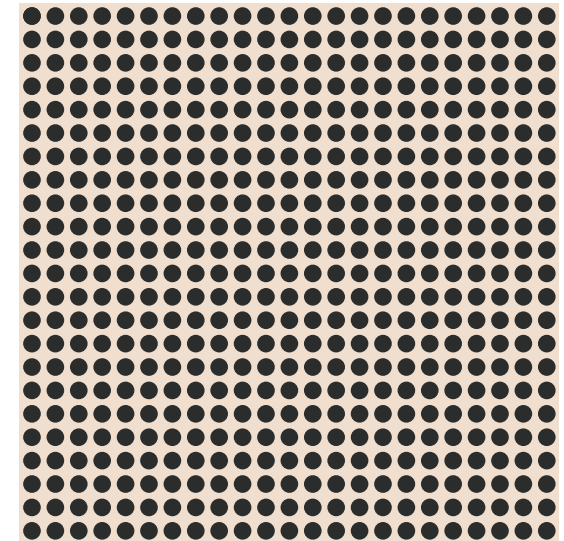


15x15m

500+ people

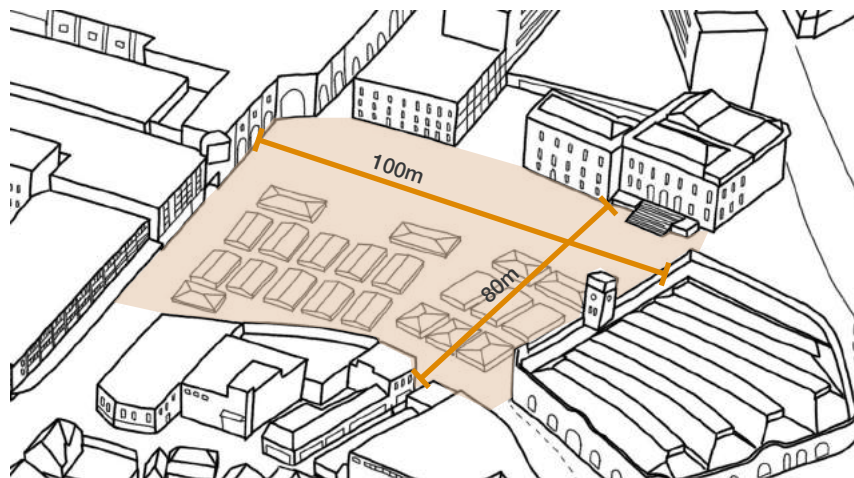


Cambridge folk Festival,



30x30m

Ashton Market Square - 500+ people



100x80m

A Programme of Events

A variety of events will be planned for the re-imagined Ashton Market Square including eating and drinking, crafts, culture and family fun throughout the year.

The programme of events will be designed to welcome all ages and demographics.



An example of precedents for different types of events

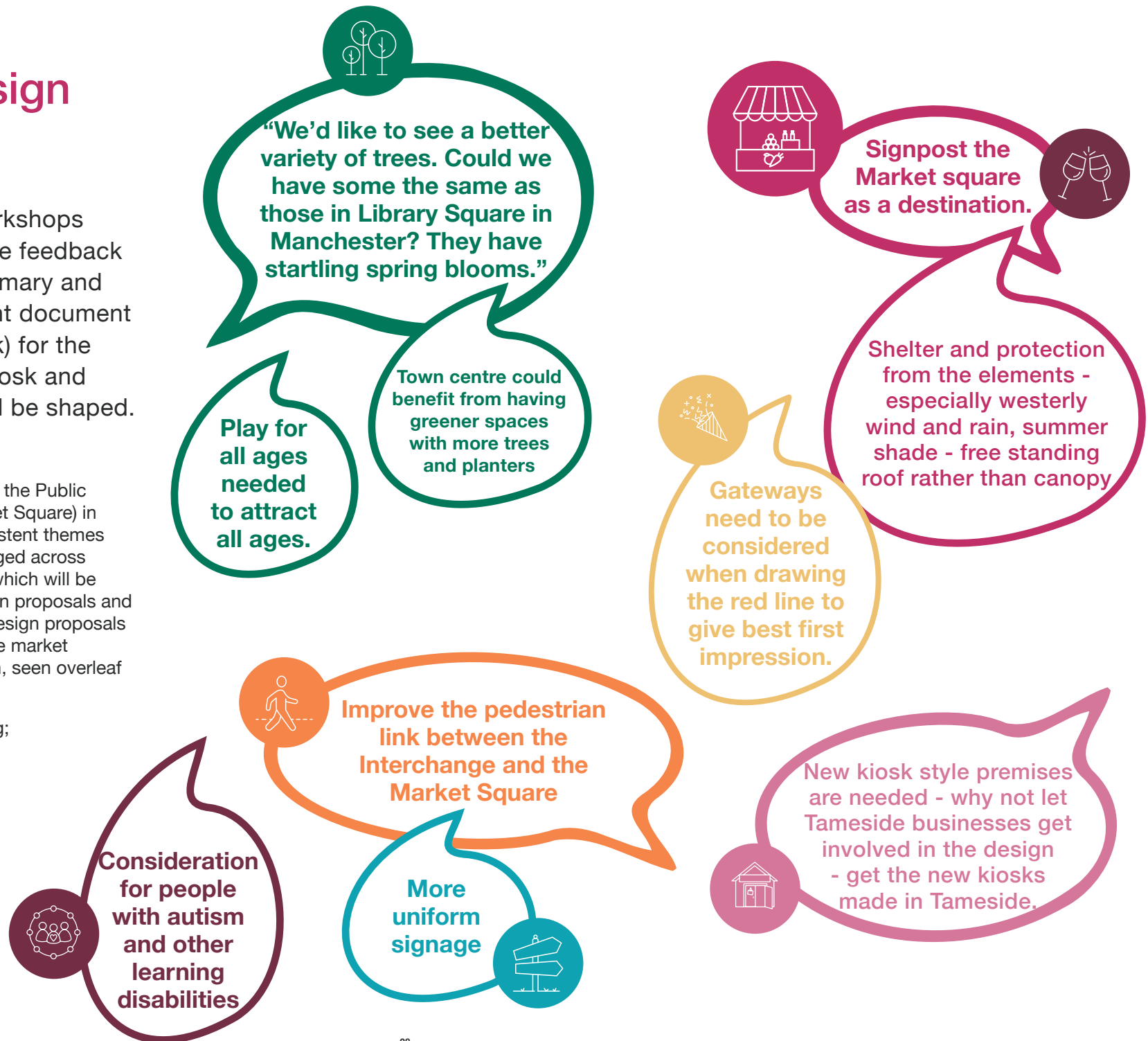
Illustrative Design Principles

From the Consultation workshops undertaken for Stage 2, the feedback (see pages 8-11 for a summary and the Consultation Statement document for full detail and feedback) for the Market Square; canopy, kiosk and public realm proposals will be shaped.

Consultation Key Messages

Following the public consultation of the Public Realm Strategy (Phase One - Market Square) in November 2022, a number of consistent themes and important considerations emerged across the various consultation sessions, which will be incorporated into the detailed design proposals and delivery. The emerging illustrative design proposals have been included in the illustrative market proposal and design proposals plan, seen overleaf and on the next pages.

The feedback included the following;



Illustrative Design Proposals

The illustrative Market Square plan illustrates one way that the design principles could be brought forward. The plan illustrates the key design principles and guidance for the detailed design stages of the Market Square.

The illustrative plan is indicative and subject to further technical considerations, surveys and the detailed design process. The findings from the contextual analysis and feedback from the consultation have shaped the illustrative Market Square Plans.

The emerging ideas include;

Public Realm

1. Informal play area within the Market Square
2. An arrival space beside the Town Hall which will announce the Market Square
3. Emphasise and retain views to and from the Town Hall and Market Hall from key streets and spaces
4. Signage with strong branding from key streets and spaces will guide visitors from and to the Town Hall and Market Hall
5. The public realm will be designed for less able persons – level changes and lighting will create accessible routes
6. Heritage interpretation will be incorporated into the public realm design
7. A sustainable urban drainage approach will assist in responding to local climatic conditions
8. Servicing access along Bow Street for traders will be retained
9. Cycle parking areas on the periphery of the Market Square
10. Intimate spaces will be designed into the public realm
11. Planting will be proposed within the Market Square, avoiding grassed areas, instead providing planted areas that are easy to maintain (consider current issue with trees and bird droppings by seated areas).
12. Spill out from the Market Hall to allow for seating and F&B.


















Kiosks

13. Kiosks will be designed to be located underneath the canopy (exact location and number of kiosks will be determined at the detailed design stage).
14. Design recommendations/requirements from kiosk traders relating to; kiosk design, lighting, storage, waste and servicing (consider VAT requirement) will be incorporated into the detail design of the kiosks
15. Consideration to the height of the kiosk structure, key views towards heritage buildings, and access to the first floor level within the canopy will be designed holistically

Canopy

16. Factor in environmental conditions (south-westerly wind and rain) within the canopy design
17. Space within the canopy for ticketed events and security measures during night-time hours will be designed into the canopy features.
18. Allow for movement and circulation through the canopy to enhance permeability.
19. The design will consider security at night-time and avoid anti-social behaviour.

Key

-  Main Market canopy structure
-  Canopy overhang
-  ① Market Kiosks (under canopy)
-  ② Market stalls (under canopy)
-  ③ Temporary seating and market stalls for events with cover (large)
-  ④ Waste and storage facilities for kiosk traders will be incorporated into the detail design of the kiosks
-  Flexible event space area
-  Proposed trees
-  Proposed informal seating area
-  Proposed cycle storage
-  Proposed lighting
-  Entrance to Market Hall
-  Active frontage to kiosk units
-  Active frontages
-  Passive Movement Zone
-  Key Views
-  South Westerly wind



Illustrative Market Square proposals plan (proposals are indicative and subject to further detailed design)

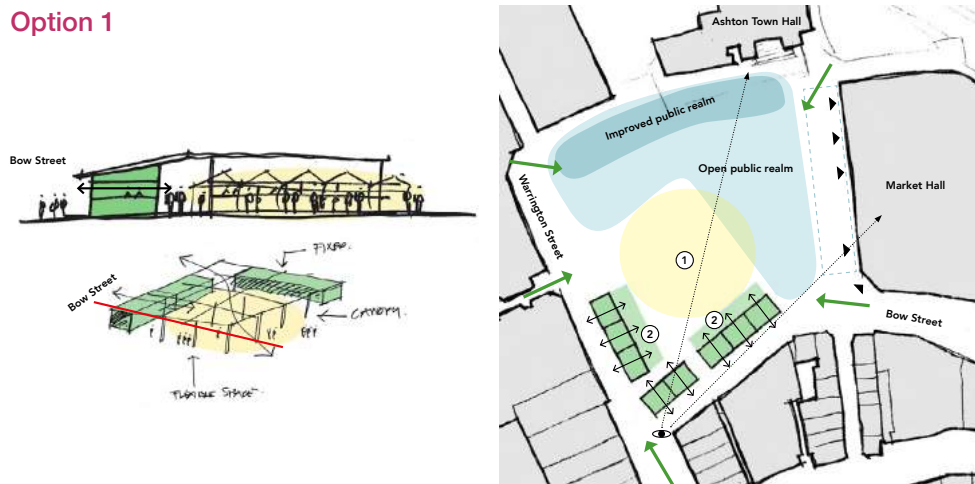


Canopy Design Principles

The following pages are a series of sketch options of the potential plan, elevations and massing for the canopy structure within the Market Square, considering weather conditions, views and the historical context.

The design options follows consultation suggestions, as described on pages 10-14, to provide shelter and protection from the elements, improved accessibility, kiosks with spill out spaces for the night-time economy, and an intimate space overlooked by kiosks.

Option 1



This option studies access to the Market Square from different arrival points. The canopy structure is composed of a low-sloped roof with two perpendicular rows of kiosks that face in and out of the canopy, enclosed on two sides the open space for stalls.

Views to the Market Hall are preserved, although visibility towards the Town Hall is limited by the kiosks.

The design of the canopy is permeable and allows for desire lines and paths through to the Square.

Option 2

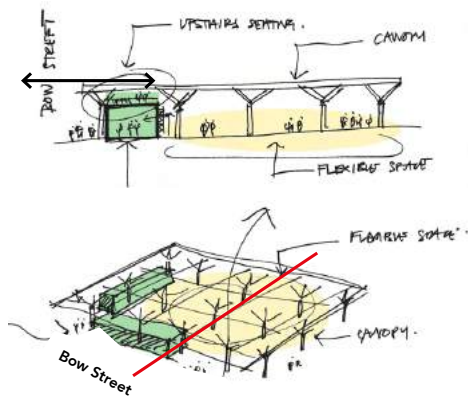


The canopy structure of this option consists of a pitched roof with kiosks on each side. Views and connectivity are enhanced through the slopes of the roof, highlighting the Market Hall.

This options also provides a central atrium for spill out from kiosks. Market stalls would not be accommodated underneath the canopy, and would not provide cover for the market traders.

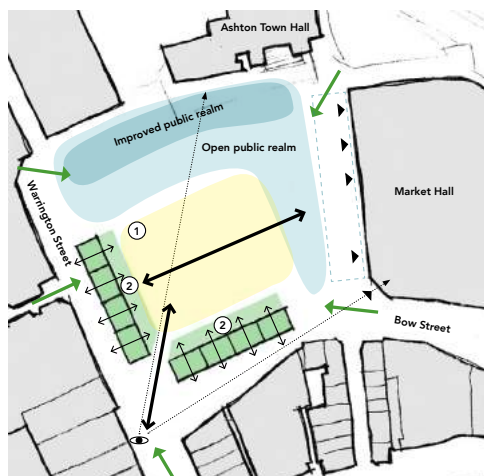
These options are part of an on-going process, and the final design on the canopy, kiosks and Market Square layout are subject to further detail design stages.

Option 3



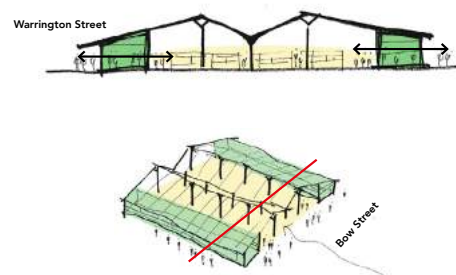
This option, derived from option 1, studies the possibility of enhancing views to both the Town Hall and the Market Hall.

The alignment of kiosks allows for stalls to be accommodated under the canopy.

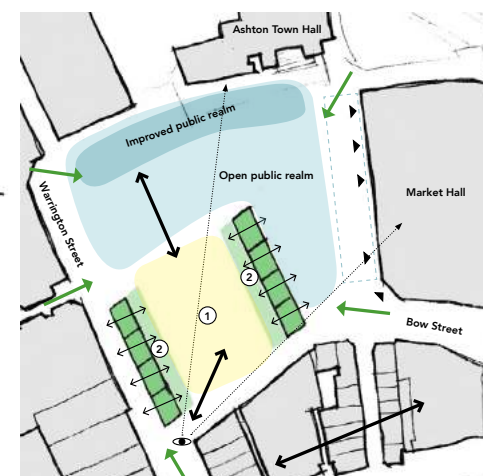


The design of the canopy is permeable and desire lines and paths through into the Square are possible. This would help improve connectivity and legibility, as well as creating a better relationship between the open public realm of the square and the relationship with both the Town Hall and Market Hall.

Option 4



The canopy structure of this option consists of a double pitched roof with kiosks on each side. Connectivity with the public realm is enhanced, and it further allows for market stalls and spill out from kiosks to be accommodated underneath the canopy.



Kiosks on either side of the canopy create active frontages towards Warrington Street and the Market Hall but views towards the Market Hall and the Town Hall are limited by this layout.

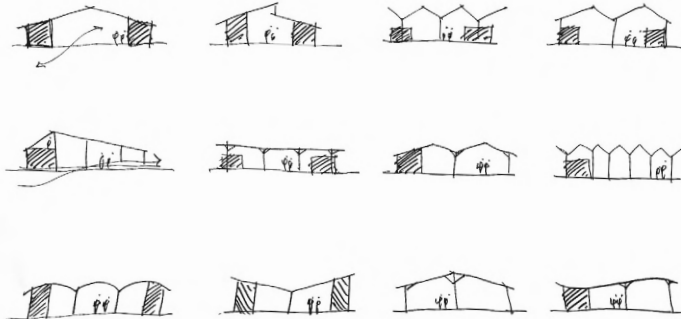
Market Square

The design of the canopy needs to be sensitive to the surrounding buildings and context, including views from key streets and spaces. The following images show the different massing options, kiosk layout, and roof typologies that are being tested through the design development to address the context.

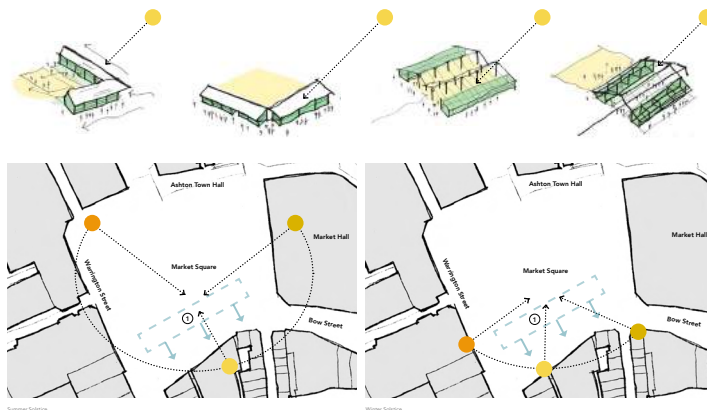
Weather analysis and sun studies are being carried out to provide a design solution that will successfully incorporate such considerations, as well as concerns raised in the consultation process, into the design of a weather-proof canopy.

Design and materiality of the canopy structure and kiosk must respect heritage and complement the Market Hall, Town Hall, and character of Ashton in a positive way.

Roof typologies



Sun study



Constellations Bar Liverpool



House of Switzerland Pavilion



Grote Markt, Belgium



Balti Jaama Turg Market, Tallin



Yarmouth Covered Market

The Kiosks

The kiosks will be located underneath the canopy structure for year-round protection. There is potential for the kiosks to work within the canopy, with first floor access.

Further consideration to the kiosks and their design will be required. These include elements that were highlighted during the consultation process and can be found in the consultation summary.

The considerations are as follows:

- Lighting strategy for the kiosks and stalls,
- Storage for market traders, included within the design of the kiosks and stalls, as well as provision for maintenance equipment storage,
- Design consideration of the kiosks and the waste management, including storing, disposing and collection of refuse,
- Power and utility facilities for kiosks, storage units and flexible space under canopy (for market traders/stalls and/or for flexible events under canopy),
- Servicing, including goods loading and unloading,
- Security, including potential to fully close canopy and kiosks outside of opening hours.



Kärda Central Square, Estonian island Hiiumaa



Lower market, Altrincham



Borough Market, London



Old Spitalfields Market, London



Shambles Market, York

Public Realm

The redevelopment of the Market Square presents an opportunity to create better-connected, better-looking public spaces that build on Ashton's proud history and heritage, and provide a sense of consistency across the town centre.

The Market Square will be a space to host flexible events through the year. Proposals should include heritage interpretation, wayfinding and signage which is unique to Ashton.

Following the consultation process and comments from different stakeholders, there is potential to introduce attractive tree planting to create permeable wind breaks, and to create amenity through planted areas for seasonal interest which can further incorporate informal areas for seating and play.



A flexible open hard square where some permanent stalls are removed to host a variety of events



Potential for more stylised totems incorporating branding



Jaktgatan and Lövängsgatan, Stockholm



Hapa Collaborative Square, Canada



Curved seating with planted areas



Historical dates, text and imagery can be cut into paving and steps

Market Square



Hertig Johans Torg Och Gata, Skövde, Sweden



Hertig Johans Torg Och Gata, Skövde, Sweden



Ede Market Square, The Netherlands



The Mall of Tripla, Fredikanterassi Square, Finland



Market place, Willich, Germany

Brand Identity

A recommendation is to create a brand identity and tool kit to be implemented within the public realm design and marketing, to create a unique identity that captures the essence of Ashton and attracts visitors to the Market Square.

Vibrant branding is pivotal to creating an attractive, successful and thriving market.

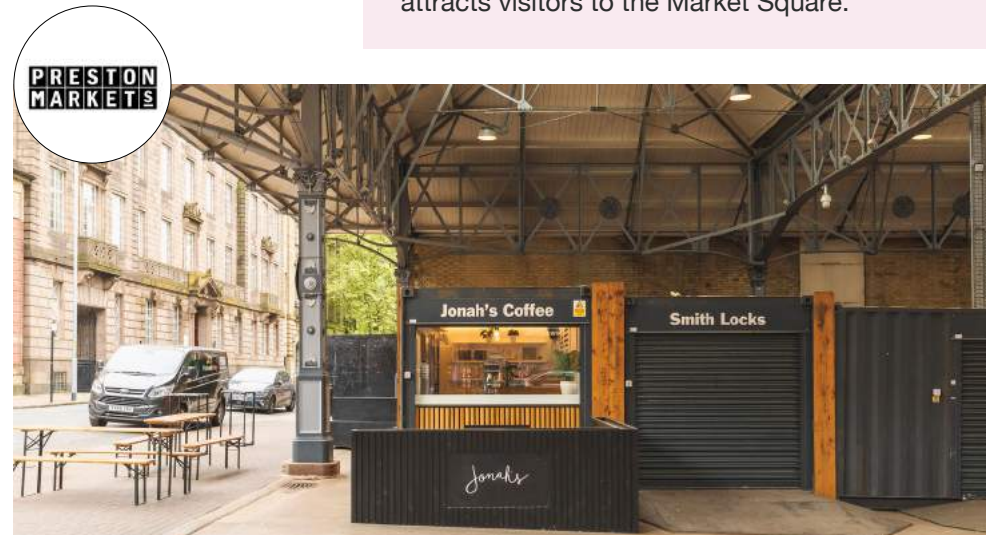
The adjacent images are all examples of successful UK markets where good branding has elevated their appeal to a wider audience.

Ashton Market Square is currently lacking branding and identity. There is potential to create an iconic logo and branding for the market and wider town centre which reflects the history of Ashton, that will give potential to create a market that is a destination venue.

This same logo can be utilised across all social media platforms and any marketing imagery used to promote the permanent and flexible stalls, as well as future events, drawing a wide audience to create a sustainable market town for Ashton-under-Lyne.



Warrington Market has created an attractive space in the town



Preston Market - simple and successful branding defines the upgrades to the market



Altrincham Market has transformed Altrincham into a vibrant town



Hatch - a popular temporary food market in central Manchester



Mackie Mayor - a thriving central Manchester food market and evening venue

Lighting

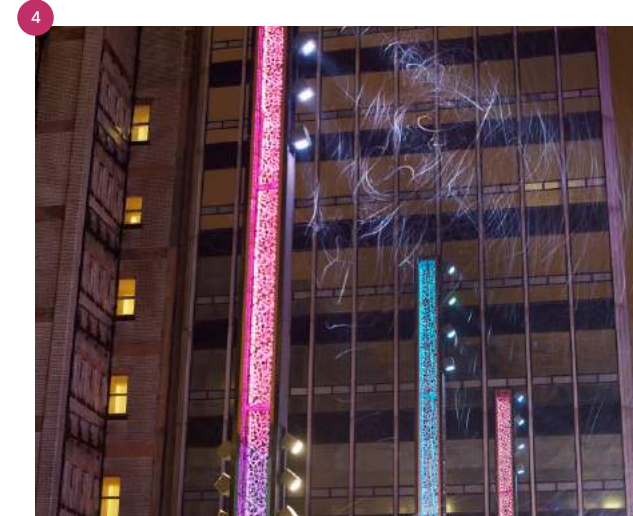
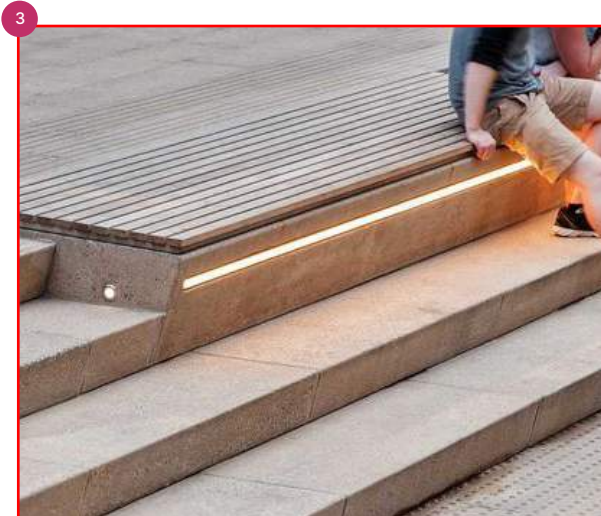
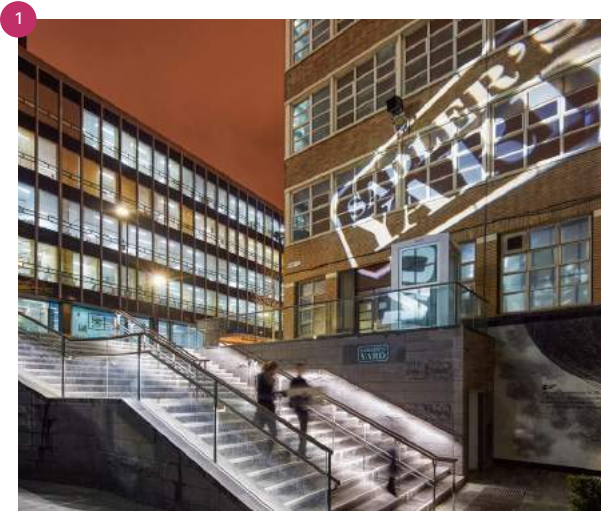
Lighting can alter the atmosphere of a place and create lively unique spaces.

Although its primary purpose is night-time visibility for security and safety, successful street lighting takes into account the human users of the street, and curates a sense of place or atmosphere. The type, placement, and wattage of street lighting affects how a street is perceived and used.

Lighting design will celebrate the distinctive identity and history and draw attention to the uniqueness of Ashton. Lighting will animate the spaces and create a safe and vibrant environment at night-time.

Lighting at Ashton Market Square will:

- Increase safety in high-use spaces and movement corridors, such as walkways and bus stops.
- Aid in geographic orientation, as people can use well-lit focal points as landmarks to help them find their way.
- Celebrate the distinctive identity and history of an area, for well-lit townscape details draw attention to the uniqueness of an area.
- Create a sense of intrigue and drama. Accentuate character and sense of place.
- Curate distinctive atmospheres and encourage particular uses.



1. Lighting illuminates buildings at night-time at Saddler's Yard, Manchester
 2. Lighting on walls and floor surfaces creates safe spaces

3. Illuminated details, Chicago Riverwalk Expansion
 4. Artistic interventions add colour and playful space, Saddler's Yard Manchester

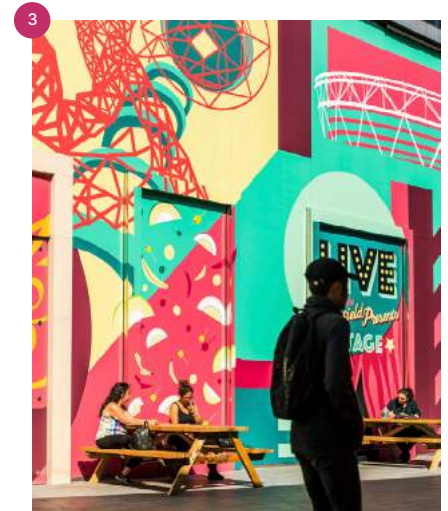
Public Art and Heritage Interpretation

Through the regeneration of the Market Square, there is a need and opportunity to curate a positive image of place for Ashton Town Centre, celebrating cultural and heritage identity, accentuate local character and distinctiveness, and enliven the space with the use of public art and place branding.

Engaging with both artists and the community early in the planning process for public spaces is crucial to developing successful public art. There is an opportunity to build community cohesion and create a sense of community ownership.

Art and sculpture can help to develop a positive visual identity for Ashton, creating enriching experiences and sensory stimulation. Historical artworks, including sculptures, statues and other public art could help create sense of arrival into the Market Square.

Exploration of neglected streets such as Market Avenue and Clarendon Sixth Form College Walk suffer from low footfall and a poor pedestrian experience, should be encouraged through the use of public art.



1. Landmark public art creates a sense of arrival at Altrincham Town Centre

2. Sculptural street furniture references heritage at Goose Green, Altrincham

3. Murals by local artists creates a fun environment to the rear of development to activate under utilised

4. Illuminated public references culture

5. Artistic interventions attracts visitors at Chester Market

Way-finding

Understanding users is key to implementing an effective way-finding strategy at the Market Square.

It is important that improvements create a legible environment and enhance way-finding for people walking, wheeling, cycling and driving. It is important to encourage walkability, and to inspire exploration of the Market Square and the wider Town Centre. Way-finding can play a significant role in making the Market Square feel accessible reconnecting to the wider town and key movement nodes.

Way-finding should be curated through intuitive landscape, active building frontages, street furniture and features, landscape elements and materials, used to guide users through different areas of the space.

Consistent signage will guide people from arrival points and destinations. Good way-finding can encourage learning experiences; create a distinctive image for a place; and local pride by incorporating history or cultural details.



1. Way-finding and signage at Saddle's Yard, Manchester
2. Brand identity within way-finding at Cotton Field, Islington
3. Accessible Braille Navigation Charter Square, Sheffield
4. Map engraved into floor surface, The Strand, London.

Street Furniture

Street furniture will be functional and durable meeting safety requirements. Attractive street furniture will create a welcoming environment encouraging people to dwell for longer in the Market Square.

Cohesion will be created with high quality and accessible street furniture that is consistent with the branding and offers various arrangements for people with different levels of mobility. Street furniture will be designed for the long term, it will fit with the heritage character and avoid off the shelf standard products.

Street furniture will include bike parking and incorporate playful and interactive elements.



1. Cycle storage designed to be in keeping with the character, Altrincham
2. Seating and art could be combined with a playful element
3. Illuminated furniture and details, The Mall of Tripla, Fredikanterassi Square, Finland
- 4 Heritage interpretation incorporates public art and water to encourage play for children, Warrington

Materiality

Ashton is rich in heritage and its unique character will inspire a palette of complimentary surfaces, materials and street furniture to create a consistent approach in the Town Centre. Contrast in specific areas will create interest and variety.

Heritage Character

Ashton Town Centre and its Market Square consist of a variety of materials. The heritage buildings are predominantly red brick with stone detailing and occasional land mark buildings are made from stone such as the Town Hall. There are modern buildings framing the square to the east and south frontages, these are inappropriate and poor quality. The materials palette will avoid replicating these buildings.

Materials and structures within the Market Square proposals will consist of either similar materials or complimentary materials.

Market Square surface materials are mainly Porphyry flags tiles in red and grey. There are some areas of concrete slabs and tarmac, replicating this will be avoided in the proposals.

The market square includes existing high quality surfaces. To minimise waste and reduce embodied carbon emissions, materials will

be recycled or re-used where possible.

In order to fully understand the potential to reuse the existing tiles in the Market Square it is essential to understand the existing laying conditions, the depths of the unit sizes, and the ability to successfully lift the material without excessive breakages. A ground investigation is required to establish the existing situation.

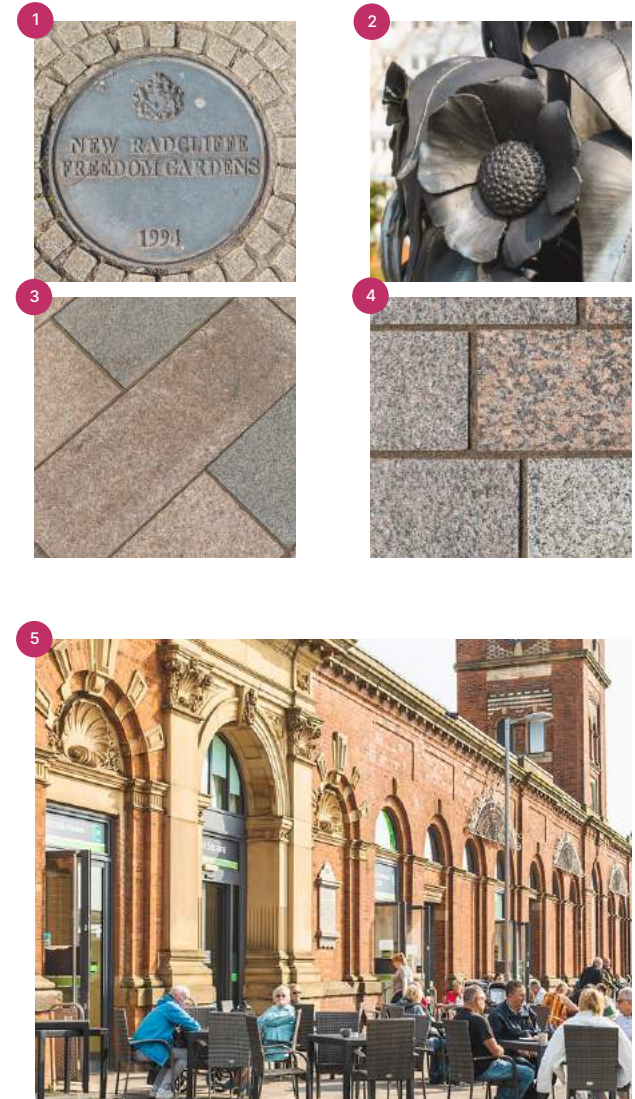
There are many considerations associated with the re-use of materials:

- Tiles could be damaged or broken due to kiosk fixings and the removal of stalls
- Ground conditions will need to be investigated.
- Method of laying tiles and incorporating new tiles.

Complimentary surface materials and patterns will allow for flexibility of materials and contingency associated with the re-use of materials.

There is potential to recycle broken surface materials and paving into unique street furniture elements, inviting local artists to design installations and usable street furniture, this could be incorporated in the surrounding areas of Ashton.

1. Existing inlays in paving highlights landmarks in the town centre
2. Existing sculptural elements create contrast with street materials
3. Existing paving materials by Ashton Old Baths
4. Existing paving materials by the Ashton Interchange
5. Market Hall consists of red brick and stone detailing

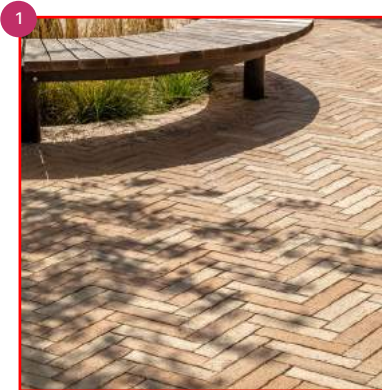


Design Drivers

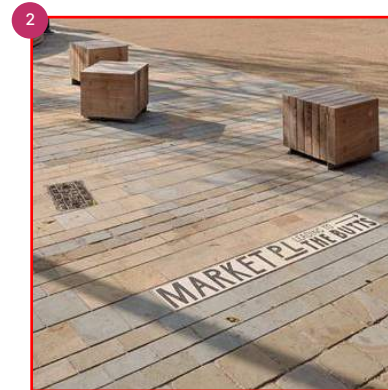
Materials and street furniture will include high quality, robust and sustainable materials to create an attractive environment that is durable. The materials palette will be informed by the design drivers below:

- Contextual character - Materials must draw on the historical and present day pallet of materials.
- Cohesive - Creating a cohesive public realm that expands and enhances the quality of the existing area.
- Inclusive and accessible - Ensuring that hard material selection and arrangement meets the needs of all users.
- Scale - Ensuring materials are of an appropriate scale and character for the use of the space or street.
- Durability - Material selection must be durable ensuring that each material is fit for purpose, easily sourced, has manageable maintenance regimes, meets all applicable B.S and E.N safety/quality standards.
- Sustainability - Credentials and carbon impact of the materials and products being used, in terms of manufacture and shipping/transportation.

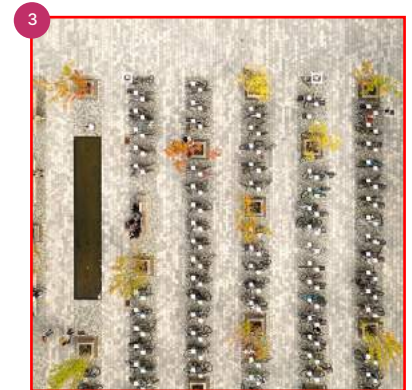
The specification of materials will be decided at detailed planning stages, costs and budgets will influence proposals. The following examples are inspiration for the selection.



Jyllinge Recreational Square



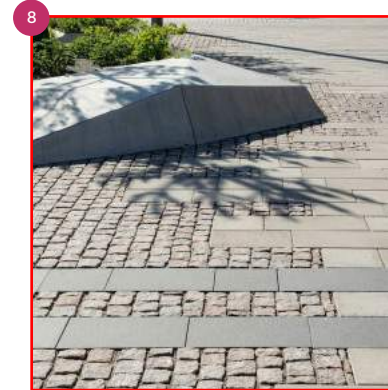
Reference to heritage engraved in surfaces



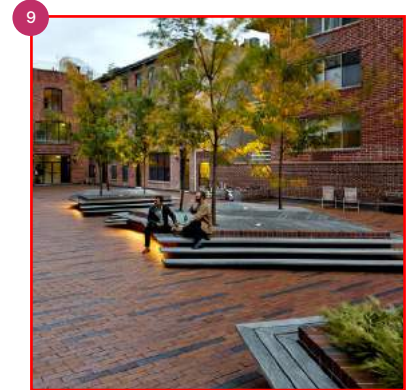
Marktplatz in Bünde, Germany



Kärđla Central Square, Estonian island Hiiumaa



Example of existing floor materials combined with new surfaces



Archipelago Courtyard, Brooklyn

The Market fringes are part of part of the overall vision for the future regeneration of Ashton Town Centre. A comprehensive approach to the design of the Market Square and the surrounding streets and spaces creates a future proof plan.

Future phasing and delivery

The following pages describe the design principles and guidance for the future phases of regeneration and the market fringes. The following streets and spaces will form part of the detailed design stage, up to RIBA stage 2. These areas will be excluded from the Levelling Up Fund and delivered at a later stage.

- Wellington Square
- Clarendon Sixth Form College and Tameside One Walk
- Market Street and Fletcher Square
- Warrington Street
- Market Hall and Market Hall canopy.
- Market Avenue

The delivery of these streets and spaces will be subject to future funding opportunities.

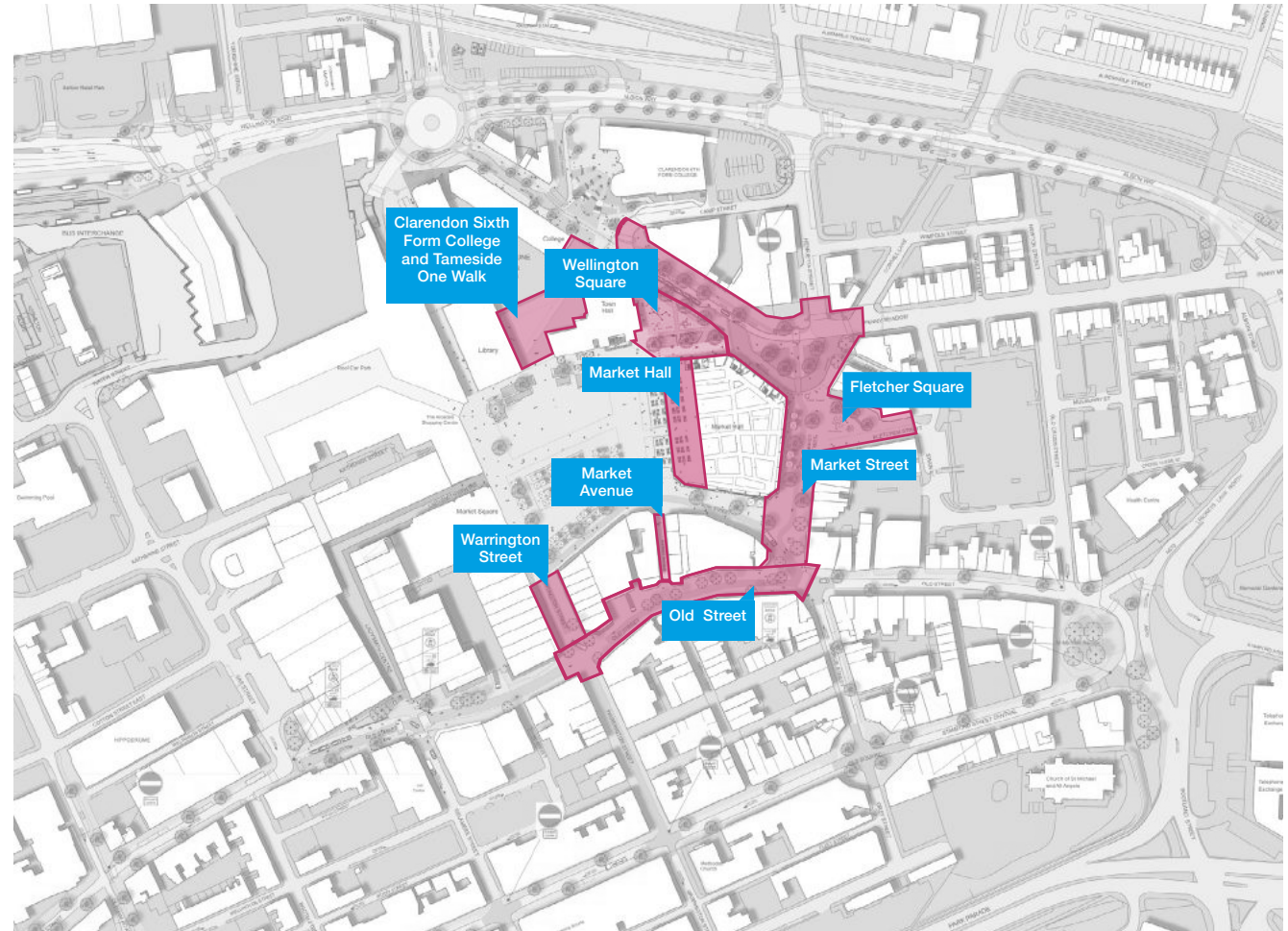
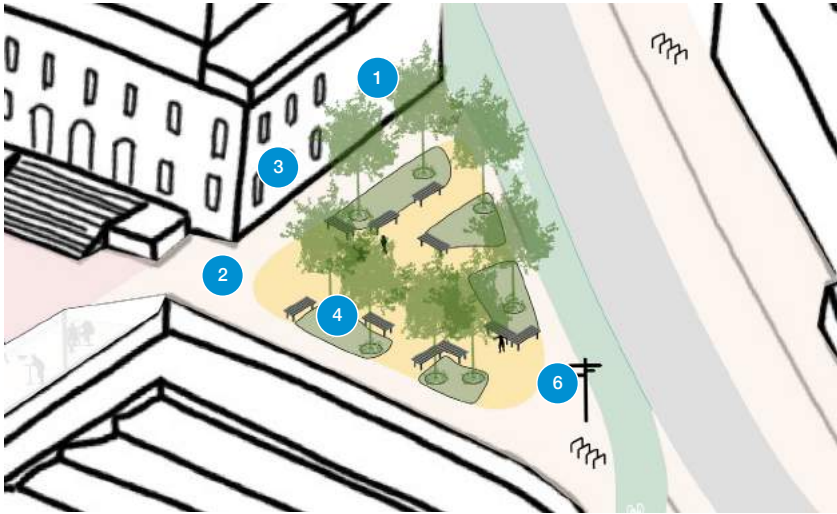


Diagram illustrating the Future Phases

■ Future Phases, detailed design to RIBA Stage 2

Wellington Square

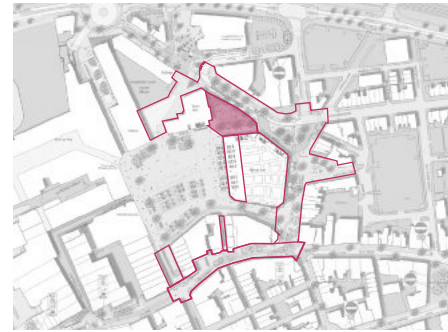
A key arrival space situated by the Town Hall and drop-off. It has potential to become a key gateway into the Market Square.



Wellington Square design principles

Wellington Square will complement the Market Square offer of a public, accessible and calm green space to dwell. Key qualities include:

1. Trees and planting to improve air quality and attract nature.
2. High quality design and materials to celebrate heritage buildings within the surrounding the area.
3. Buildings are orientated to provide natural surveillance to create a safe environment for all ages.
4. Seating is designed to surround the space to provide overlooking.
5. Penny Meadows and Wellington Road includes spaces where people can move around easily.
6. Signage and wayfinding reflects the identity of Ashton's Market Square and the town centre.



Location plan



Interactive sculptural elements provide interest and are informative, alongside seating



Attractive signage announces the space alongside attractive seasonal planting



Feature seating within planting offers a calmer environment

Market Street / Fletcher Square

Fletcher Square is a historic space which connects the east of Ashton Town Centre with the Market Hall and Market Square, through Swan Street. It has potential to be an intimate arrival space with informal play and spill out from surrounding uses.



Informal, incidental and interactive play element



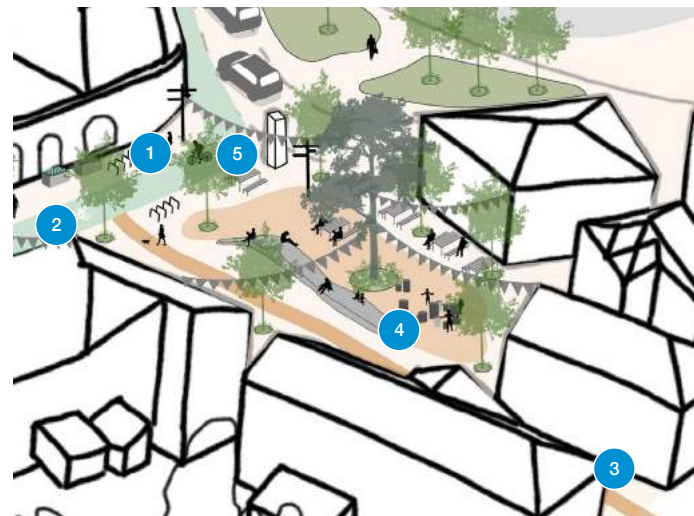
Location plan



An attractive route with planting and pedestrian and cyclist priority



Tree-lined, pedestrian and cycling route with cycle parking and planting



Market Street and Fletcher Square design principles

Market Street comprises incidental spaces which can complement Market Square. Key qualities include:

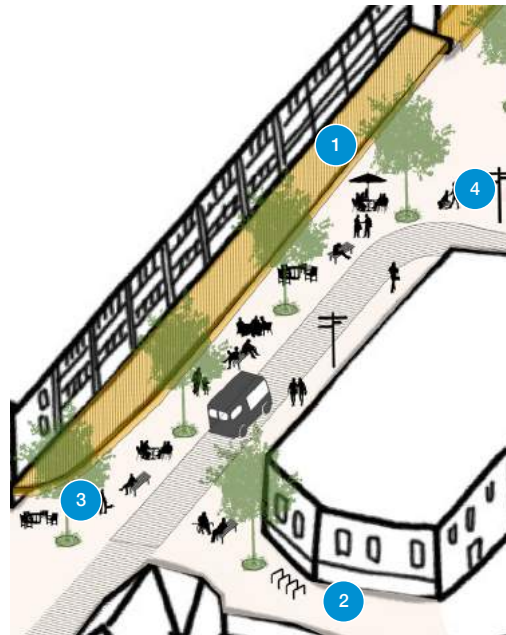
1. A flexible open space for seasonal events around the Market Hall which complement activities in the Market
2. A cycle route through Market Street creates a critical north-south connection through the town centre
3. A pedestrian route to Swan Street connects the east of Ashton with the Market Quarter, incidental seating and art murals create an attractive route
4. Opportunity for spill-out spaces in Fletcher Square from the surrounding buildings
5. An avenue of trees on Market Street with high clear stems creates an attractive cycle and pedestrian through-route
6. High quality materials used and re-used within the spaces to create attractive streets and spaces

Warrington Street

Warrington Street is a key north-south pedestrian connection in Ashton Town Centre.

Warrington Street, a pedestrianised street, is a key link between Market Square, Stamford Street Central and the transport interchange.

Improvements to the public realm are proposed, creating a lively and inviting atmosphere for residents and visitors alike. Spill out from food and beverage and other businesses provides amenity for shoppers; attractive pavement, street art, lighting, and installations lighten up the atmosphere and create an inviting environment.



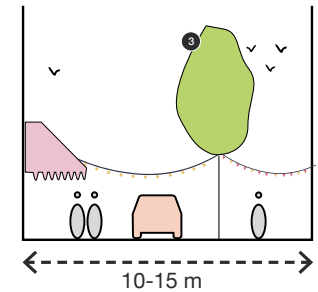
Warrington Street design principles



Location plan

1. Proposed new and existing uses animate the edges, spilling into the streets.
2. Highlighting and celebrating the historic significance of Old Street through public realm proposals and with attractive art installations.
3. Proposals illustrate integration of green elements - such as trees or green walls, improving biodiversity and walkability.
4. Signage and wayfinding reflects the identity of Ashton's Market Square and the town centre, linking the surrounding context to the heart of Ashton, the Market Square and Hall.

Warrington Street
- a conceptual aspiration of the potential for the area, designs are subject to further detail analysis



Example of a pedestrian priority street with tree planting and spill out from shops



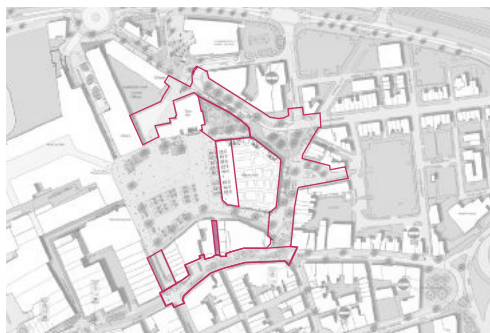
An example of a tree lined, single surface, pedestrian priority street with vehicular access

Market Avenue

Market Avenue, a fully pedestrianised street and precursor of the modern day-arcade, is the key link between Market Square and Stamford Street Central.

Spill out from food and beverage and other businesses provides amenity for shoppers; attractive pavement, street art, lighting, and installations lighten up the atmosphere and create an inviting environment.

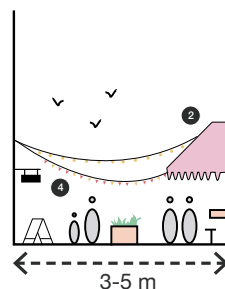
With new and existing uses animating the edges and spilling into the streets, the lanes and Market Avenue should seek to create an inviting, human-scale route into the heart of the Market Quarter whilst encouraging dwell-time in a cosy and sheltered environment.



Location plan

Highlighting and celebrating the historic significance of Market Avenue as a commercial arcade, creating spaces to dwell for shoppers with attractive art installations and seating arrangements.

Introducing attractive lighting ie. in trees and string lined lights, improves feelings of safety and create an inviting atmosphere during night-time.



Market Avenue - a conceptual aspiration of the potential for the area, designs are subject to further detail analysis



Art installations provide shade and create a pleasant atmosphere for pedestrians in a shopping area in Liverpool



Photograph of Market Avenue



Photograph of Art sculptures in Market Avenue



George Street at the intersection with Old Square



Clarendon Sixth Form College and Tameside One Walk

The through route between the back of the Town Hall and Tameside One has potential to become an intimate space that provides people with seating and green amenity.

This pedestrian through route provides access for students, visitors, shops and Tameside council from Tameside One. Due to its secluded location, there is potential to introduce lighting and bring activity to animate the area during night-time and increase safety.

There is opportunity to introduce wayfinding, and public art to animate the streets and to create historical references, celebrating the heritage of Ashton.



Location plan



Lighting strategy in Rochdale Riverside creates a fun, safe, walkable environment



Example of a pedestrianised square with seating, planting and cycle parking. Art murals on blank façades create a vibrant backdrop to the square and opportunity to create historical references

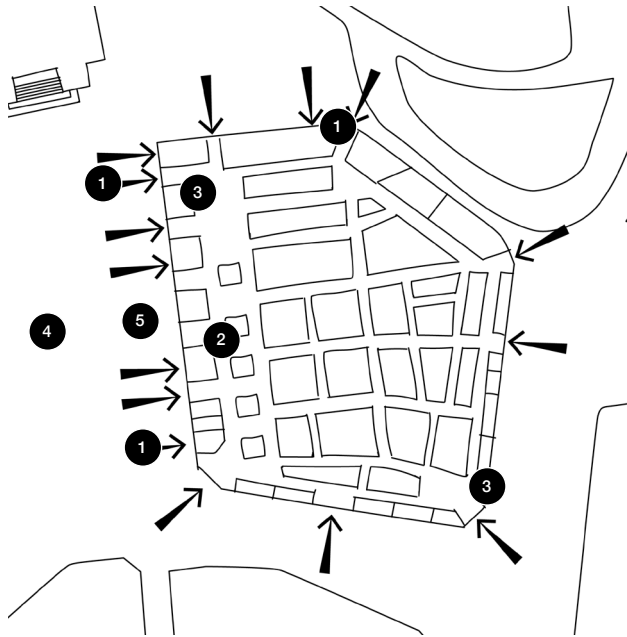


Street art and murals animate a street in New Zealand

Market Hall

A key heritage asset, the proposals celebrate the history of the Market Hall. Creating visual connections into the hall and improving dwelling areas in and around the building will allow for an improved relationship between the indoor and outdoor activities. The Market Hall will benefit from this relationship with the improved Market Square.

Current Situation



Current Internal Layout Plan

The market hall will be reviewed subject to further studies and will be considered as part of future phases.

The key considerations to the existing Market Hall, include:

1. Multiple entrances make wayfinding and circulation in internal market more complicated than necessary.
2. Toilets and stalls are adjacent to the main facade blocking the building's historic views
3. Few existing opportunities for eating and seating next to food and beverage offer
4. Market Hall activities are currently segregated from the Market Square
5. Outdoor seating is currently dependent on weather conditions.



Heritage assets from the Market Hall are hidden behind plaster and stalls



Informal seating from existing food and beverage vendors depend on weather conditions



Future Phases



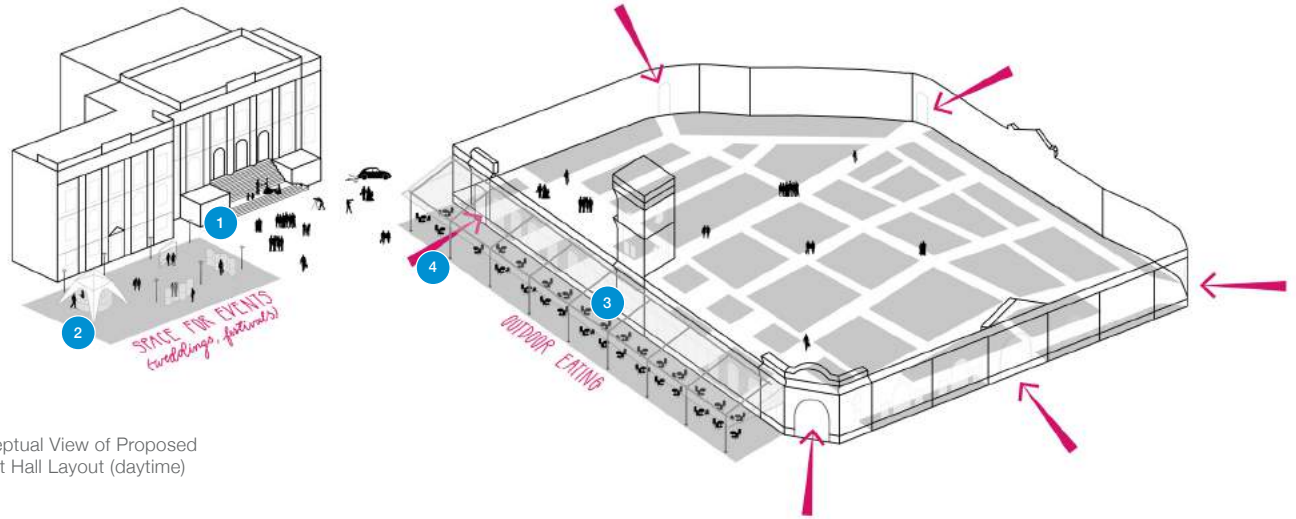
Canopy provides flexible, weather-proof amenity for eating and drinking. Glasped elements provides visual connections towards the internal Market Hall in Preston



Indoor layout provides seating arrangement for food and beverage offer in Spitalfields Market, London

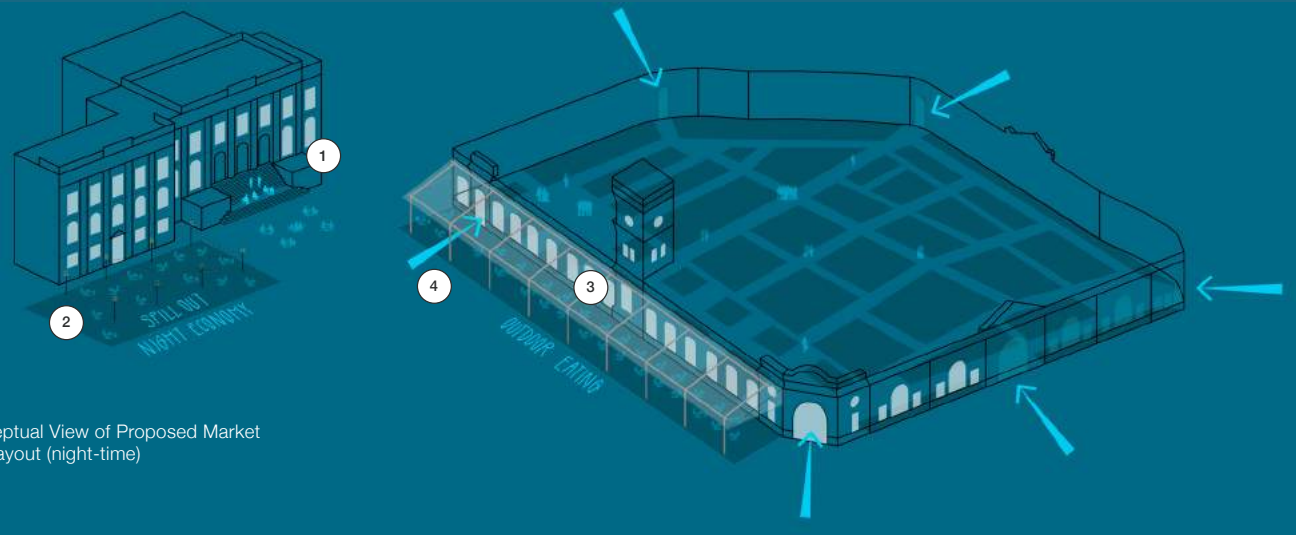


Opportunity to create an attractive frontage along the Market Hall edge which creates interest through the day and night



Conceptual View of Proposed Market Hall Layout (daytime)

1. Celebrating the heritage of the Town Hall and Market Hall, enhancing the relationship of these assets and boosting local economic activity.
2. Flexible space for events during day and night by the Town Hall, including; a variety of events, weddings, and exhibitions. Potential night time uses such as spill out from food and beverage, events, communal dinners, etc.
3. Improvement of indoor/outdoor relationship between the Market Hall and Square. Glazing allows for views in and out of the building, and animates the square during night time hours.
4. Consolidate and enhance key entrances which will be available on the front of the Market Hall towards the Market Square, to serve outdoor/indoor seating areas.



Conceptual View of Proposed Market Hall Layout (night-time)

The Public Realm Strategy

Phase 1 - Market Square

The Public Realm Strategy will focus immediately on the Market Square, Market Hall and connecting streets and spaces. This is Phase 1 of an overall Public Realm Strategy for the Town Centre. The aim of the Phase 1 Market Square Strategy will include strategic plans, along with guidance and design

Phase 2 Ashton Town Centre

In the future a comprehensive Public Realm Strategy will also include Stamford Street Central, Old Street and St. Michael's Square. It will incorporate proposals for Wellington Road and extend to Katherine Street, Penny Meadows, Oldham Road.

The ambition is that the improvements to Phase 1 Market Square will be a catalyst for the future regeneration of Ashton Town Centre, attracting investment to deliver the Ashton Town Centre Vision

Engagement and Continual Feedback

The consultation process has been important to gather views and opinions that have shaped the design principles described in this public realm strategy for Phase 1 Market Square and to ensure that the most appropriate scheme comes forward for the community and the surroundings.

Two stages of consultation, with both the public and stakeholder groups have been undertaken. The findings have been gathered and analysed to draw out the key messages to inform the design principles described in this document and the emerging detailed design proposals.

The process will not end here and engagement will be an ongoing process throughout the detailed design stage to ensure that all ideas are incorporated at every stage.

As part of next stage detailed design we will be liaising with traders and markets team around establishing a new operational model for the new scheme. This will be picked up as part of the next stages of work and ongoing dialogue.

Next Steps

The following describes the process and timescales for the detailed design and delivery of Phase 1 Market Square:

- Public consultation: November/December 2022
- Consultation analysis: December 2022
- Preliminary works January 2023
- Approved Public Realm Strategy: March 2023
- Detailed Design Stage begins: April 2023
- Detailed Design Approval: November 2023
- Early Market Square works commence: November 2023
- Delivery of main Market Square works: Winter 2023 – ending March 2025

