

PART II

Developing the Masterplan

PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

3.1 DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

In order to develop the masterplan in physical “terms” it is important to understand the role and context of the town centre to identify the key characteristics which will inform the design of future new developments.

Our urban design analysis outlines a series of layered themes focusing upon four key areas:

Movement - pedestrian and vehicles within and around the town centre.

Space - hierarchy of spaces within and around the town centre with regard to their distinct role.

Form - the physical characteristics of the built form surrounding and within the town centre.

Use - the current and proposed land uses within the town centre.

The masterplan is not intended as a prescriptive document, rather as a tool for understanding the environment in terms of movement, linkage and street form. This analysis naturally leads into an evaluation of the opportunities for enabling proposals and site development (see Part III below). This wider agenda is in accordance with the overall aspiration that every site is an opportunity that can contribute to the vision.

Additional historic mapping, topographical and technical mapping is appended.

3.2 MOVEMENT

Access to and within Chesterfield town centre is fundamental to the success of the town. This includes the ‘legibility’ of the town centre – how easy it is for a visitor to find their way around the centre to their destination.

- 1 - Form
- 2 - Space
- 3 - Movements



	Offices
	Public
	Retail
	Residential
	Industry
	Leisure
	Car Parks

	Key Pedestrian Movements
	Key Pedestrianised Roads
	Nodes

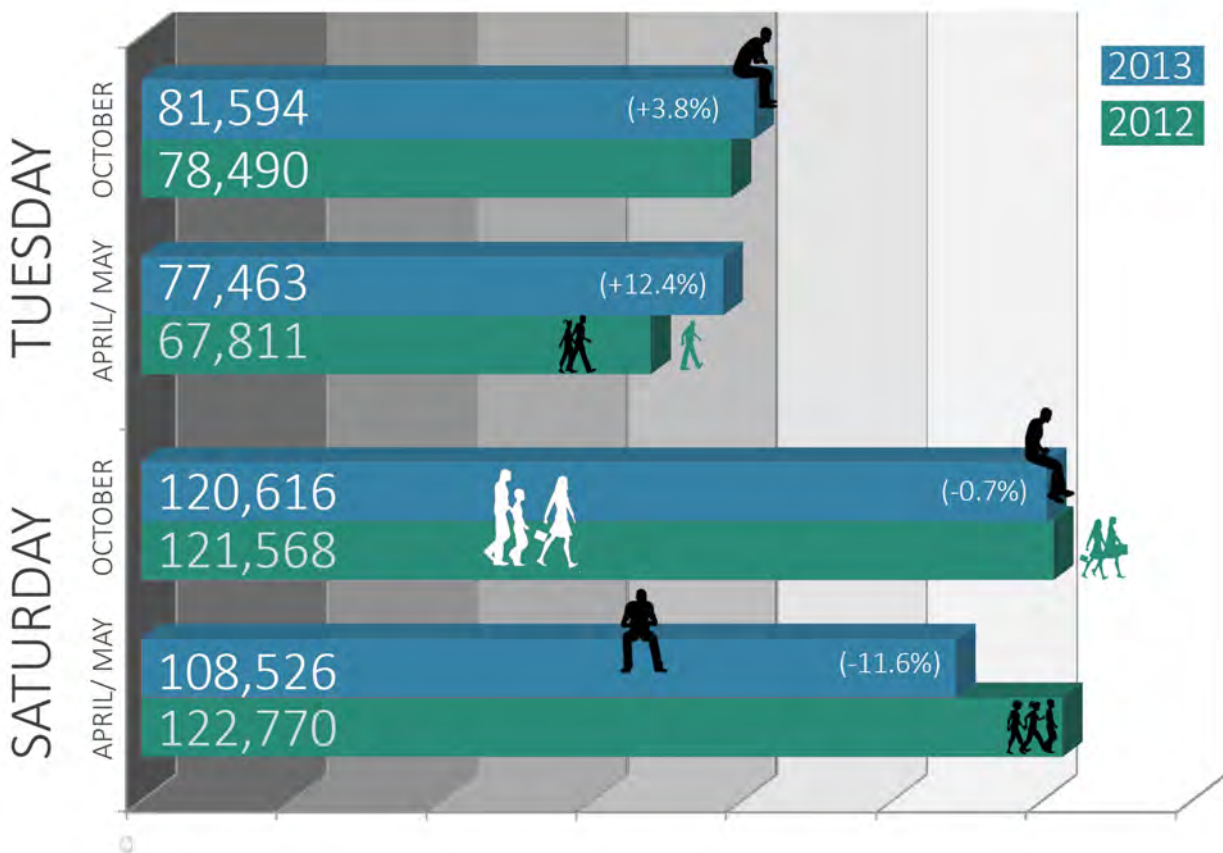
3.2.a WALKING

The diagram illustrates the main drivers of footfall in the town centre. The recent town centre health check produced in April 2014 has identified that the busiest retail sites continue to be Vicar Lane, High Street and Low Pavement, which are the main shopping areas within the town centre. The least busy areas were identified by lower footfall in the Yards and Stephenson Place to the north of the town centre. Footfall was counted in April and at the time of publication of the last health check counts showed a decrease in footfall on Saturdays when compared to the previous year; however an increase was seen on Tuesdays.

Future drivers of footfall include the new Derby University campus and the Northern Gateway development. It is important that these destinations across the town centre are well connected to each other. This will enable linked-trips, extending the dwelling time in the town centre and activate the spaces and principle routes between these destinations.

The diagram shows the key pedestrian linkages and networks across the town centre. Some of these are recognised pedestrianized routes including Vicar Lane and routes through and around the Pavements Shopping Centre.

Other routes are informal routes but sometimes heavily trafficked due to the nodal points – for example, Cowley Close alley between Chesterfield College and the town centre retail core.



3.2.b CAR

Access by car is important for any town centre to function. This includes having an effective road network and appropriate car parking. The diagram below shows the road hierarchy in and around Chesterfield town centre and also the location of the principle car parks. In simple terms, ample car parking provides convenient car parking spaces for visitors and commuters. However, an over reliance on the private car generates other potential problems. It causes congestion at peak times and is environmentally unsustainable.

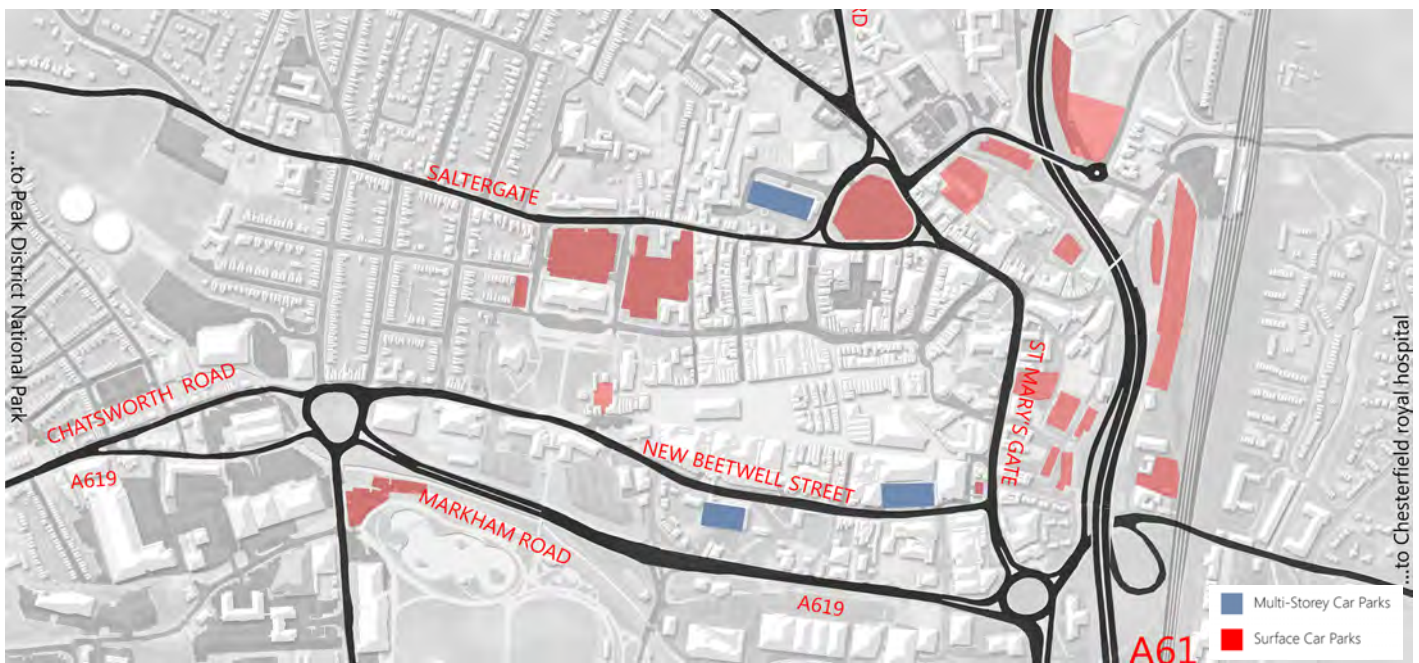
Research shows that whilst car parking is important for the vitality of town centres, it is by no means the biggest influence.⁵A report by the former Regional Development Agency⁶ stated that the relationship between parking and economic performance is actually weak, but generally positive.

The report goes on to support the theory that it is the broader retail, commercial, leisure and/or tourism offer which are the primary factors affecting a town's competitiveness. Some of this offer could be developed on existing surface car parks in order to diversify the town centre and improve the streetscape and environment.

Service access for deliveries and emergency access is also fundamental for the functioning of the town centre. Ideally, servicing should be separate from the main frontages. Service streets can provide additional means of connectivity and do not necessarily need to be exclusive from pedestrians, but deliveries should be timed to avoid congestion and the impact on the environment mitigated by thoughtful design and shared surfaces.

An important aspect in avoiding congestion and improving the visitor experience for customers and clients navigating the town centre is to ensure clear road signage. All roads should have street names clearly visible so drivers and pedestrians can identify where they are in the town centre. Similarly, all car parks should have simple cash-free payment methods e.g. number-plate recognition, card and mobile phone payments. If the customer experience is easy, people are more likely to return.

In future, variable message signage for car parks could be introduced to identify available car parks.



⁵ Chesterfield Car Parking Strategy, Drivers Jonas Deliotte (April 2012)

⁶ Renaissance Market Towns Programme, Car Parking Research, A detailed report on how parking can be managed in the region's market towns, Yorkshire Forward Commissions



3.2.c RAIL

Chesterfield Train Station is located less than ½ mile from the main town centre and handles some 1.5 million passengers a year and rising. It was substantially rebuilt around the turn of the 21st century, which although a significant improvement over previous provision, is rather utilitarian in design with limited facilities.

The forecourt has some poor quality landscaping with multiple kerb-lines and various circulation routes for taxis, drop-off, and disabled parking.

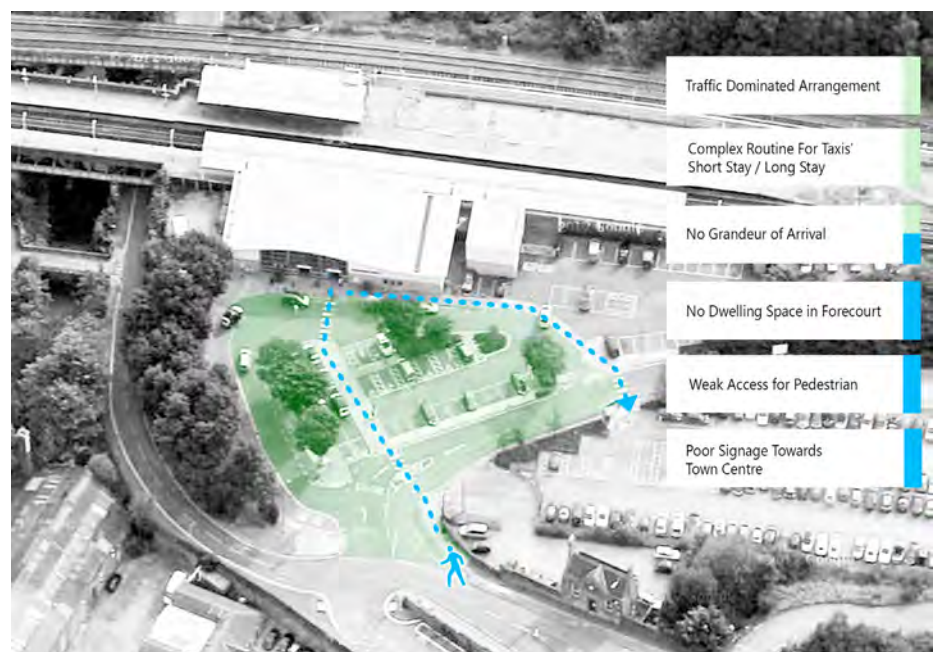
Another significant issue is the perception that the station is disconnected from the town centre. This is due to the main A61 which runs north-south in a cutting between the station and the town centre. Access on foot is via a narrow pedestrian bridge along Corporation Street.

Similarly vehicular access is poor via the B6543 Brewery Street, Malkin Street and Crow Lane. Vehicles have no direct access to the station from the A61. Traffic has to pass through the town centre from the Hornsbridge roundabout, over the Markham Road roundabout, past the St Mary and All Saints Church and round the Saltergate gyratory.

This is a convoluted route which puts pressure on the town centre and is a disincentive to rail use.

The Chesterfield Gateway enhancement project has improved legibility of the route, however, there is a significant opportunity to improve pedestrian connectivity between the station and the town centre and to

improve vehicular access through a series of projects including the Hollis Lane Link Road and the Green Bridge over Corporation Street. These projects are described in more detail within section 5 – Station Arrival.



3.2.d CYCLE NETWORK

Chesterfield has a comprehensive network of cycle routes which is being developed by Derbyshire County Council with Chesterfield Borough Council, Chesterfield Cycle Campaign and Sustrans.⁷

The strategic cycle network has been developed through a process of identifying important ‘destinations’ including shopping areas, hospitals, schools, the train and bus station, Market Square, main residential areas etc. These destinations (known as cycle hubs) are connected by ‘desire lines’ creating the Chesterfield Cycle Network Schematic.

In total, ten strategic routes were identified and work has begun to deliver these routes albeit it is a considerable project which will take many years to complete – depending on resources, available funding and also land-use re-development.

In terms of the town centre it is important that the strategic cycle network is completed to enable safe access by cycle to all parts of the town centre. However, it is also important that the cycle network does not become the ‘dominant’ force in highways design, as multiple kerb lines and road surfacing can have a significant impact on the quality of the streetscape. In this respect we increased use of shared surfaces, reduced speeds in the town centre and enabled better access for all road users including cyclists, pedestrians, taxis and public transport etc.

3.2.e BUS/COACH

Chesterfield is well served by local buses and national coaches. The main bus routes through the town centre are along Markham Road/New Beetwell Street to the south, around Rose Hill (East and West) from Saltergate from the north west of Chesterfield and around Holywell Street/Elder Way and Church Way/Stephenson Place/Cavendish Street on the north eastern side of Chesterfield – with a key west to east link along Knifesmithgate.

Chesterfield town centre’s bus stops are dispersed around the periphery of the centre with stops on the principle streets around New Beetwell Street and Church Way. There is a Coach Station office on New Beetwell Street/Beckingham Way, which is an important hub for the town’s coach visitors, and a Visitor Information Centre on Church Way. It is important that accessibility by bus to all parts of the town centre is maintained.

However, it is also important that the principle bus routes do not in themselves become barriers to pedestrian movement and we have identified opportunities to improve connectivity, particularly around New Beetwell Street/Markham Road.



⁷ http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/transport_roads/transport_plans/transport_studies/chesterfield_cycle_network/default.asp

Existing Movement Analysis
Illustrating Road, Cycle, Train &
Bus Routes

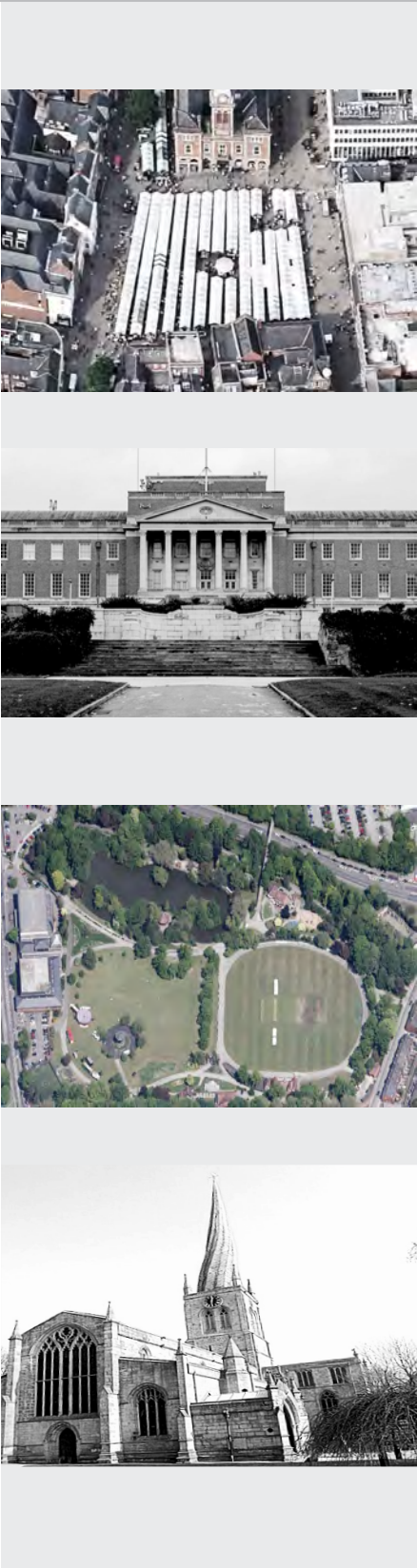
- ⋯⋯⋯ Main Bus Route
- ⋯⋯⋯ Main Cycle Route
- ⋯⋯⋯ A 61
- Train Line



Existing Movement Analysis
Illustrating Main Pedestrian
Walkways

- ⋯⋯⋯ Key Pedestrian Movements
- ⋯⋯⋯ Key Pedestrianised Roads
- Nodes





3.3 SPACE

The spaces between buildings in the town centre is in some respects more fundamental than the building themselves. The spaces define the town centre and the views of the buildings and streetscapes.



PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

MARKET SQUARE

Chesterfield Town Centre has some fantastic public realm. Chesterfield market square is home to one of the biggest open-air markets in the country. The cobbled square is majestically set-off by the 1857 Market Hall and surrounding buildings, including The Shambles and Low Pavement.

The Market Hall was substantially refurbished in 2013 and its clock tower provides a focal point and together with the 'Crooked Spire' of St Mary and All Saints Church is one of the defining features of the town's skyline. Continued maintenance of the Market plus investment in the market square and surrounding public realm is important for the future success of Chesterfield due to the high footfall.

Market square incorporates a historic water pump feature in the north east corner but this is largely hidden by market stalls. The current layout of the market square comprises some 150 stalls set out in 12 horizontal rows. This is split into quarters by walkways from north to south and east to west. However, these walkways are narrow and the market suffers from poor sight lines. This needs to be improved to increase stall occupancy and accessibility.

New Square is on the opposite side of the Market Hall to the west. New Square also has an important role with attractive mature trees and low footfall. It is also currently used more flexibly than the Market Square (with fairs held in this space, a location for the Christmas tree etc). However, it is somewhat dominated with traffic and parked cars which damage its attractiveness and ambience.

These are issues that need to be addressed by future investment if the market is to retain its importance to the town and the local community. There is potential to improve the linkages and footfall between the Market Hall and the rest of the town centre and an opportunity for a more flexible central public square - see Section 4 (Historic Core).

RYKNELD SQUARE

Rykneld Square and the churchyard provide a different kind of public space for quiet contemplation



away from the ‘hustle and bustle’ of the market square.

Ryknelde Square is a block paved square off Church Way which at that point has limited vehicular access for buses and loading/unloading. The square is used by St Mary and All Saints Church for wedding vehicles and funeral cortèges attending services.

The Visitor Information Centre is located on the southern side of Ryknelde Square. Although its setting is attractive, the quality of the surfacing and materials is poor for such an important location within the town.

The churchyard provides an important pedestrian route from the shopping area of the town centre through to St Mary’s Gate and beyond to Corporation Street and the railway station. It is a peaceful environment with mature trees and seating.

ROSE HILL/SHENTALL GARDENS

To the front of the Town Hall is Rose Hill which comprises formal gardens down to West Bars and beyond to Queen’s Park. This is the largest area of green space in the town centre and has an important role for the setting of the Town Hall. The southern end of the gardens is enclosed by Future Walk offices and there are existing buildings to the East and West.

Within the Rose Hill gardens is Knightsbridge Court which is the former Magistrates Court. The building is Grade II listed totalling approximately 2,000 sqm (21,200 sqft). It has an unusual double ‘fan’ design with a larger eastern section housing the former courtrooms.

The building is currently vacant and represents an important opportunity for this key public open space.

- 1 - Market Square
- 2 - Ryknelde Square
- 3 - Town Hall



QUEEN’S PARK

To the south of Rose Hill is Queen’s Park. This is a major recreational park within short walking distance, situated on the edge of the town centre to the south of Markham Road. The park was developed to celebrate Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in 1887 and incorporates a county-standard cricket pitch, tennis courts, bowling green, boating lake and bandstand. The park is surrounded by mature trees and is a key outdoor space for Chesterfield.

Situated within the park is Queen’s Park Sports Centre. As of 2017 this will be replaced with a new, purpose built centre on the annex site to provide additional new facilities (see Section 10 – Markham Road below).

- 4 - Cricket @ Queen’s Park
- 5 - Queen’s Park
- 6 - Sport Centre



PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

CREATING THE AMBIANCE

In any future developments in the town centre it is important that the public spaces between the buildings are successful. 'Success' is not just about the quality of the materials, provision of seating and lighting etc. – it is about how spaces actually 'work'. In this respect the design of spaces should have the same emphasis on the end-user than the design of buildings. Research has shown that successful spaces are those that encourage people to stop moving and spend time there – i.e. where to meet people, be entertained, buy a coffee or simply contemplate, 'dwell' and watch the world-go-by. It is this 'static' activity that makes urban spaces.

In this respect, future open space should be tested against the following principles to ensure it will be hospitable to people:

- Scale – in relation to the height of the proposed surrounding buildings.
- Location - in terms of connectivity to other spaces and routes.
- Sun-path – so as to maximise the amount of sunlight and 'warmth' within the spaces.
- Use – in relation to surveillance and activity achieved through the ground floor use of adjacent buildings.
- Views – in and out-of spaces to afford people the best all-round-views.

- 1 - Winter Gardens, Sheffield
- 2 - Market Square, Nottingham
- 3 - Peace Gardens, Sheffield
- 4 - Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester
- 5 - Precedent: Church Street, London, Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and Grant Associates





ECONOMIC JUSTIFICATION FOR PUBLIC REALM

The importance of high quality public realm cannot be understated and the historic environment is a key feature of Chesterfield town centre.

Therefore both private and publically owned open spaces should be afforded the same attention to detail.

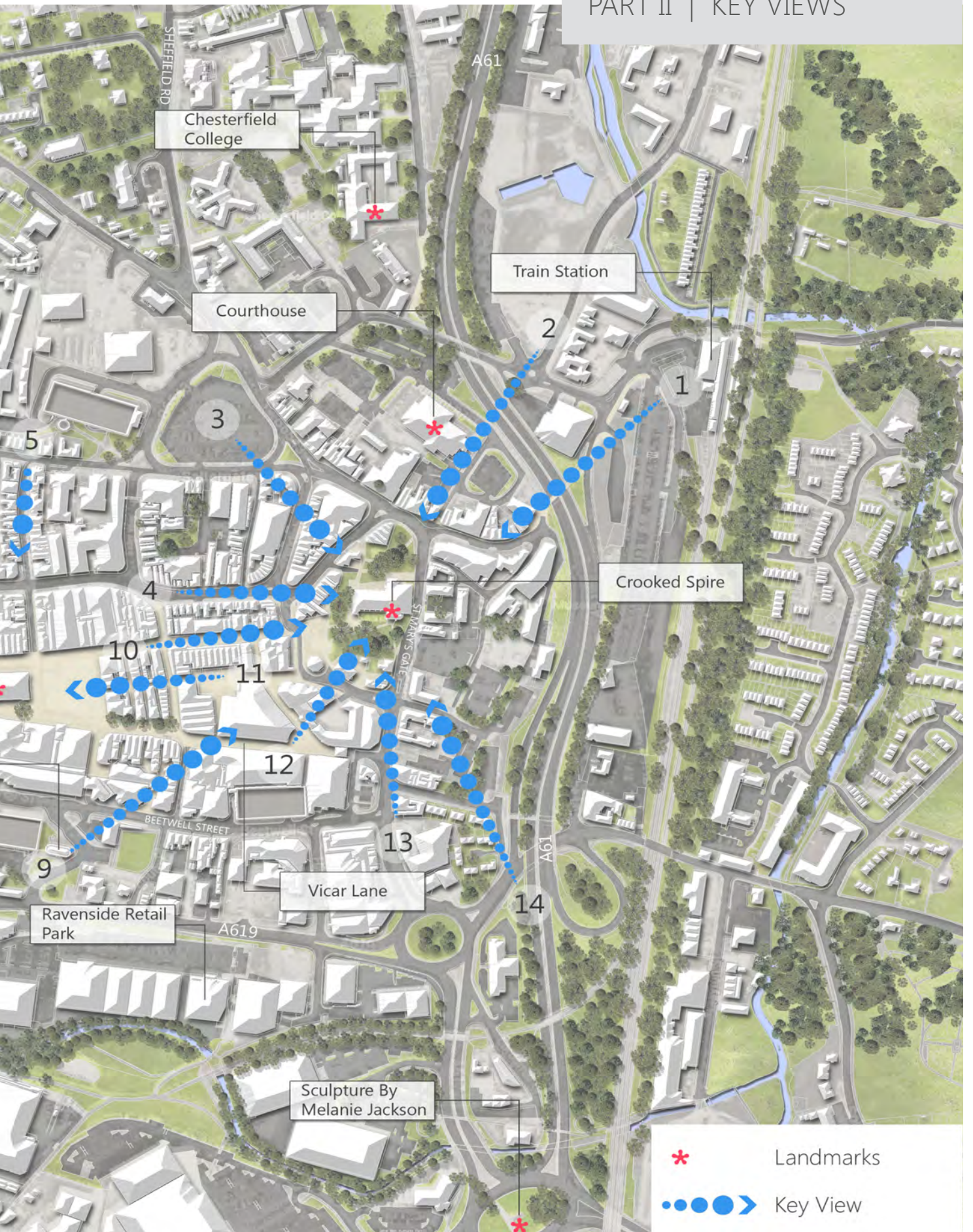
Evidence from elsewhere, including locally at Sheffield which underwent substantial city-wide public realm improvements in the 2000's, shows that there are direct and indirect benefits of public realm including, *inter alia*:⁸

- Enhanced local distinctiveness – i.e. greater differentiation of Chesterfield as a successful market town with vibrant successful spaces.
- Enhanced cultural vitality – with more formal and informal activities taking place in public spaces and more inclusive for all sections of the population.
- A more attractive and environmentally sustainable town centre - reduced traffic in the town centre, with less associated noise and traffic-related emissions.
- Enhanced viability of neighbouring uses – e.g. the Market Hall and surrounding shopping streets.
- The potential for increased land and property values as the town centre is seen as an attractive place to invest (by occupiers, retailers and investors).
- Better security and less crime – due to the increased footfall.
- Greater civic pride – as the town centre becomes a place where people want to visit and spend time enjoying.

⁸The Economic Justification for City Centre Projects, Final Report (July 2002), Sheffield City Council, Yorkshire Forward and English Partnerships



PART II | KEY VIEWS



3.4 FORM

The relationship between the buildings and spaces is extremely important both for the town centre skyline as a whole and also in relation to local form and scale. The core of the town centre retains much of its historic Medieval street pattern and the market area has a strong sense of identity.

A significant amount of historic buildings have been retained and this results in a rich architectural heritage, ranging from Chesterfield's highly recognisable black and white Tudor Revival buildings to the retained frontages along Low Pavements. The iconic 'Crooked Spire' can be glimpsed intriguingly throughout the town and contemporary developments, such as Vicar Lane, compliment this historic setting. Modern architecture can be found in the shape of the former Magistrates Court and Pavements Shopping Centre, which both create a contemporary take on a pitched roof.

Two - three storey buildings are the most common building scale in the town with a typical composition of shop fronts at lower levels and sales or office space above.

Pitched roofs and decorative parapets create an eye pleasing roofline and are typically accompanied with sash windows on the floors below.

Brick and rendered facades as well as slate roofs and plain clay tiles are typical materials used throughout the centre and the wider area.

Varied plot widths and variations in floor to ceiling heights contribute to this visual richness and generally provide a fine grain to appearance of the townscape.

BUILT HERITAGE

Although Chesterfield has a history stretching back beyond Roman times, most of the town centre was developed in the 18th and 19th centuries.⁹

The Chesterfield Town Centre Conservation Area was first designated as a Conservation

Area in November 1976 comprising, the Church Close Conservation Area together with the market square and the surrounding old streets. The Conservation Area was extended in September 1982 to include the site of the former Royal Hospital and Cavendish Street.¹⁰

The Conservation Area includes seven character areas¹¹, as follows:

Area 1

Town Hall/Shentall Gardens - a civic group around the Shentall Memorial Gardens, a sloping park dominated by open spaces around large civic buildings extending North to Saltergate. This area includes Rose Hill and West Bars.

Area 2

Market Square - an area of intense shopping and pedestrian activity, with a mix of permanent and transitory retailing activity spaces dominated by the Market Hall. This area includes High Street, the market square, New Square, Low and Central Pavement, The Shambles, South Street and Beetwell Street.

Area 3

Vicar Lane - This is a modern shopping area on spacious streets which is a contrast to the market square and the Shambles. The area includes Vicar Lane/Steeplegate and Church Lane/Church Way.

Area 4

St Mary's Gate - St Mary's Gate is one of the oldest routes connecting traffic from south to the north of the town centre.

Area 5

Holywell Street/Stephenson Place - Historically this was the outskirts of the town centre and was transformed in the inter war period when Knivesmithgate was extended from Packer's Row to Rose Hill, and Elder Way was built. This facilitated a large slum clearance and many of the buildings were built in a mock Tudor style. This area includes the following streets - Burlington Street, Corporation Street, Stephenson

Place, Knivesmithgate, Cavendish Street, and Holywell Street.

Area 6

Saltergate/Glumangate - Most of the buildings in this character area are predominantly red brick of the Georgian and Victorian period.

Saltergate is one of the main thoroughfares through the town and forms part of the northern part of the Conservation Area. Glumangate is a medieval street linking the northwest of the Market Square with Saltergate.

Area 7

Former Royal Hospital Site - including the northern end of Holywell Street, Durrant Road and Brewery Street.

In defining the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area, the following considerations have been taken into account:

- The distinctive architectural and historic qualities of the area.
- The age and character of buildings and spaces.
- The number of buildings of townscape merit.
- The occurrence of features of special interest.

These are the qualities that should be preserved and enhanced for the town centre to continue to maintain its character. Any management proposals in terms of planning policies or enhancement and regeneration efforts should be geared towards meeting these key objectives.¹²

The Conservation Area and associated studies and policies are a key part of maintaining the distinctiveness and rich heritage of the town centre and are a key consideration for all future development.

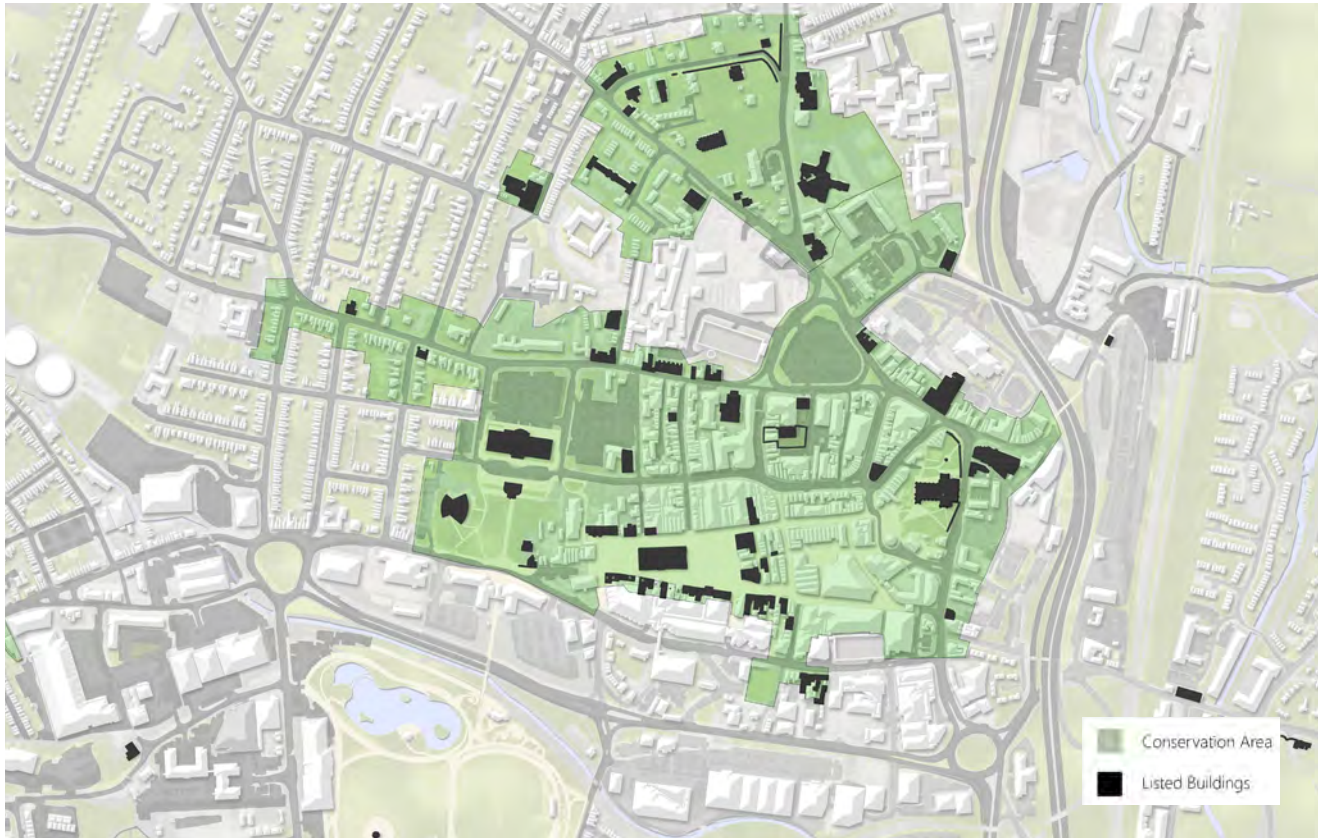
⁹Chesterfield Town Centre, Conservation Area Character Appraisal December 2006 page 5

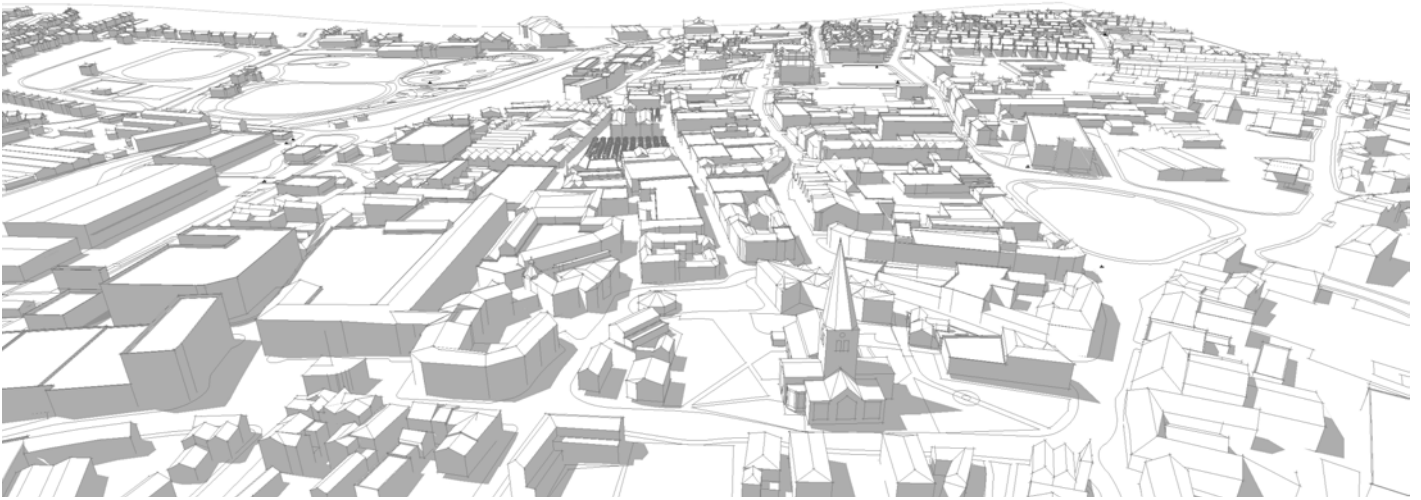
¹⁰Chesterfield Town Centre, Conservation Area Character Appraisal December 2006 page 6

¹¹Chesterfield Town Centre, Conservation Area Character Appraisal December 2006 Section 6, pp 20-44

¹²Chesterfield Town Centre, Conservation Area Character Appraisal December 2006 page 7

TOWN CENTRE CONSERVATION AREA

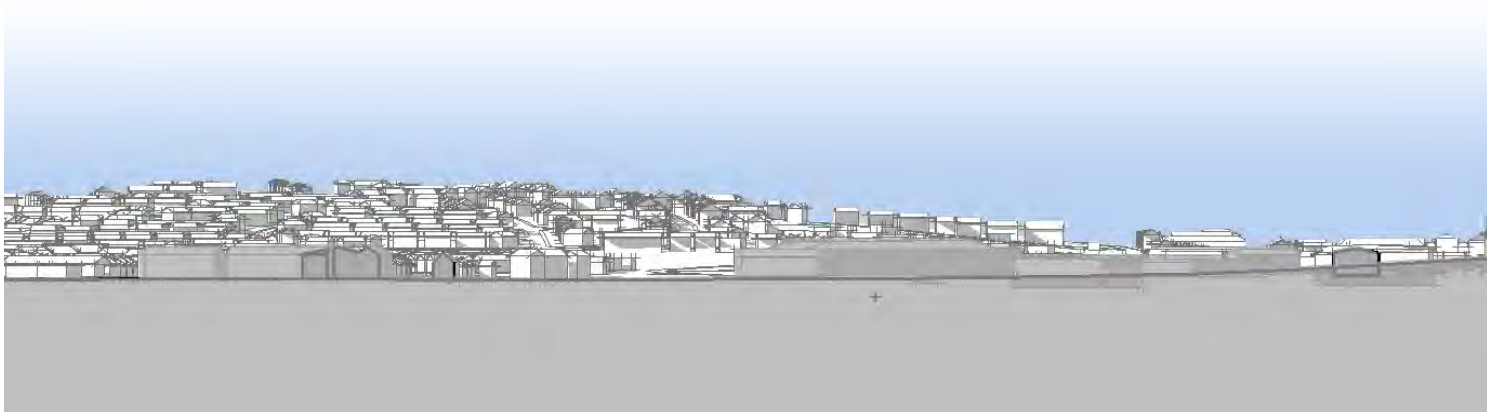




3.5 BUILDING HEIGHTS

A range of building heights are present around the town centre. These vary from 2 storeys to 4 storeys with a typical height of 3 storeys surrounding the market. A taller brick built MSCP sits adjacent to the Coach Station. The general pattern is for storey heights to increase southwards round New Beetwell Street and Markham Road which reflects the topography sloping down to the south. That said, to the south of Markham Road is predominantly single storey retail warehouse typologies.

Building heights should not obscure key views of the Crooked Spire and the Market Hall clock tower which provide useful way-marking points at either end of the town centre.



3.6 USE

It is important to understand the nature of the uses currently operating within the town centre and to assess the vitality and locational patterns of these uses as a driving force of the local economy.

The previous Chesterfield Town Centre masterplan was produced pre-recession in 2009 and was therefore completed in very different economic circumstances.

Since its production a number of changes to the fabric of the town centre have occurred. Some of these changes are positive, such as the refurbishment of the Market Hall, public realm improvements to key gateways and successful residential development on the town centre periphery.

Other changes reflect the negative effects of the changing economic climate including the vacant Co-op department store and underutilised Victoria Centre.

Opportunities previously identified in the 2009 masterplan are now less viable options including the proposals for major convenience retail development at Northern Gateway.

The 2009 masterplan identified that the commuting relationship with Sheffield is one of equals – slightly more people travel into Chesterfield from Sheffield than vice versa, despite the size disparity, demonstrating the attractions of the town as a place to invest, work and shop. However, there is also a skills deficit in the borough with some local people unable to access the type of service related work on offer.¹³

Employment in retail is also identified as an important component of the local economy, however it is vital that the economic base is diversified to provide jobs and skills in other service sectors to add strength to the local economy and attract a broader demographic to the town centre.

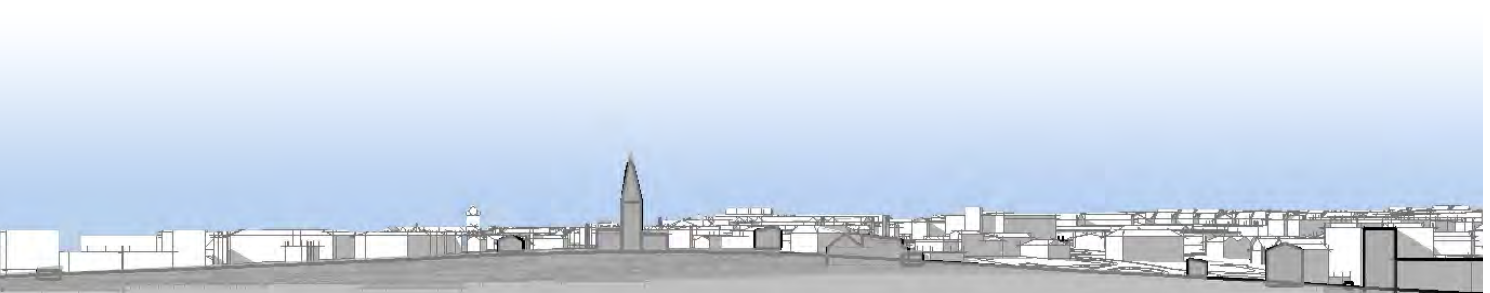
'Town centre/high street plans must encompass a complete community hub solution incorporating: health, housing, education, arts, entertainment, business/office space, manufacturing and leisure, whilst developing day time, evening time and night time cultures where shops are just a part of the total plan'....'Veteran Retailer' Bill Grimsey, An Alternative Future for the High Street.¹⁴

The recent Chesterfield Retail and Leisure Study¹⁵ provides a profile of the types of shoppers attracted to Chesterfield.

This is based upon Acorn profiles.¹⁶ The core Acorn groups in Chesterfield are the high affluence Executive Wealth (11%) and Mature Money (12%), as well as the less affluent older group Poorer Pensioners (15%).

Chesterfield is under-represented by younger groups in the 'rising prosperity' category such as 'career climbers' which may include couples with young children and students.

In order to understand the dynamics of the town centre we assess the key land use patterns and characteristics of key uses within Chesterfield centre.



¹³ Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan October 2009 - Urbed pp17

¹⁴ Grimsey Review – An Alternative Future for the High Street, September 2013.

¹⁵ Chesterfield Retail and Leisure Study November 2014 – CACI Ltd

¹⁶ Acorn is CACI's geo-demographic classification system. Acorn combines geography with demographics and lifestyle information, grouping the entire population into 5 categories, 17 groups and 62 types.

PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

RETAIL

The pattern of retail use within the town centre has gradually shifted southwards over the last three decades, starting with the development of the Pavements in the 1980s, followed by the redevelopment of Vicar Lane in the late 1990's and more recently the completion of the Ravenside Retail Park which includes a Debenhams department store.

The main shopping environment is a pleasant one at its heart, offering views towards the 'Crooked Spire' and historic building frontages at various key points on route. At its centre is the attractive and newly refurbished Chesterfield Market Hall which links into the busiest shopping areas in the town centre at Vicar Lane and Low Pavement.¹⁷ Vicar Lane is a modern open air shopping centre and offers many high street named retailers such as H&M, Argos, River Island, New Look, Holland and Barrett, among others. The Pavements Shopping centre also includes major high street names such as Boots, WH Smith alongside some independent retailers within a covered centre. Premium retailers currently comprise 5% of the retail mix in Chesterfield and across Chesterfield the focus remains on value retailers, which now account for 52% of the town centre offer.¹⁸ Opportunities exist to diversify this offer and attract more niche retailers to the town centre by increasing the town centre population, diversifying the town's core function and investing in the historic town centre environment.

The town centre also offers a wide range of independent retailers operating along attractive narrow medieval streets at the Shambles and the Yards and at the newly developed Market Hall. Areas such as this provide the perfect setting for creative independent operators seeking a unique environment for their business. Small scale interventions, such as strategy for commercial waste bins (see section 4), could have a major impact here.

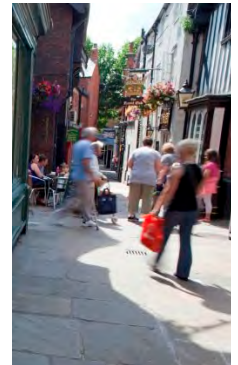
The recent update of the Chesterfield Retail and Leisure Study¹⁹ identified that Chesterfield can extend its up-market offer of clothing and footwear shopping through introduction of such brands that are prevalent in other aspirational towns. The retailer gap analysis in the CACI study identified that there is an opportunity to push Chesterfield's retail offer towards more accessible premium brands such as Oasis, Warehouse, Fatface, Office, Coast, Jones and Laura Ashley that are present in other similar towns but not currently available in Chesterfield. The Northern Gateway development and refurbishment of other vacant units in the Historic Core is of major importance in the attraction of more premium retailers.

Chesterfield's individuality of the built

environment and the diversity of its retail offer has ensured that it has positioned itself well against other similar sized towns. It has retained a vibrant retail core and one of the town's key strengths is that it has a tight, local catchment of loyal shoppers and retains 52% market share of its catchment.²⁰ In order to maintain a strong town centre it is important to attract more retailers to Chesterfield.

Prime retail rental values are currently at around £90 psf for Zone A retail along Vicar Lane which peaked above £100 psf between 2008 - 2010.

Retail vacancy levels have been consistently good and remained above 90% for the last 5 years (compared to the current national average of 87%).



¹⁷ The recent town centre health check produced in April 2014 identified that the busiest retail sites continue to be the main shopping areas of Vicar Lane, High Street and Low Pavement.

^{18/19/20} SourceCACI Audit 2014, Chesterfield Retail and Leisure Study, November 2014.

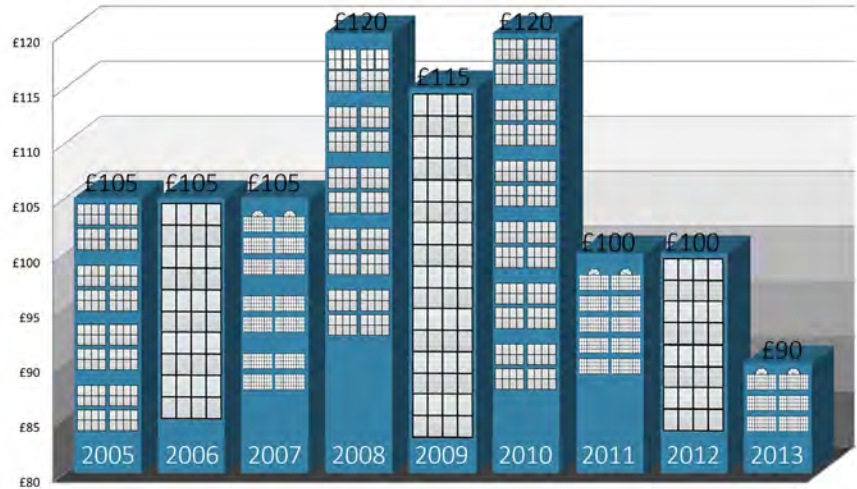
The recent CACI audit identified that since their previous audit of 2010 there has been a slight increase in vacant units to 8.8%. CACI found that many vacant units were found in the Cavendish Street area, High Street and Knifesmithgate. Failed units on Cavendish Street included the former club Department (although the ground floor has now been brought back into use as a Boyes supermarket), a pizzeria, Lisbos Bar and Shooters. Despite a seemingly high number of vacant units here (9) there are signs of improvement with the formation of new businesses including 2 new bars on Station Road. The Yards has the highest vacancy rate at 15.4% of all units including Divine Interventions. Closed units at Market Place include Jessops, Regis and the former Post Office building. The Pavements Shopping Centre continues to suffer from vacancies reflecting the large volume of Value independent tenants. Some of the changes to the retail environment are reflective of the changing retail landscape at a national level with the rise of internet commerce leading to the decline of some traditional high street retailers such as Jessops (Market Place) and Phones4U (Vicar Lane).²¹

It is important that Chesterfield embraces the dramatic structural changes that are impacting upon the retail industry, through the changing consumer behaviour, driven by the internet and other mobile technology.²²

The share of people shopping online has quadrupled in just six years and continues to grow rapidly. Retail destinations need to be attractive, well-run social hubs in order to retain customers.²³

There is a need to build upon the existing retail offer strengths of the retail core in Chesterfield by investing in the unique historic environment (public realm and technology) to encourage more people to visit, shop and dwell in the town centre. This will attract more diverse retailers and position the town centre to respond to the rise of internet shopping e.g. 'showroom', advisory and exhibition spaces and 'click and collect'.

PRIME IN TOWN RETAIL RENTS



TOWN CENTRE SHOP OCCUPANCY



²¹ Chesterfield Retail and Leisure Study 2014, CACI Ltd

²² Grimsey Review – An Alternative Future for the High Street, September 2013.

²³ 21st Century Retail Policy: Quality, choice, experience and convenience, Alex Morton, 13 September 2013 <http://www.policyexchange.org.uk/publications/category/item/21st-century-retail-policy-quality-choice-experience-and-convenience>.

PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

CHESTERFIELD MARKET

Chesterfield's markets are a great asset to the town centre. It is one of the largest in the country and dates back to 1204 with the granting of a Market Charter by King John.²⁴ The Chesterfield Market Hall has recently benefited from a major £4 million refurbishment which has further diversified the town centre shopping mix and protected the historic heart of the town centre. The Market Hall re-opened in October 2013 and provides 45 internal and external retail units, 22 offices, a central café and conferencing facilities in the first floor Assembly and Meeting Rooms.

Improved entrances have been designed to increase the pedestrian flow through the Market Hall and provide guidance and direction for customers and visitors. The new Market Hall has been officially named as the UK's "best small indoor market" by the National Association of British Market Authorities (NAMBA).

The open air market is one of the biggest in the country and takes place in Market Place and New Square. These are described in detail above as key public spaces which help to shape the sense of the place.

The markets are very important as they provide local variety and character. They generate high footfall creating a vibrant place to meet and shop at the heart of the historic core and are destinations in themselves. The markets are also important for new start-up retailers to test their ideas as low overhead retail incubators.



The Market Dates Back to

1204



Amount Spent on the 2013 Refurbishment to the Market Hall



£4M



20%

Increase in Thursday's Flea Market Occupancy Over the Last 5 Years



²⁴ Destination Chesterfield – Chesterfield Visiting, Chesterfield Market (<http://www.chesterfield.co.uk/about-chesterfield/destination-chesterfield/>)



Open Market Occupancy (Chesterfield Borough Council 2014)

	Av. no. of Stalls 08/09	Av. Occupancy 08/09	Av. no. of Stalls 13/14	Av. Occupancy 13/14	Change +/-
Monday	139	58%	120	50%	-14%
Friday	152	63%	133	53%	-16%
Thursday	129	72%	155	86%	+20%
Saturday	157	65%	150	61%	-6%
All Days	144	65%	140	62%	-5%

Monday, Friday and Saturday figures based on 240 stalls as full occupancy.
Thursday figures based on 180 stalls as full occupancy.

Open Market Occupancy (Chesterfield Borough Council 2014)

PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

LEISURE AND TOURISM

The town centre contains a number of historic features which are a big draw for tourists. Key attractions include the 'Crooked Spire' of St Mary and All Saints Church and the cobbled Market Square.

The recent CACI Chesterfield Retail and Leisure Study²⁵ states that a strong restaurant offer will drive footfall in the town centre and encourage linked trips that extend into the evening; this will drive higher dwell times and shift shopping behaviour towards destination trips that combine retail, catering and leisure.

At present there is ample headroom to improve the leisure and restaurant mix in Chesterfield. This should be given priority given that a strong leisure offer has been shown to increase retail spend. The CACI study provides an analysis of the gap in current catering provision within the town centre and identifies a number of caterers such as Pizza Express, Starbucks, Zizzi, Carluccios and Prezzo that are present in similar aspirational towns but not currently present in Chesterfield. Continued investment in the historic core and strong public realm and connectivity between the retail and emerging leisure areas should encourage more leisure operators to invest in the town centre.

At present there is one cinema in Chesterfield located just outside the town centre at the Alma Leisure Park featuring a 10 screen cinema and dining. In addition, The Pomegranate Theatre is currently developing its cinematic offerings and has recently installed a digital cinema allowing it to show live performances in addition to more 'art house' films. However there is still a strong opportunity for an additional cinema in Chesterfield based upon the level of available cinema spend within a 20 minute drive time of the town centre which is £4.5m (compared to an average of £2.0m in similar benchmark centres).²⁶

Effective town centre management and improvement of the current leisure offer is recommended to allow for diversification of uses which are currently underprovided, such as family restaurants, cafes and bars. This will ensure that people continue to be drawn into the centre to access not only the retail offer but other uses, for example, The Pomegranate Theatre and Winding Wheel as well, therefore widening the visitor experience within the town centre.



OFFICES

The focal areas for office use within the town centre are within the Civic Quarter near the Town Hall on Rose Hill, along Saltergate and to the north of the town centre retail area. There is also office uses at Blenheim Court within the Northern Gateway and Basil Close / Durant Road in the Spire Neighbourhood near the Magistrates Court. The largest office occupiers in the town are predominantly public sector including the local authority (1,200 employees) and Chesterfield College (500+).

North East Derbyshire District Council (250-500 employees) are moving out, but this creates other opportunities for the reuse or redevelopment of their office building on Saltergate. The main private sector employers with 100 – 250 employees in the town centre include:

Sixt Vehicle Rental headquarters, URS Engineering, and Royal Mail. Many other

companies are located around the periphery on various business parks and trading estates along the A61 corridor.

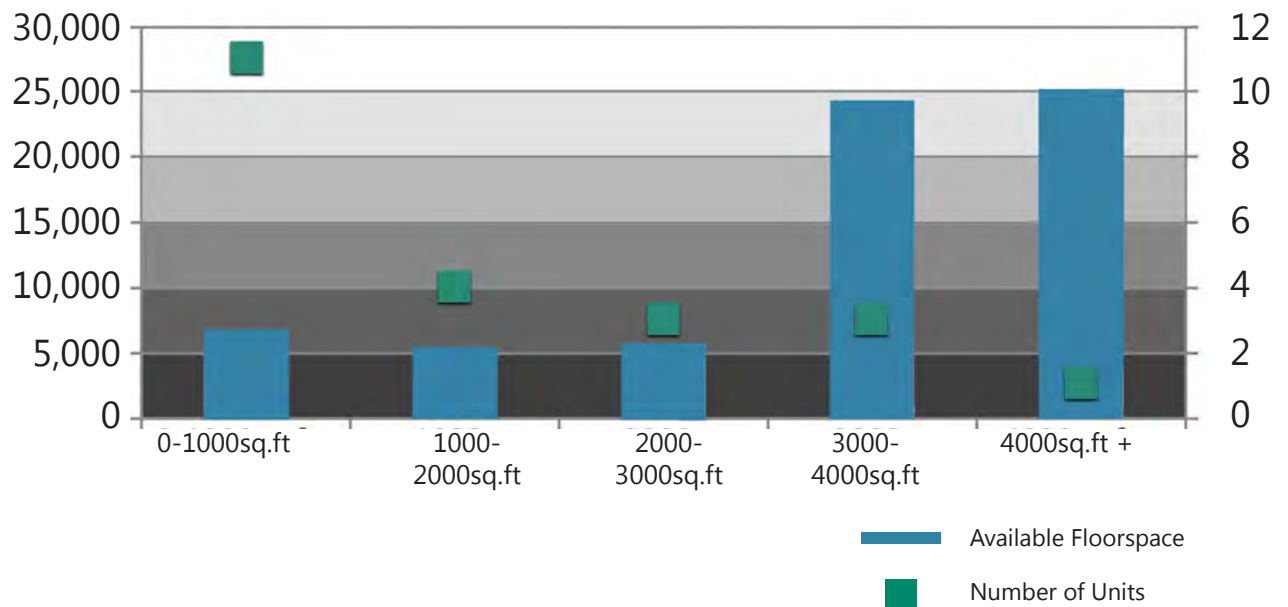
There is currently a lack of new-build grade-A office space in the town centre and an identified latent demand from occupiers for this type of space. A little further away from the town centre there are a number of new-build office suites available within the Ashgate Road Medical Centre. This office space was completed in 2014 as part of a new medical centre with suites between (42 – 280 sqm) 450 - 3,000 sqft. Quoting rents are between £13 psf - £15.60 psf (£140 – £167.90 psm) and demand is likely to fill this space.

There are also a number of small refurbished office units available on the market at Burlington House within the town centre behind Vicar Lane Shopping Centre.

The marketing agents for these properties have stated that demand for these units is limited as they are small and don't meet the needs of current occupiers looking for modern accommodation. Consultations with local agents echo these comments relating to accommodation being out dated and too small and it is suggested that if larger, more modern accommodation was provided, that there is demand both from local and national businesses looking for accommodation in Chesterfield.



Office Availability (Egi 2014) *Estate Gazette 2014*



INTERNET CONNECTIVITY

Chesterfield centre contains a variety of businesses that depend on digital connections, not least the local media sector, which includes a variety of digital radio stations and local newspapers.

The main Chesterfield exchange, which covers the town centre, is enabled for superfast broadband but this still has to be rolled out uniformly across the town centre. The broadband speed and WiFi connectivity within Chesterfield town centre needs to be improved and reliable digital connections are required to support the future economy.

It is vital that the town centre is digitally connected and that all buildings have sufficient broadband capacity and wireless hotspots enable public spaces based on current and future technology.²⁷



1 - AQL Blue Boxes WiFi Hubs

PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

RESIDENTIAL

Chesterfield town centre falls within the post code area of S40 where the average price paid over the last 5 years is £155,977. Values in this area have increased by 4.65% over the last year but this is still significantly lower than the UK average of £231,378 making Chesterfield a more affordable location to live.

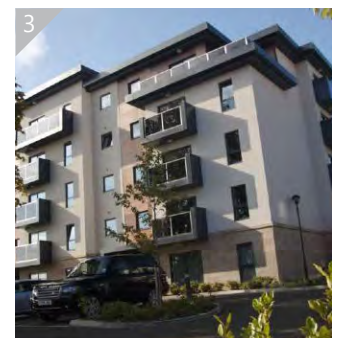
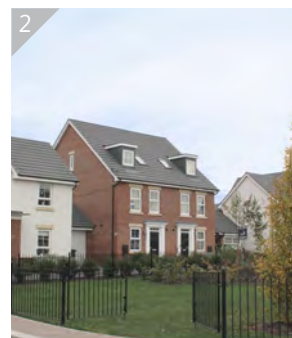
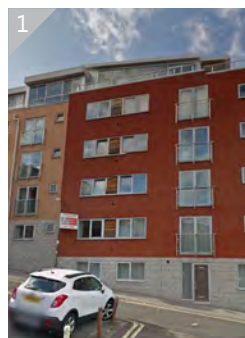
Values in the S40 area are higher than the Chesterfield average and are also higher than the South Yorkshire average, but lower than the Derbyshire average (which includes the Peak District). The lowest values achieved have been for terraced properties which are the most prevalent house typology followed by residences in a commercial building (i.e. above a shop) and flats (both purpose built and converted).

Recent new development in the town centre has diversified the residential offer and proved to be very successful. Barratt Homes have recently completed two schemes in Chesterfield – The Spires and subsequently Saltergate. The Spires is a development just to the south of the town centre on the A61 Derby Road where typical prices are £171,000 for a 3 bedroom terraced town house.

Saltergate, comprising 68 homes, has recently been completed on the former Chesterfield Football Club site close to the Civic Quarter. The development includes a mix of terraced town houses, semi-detached, and detached properties and there is only 1 x 4 bedroom property remaining at £269,995. Similarly Miller Homes are developing a scheme of 126 homes to the north of the town centre on the former rugby club site, The Portlands. Prices here range from £186,000 - £275,000 for 3 and 4 bedroom homes.

Residential development has also taken place at Manvers Court off Newbold Road between the Northern Gateway and the Civic Quarter. This comprises a mixture of

Area	Flats	Terraced	Semi Detached	Detached	Average Price
S40 Area	£ 109,516	£ 106,641	£ 143,746	£ 253,826	£ 155,977
Chesterfield	£ 115,388	£ 98,160	£ 128,193	£ 234,115	£ 141,476
Derbyshire	£ 123,744	£ 118,892	£ 146,864	£ 264,383	£ 163,092
South Yorkshire	£ 121,967	£ 103,798	£ 133,296	£ 238,759	£ 139,011



new build and refurbished accommodation including apartments to rent. Here 2 bedroom apartments command a rent of £470 - £500 pcm. Town centre apartments have also been developed at Town Walk, Tupton Lane next to the new Magistrates Court within the Spire Neighbourhood. This comprises a modern 6 storey block where 2 bed units are currently c £170,000 to buy or £670 pcm to rent.

There is huge potential for new residential development on sites within the town centre and particularly the former Saltergate Medical Centre which is being demolished by the Homes and Communities Agency and other sites around the Spire neighbourhood,

Northern Gateway and Waterside (see Part III below).

Development in the town centre should build upon this success and continue to increase the amount of housing available in town centre locations. There are significant opportunities for refurbishment of upper levels (e.g. the Co-op and Victoria Centre – see Historic Core below) to bring these buildings back into use to create town centre living which will support the shops and services in the town. Similarly there are requirements for new supported living schemes in the town centre given the national trend of aging population.



- 1 - Tipton Lane Housing
- 2 - Saltergate Development
- 3 - Chatsworth Road Development

Precedents:

- 4 - Great Kneighton, Cambridge
- 5 - Details, Great Kneighton
- 6 - Newhall Be, Harlow
- 7 - Ancoats, Manchester

PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

EDUCATION AND HEALTHCARE

The future success of development of additional homes in the town centre will in part be dependent upon the presence of supporting services to cater for the needs of the community. The essential services that people will require access to are health and education.

There is a good existing provision of healthcare facilities, including four GP medical surgeries within or near to the centre - Chesterfield Medical Partnership, The Surgery @ Wheatbridge, Holywell House Medical Centre, Avenue House and Hasland Partnership. There is also good provision of opticians and dentist services within the town centre.

There are no primary schools located within the town centre as illustrated by the map, however there are several schools within reasonable proximity to the town centre (Abercrombie Primary, Christ Church CE Primary School, Hady Primary School, Old Hall Junior School and William Rhodes Primary School). According to the Derbyshire County Council School Organisation Plan, all of these schools have a surplus of places apart from Old Hall Junior School totalling 211 places at primary and infant level.

If more residential accommodation is to be developed in the town centre and in particular more family orientated homes, provision may be needed for more school places in or near to the town centre. The business case for investment would need to be made, but there would be good opportunities for a new school on sites in the Spire Neighbourhood or the Northern Quarter near the College.

HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION

Chesterfield College is a highly successful and vibrant college based in North Derbyshire with excellent pass rates and high student success levels.

Its location in Chesterfield town centre is part of its success - attracting students from north and south Derbyshire, Buxton, Derby and South Yorkshire and Sheffield. The college has over 700 courses (including foundation courses, A Levels, Apprenticeships, Vocational (work related) and Professional Qualifications, Diplomas and Degrees) and over 8,000 full, part time or HE students every year. The emphasis for the college is to equip students with the skills and knowledge for progression and employment.²⁸

The college is expanding and work has begun on a new building including main reception and brand new facilities for construction students, including carpentry & joinery, plumbing and mechanical engineering. This work will be completed by September 2015. Chesterfield College have also invested £2.5 million into the redevelopment of the Queen's Park Sports Centre (see page 94 below) to ensure that its students can make use of the facilities during term time alongside regular customers. The college will also contribute to the running costs of the new centre once it is opened.

Furthermore the University of Derby has recently announced plans to open a Chesterfield campus in addition to existing campuses in Derby and Buxton. The University has purchased the Grade II listed former girls' school, the St Helena Centre, from Derbyshire County Council. The campus is situated between Chesterfield College and the Northern Gateway which consolidates the Education Quarter in this location. It will bring new jobs, business support, business incubation, nursing, engineering and real world learning to the town with courses initially in adult nursing.²⁹ It is anticipated that student numbers will increase to around 300 places by 2016.

At present there is live-in accommodation at the Royal Hospital which caters for students that are attending the university from further

afield.

However there may be an opportunity to provide some further accommodation within the town centre to cater for increased numbers of university students in 2016. The university may also expand to offer other courses at the St Helena facility in addition to nursing.



1 - Ashgate Medical Practice

2 - The Surgery @ Wheatbridge

3 - Abercrombie Primary School

²⁸ <https://www.chesterfield.ac.uk/about>




²⁹ <http://www.derby.ac.uk/news/new-future-for-landmark-chesterfield-building>

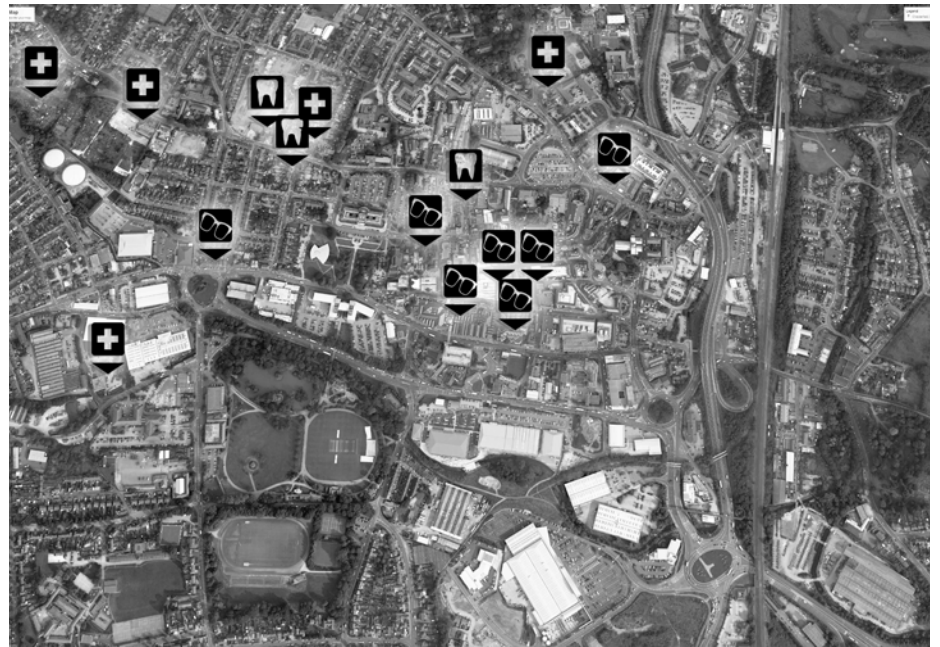
Local Schools >

- N** Nursery/Pre-School
- P** Primary/Infant/Junior School
- S** Secondary/Sixth Form Education
- F** Further Education
- O** Other



Local Health Services >

-  Doctor Surgeries
-  Opticians
-  Dental Practices



PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

CAR PARKING

There are 4,589 parking spaces in Chesterfield town centre, of which the Council own and manage 2,689 of them. Some of the privately owned car parks are on temporary sites such as 250 spaces on Brewery Street which will be part of the Waterside development.

The following charts illustrate the average levels of occupied car parking spaces at council owned car parks within the town centre for weekdays (Monday to Friday) and Saturday.³⁰

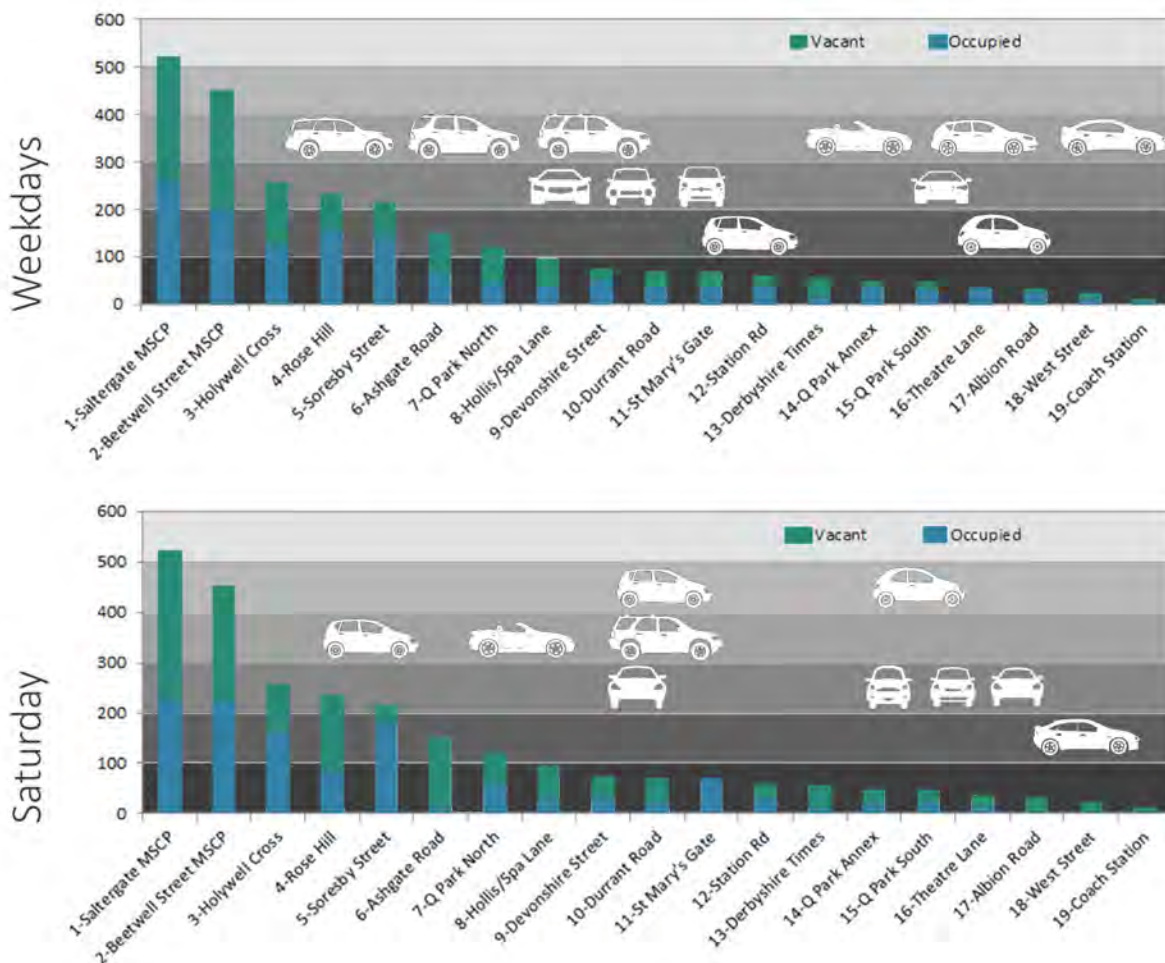
It should be noted that some large MSCPs are operating at an average occupancy rate of less than 50%. This includes the Beetwell

Street MSCP (465 spaces) and Saltergate MSCP (529 spaces) (albeit 2 decks are not currently in operation). In addition to the two council owned multi-storey car parks, there is an additional MSCP at Vicar Lane/Beetwell Street adjacent to the Vicar lane shopping area (395 spaces) which also presents further car parking capacity within the town centre. There are opportunities to improve/refurbish existing MSCPs to make them more attractive to motorists (e.g. variable message signage) and more accessible (e.g. Beetwell Street MSCP).

It is also important to note that Ravenside Retail Park has 435 free car parking spaces and there is a big draw of shoppers to this location.

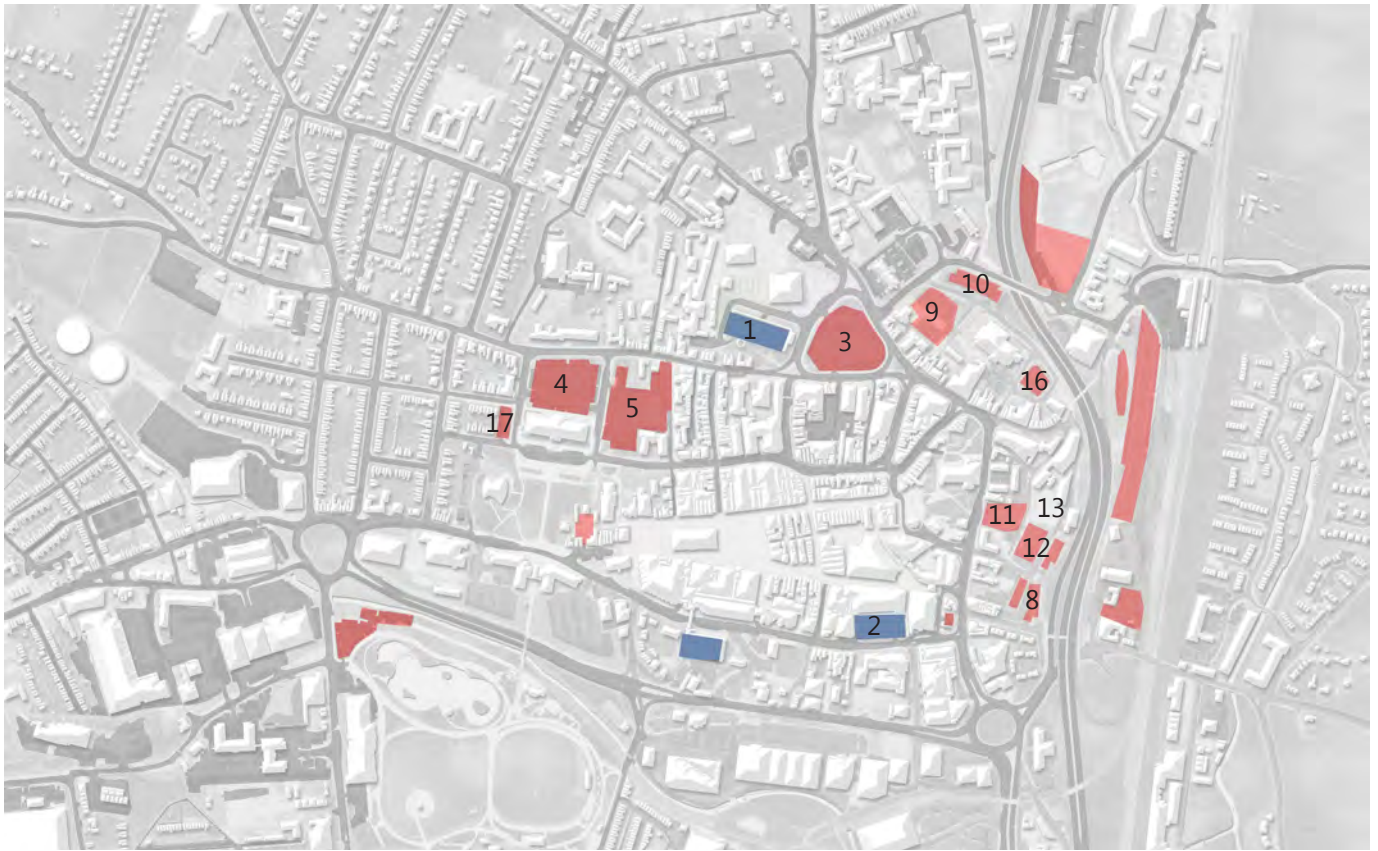
Previous plans³¹ suggested development of a number of surface car parks including in the Northern Gateway, the Spire Neighbourhood and the Civic Quarter. The occupancy statistics show that there is capacity to release some car parks for development. The benefits of developing on some of the sites include: improvements to the urban fabric and streetscape; more residential and/or commercial floorspace in the town centre generating rent, rates and local property taxes; stimulating a modal shift away from over reliance on the private car.

Further work is required to determine the future car parking requirements having regard to long-term trends in car transport and the needs of future businesses, shoppers and visitors to the town centre.



³⁰ data collected in 2013 by Chesterfield Council

³¹ Chesterfield Town Centre Masterplan 2009, Urbed (pp 53)



- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Saltergate MSCP | 11. St Mary's Gate |
| 2. Beetwell Street MSCP | 12. Station Road |
| 3. Holywell Cross | 13. Derbyshire Times |
| 4. Rose Hill | 14. Q Park Annex |
| 5. Soresby Street | 15. Q Park South |
| 6. Ashgate Road | 16. Theatre Lane |
| 7. Q Park North | 17. Albion Road |
| 8. Hollis / Spa Lane | 18. West Street |
| 9. Devonshire Street | 19. Coach Station |
| 10. Durrant Road | |

- Surface Car Parks
- Multi-Storey Car Parks

PART II | 3. DEVELOPING THE MASTERPLAN

ACTIVE FRONTAGES

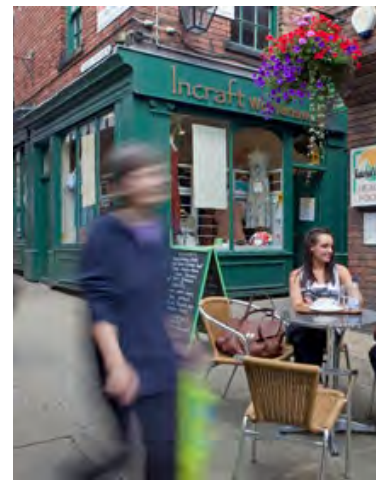
It is important when considering any new development that frontages are activated with visible uses whether that be shops, offices and bars/restaurants. It is important to avoid blank frontages particularly on the main pedestrian and vehicular streets. There needs to be a clearly defined hierarchy of service streets and frontages to ensure the activity is concentrated in the relevant areas.

UPPER LEVELS

Similarly it is important that vacant upper floors in the town centre are brought back into use. This could be for low cost flexible offices or residential. This will bring more people into the town centre which will support local shops and services. The Council and landlords need to adopt a flexible approach to encourage these uses and invest in improving facilities/access.

Chesterfield Borough Council currently has 1,070 sqm (11,521 sqft) of vacant office space in the town centre available within their portfolio. Much of this stock is located at Corporation Street and all offices are on the first or second floor with no DDA access (lift).

A total of 16 of the office suites make up the 1,070 sqm (11,521 sqft) of vacant space with three being 121.5 sqm (1,308 sqft), 212.5 sqm (2,287 sqft) and 279 sqm (3,000 sqft). The rest is made up of 13 offices between 16.8 – 42 sqm (181 - 450 sqft). All are converted Victorian properties with retail on the ground floor. Destination Chesterfield are marketing some of the properties at a reduced rent to attract tenants, however the properties are proving difficult to let due to the restrictions on access and lack of DDA compliance and the age of the accommodation on offer. Opportunities may exist to convert these offices to alternative uses such as residential flats.





— Active Frontage

