



ANNAN REGENERATION
MASTERPLAN REPORT

DUMFRIES AND
GALLOWAY COUNCIL

JULY 2010

TURLEYASSOCIATES



Contents

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The Annan Regeneration Masterplan has been supported and guided throughout by members of the Annan Regeneration Steering Group. Members include:

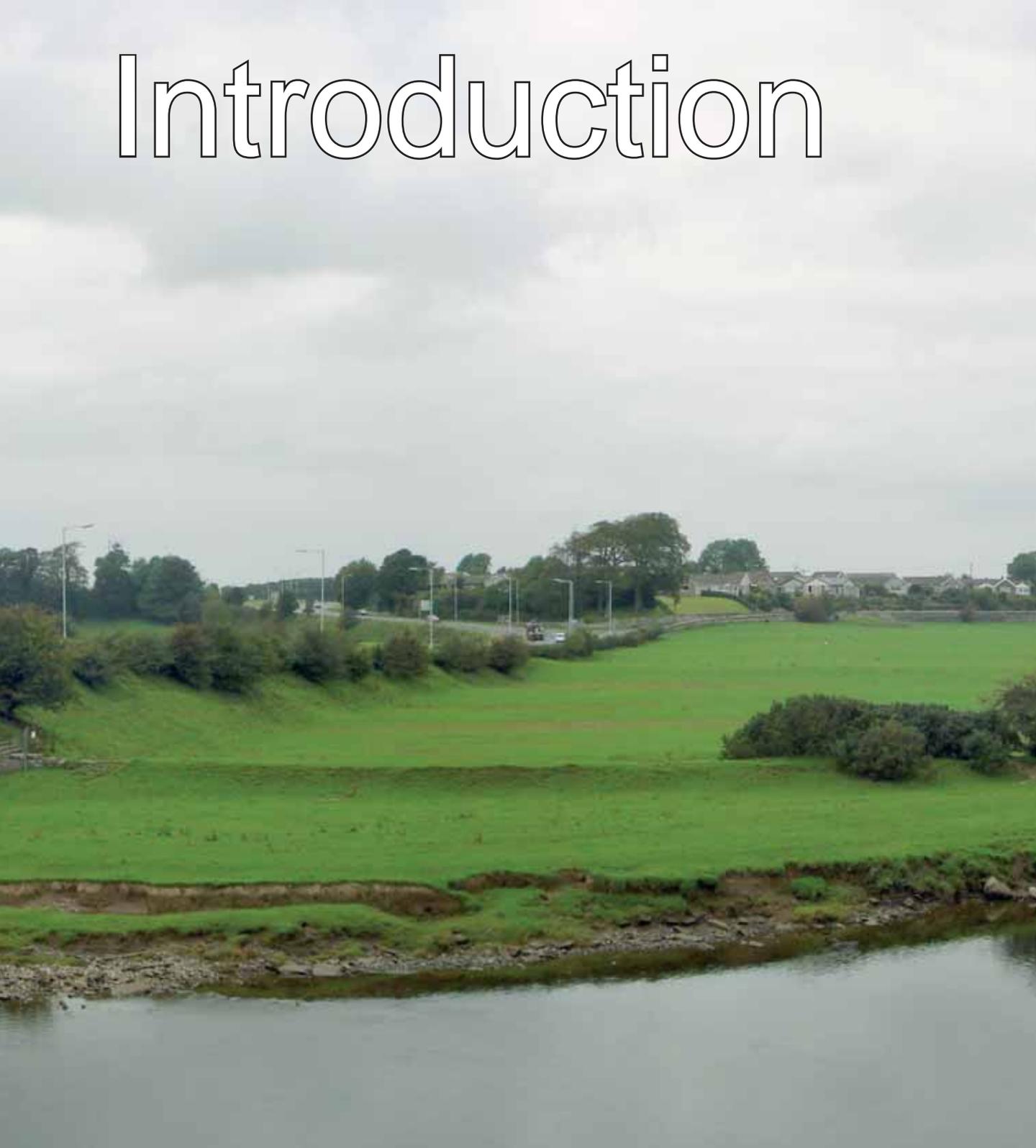
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report sets out an ambitious but realistic regeneration masterplan for the town of Annan. Its aim is to improve Annan as a place to live, work and visit. The team was led by Turley Associates and supported by Tom Langlands (Architects Plus), Peter McCaughey (WAVE) and Brown and Wallace as cost consultants.
2. Developed with support from the Annan Regeneration Steering Group and Dumfries and Galloway Council, the plan was underpinned by an extensive community engagement process. Local people made a significant contribution to the development of this strategy.
3. This plan is one of a series of studies that will identify regeneration solutions that minimise the local economic impact of the decommissioning of the Chapelcross Nuclear Power Plant. The decommissioning, currently underway, will result in the direct loss of 400 skilled local jobs and an indirect impact on local employment that is harder to predict. The closure of Chapelcross will have a significant and detrimental impact on Annan. Many skilled engineers and plant operatives are employed at the plant and live locally.
4. Many of the Chapelcross employees have skills that are valuable and transferable. This study also considered the broader employment statistics for Annan. These show a majority of local people employed in manufacturing and within that, a significant proportion employed in food processing and machine handling - relatively low paid and low skilled employment. These individuals are predominantly employed in large local businesses, all of which compete in a market where minimising the cost of labour is a business imperative.
6. In contrast to many small towns in southern Scotland, Annan has very low numbers of local people employed in the service and tourist sector. Commonly, it is this sector that provides employment to people with limited skills and educational attainment. The town also suffers from a very significant leakage of food and non food retail spend to Dumfries and Carlisle and out migration of young people (25 - 40).
7. The regeneration masterplan identifies a direct link between increasing service sector employment, the retail performance of the town centre, the retention of young people and the look and feel of the heart of the town. Analysis undertaken during the study uncovered a town rich in townscape, architectural quality, history and community infrastructure but one where these strengths were unrecognised. A high quality Town Centre will be a powerful vehicle in the Town's social and economic regeneration.
8. The analysis uncovered a High Street that was outstanding at one end but weak at the other; a lack of people living in the town centre creating a 'no go' area at night; historic development patterns that had stretched north and effectively dragged investment away from the town; and, a harbour that presented exciting opportunities but was quite a separate project from the overall regeneration of the town. Annan needs regeneration that is about a careful process of repair, reinvention and revitalisation focussed on its Town Centre.
9. The regeneration strategy recognises this focus and is based on simple concepts aimed at re-strengthening the structure of the town. It seeks to strengthen the core; extend the spine; improve the gateways; and, bring people and activity back into the heart of the town.
10. It is a flexible strategy that identifies a number of precise development, investment and community infrastructure projects; shows what they could look like and how much they might cost. Taken together these projects total £50 million of public and private investment over a 15 - 20 year action plan. The strategy is flexible and should always remain so. Local people demonstrated great imagination and passion throughout the process. New ideas should be encouraged and welcomed where they reflect the core development principles.
11. The report concludes with a chapter that identifies potential delivery mechanisms for the regeneration strategy. It recognises the role of Annan Regeneration Steering Group and identifies this organisation as the basis for any future delivery vehicle.



Introduction





Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report, commissioned by Dumfries and Galloway Council, sets out an ambitious but realistic regeneration masterplan solution for the town of Annan. It will help inform investment decisions within the context of the Gretna, Lockerbie and Annan (GLA) Corridor and Corridor Regeneration Strategy (CoReS).
- 1.2 Although commissioned by Dumfries and Galloway Council, the masterplan team have reported throughout to the Annan Regeneration Steering Group which includes Dumfries and Galloway Councils Strategic planning service, elected members, representatives from the local and business community, Annan Initiative and Annan Community Council. A full list of all steering group members can be found in Appendix 1.
- 1.3 Ultimately the masterplan identifies a number of projects which are achievable in the short (next five years), medium (five to ten years) and long term (15 years). Its aim is to improve Annan as a place to live (housing, community facilities, services and infrastructure), work (sustain current employment and attract new investment) and visit (promotion of the town's unique attributes and provision for visitors, as well as local people, of suitable attractions / facilities).
- 1.4 The masterplan recognises the important interaction with the emerging Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan (LDP). The LDP process is necessarily independent but there will be opportunities for partnership working and continued engagement as the process moves forward.
- 1.5 This report also reflects and sits alongside other pieces of work currently in preparation. It is important that this work is not duplicated and where necessary reference is made to various documents and initiatives, which include:

- The Corridor Regeneration Strategy (CoReS)
- LDP Main Issues Report
- Local Housing Strategy (LHS)
- The Chapelcross Masterplan
- Townscape Heritage Initiative
- The Solway Energy Gateway feasibility study

Understanding the Brief

- 1.6 Annan has long been established as a strong industrial centre within Dumfries and Galloway. While other towns have developed significant service sector economies, Dumfries in particular, Annan has continued to attract and sustain a substantial industrial employment base (the largest in the region) thanks to employers such as:
 - Chapelcross (currently being decommissioned)
 - Young's Seafood
 - Pinney's
 - Cochran Boilers
 - Phoenix Chemicals
- 1.7 While unemployment levels are relatively low, Annan is dependent upon the fortunes of these large local businesses. Not only that, but once where there were companies that were once 'Annan born and bred' there are now large companies that are 'branch plants' and are subject to external decision making.



BACKGROUND

- 1.8 In comparison other towns have spent many years developing a more diverse employment base, particularly in the service sector. This process has been supported by theming initiatives, e.g. Gretna Gateway, Kirkcudbright 'Artist Town' and Castle Douglas 'Food Town'. Mapping a path toward greater diversification of employment is a key objective of the masterplan.
- 1.9 Growing the importance of the service and tourism industries will be critical in establishing this diversity. The attractiveness of Annan as a place to live will be a key parameter in increasing activity in these sectors.

A Flexible Masterplan

- 1.10 The process of regeneration and diversification will take time. The masterplan must remain relevant and flexible. For this reason it focuses upon a series of progressive development opportunities and investments in place and community. The result is a realistic document that can be used up until 2025.

Masterplan Aims

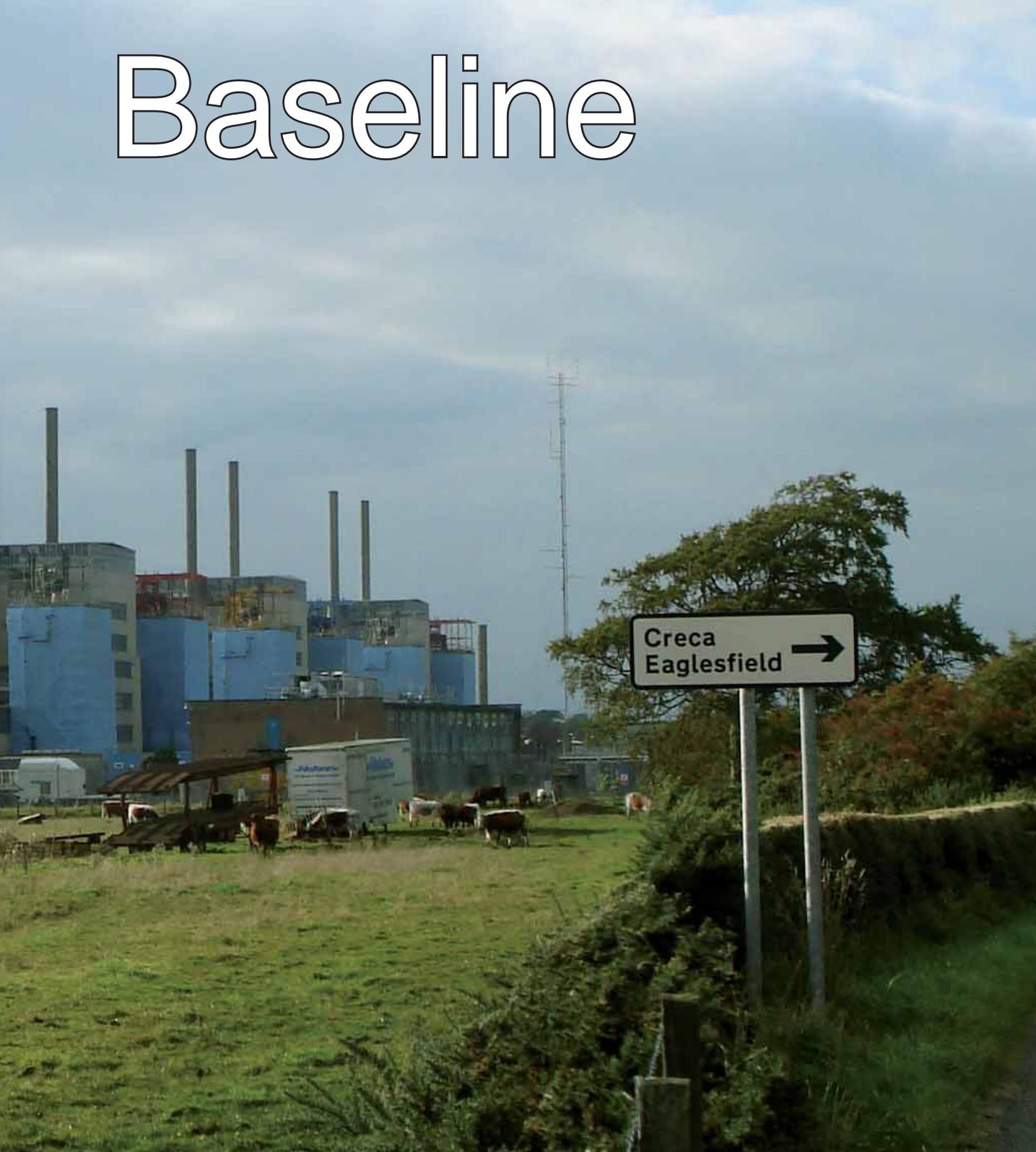
- Maximise the economic potential of Annan
- Secure sustainable economic development and employment opportunities
- Develop the profile of Annan
- Develop the event tourism potential
- Integrate enterprise, housing, commerce and leisure
- Identify development sites in locations that maximise their economic impact

Consultation and Consensus

- 1.11 Key to the development of the masterplan has been the unity and consistency of the Annan Regeneration Steering Group. From the outset the group emphasised the need to fully embrace extensive, inclusive and innovative consultation and engagement with local people in the process. The consultation framework has formed the back bone to the masterplanning process for Annan.
- 1.12 Local people have directly informed each masterplan stage and the development of all concepts and proposals. It is genuinely their masterplan for their town.



Baseline



.02

	Scotland	Dumfries and Galloway	Annan	Dumfries	Gretna	Lockerbie
Population	5,062,011	147,765	8,389	31,146	2,705	4,009
Industry of employment						
Manufacturing	13.65 %	13.45 %	27.88 %	11.96 %	17.56 %	18.88 %
Wholesale and retail trades	13.30 %	14.62 %	12.48 %	16.55 %	17.74 %	15.23 %
Public administration	7.23 %	6.37 %	7.08 %	8.63 %	7.40 %	5.45 %
Health and social work	12.63 %	13.62 %	9.66 %	19.68 %	7.49 %	11.67 %
Occupation groups						
Managers and senior officials	12.63 %	10.54 %	6.57 %	10.06 %	7.49 %	10.37 %
Professional occupations	11.20 %	7.53 %	5.21 %	8.97 %	3.03 %	6.69 %

Figure 2.1 - Employment Comparisons (the figures are a percentage of the Scotland / region / settlement population and use the 2001 Census data, www.scrol.gov.uk)

Strategic Context

Regional

2.1 Dumfries and Galloway shares characteristics with many other rural communities and economies across Scotland. These include, but are not exclusive to:

- Large proportions of population living in small communities (i.e. less than 4,000 population) or in the countryside;
- Distinctive rural economy, with high economic activity rates (82%) and business start up rates;
- High employment and relatively low unemployment; leading to inherent shortage of available labour and skills for employers
- High self-employment, part-time and seasonal employment
- Less than average levels of household income and lower wage jobs;
- Declining birth rates in tandem with ageing population;
- Increased economic performance (and prosperity) but this remains below average – i.e. the productivity gap remains; and
- Imbalance between employment within private and public sectors, and as such this could be a future weakness and threat.

Sub-Regional

2.2 Within Dumfries and Galloway, Annandale and Eskdale is characterised by following key attributes:

- 37,000 population with Annan largest settlement (circa 9,000);
- Annan population itself declined by 2.8% during 1991 to 2001

- Migration patterns: youngest leaving to obtain higher education, and older population retiring or returning to area.
- Lower proportion of small children: reduced birth rate (national trend) and decline in female population of child-bearing age (local trend)
- Key transport routes: M74 (N/S); A75 Euro Route (to Stranraer) and A7 (tourist route Carlisle to Edinburgh); and
- Nith Valley railway – Carlisle to Dumfries, with station at Annan.

Jobs and Employment

Manufacturing

2.3 Annan is situated some 15 miles from the regional centre of Dumfries and to the west of the M74 and Gretna. The Town has developed from its historical roots in shipbuilding and agriculture to become a centre for engineering and manufacturing within the region.

2.4 The large employers identified earlier continue to provide employment for significant numbers of local people. However, the valuable engineering apprenticeships that helped develop Annan as a centre of excellence have been replaced by jobs that are focussed on processing and machine handling. While valuable locally, these jobs require less skill, are lower paid and as a consequence offer less opportunity for career development.

Small Businesses

2.5 Although there has been a reduction over the years in business associated with traditional engineering, Annan still maintains a strong element of small businesses and a continuous level of small business start ups (82 in 2009). These businesses should be nurtured and opportunities made available to support and grow them within the town.

Service Sector / Tourism

- 2.6 The service sector in Annan is generally limited to local shops, pubs and cafes. The arrival of Tesco in 2009 brought a further 180 service sector jobs to the town. However the numbers of people employed in this sector are statistically lower in Annan than the average across Dumfries and Galloway.
- 2.7 Annan is a beautiful Town and its natural setting, particularly its proximity to the Solway Firth, is of some note. Add to this its role at the start of the Annandale Way, the various leisure activities nearby (such as golf and mountain biking) and its rich history, and one would expect a better tourism potential. There is however little sign of a growing tourist market in the area.
- 2.8 In terms of tourism Annan has a number of hotels, Bed and Breakfast establishments and of course the nearby caravan parks, however the proportion of local people employed in tourism related activities is incomparable with other small towns nearby like Gretna or Kirkcudbright. Many local towns have invested heavily in developing their tourism potential through theming what the town offers.
- 2.9 Annan is not particularly well located for day visitors, most of whom use the M74 as the basis for planning their journey. Over the last few years Gretna has benefitted from its direct relationship with this important route. Annan is considered as a place to visit off the main route, it is not generally considered a place to spend time and therefore the Town fails to capture large numbers of over night visitors.

A Growing Need for Diversification

- 2.10 The Galloway Economic Review (2007); Regional Economic Strategy; and the Single Outcome Agreement identified a need for social and economic regeneration in Annan and the sub-region to address wider challenges,

and specifically those related to employment sectors of manufacturing, agriculture, forestry and tourism.

- 2.11 The Gretna Lockerbie Annan (GLA) Corridor Regeneration Strategy (CoReS) was established in June 2002, following the announcement by British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) that its intention was to cease generating electricity at Chapelcross by March 2005.
- 2.12 It was estimated at the time that the closure would result in the loss of 430 high quality jobs at the site with potentially an additional 300 job losses in the area. While this is of concern it is not an isolated problem. There have been a number of recent closures and economic losses associated with some of the area's largest and most significant local businesses, e.g. Young's Seafood and Shasum Pharma amongst others. These difficulties have focussed discussions on the need to diversify Annan's economic base.
- 2.13 CoReS identifies four objectives for achieving economic regeneration:
 - Wealth – raise income and living standards;
 - Diversity – new / different economic opportunities for sustainable growth;
 - Inspiration – vision, common ownership and aspiration; and
 - Inclusion – residents much benefit from regeneration.
- 2.14 Annan and the wider sub-region have a number of clear challenges and opportunities to address. In short, the CoReS area is experiencing a decline in the working age population that in turn affects skilled labour availability. In addition, the area is perceived to suffer from peripherality to the major economic centres across the Scottish Central Belt.

Gretna-Lockerbie-Annan Economic Regeneration



GRETNA-LOCKERBIE-ANNAN
ECONOMIC REGENERATION STRATEGY

PROSPECTUS

A catalyst for economic regeneration



Together is better

A community plan for Dumfries and Galloway for 2009-2012

Our vision

Working together to create an ambitious, prosperous and confident Dumfries and Galloway where people achieve their potential.

Our principles

We have identified the following principles as being important to help our partners to achieve the vision.

Best value

- Providing the right services in the right place, at the right time and at the right price.

Engagement

- Listening to, speaking to and consulting individuals and communities, following National Standards and Compact guidance which says involving the public is a vital part of our work.

Diversity

- Treating people equally and respecting them, whatever their social or cultural differences.

Sustainability

- Making sure we will have a successful long-term future, economically, socially and environmentally.

Working together

- Finding ways to plan and provide services in a better way that makes a real difference to people's lives.

The Scottish Government has five '**strategic objectives**' that support its aim of creating a more successful country. These are as follows.

- Wealthier and fairer
- Healthier
- Safer and stronger
- Smarter
- Greener

The Government's aim is to work across all of these strategic objectives, to make sure the economy can grow over the long term and allow all of Scotland to flourish. These strategic objectives have been translated into '**outcomes**' which are local to Dumfries and Galloway. Our aim is to work across all of the outcomes to achieve a high quality of life for everyone.

Figure 2.3 - Community Plan extract

2.15 The masterplan process, and particularly the stakeholder sessions, highlighted a number of issues specific to the future of the Town. Broadly the population of Annan could be categorised into the following employment groups:

- i. Mobile and well educated, mainly working outwith the town in Carlisle and Dumfries etc. They have families and their children follow a similar pattern and leave following education.
- ii. Engineering background (e.g. Chapelcross), based and focused on Annan but who are also relatively mobile and with a transferable skill set. Some of those who left Chapelcross and other plants went on to become self employed.
- iii. Lower wage earners who are employed at local factories and processing plants. They have lower educational attainment, are less mobile and work locally.
- iv. Another workforce – shopkeepers etc and tourist based employment?

2.16 These groups are found in every town in Dumfries and Galloway. What is strikingly different in Annan is the high proportion of people employed in the third group engaged in unskilled process manufacturing compared with a very low number of professionals or people working in the service sector.

2.17 CoReS is focussed on the impact of Chapelcross, however the programme itself recognises the impact of the closure of one of the Town’s major employers. The third workforce group is particularly vulnerable in that they are less mobile, with fewer skills, lower educational attainment and therefore less adaptable to market change. Indeed this group is more vulnerable than many of the skilled engineers that are affected by the closure of Chapelcross. Interestingly this group are precisely the type of workforce that traditionally benefit from an increase in the availability of service sector / tourism jobs.

2.18 There are five key CoReS themes of most relevance to Annan:

- Diversifying beyond Chapelcross, which includes both existing workforce and also encouraging new uses for the site;
- Improving connectivity;
- Maximising return and value on natural resources and the impact of local business on the local economy;
- Attraction of new sector opportunities and associated investment; and
- Enhance and promote area distinctiveness and competitive advantage, e.g. build upon its attraction as place to live, work, visit and invest.

2.19 The re-use of Chapelcross as an employment use in the future would be hugely significant to the town as a whole. Currently a business use is being proposed on the eastern edge of the Chapelcross site which could include an upgrade of the B722 to an ‘A’ class road connecting Annan to the M74.

2.20 The Chapelcross masterplan is in final draft form. It proposes a series of employment uses across the site, including high spec business units. There is little doubt of the positive impact that large numbers of employment opportunities, particularly professional opportunities, would have in Annan but it is unclear whether the market would overlook the obvious locational disadvantages or the negativity surrounding the sites previous use.

Shopping - A District Centre

Annan's Role in Dumfries and Galloway

- 2.21 Within the Adopted Annandale and Eskdale Local Plan 2006 Annan is designated as a District Centre, and as such has an important role to play in terms of providing a significant volume of employment, retail and services to the town and its hinterland.
- 2.22 In recent years this role has been diminished, possibly prompted by the loss of the towns traditional markets in the mid 1990s. There has been an ongoing decline in footfall along the High Street. Indeed there seems to have been a specific reduction in visitors from outwith the immediate town boundaries. In turn this has had an affect on the quality, and on the range of shops, operating with the town centre.

Retail

- 2.23 The DPP (planning consultancy) research that supported the Tesco planning application, showed the levels of 'spend' leaving Annan for food and non-food shopping to be considerable:
- Non-food = 75% loss (50% Carlisle and 25% Dumfries)
 - Food = 62% loss (43% Carlisle and 19% Dumfries)
- 2.24 These figures illustrate a very significant leakage and its testament to the hard work of local shopkeepers that the High Street has remained as a retail force at all. The leakage of food retail is likely to decrease now that Tesco is based in the town, however the impact on food retailers along the High Street must also be considered.

- 2.25 Within the town there are a variety of small independent retailers and businesses. Increasingly over the last 10 to 15 years such businesses have struggled through a combination of the loss of traditional town markets, a shift in consumer shopping patterns and particularly and specifically within Annan is the issue of the limited availability of short term and / or affordable High Street leases as well as limited availability of High Street upper floors. These factors have resulted in a distinct lack of opportunity for both existing businesses to expand and also for new businesses to be able to afford to start up.
- 2.26 During the stakeholder sessions many people expressed the view that since Tesco opened in December 2009, that the High Street had become busier. The suggestion being that people from Annan's hinterland will use the Annan Tesco and then travel into the High Street to browse. Previously these same visitors would have simply travelled to Tesco (or equivalent supermarket) in towns such as Dumfries or Carlisle. These claims are unsubstantiated and will need to be tested further over a period of time. They do offer the possibility that strengthening physical links to Tesco could increase the numbers of shoppers visiting / staying in the Town.
- 2.27 Any retail capacity in Annan has been satisfied by the new Tesco store. Within the town Somerfield, Costcutter and Farmfoods form a 'food retail core' around Fish Cross and Butt Street. There might be the opportunity to convert one of these stores into a greater competitor for the new Tesco store and thus attract / retain more town centre shoppers. Alternatively, the site of one of these stores may become available should Tesco have a significantly adverse effect on the town centre food retail market.

A Place to Live - Housing

Background

2.28 Annan regeneration masterplan will feed into the preparation of the new Local Development Plan (LDP), and in the first instance it's Main Issues Report. The masterplan, with the anticipated 'buy-in' from the community through the extensive consultation strategy, identifies priorities for the area up to 2025. The Annan Regeneration Steering Group will be set the task of delivering the regeneration priorities over the development plan period in order for the town to prosper as a place to live, work and visit.

The Adopted Local Plan

2.29 Over the course of the adopted Local Plan the identified housing development sites, located by in large at the northern edge of the town adjacent to the A75, have been developed to the extent of approximately 150 units out of a total of 250 units identified between 2001 and 2009. The remaining 105 unit site (Policy LA4 – Upper Stapleton Road) and 'reserved housing land (Policy LA35 - Upper Stapleton Road) are considered available for housing development over the short term. It had been hoped that through the development of these sites a variety of housing types would be built to cater for the emerging 'affordable 'market'. This does not appear to have been the case.

2.30 Within the Local Plan there are other sites identified for business and industrial. Significantly site PLA2.1 Stapleton Road, as well as the adjoining land between PLA2.1 and the A75, has been granted planning permissions for housing, business and industry which will facilitate an upgrade of the local road network. This planning permission has been granted to Katalyst.

2.31 There a several opportunity sites also identified which will be considered for development within the masterplan:

- OPP8 - Silverlaw Industrial Estate
- OPP9 - Port Street (Bridge House)
- OPP13 - Scott's Street / Solway Street

Other Sites currently subject to active planning permissions

- Housing site Solway Street (09/P/4/0296) approved for 15 plots and road layout
- Ednam Street (07/P/4/0466, recently permitted for 10 flats and two houses

2.32 What seems to be happening is a very gradual transition between industrial land and its redevelopment for residential use.

Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA)

2.33 The Housing (Scotland) Act places a duty on the Council to develop a Local Housing Strategy (LHS), informed by an assessment of housing need in the region. The Council commissioned a comprehensive analysis of housing need and demand in order to determine the range of housing need, demand and affordability issues within the area; and to provide a robust and credible evidence base to inform future strategic planning.

2.34 The study identified 6 distinct Housing Market Areas (HMA's) in Dumfries and Galloway. One of these is the Annan HMA which includes the main settlements of Annan, Eastriggs, Gretna/Gretna Green and Springfield. It is anticipated that the HNDA will be assessed as robust and credible by the Scottish Government which means the key findings will not normally be challenged at the Public Inquiry stage of the Council's emerging Local Development Plan (LDP).

- 2.35 The HNDA should be utilised as the local mechanism to address the national priority to increase housing supply across all tenures. The study identified significant current and future shortfalls in affordable housing as well as an under supply at the lower end of the housing market and an oversupply at the upper end of the housing market. To tackle these issues effectively it is vital that the outputs from the assessment should be utilised to integrate the Council's LHS and LDP. The LHS will set out the Council's key strategic housing priorities and, where appropriate, the LDP will make the housing land allocations to deliver them.
- 2.36 The Council proposes to consult on its LHS and Main Issues Report simultaneously and it is proposed this commences in November 2010. It is in this context the housing elements of the Annan Regeneration Masterplan will start to be prioritised and delivered.
- 2.37 The proposed housing sites identified in this Masterplan will be highlighted in the Council's Main Issues Report which should lead to Annan being identified as a priority for housing investment in the proposed LDP. The town has good road access, high public transport accessibility and a range of facilities which means it can achieve the key policy principle of delivering sustainable development within the Annan HMA.
- 2.38 The lack of affordable housing and the possible role it might be playing with regard to the out migration of young people from the town is an issue that must be considered and where possible addressed. It should also be recognised that there will be a growing need for affordable housing to meet the needs of the growing older population in Annan.
- 2.39 It is the view of Dumfries and Galloway Council that housing will play a major role in driving Annan forward in the course of the development plan period. What is unclear however is what form residential development might take. For example:

- Further green field release;
- Partial demolition of under performing stock and replacement with new build; or
- Intensification of repopulation in the town centre through re-use of upper floors and identification of brownfield sites for higher density development.

- 2.40 All these factors point to an important question, 'where does Annan extend to in the future?'. This is something that must be addressed by the masterplan through indicative mapping and development briefs. The outcome of that process will in turn inform the Main Issues Report (MIR) and LDP.

Townscape Heritage Initiative

- 2.41 The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Dumfries and Galloway Council and Scottish Enterprise Dumfries and Galloway are jointly funding a restoration project in Annan as part of the Townscape Heritage Initiative. The project has been underway since 2008 and is due for completion in September 2010.
- 2.42 The scheme categorised buildings within the conservation area for priority grant funding. On the whole there has been a very successful take up from local businesses. There has also been improvements delivered to the public realm around Annan Town Hall and the War Memorial.

New Opportunities

Renewable Energy

- 2.43 The initial feasibility study for the Solway Energy Gateway was published in December 2009 (Mott MacDonald, RSK and Halcrow). The study considers a range of options for generating power at various locations on the Solway Firth. The study identifies the potential to generate from under 100MW to around 6GW of power. The selection process identified three options for generating the power. These were barrage, lagoons and tidal reef.
- 2.44 Due to the differences in tidal stream velocities and channel depth the study identified that the locations that would generate the most significant amount of energy would be towards the mouth of the Solway. However, all options would need to be considered against the criteria of technical, financial and environmental feasibility. The result of that feasibility was a traffic light system to identify what options were possible. The barrage option from Bowness to Annan was considered to be 'orange' across the three feasibility criteria. The most technically and financially feasible option (a barrage at Southernness Point to Beckfoot) would however be one of the most environmentally sensitive options.
- 2.45 The report concludes that the Solway is one of several key estuarine environments in the UK that could generate significant amounts of renewable tidal energy. However, there would be significant environmental impacts. The conflict arises as in order for energy generation to be worthwhile it would likely need one of the larger schemes which would inevitably have the greatest environmental impact. However, the report highlights that the conflict can be overcome to varying degrees through the application of different technologies, optimisation of operating regimes and by maximising the benefits of the specific physical characteristics.
- 2.46 The significance of such a project should not be underestimated. Not only would it provide a catalyst and focus on the Firth that could help the regeneration of the Port area, but the opportunity to use the existing infrastructure at Chapelcross and its links to the grid are enormous. A development of this nature could result in significant investment and job creation in the region, as well as providing opportunities for niche skills and knowledge development.
- 2.47 A project such as this could significantly add to the growing reputation that Dumfries and Galloway is embracing renewable energy and driving forward a new culture of sustainability. Adding to the SSCI Ladyfield project, the Crichton Carbon Centre and the proposed Harestanes wind farm (one of many proposals in Dumfries and Galloway), Dumfries and Galloway will be well on its way to being the most sustainable region of Scotland.
- 2.48 For the purpose of the masterplan the potential of these projects should be recognised but not considered as a fundamental element in the regeneration of Annan over the next 15 years.

Communications and Digital Infrastructure

- 2.49 Currently Annan suffers from poor internet connections with low bandwidth serving the town from an old DSL exchange (currently 1mb download speeds). In order for the town to develop, diversify and attract investment for any scale of business or industry, the digital infrastructure must be at least competitive with other similar settlements but a superior offer would set it apart from other rural Scottish towns.
- 2.50 Not only is this important for business, but it is also significant in terms of offering young people a 'modern quality of life' and providing an option to remain in the area and seek education or job opportunities while still based in Annan. The importance of continuing to attract young families to the area who have potentially become very accustomed to fast broadband in the larger towns and city's is also vital. In attracting young families this will help to maintain school roles in the town.
- 2.51 Annan currently has a fibre optic cable laid along the high street which offers tremendous potential and a basis for a number of suggested models of delivery.

The Problem

- 2.52 Annan, as with most of rural Scotland, is extremely unlikely to have fast broadband provided by the private sector, it simply is not commercially viable to lay the fibre optic infrastructure across the town. The public sector intends to wait to see what areas are left out before they consider how they might deliver the service. By this point, potentially 2017, towns like Annan will have been left far behind in terms of its technological capabilities and ability to attract business and retain and attract young people who's lives depend to a large extent on the internet.



Summary of Key Issues and Opportunities

Summary

2.53 The challenges facing Annan can best be outlined as:

Strengths

- High quality natural environment
- Good road networks
- Gateway to D&G and Scotland
- Strong sense of local community
- Low crime rates, low unemployment, growth of self-employment
- Loyalty and flexibility of workforce
- Thriving and wide ranging activity of voluntary sector
- Relatively low house prices
- Active experienced older population
- Social enterprises – ability to use external funding for development

Weaknesses

- Declining male employment
- Dependence on agriculture and key employers
- Low levels of educational attainment
- Low job mobility and lack of career structures
- Low levels of pay
- Low car ownership and dependence on public transport

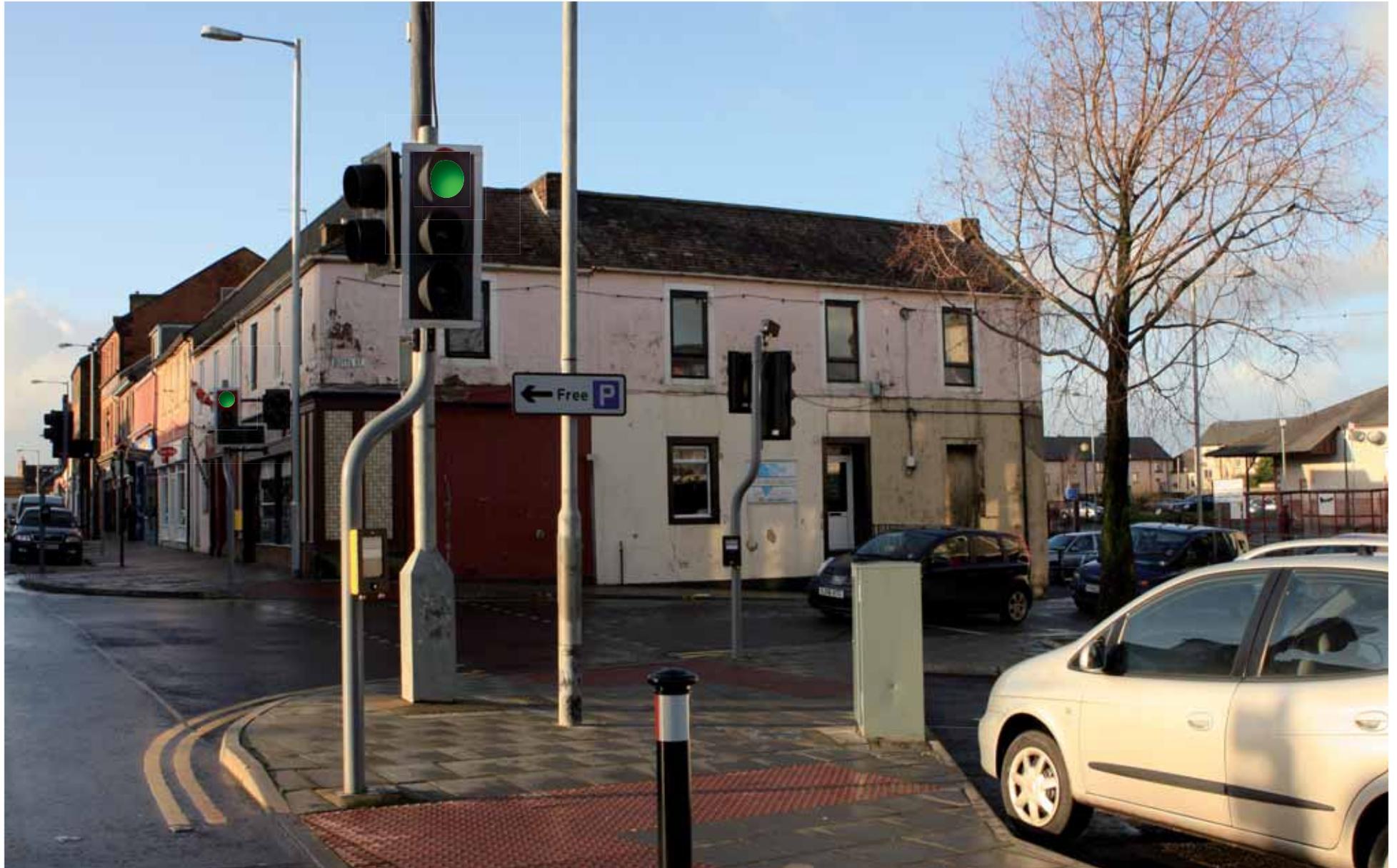
- Rail networks restrict ability to commute to Central Belt
- Lack of recognition of social economy and rural poverty
- Dependence of voluntary sector on grant funding
- Lack of capacity (sewerage and water) to support new development
- Lack of broadband facilities

Opportunities

- Chapelcross closure
- Gateway to Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland
- Expansion of further and higher education
- Benefiting from skills of older population within communities
- External funding; Social economy development funding available

Threats

- Ageing population
- Decline traditional industries
- Speed of infrastructure development
- Chapelcross Decommissioning
- Globalisation and urbanisation of workforce
- Closure of rural schools and fragility of limited childcare facilities
- Leakage of economy to neighbouring regions
- Lack of capacity to access external funding – limits effectiveness of voluntary and community sectors



Taking Regeneration Forward

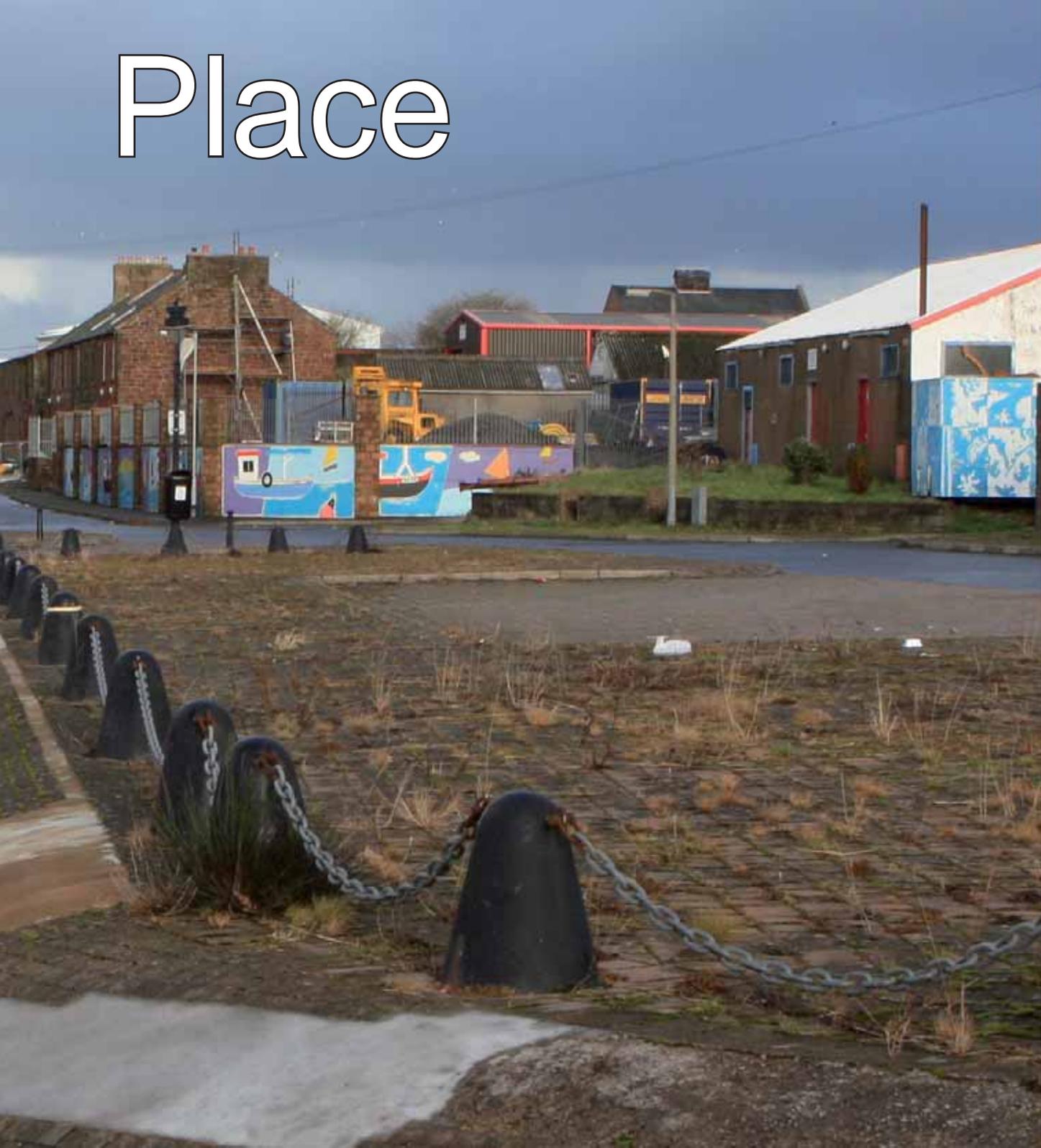
- 2.54 Annan is potentially vulnerable. It has many strengths and is without question a place with great potential, however it also faces a number of key challenges with regard to its employment profile, lack of economic diversification, loss of young people and locational disadvantage.
- 2.55 There is a growing need to put in place a dedicated initiative to drive forward the transformation of the Town and realise the natural strengths that the Town has. The Annan Regeneration Steering Group could form the core delivery mechanism for this regeneration masterplan.
- 2.56 The most recent indication of strategic policy and community planning is contained within the Dumfries and Galloway Council Single Outcome Agreement for 2009/11. Moving forward this identifies a number of regional outcomes that will be the thrust and direction of policy / action aspirations for the next few years.
- Innovative and prosperous rural economy;
 - Healthy and happy lives;
 - Feeling safe and respected within community (supporting communities);
 - Better equipped for adapting to evolving world and improved life chances; and
 - Providing an environment that is not only protected but enhanced.
- 2.57 In short, these are each of particular relevance to the delivery of a sustainable and all-inclusive approach to economic regeneration in Annan. In particular these outcomes seek to demonstrably build upon and further address the existing positive attributes and weaknesses of the locality.

The Key Challenge - Demographic

- 2.58 Annan is in line with the Scottish average (2001 census data) for the age group 0-16 year olds. There is then a significant drop in 16-29 year olds as young people migrate away from the town, however it levels back out with the Scottish average for 30-44 as many people return to the area to raise their families.
- 2.59 The figures remain level for 45-59 year olds but are significantly higher for 60-74 year olds. Annan is an attractive place for people to retire due to the relationship between manageable geographical size, range of facilities available and strategic road network connections.
- 2.60 Annan in the future has to be seen as a place where young and old have a unique quality of life, where the town centre can provide a living and retail environment that is genuinely exciting as opposed to functional. Annan needs to be transformed not physically but in terms of how it is perceived by locals and visitors alike.



Place



.03

PLACE - SURVEY



Figure 3.1 - Figure Ground



Figure 3.2 - Topography



Figure 3.3 - Flood Risk



Figure 3.4 - Landscape

Survey

- 3.1 The baseline section illustrates that the town has significant challenges over the next 10 - 15 years.
- 3.2 Diversification of the employment base, growth in the service sector and optimisation of tourism opportunities are by no means easily achieved but are important in terms of Annan achieving a balanced and robust economy with the potential to grow.
- 3.3 The existing situation as identified in the baseline would be all the more concerning if Annan did not have a natural strength to build upon.

Physical Place

- 3.4 Annan is blessed with a beautiful natural setting, two miles from the mouth of the River Annan and the Solway Firth. The town has a population of approximately 9,000 and is relatively well connected in terms of transport infrastructure to Dumfries, 15 miles away, and east to the M74 and Gretna. However, in comparison to Gretna for example, Annan is not as directly accessible by a large volume of people and in comparison to Kirkcudbright for example it does not currently represent a 'destination' to generate specific journeys.
- 3.5 The town benefits from its relative proximity and ease of access to the central belt as well as England. However, generally as house prices are below the national average, it attracts a significant number of people relocating within the age group of 65+, and not necessarily younger working age people. Added to this is the high proportion of young people leaving the area. The result is much lower proportion of wage earning adults in Annan.

Environment*Topography*

- 3.6 Annan is set within the generally flat landscape of the coastal flats of the Upper Solway. The River Annan and its shallow valley lies to the western edge of the town with the main bridging point located at the western edge of the towns east to west central highway. Land around the river is prone to flooding with substantial flood plains stretching into Everholm Park. The result of the open flood plains is that the town projects from the landscape when arriving from the west and provides a visually dramatic approach.
- 3.7 Within the town there are also a series of more locational drops, falls and high points. These include the motte and bailey and some areas of raised land north of the town towards the A75, and south towards the Solway.

Landscape

- 3.8 The landscape surrounding the town is very clearly agricultural in nature. For hundreds of years the lands have been extensively farmed with the result of little in the way of mature wooded areas. Instead field boundaries break up the landscape with several linear areas of tree planting alongside various vehicle routes.

Flooding

- 3.9 Areas at risk from flooding from the sea constitute the majority of land affected within the town (1 in 200 year event area). Of particular note is the harbour area of the town where buildings and infrastructure in and around Port Street are most adversely affected. Such issues will have a serious affect on any future proposals for redevelopment of the harbour area.

Environmental Protection

- 3.10 There are various environmental designations along the north coast of the Solway within the Lower Annandale and Eskdale Local Plan area between Priestside in the west and Gretna in the east. These include:

- One Regional Scenic Area
- Six Nature Conservation Sites of National Importance
- Five Nature Conservation Sites of International Importance

Infrastructure*Road*

- 3.11 In terms of connection to the rest of Dumfries and Galloway, the Borders and indeed England, Annan is extremely well situated and served by numerous strategic road links which have seen good levels of investment. The A75 (Annan bypass) was constructed in 1989 and further enhanced the connections east to Carlisle and the M74 / M6 linking north to Glasgow / Edinburgh and south towards England.

Rail

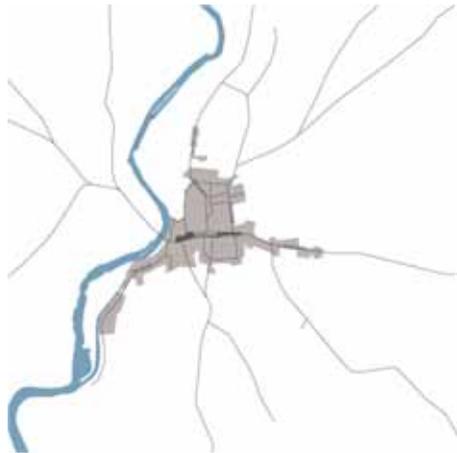
- 3.12 Annan is served by a single railway line which connects Carlisle to Glasgow via Annan, Dumfries and Kilmarnock. There has previously been a railway line running through Annan in a north to south direction which crossed the Solway on a viaduct, however, this line was dismantled in 1936 following the removal of the remains of the viaduct which collapsed in 1920s.

Water and Drainage

- 3.13 Annan's sewage treatment works is located to the south of the town where work has been carried out to improve the quality of the effluent so that it does not form a constraint on new development in the town. However, there may be localised network constraints within the sewage pipe system.

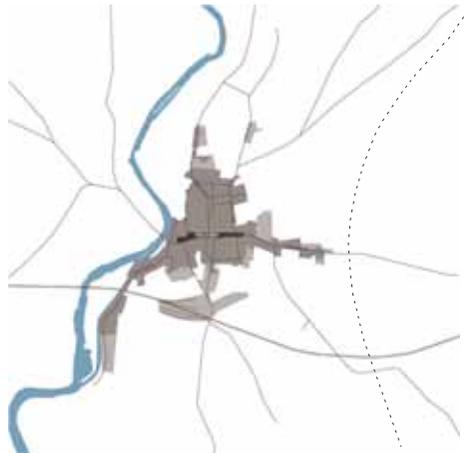
PLACE - SURVEY

Figure 3.5 - 1859



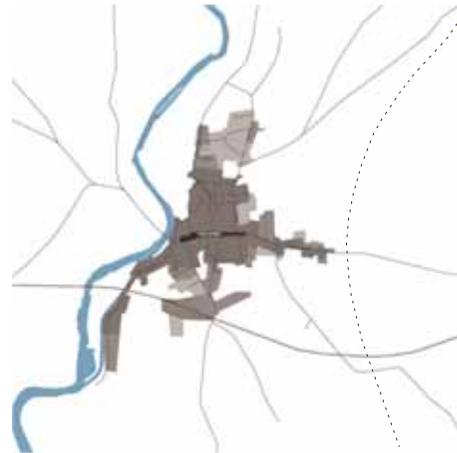
As a market town and port its physical growth was closely connected to the High Street and core

Figure 3.6 - 1899



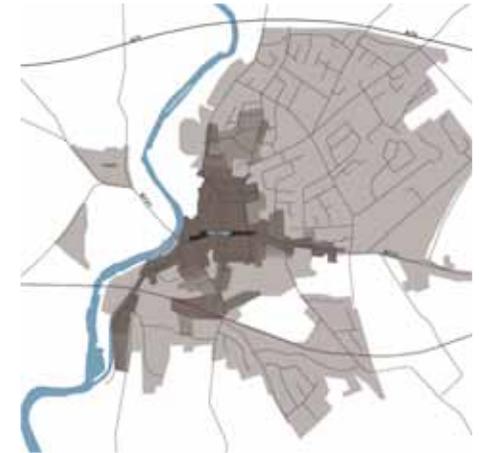
Infrastructure grew in close proximity to the core and strengthened it

Figure 3.7 - 1931

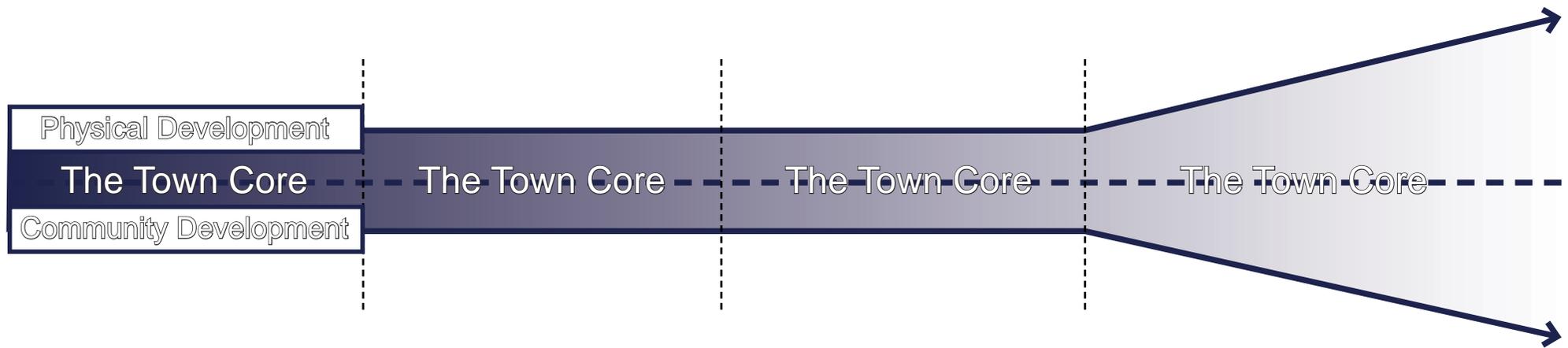


Physical development still focuses on the core with community facilities and development around it

Figure 3.8 - 1931 - Today



Rapidly physical growth skewed the town's form and created a disconnect between neighbourhoods, communities and the town core



Historical Development and Townscape

- 3.14 Annan is a town with an extremely rich history, some of which is common to many border towns and relates to its strategic location and resultant periods of destruction and rebuilding, but also relating to innovation and imagination. In the past Annan has been at the forefront of shipbuilding and intercontinental trade as well as the supply of high quality building materials from its local Corsehill Quarry. These more recent feats, over the last 200 years, has placed Annan at the centre of cutting edge ingenuity, craftsmanship, engineering and industry. In many regards Annan has been put on the map with a series of 'events' or 'steps' which have taken place and resulted in bursts of population growth and periods of physical development of the town.
- 3.15 Such 'events' include:
- River Annan bridging point
 - Market town, grain milling and cotton spinning
 - Corsehill quarry, stone shipped all over the world
 - Port industry (coastal brigs and schooners)
 - Port industry (including the construction of some of the largest Clipper ships in the world)
 - North American trade established
 - Port associated industry – rail infrastructure established
 - Chapelcross built and begins generating power in 1959
 - Modern industry including pharmaceutical and food processing plants
- 3.16 The towns growth was incremental and organic until the late 1950s and early 1960s when one of the most significant periods of Annan's physical growth occurred following the construction of Chapelcross nuclear power station. The housing estates of Newington, Kimmeter and Springbells comprise a large proportion of the northern part of the town and are generally bounded by the A75 to the north, B6357 to the east, B721 (Scott's Street) to the south and Hospital Road / Newington Road to the west.

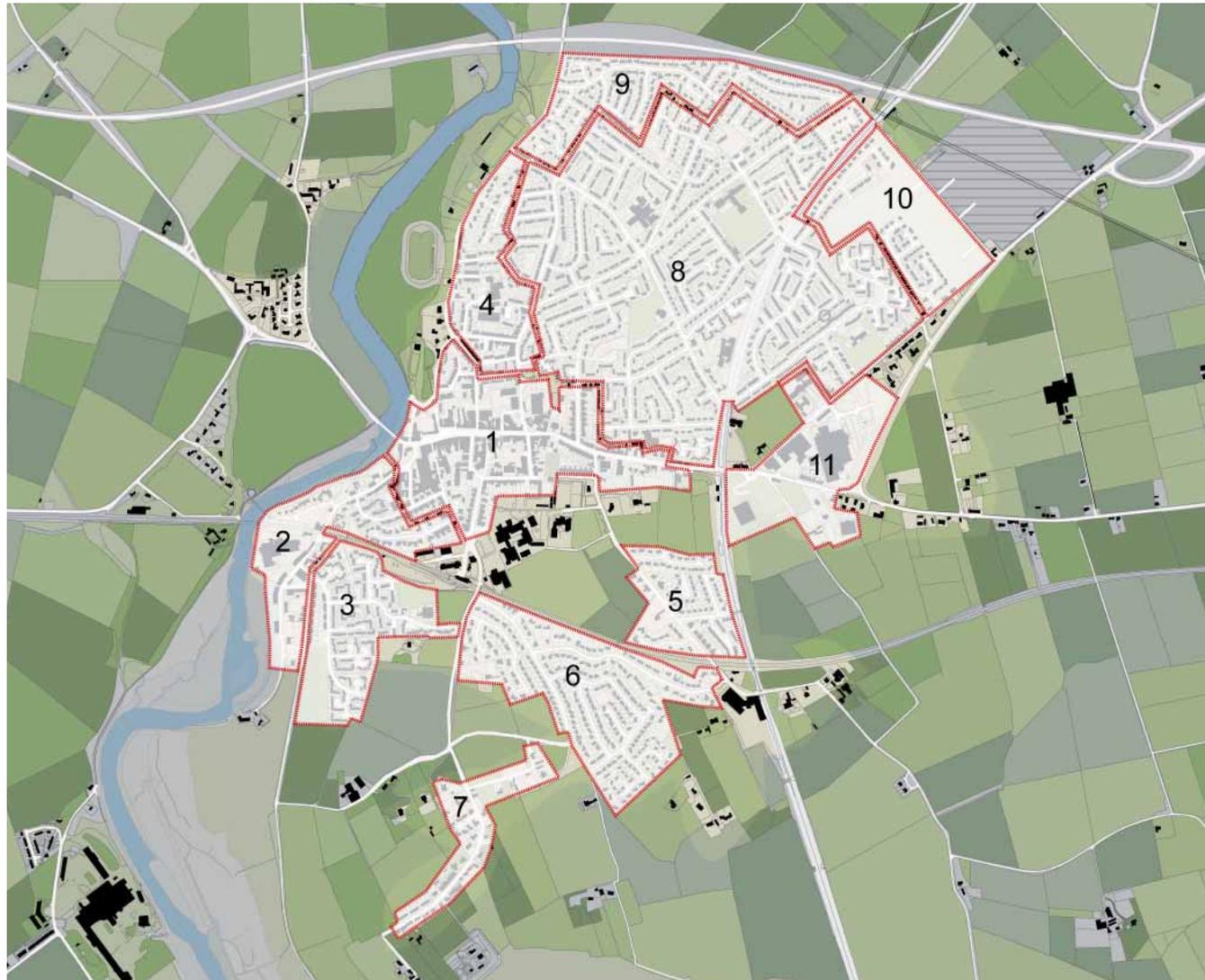
Diverging relationship between place and function

- 3.17 Unlike previous phases of growth, the 1950/60s saw housing developed with little regard to its relationship with the Town Centre or rest of the town, and no relationship with the River Annan. It could have been anywhere. Isolated even today, it is just as easy for people to drive to Dumfries or Carlisle from these areas as it is to get to Annan Town Centre.

Disconnected Housing Areas

- 3.18 Some housing areas in Annan can also be considered to be somewhat isolated. The northern half of the town has a lack of clear and permeable east west routes and there is limited penetration of public transport services. The areas of Kimmeter and Newington, in the north, as well as Longmeadow (Welldale), adjacent to the harbour, have been identified through consultation as being quite isolated and with a lower quality of environment. The Kimmeter / Newington area also features within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation as 'Annan North' and ranked 484 in the current index (ranked 751 in 2006 and ranked 1,064 in 2004).
- 3.19 Although these areas are isolated there is still a high level of demand for affordable housing and currently all social rent stock is being upgraded in order that it satisfies Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) by 2015
- 3.20 The Harbour itself was subject to a feasibility study by Halcrow in 2004 which outlined a preferred option as a 'High Investment' model which aimed to restore key buildings, public realm improvements, establish the area as a visitor attraction, sustain local business and attract new businesses in order to make the area an attractive place to live and work. To date no significant investment has been attracted to the area with issues such as significant flooding risk and land ownership likely reasons. Extensive redevelopment of Annan Harbour represents an enormous project in itself but should also be considered in the context of improving the housing area of Longmeadow as well as a means to potentially increase land values and stimulate private investment.

PLACE - SURVEY



- 1 - The Town Centre
- 2 - The Harbour area
- 3 - Longmeadow
- 4 - Galabank
- 5 - Hecklegirth
- 6 - Summergate
- 7 - Back of the Hill
- 8 - Kimmeter / Springbells / Newington
- 9 - Northfield Park / Preston Gardens
- 10 - Stapleton Road
- 11 - Stapleton Road Industrial Estate

Figure 3.9 - Character Areas

Character Areas

3.21 Generally speaking there are areas within the town which function better than others. The areas which connect or respond to either the river or the town core tend to work better as places, and those that lack legibility tend to become more isolated and subsequently deteriorate. Below are a number of areas of particular note.

Town Centre (1)

3.22 Annan town centre has a rich built form, the legacy of wealth generated in the late 1800s and early 1900s through trade and industry. The stone used to construct the majority of the red sandstone buildings was quarried from the Corsehill quarry less than one mile from the town hall. The town contains several significant buildings at important junctions and beside traditional public spaces in the town.

3.23 Strung along the High Street are several important public spaces which have been used traditionally as meeting points and market areas. These spaces are formed along the northern side of the High Street so that they take greatest advantage of the streets south facing aspect.

3.24 The town's conservation area covers the majority of the town centre. This area encompasses a number of listed buildings with both local, regional and national importance. By and large this part of the town gives Annan its individuality and identity. As such it should be strengthened and celebrated as a major town asset.

The Harbour Area (2)

3.25 The Harbour has not functioned for many years. The general area is run down although some recent investment has seen resurfacing of the harbour car park. There is little or no evidence / record indicating the historic importance of this part of town.

3.26 There are a number of empty and semi-derelict warehouse buildings within the harbour area toward the end of Port Street. There is a considerable

issue with regard to flooding at certain times of the year, the prevention of which is likely to be a significant reason for the lack of investment and interest from the private sector.

3.27 There is some housing in the vicinity which mostly lines Port Street but there is also a mixture of industrial / commercial use nearer to the overhead railway crossing.

3.28 There has been some new residential development on the former 'common land' within the last 20 years which was intended as a catalyst for regeneration of the harbour area, this does not seem to have taken effect. There are also issues regarding anti-social behaviour relating to motor vehicle activity.

Longmeadow (Welldale) (3)

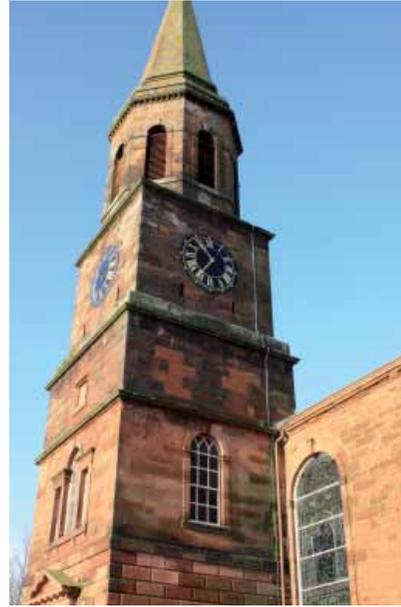
3.29 This consists of medium density housing comprising mostly of terraces with some semi-detached housing built in the 1950s. The area has seen some investment recently which has been lead by DGHP as they bring their housing stock up to Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQH) by 2015. Additional investment is however needed in the general environment and amenity spaces. The area benefits in terms of its proximity to the River Annan, Elmvale Primary School and the train station although there is a sense of isolation from the town centre.

Kimmeter / Springbells / Newington (8)

3.30 Constructed during the 1960s and 1970s, these areas lack legibility with no clear routes through and between the areas. Of particular note is the area of Kimmeter where the main route (Turnberry Crescent) meanders into the housing area but does not then connect with other streets beyond. This lack of permeability and legibility can be disorientating and a lack of through traffic causes the area to be isolated.

3.31 Within these areas there also appears to be a lack of amenity open space and any existing spaces are generally of a poor quality. Dumfries and Galloway Council will shortly be carrying out an open space audit across the town.

PLACE - SURVEY



Annan's Palette of Materials

3.32 Much of Annan's physical identity comes from a strong palette of local materials and a series of recognisable landmark buildings which help create a cohesive and legible town core.



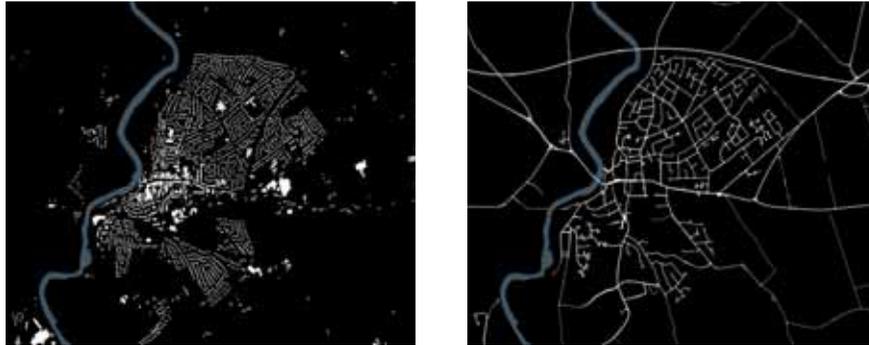


Figure 3.10 - Inverted Figure Ground Figure 3.11 - Inverted Road Infrastructure



Figure 3.12 - Bus Routes and Walking Distances

Public Transport

3.33 Annan has a main local bus service (80) with a frequency of approximately every 35 minutes. At this frequency it may not provide a viable option to car use. Other less frequent services connect the town to Carlisle (79 with approximate frequency of every hour and a half), Lockerbie (383, twice daily), and Edinburgh (103, twice daily).

3.34 Other services include:

- Powfoot/Newbie 390 (3 daily)
- Back of the hill 388 (2 daily)
- Falford Bridge 384 (2 daily)
- Langholm 123 (1 daily)
- Carlisle 179 (9 daily)
- Carlisle 379 (3 daily)
- Dumfries 385 (6 daily)

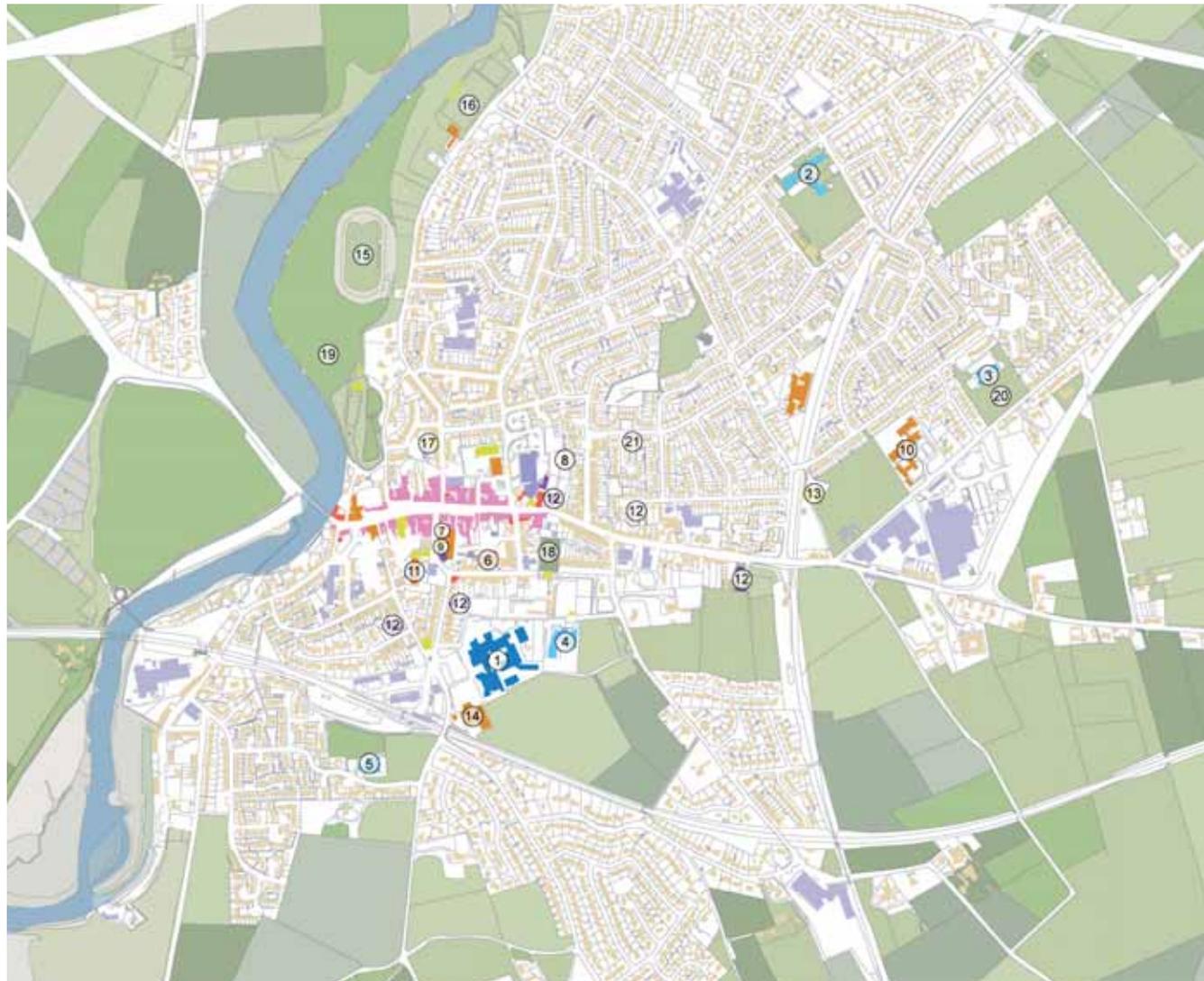
Rail

3.35 Regular connections to:

- Carlisle (1 service every 1/1.5 hours) via Gretna. Once at Carlisle connections are available north to Glasgow and Edinburgh, east to Newcastle and south toward Preston, Manchester and London.
- Glasgow (approximately 1 every hour) via Dumfries and Kilmarnock.

NB - Lockerbie railway station, located approximately 10 miles from Annan by road, is popular with Annan residents as there are additional routes served from here.

PLACE - SURVEY



- Residential
- Employment
- Large food retail
- Mixed use employment
- Mixed use residential
- Religious congregation
- Lower school
- Upper school
- Community facility
- Leisure / recreation

- 1 - Annan Academy
- 2 - Newington PS
- 3 - St Columbas RC PS
- 4 - Hecklegirth PS
- 5 - Elmvale PS
- 6 - Adult training centre
- 7 - CLIP
- 8 - Library
- 9 - Museum
- 10 - Hospital
- 11 - Medical centre
- 12 - Churches and halls
- 13 - Leisure centre
- 14 - Swimming pool
- 15 - Athletics ground
- 16 - Annan Athletic FC
- 17 - Cinema
- 18 - Bowling green
- 19 - Everholm Park
- 20 - Seaforth Park
- 21 - Hecklegirth Park

Figure 3.13 - Land Use

Land Use

3.36 Annan benefits from a wide range of community facilities and indeed probably more than would be expected in relation to its size in terms of physical size and population. Although it may not contain a facility linked specifically to arts and culture (which some surrounding settlements can boast) the town can offer a diverse range of alternative facilities even though some may require investment and modernisation.

Community Infrastructure

Community Assets

3.37 Annan has traditionally been a wealthy town where industry and agriculture supported a reasonable sized population and service sector.

3.38 During the 1950s and 1960s there was rapid expansion of the town with large residential areas developed to cater mainly for incoming workers at Chapelcross and also to offer a 'modern' and lower density housing option within the town.

3.39 In response to this the towns facilities and services have at least matched this growth with the town supported by many facilities that other towns of relative size cannot boast (see figure 3.13 opposite), the likes of a swimming pool, cinema, large secondary school (with associated facilities) and shops.

Community Organisations

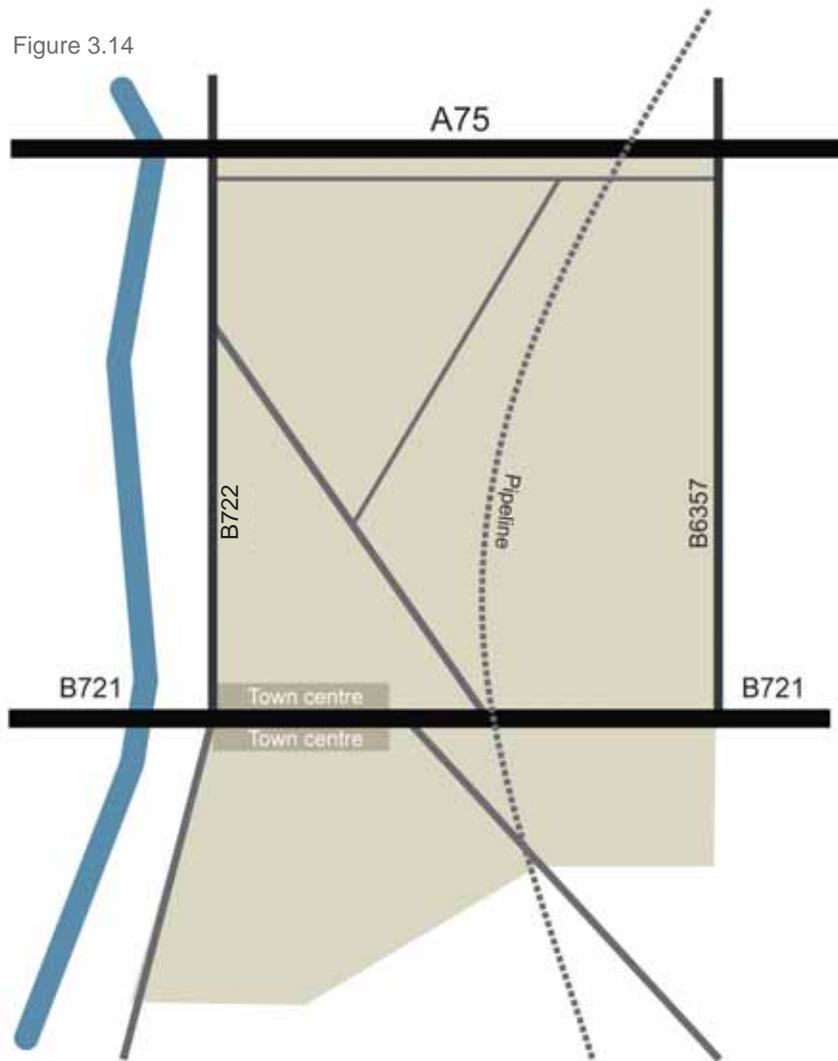
3.40 Annan has a well established network of sports clubs, societies and groups. However, the town lacks a central focus for these groups to either congregate or at least display notices.

Education

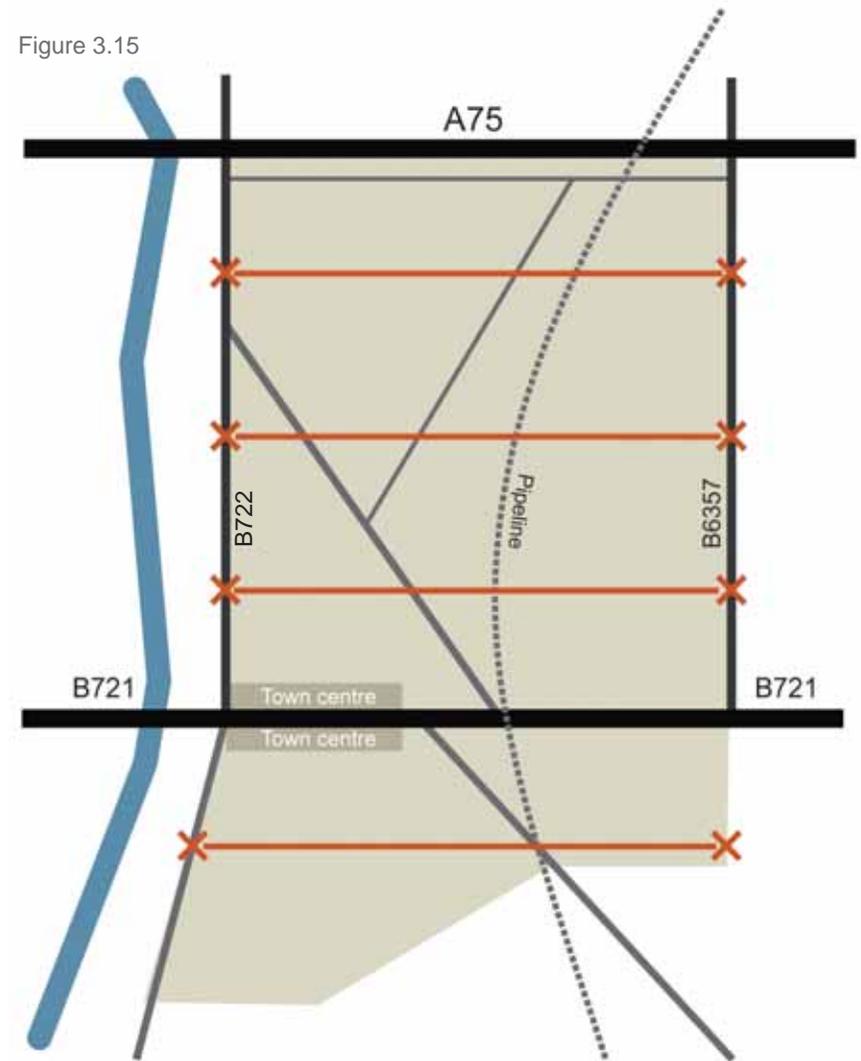
3.41 Within Annan there are four primary schools; Elmvale Primary School, Hecklegirth Primary School, Newington Primary School and St Columba's Primary School, and Annan Academy which serves a much larger catchment area taking in the settlements such as Gretna and Eaglesfield.

3.42 Annan Academy also provides facilities that can be used by the general population of Annan and is also in the process of investing in and upgrading the swimming pool which is an extremely well used facility by the community. Annan Academy is also on the verge of securing funding for a £5 million performing arts centre which will include a theatre, dance studio and sound recording studios.

PLACE - ANALYSIS

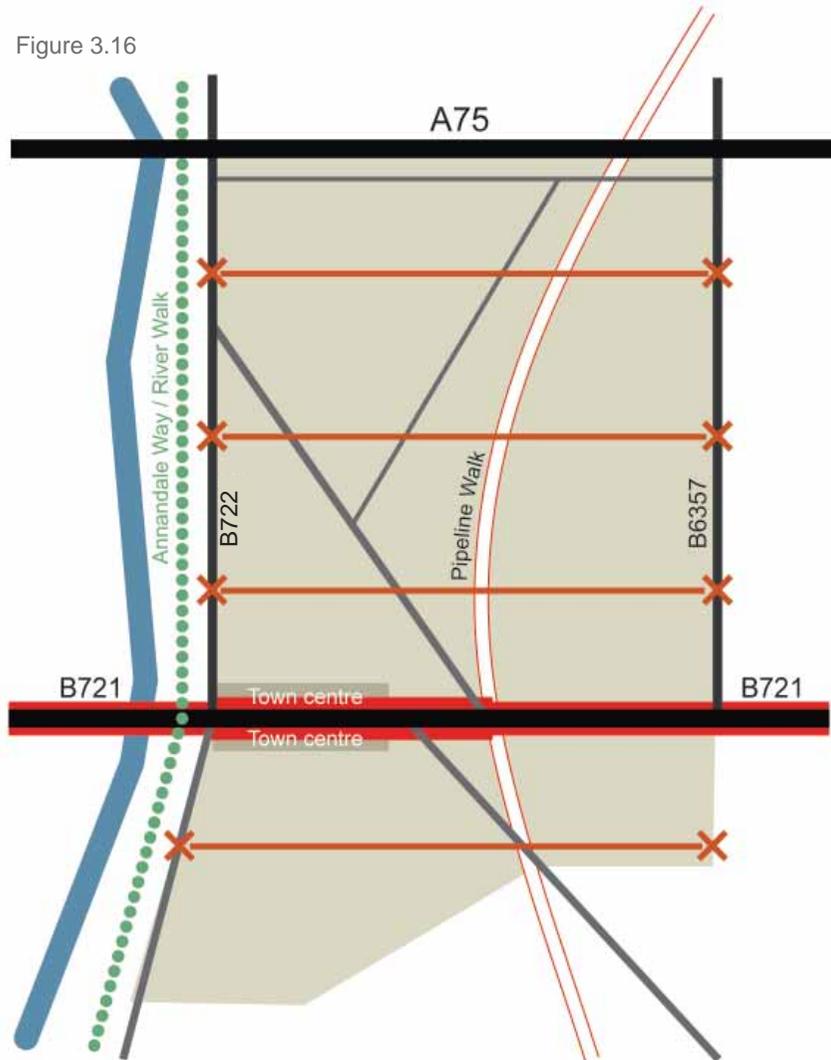


Annan High Street is the main east to west route **through** the town while the A75 is the main east to west route **past** the town



The Lack of clear east to west routes within the town reduces permeability and potentially contributes to the isolation of neighbourhoods

Figure 3.16



The importance of the High Street as a destination emphasised and major pedestrian corridor linking across the town and onto north south routes

Analysis

Permeability

- 3.43 Annan's street pattern has evolved in a similar fashion to many of Scotland's market towns. The traditional high street has been the focus for the town and contains a series of public spaces defined by important buildings and where the street edge is set back at points to create the spaces. The High Street represents the main route through the town. Beyond the High Street lanes and wynds stretch north and south from the town core, some of which have been established over time as strategic routes, most notably the B772 and the B6357.
- 3.44 Although Annan is well connected to its hinterland its internal roads infrastructure is less legible and in fact quite impermeable, caused primarily by a lack of east to west routes both north and south of the central spine. The central spine is formed by High Street, Church Street and Scott's Street and is effective in terms of orientation and traffic flow.
- 3.45 The two main north to south routes run either side of the town offering connections to either the A75 by-pass or to the central spine and the town centre. Improving these routes and connections to the town centre and focusing spend within the town centre will be important to discourage people and spend leaving the town via the A75. In addition, there is a distinct lack of signage on the major road network, in particular the A75, which forms a barrier to drawing in passing trade and tourism to Annan.
- 3.46 With a lack of permeability and potential difficulties with regard to easy access to the town centre, the north south routes, and the core itself, will have to be an attractive environment to continue to attract people and spend as an significant alternative to car journeys to other towns outwith Annan via the A75.

PLACE - ANALYSIS



Figure 3.17 - A Walkable Town

Annan: A Walkable Town

Walkable Environments

- 3.47 Annan is contained within a very walkable framework. The geography of the settlement lends itself well to journeys on foot where the town core is reachable by a large proportion of the population by a 10 - 15 minute walk.
- 3.48 Reducing the need to own and use a car and encouraging greater pedestrian movement within can have many benefits which include health, cost and increased social interaction.
- 3.49 There are numerous shops, services and facilities located around the town which can be accessed by foot. It is therefore important that the routes between these are safe and attractive so that the greatest opportunity is affordable to walking.

Importance of the High Street

- 3.50 Annan's High Street and 'spine' are a major asset and provide a substantial pedestrian route through the heart of the town.

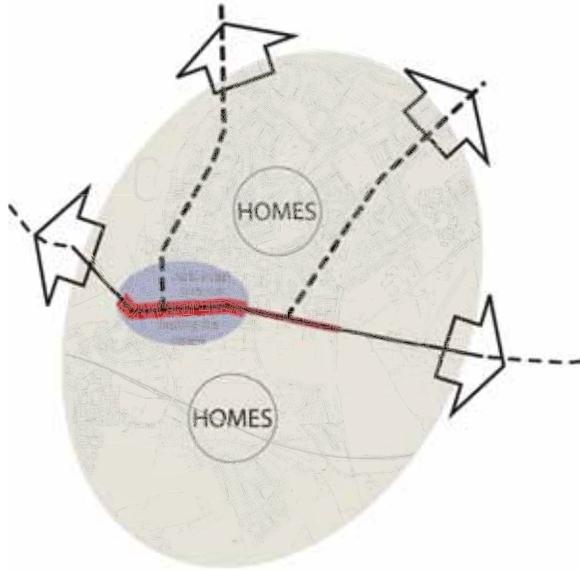


Figure 3.18 - Outward journeys

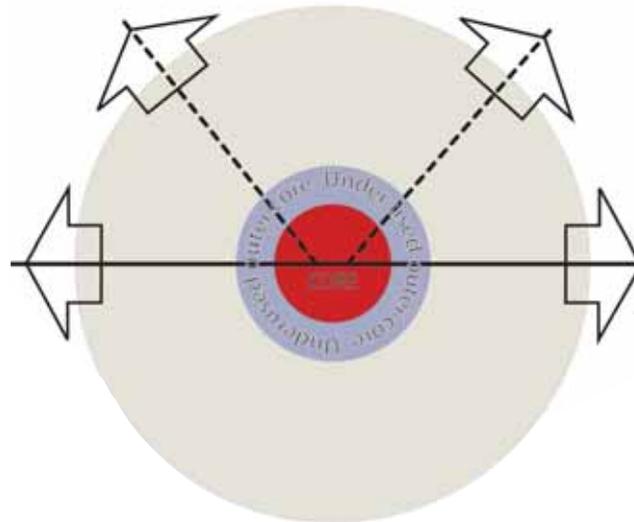


Figure 3.19 - Underused centre and core

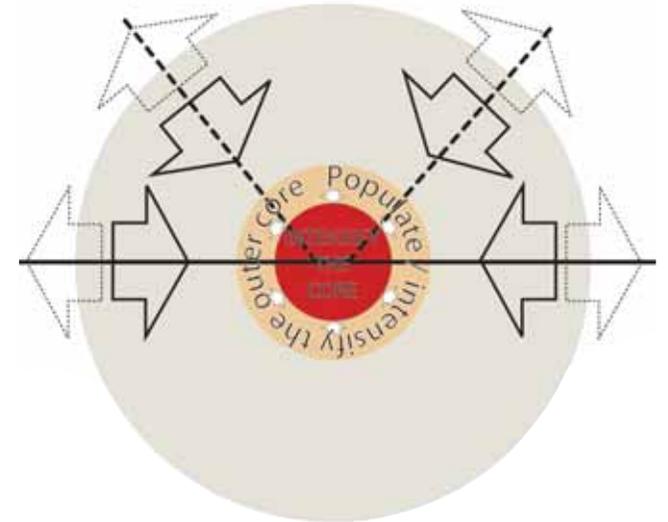


Figure 3.20 - Intensify the core

An Observation

3.51 In order that the town functions to its potential it is essential that the core of the town functions as well as it can, that it is a place where people will spend time and money and can be the focus for the community.

3.52 We have observed that the core of the town, centred on the high street, is surrounded by a number of under utilised sites. These potential sites along with some large single land use areas, such as Annan Academy, have an adverse effect on connecting the towns residential areas fully to the core.

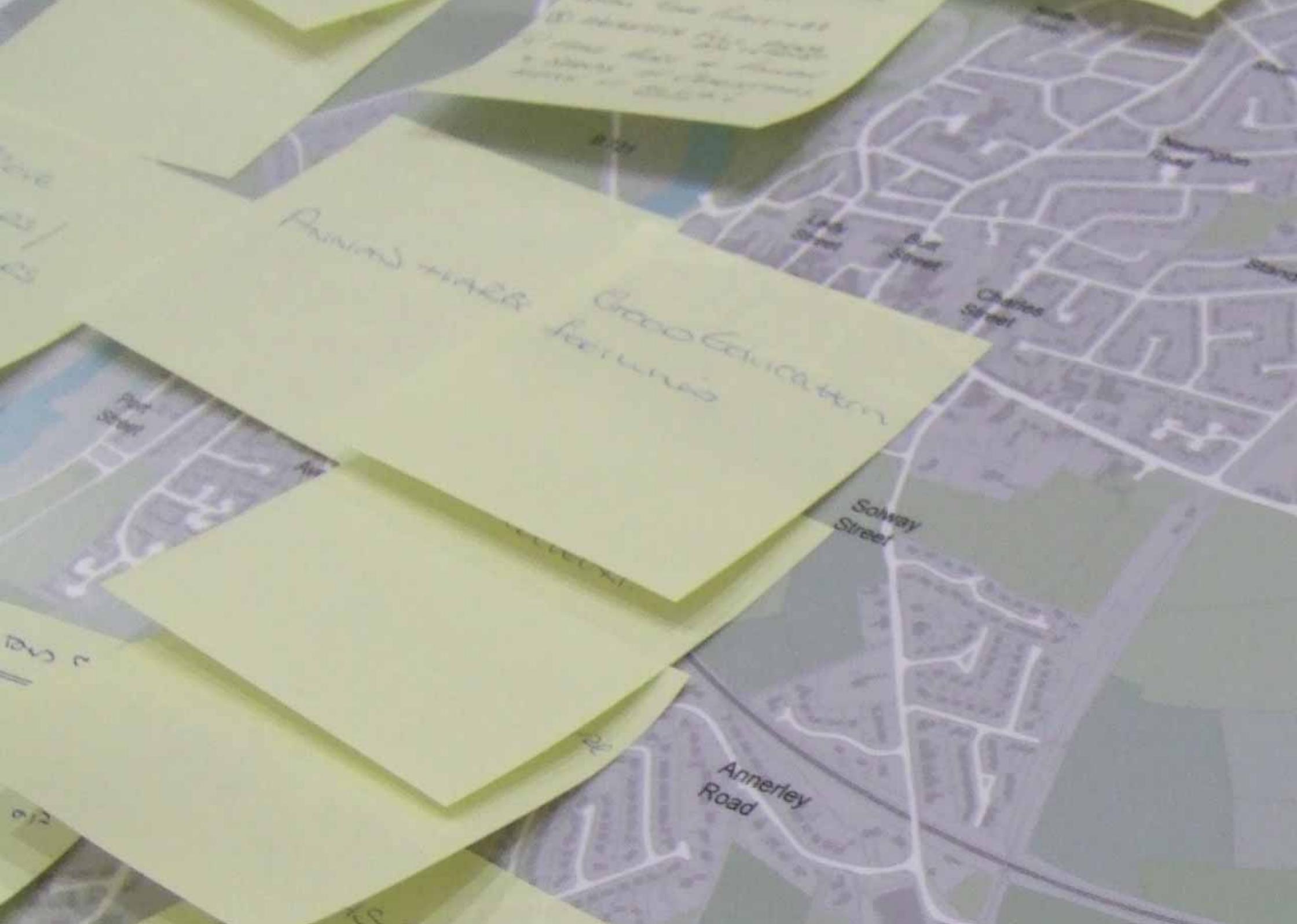
3.53 The result of this is that there is likely to be a larger number of journeys made outwith the town to shop. Therefore by 're-densifying' the core through better use of upper floors and by providing appropriate housing on under utilised sites there will be a greater concentration of people living in very close proximity to central shops and services. This can also help to better connect the core to adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

PLACE



Summary of Key Issues and Opportunities

- 3.54 Annan is clearly a great place to live. It has a beautiful natural setting, a rich history and a large range of shops, services and facilities relative to its size, all of which are within a very walkable environment.
- 3.55 However, due the towns unproportionate growth north, specifically in the second half of the 20th Century, it has effectively moved away from its core and relationship between form and function has been compromised.
- 3.56 The result of this has been that the core has been allowed to degrade and empty. A physical disconnection between a large proportion of the towns population and its core has contributed to a much greater proportion of spend leaving the town and less custom within the high street which in turn affects the viable range of shops as well as the quality of the environment.
- 3.57 The arrival of Tesco on the towns eastern edge has stretched the core east. In order that the positive benefits of the store (retaining spend that may have gone to supermarkets in Carlisle and Dumfries) the high street must both compliment Tesco's offer and provide a distinct and attractive alternative environment not just for shopping but for socialising and spending time.
- 3.58 In addition to this, and while holding an undoubted potential, the harbour area is a part of the town which is isolated and within the time scale of the next 10 years, does not offer the same opportunity to regenerate the town as a whole as the investment in the town core might.



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Good Education
Paved roads

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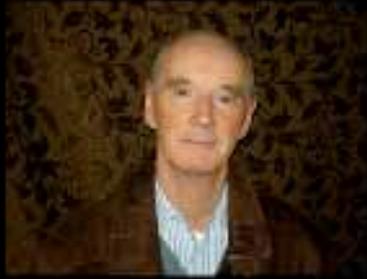
Solway Street

Annerley Road

Charles Street

Consultation: What local people want to see

.04



CONSULTATION: WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE WANT TO SEE

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- 4.1 The masterplan team believe that effective community participation plays a key role in the delivery of a masterplan that reflects the aspirations of the local community.
- 4.2 In line with best practice advice from the Scottish Government in Planning Advice Note 81: Community Engagement - Planning with People, we have undertaken extensive community engagement throughout this project. This has involved our client, Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Annan Regeneration Steering Group which consists of representatives from numerous local organisations, community council members and local Councillors. We have provided opportunities for key stakeholders and the wider community to become involved at various stages and by using a number of innovative techniques so that they could directly influence the developing masterplan.

1	06 October 2009	Household and schools post card drop
2	02 November 2009	Stakeholder and Local Businesses Workshops
3	14 & 15 November 2009	Mobile Community Engagement event
4	14 & 15 November 2009	Future Walks
5	04 December 2009	Projection Event
6	19 March	Masterplan 'Pull Out' in the Annandale Observer
7	08 April 2010	Final Stage Stakeholder and Local Businesses Workshops
8	09 & 10 April 2010	Final Masterplan community exhibition

Figure 4.1 - Consultation Timetable

Consultation Framework

- 4.3 The consultation framework is integral to good masterplanning and each stage of consultation has in turn informed the subsequent stage of the masterplans development.

Groups Involved

4.4 Through regular meetings with the client group and the stakeholder and local businesses workshops the following groups were consulted on the masterplan:

- DGC Planning
- DGC Community Learning and Development
- DGC Service/Transport
- DGC Conservation
- DGC Economic Development
- D&G Constabulary
- NHS
- Annan Community Council
- Lower Annan demonstration Project
- D&G Arts Association
- Sulwath Connections project
- Solway Heritage
- Annan Initiative
- DG Council Elected members
- Magnox North (Chapelcross)
- Annan Tenants and Residents Association
- DGHP
- Federation of small businesses
- Clip ICT
- Friends of Annandale and Eskdale Museums
- Katalyst
- Chamber of Commerce

Householder and Local Schools Post Cards

- 4.4 The post cards provided an opportunity for residents to answer specific questions on the town and to complete a 'mind map' exercise aimed at helping us understand how people use their town.
- 4.5 Being able to promote the masterplan process in this inclusive format at the start of the project was very important and provided us with a tool for gaining valuable early information which helped our understanding of the town greatly. With approximately 3,700 households in Annan it was hoped that around 5% – 10% of the post cards would be returned. The return of the post cards was either to the deposit boxes located at the Town Hall, Somerfield supermarket, Costcutter supermarket and Pinney's or by post. In total 100 post cards were returned which represented a limited response of 2.7%, not uncommon, and provided a great pool of information for the masterplan team to draw upon in terms of how people perceive and use the town.
- 4.6 The post cards themselves were hand delivered around Annan by the 1st Dumfriesshire Scouts and Adventures Scouts. The masterplan team also set up a dedicated e-mail address (Annanregeneration@turleyassociates.co.uk) for local people to either e-mail their responses to the questions posed on the card or provide more comprehensive views and opinions. The team received an additional 20 responses through this method of feedback.
- 4.7 A variation of the post card was delivered to each of Annan's schools in order for the children of Annan to have their say. A total of 2,000 post cards were distributed around Annan's five schools. There was tremendous response with over 400 cards completed and returned.

Response

- The town has fantastic buildings which are neglected
- The maintenance of the town is poor
- The town needs a better range of shops
- Parks and open spaces should be improved
- Good community facilities but there is a need for a focus of activities such as a Hub

Stakeholder and Local Businesses Workshops

- 4.8 From the outset of this project the masterplan team has sought to involve and engage key stakeholders and local businesses.
- 4.9 The masterplan must be deliverable and therefore the involvement of local stakeholders is vitally important with a need for 'sign up' to the resultant proposals. The masterplan is required to be both financially viable and robust in planning terms, influenced by local sentiment and also informed by sound commercial practice.

The Workshops

- 4.10 On the 2nd November 2009, 16 stakeholder representatives and 14 local business representatives took part in an afternoon and an evening workshop respectively, focussing on the regeneration of Annan. The aim of the events were twofold, to generate discussion on progress to date and to consider future opportunities for the town.
- 4.11 On the day of the event there were a series of presentations from the masterplan team which were used to stimulate group discussion. Attendees were seated in three groups where they each discussed the implications

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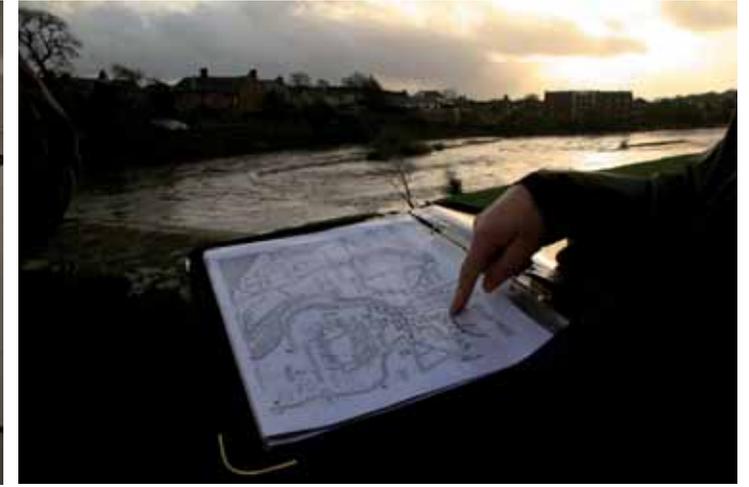


and opportunities relative to Annan as a place to live, work and visit. Each group also had an opportunity to discuss the more general issue of 'place making' throughout.

Key Issues

- Decline in cultural activities
- Parks are of insufficient quality
- Lack of professional jobs – young people leave
- Community centre far too small
- Fragmented facilities
- Important town buildings neglected
- There is a sense of segregation
- There is a lack of coach parking for tourists and visiting sports fans
- Not an attractive place to live or spend time
- The backs of buildings and backland areas of the High Street are very unsightly
- The bus station is in poor condition and isn't very welcoming
- Housing is too expensive for local people
- Absentee landlords of upper floors mean floor space in the town centre is not used to its potential
- Encourage growth within the town – community benefit clauses with redevelopment of Chapelcross for example...
- Business Gateway is ineffective
- Lack of business networks in the town
- Lack of civic pride
- There is no specific signposted visitor parking / lack of disabled parking / lack of long term parking
- Cafes and restaurants needed
- Poor choice of shops/lacks of variety
- Run down/disrepair
- Harbour area – antisocial behaviour etc.
- Library in the wrong place
- Harbour – great history – poor experience
- Too fragmented – too many things but not coherently related.
- Lacks a Buccleuch type centre
- Unlikely to attract repeat visits unless there is a family connection

CONSULTATION: WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE WANT TO SEE



Mobile Community Engagement Event

4.12 An important element within the consultation process was to have a series of publicised events at a number of locations within the town. These were held over the course of two days, Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th November. The consultant team set up a gazebo outside busy locations around the town in order to engage with local people face to face. The locations included:

- Queensbury Arms Hotel
- Galabank Football Club
- Somerfield supermarket
- Costcutter supermarket

4.13 Over the course of the two days the team spoke to over 200 people and through interviews recorded more than 50 peoples thoughts, opinions and ideas. This process would form the basis for the subsequent projection event as a forum to directly air peoples thoughts and ideas.

Responses

- A focal point for tourists and visitors
- An arts and culture centre
- Improve and do more with the High Street
- 'Start-up' retail units in the town centre
- Better use of upper floors in the town centre – intensify the town centre

Futurewalks

4.14 The team arranged two Future Walk tours (14th and 15th November) which were designed to give a brief background to the history of the town, imagine it at its most affluent and consider what lessons can be learnt to imagine future opportunities for development and how to make the most of the town's rich heritage.

4.15 The tours involved 15 people from the town and some issues that were raised included:

- A focus for tourists and visitors
- A Community Hub

Projection Event

4.16 The innovative event took place on evening of Thursday 4th December and followed the annual Christmas procession on Annan High Street which includes the switching on of the Christmas lights. Following the lights the masterplan team subsequently projected a 10 minute film onto the façade of the Queensbury Arms Hotel on Annan's High Street.

4.17 The short film gathered together some of the baseline research of the masterplan and what the masterplan was trying to achieve and presenting it in audio visual manner. The film included information on the history of the town and its important role in the region, a section playing back to the community their opinions and ideas from the community event and also displaying some of the emerging concepts and ideas for the masterplan.

4.18 The event was advertised as a notice in the Annandale observer the week preceding the event. Approximately 50 spectators viewed the film on Annan High Street which in turn generated discussion and feedback on regeneration concepts and principles.

CONSULTATION: WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE WANT TO SEE



CONSULTATION: WHAT LOCAL PEOPLE WANT TO SEE

Further Consultation Exercises

4.19 Following the initial consultation the masterplan team developed the concepts and principles further, as well as specific projects. These are detailed over the next few chapters and were the subject of two final pieces of consultation:

- A masterplan 'pull out' in the Annandale Observer in order to identify priority regeneration projects; and
- Final stage exhibition which would detail the whole masterplan process and provide additional information and the series of potential regeneration projects. *(these are detailed in Chapter 7)*

Consensus

4.20 From the outset of this project the masterplan team has sought to involve and engage local communities and other stakeholders. Such an approach is encouraged in the 2006 Planning etc. Scotland Act but it is also a tremendously valuable method of learning from an informed local resource about the place where they live.

Developing Themes

4.21 It was clear that no radical changes to the town were identified, in fact the overwhelming view being carried forward was that the town was not performing to its potential, making the most of what it already had.

4.22 Indeed the idea to **Repair**, **Reinvent** and **Revitalise** began to emerge and was something that encompassed many of the opinions and aspirations of the people of Annan.

4.23 These themes should help deliver the developing objectives of:

- Diversify the town
- Reinstate pride
- Improve the visitor experience
- Improve the town's service economy
- Support existing and new businesses



Urban Design Framework

Concepts and Key
Principles

.05

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



- 5.1 From the initial stages of consultation it was clear that the masterplan needed to identify a number of concepts and key principles that would guide development in Annan over the next 10 to 15 years. Specific proposals and projects will need to demonstrate that they follow the concepts and principles and satisfy a number of project objectives.
- 5.2 Any identified projects need to be a delivery vehicle for diversification of the town. There will also be a need to prioritise projects so that the greatest benefit to the town as a whole can be achieved. They should be about using the town's strong skeleton, its assets, and begin to implement the processes of **repair**, **reinvention** and **revitalisation**.
- 5.3 Renewal of this kind needs an engine to drive it forward, in the case of Annan such a vehicle could be housing. Enabling the town to re-densify its centre and best use sites in close proximity to the vast majority of shops and services can help give the town a boost in the short to medium term. However, with a lack of available public money and a depressed housing market where developers are struggling, such a vehicle can neither be relied upon or used exclusively.
- 5.4 Stimulating housing development alone will not deliver the plan's strategic objectives. Complementary projects that improve the town's environment and improve it as a place to visit and spend time will help the town realise, to a greater degree, its tourism potential that could in turn provide additional jobs in a more diverse range of employment groups.
- 5.5 An approach aimed at achieving this is in line with the objectives of CoReS:
 - Wealth: to raise the income and living standards of residents in the corridor area;
 - Diversity: to provide new and different economic opportunities for sustainable growth in the area;

- Inspiration: to offer a vision for the area which everyone can aspire to and be part of; and
- Inclusion: to ensure that residents are included and benefit from regeneration.

5.6 CoReS themes as key drivers for economic change:

- Diversifying the existing Chapelcross base;
- Connectivity;
- Greater value business and resources;
- New sector opportunities; and
- Image.

5.7 Any proposals identified within this masterplan should give Dumfries and Galloway Council or other organisations the opportunity to approach sources of finance to test if there is the potential to secure the investment required to fund this economic regeneration. It should also be recognised that private sector investment will also play a role.

Concepts

5.8 Regeneration is very much about working with what you've got. Annan is a fantastic town and this has come across very clearly from all areas of consultation.

5.9 The town has a skeleton of assets that can be maximised to stand it in good stead for a prosperous future. In order for the town to do this it should consider its assets and apply the following:

Repair: Maximise its assets: High Street, walkable environments and community infrastructure.

Reinvent: Provide opportunity for new business to compliment existing employment base.

Revitalise: Build upon its assets and create a vibrant town centre and community to retain and attract key workers and businesses.

Key Principles

5.10 When these themes are considered in practical terms the following actions have emerged:

1. Opportunity for some industrial and commercial businesses to relocate

- Potential to offer local industrial and commercial businesses purpose new built units with better access and opportunity to expand

2. Redevelop and intensify the town core

- Strengthen the Core: enhancing buildings and streets
- Extend the Spine: offer areas of activity all along the High Street
- Celebrate the Gateways: attractive entrance points to the town
- Introduce a Community Hub: a focus for residents and visitors
- Housing: introduce a range of homes close to shops and services

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

3. Strategic Interventions

Improvement to the housing areas of Longmeadow, Kimmeter, Newington and Springbells

- Some of the existing stock of social rented housing in parts of Annan is generally perceived as low quality. Demand for social rented stock in these areas far outstrips supply and that which is owned by Dumfries and Galloway Housing Partnership (DGHP) for example has extensive waiting lists. Social landlords are providing ongoing investment so their stock achieves the Scottish Government's Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SQHS) by 2015. In the longer term, opportunities will be explored to identify sources of funding that may allow more significant regeneration of this stock and open spaces.

Limited development of open space edges to define 'Southern Parkland'

- Some housing development overlooking park areas
- Creating attractive pedestrian connections from east to west, the pipeline to the river

Strategic Pedestrian and Cycle Routes - 'Circuits'

- Pipeline
 - » Potentially a key recreational resource with arts and heritage trails
 - » Connecting to the River Annan / Annandale Way either along the Solway coast or through a 'Southern Parkland' will help create a walking circuit
 - » Potentially a draw for tourism

- Southern Parkland (see page 79) routes
- The improved High Street as a pedestrian spine linking across the town

Signage and Interpretation Maps

'Ambassador Routes' - Approach roads to the town

- B722 (potential upgrade to A road): north west town approach
- B6357: north east town approach
- B731: eastern and western approach

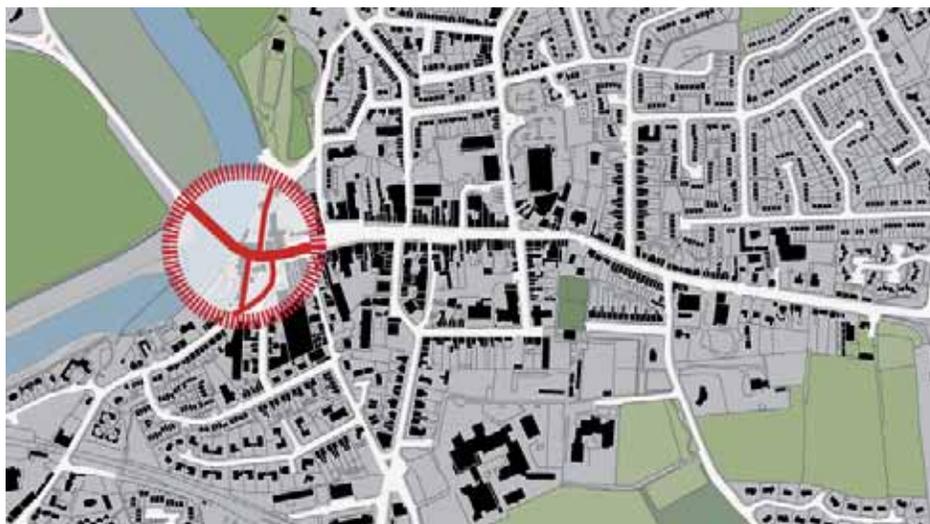


Fig 5.1 - Stunning western approach at the core: Bridge House and Town Hall

Strengthen the Core

- 5.11 There has been significant investment over the past 10 years, most recently through the THI project, in the core of the town focusing on the High Street. A key aspect of this investment has been at the western end of the High Street around the Town Hall. It is around this area, taking in Bridge House, the top of Port Street and Greencroft Wynd that the masterplan team has identified as ‘the core’.
- 5.12 The first step in the masterplan was to identify a number of key projects that would further strengthen this core and the investment which has already been made. The proposed projects will aim to celebrate what is one of Annan’s best assets, its western approach and entrance via the bridge. The re-development of a number of key buildings and sites include; Bridge House and potential new build within the curtilage, Carrs Billington (agricultural supplier, hereafter referred to as Carrs)¹ and also public realm investment around ‘old’ and ‘new’ Port Street.

The Bridge Gateway

- 5.13 Bridge House, built in the mid 18th Century, is one of the oldest buildings in Annan and certainly its most prominent. The building has been laying in a state of disrepair since the 1990s.
- 5.14 While the costs are significant, Bridge House is such an important building not only in its historical significance but in terms of its location at a gateway to the town, that we believe it is an extremely important aspect of the regeneration proposals. It has also become clear that the building is very important to the people of Annan with a huge majority insisting that it should be brought into productive use and preserved. Indeed, recently work has begun on the buildings restoration and redevelopment by David Smith which will bring the building back into residential use.
- 5.15 Like Bridge House, Carrs sits in a geographically important location. While there are tractors and various items in the street in front of the shop, in themselves they are not an unattractive entry point. However, Carrs themselves are interested in moving to a site outwith the town, to allow better access and expansion. The issue in the past has been the restrictive planning policies in the area.
- 5.16 This is an important opportunity to consolidate the core of the town and we advise strongly that the Carrs site is re-developed, probably for a housing development at an overall medium density.

Harbour Gateway

- 5.17 As has been identified the harbour area is relatively isolated from the town centre. Improvements to the area around ‘old’ and ‘new’ Port Street would serve as a much improved gateway to lower Port Street and the Harbour area. This would effectively begin to break down the distance between the High Street and the harbour and contribute to an improved pedestrian environment.
- 5.18 Any development proposals at the harbour would need to remedy flood risk which impacts a large proportion of the area.

1 - It should be noted that Carrs Billington is a well established and important business within the town. It is the intention of the masterplan team that the firm remains within Annan and that a suitable, alternative location is sought allows the firm to continue a prominent trade and that also fits with the key principles outlined in this document.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK



Figure 5.2 - Annan's traditional High Street with market spaces is a major asset



Figure 5.3 - Celebrating major crossing points and opportunities for development

Extend the Spine

5.19 Significant investment has already taken place on the High Street. Maximising the impact of this investment going forward requires the upgrading of materials, street furniture and lighting to extend east along High Street to at least Fish Cross and possible in terms of public realm and lighting slightly further to Annan Old Parish Church. Fish Cross itself should be considered to be a significant opportunity for not only public realm improvements and expansion of public space, but also some limited re-development and rehabilitation.

Lady Street / Bank Street

5.20 Where Lady Street and Bank Street cross High Street is an extremely important junction is formed which connecting two very important north south routes. This provides significant focus on the High Street and indeed is celebrated with a number of landmark buildings at its edges. The development of this route, and particularly Bank Street to the south, is intrinsically linked with the improvement of the train station arrival point or gateway and celebrating the link to the town centre.

5.21 Bank Street is interesting because there are a number of key public buildings along its length, some of them derelict or under utilised and which could be brought back into life. Rather than just attempting to improve the public realm or lighting on Bank Street, arguably it's more important to focus on the re-development and re-activation of some of these fantastic buildings, such as the Victoria Halls complex. We believe this is the priority for this particular route.

Fish Cross

5.22 Fish Cross itself has huge potential but the impact of public realm investment will be lost without some subsequent re-development of potential sites and refurbishment of key buildings. Improvements to shop fronts etc may help this but they will not solve the problem. There is the

potential that Farmfoods could be an issue in the regeneration of this space and this gateway to the town centre.

5.23 In particular the opportunity presented by the site currently occupied by Farmfoods, which sits as part of a triangular budget retail core, is untapped at this moment in time. While we accept that the car parking to the front of Farmfoods is important for their retail function we do not consider that the current layout is a positive element of townscape and actually contributes to a drop in quality at this point along the High Street.

5.24 The proposed solution would see the re-development of the area to the front of Farmfoods and an alternative parking solution being found elsewhere. This would provide a much stronger street edge to Fish Cross and would allow not only Farmfoods but other buildings including restaurants, pubs and cafes to spill onto the open space at Fish Cross. Potentially an outdoor entertainment space, perhaps for a bar or restaurant, could be created at this important point along the High Street and could effectively partner the investment that is taking place toward the west of the High Street.

5.25 On arrival at the High Street from the east, views of Fish Cross are relatively unattractive, particularly with regard to the bus station on Butt Street. The improvement of Fish Cross will form part of a broader strategy that involves improvement to the bus station and potentially also to the key buildings on Butt Street.

Interventions and Points of Interest on the Spine

5.26 There exists the potential to develop / redevelop a series of sites next to or in close proximity to the spine, these include the following:

- Scott's Street
- Solway Street
- Mafeking Place

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

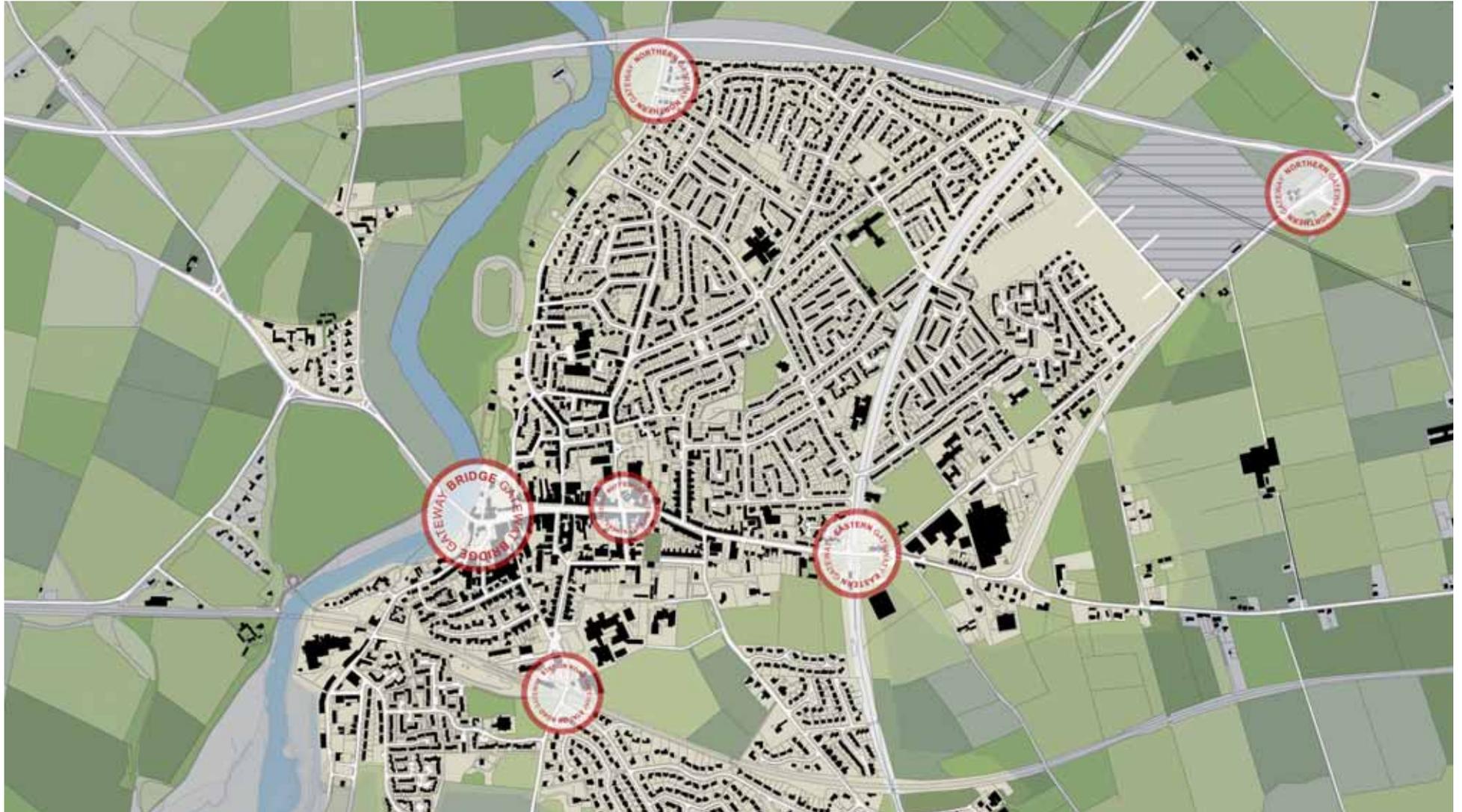


Figure 5.4 - Annan's Gateways and Arrival Points

Gateways and Arrival Points

- 5.27 Proposals for the towns Gateways include a combination of public realm improvements and lighting schemes as well as public art and in some case development and restoration and redevelopment of existing buildings.

Bridge Gateway

- 5.28 As discussed previously the bridge affords a very dramatic entrance to the town from the west. This should be celebrated through the Bridge Gateway investment scheme identified in Chapter 6.

Butt Street / Bus Station Gateway

- 5.29 Although a prominent arrival point by visitors to the town, the bus station is hampered by facing into the back of the High Street and also by the fact that Fish Cross, the key gateway to the town from the bus station, is not of a particularly high standard.
- 5.30 The opportunity to link the development of the bus station with the redevelopment of Fish Cross is significant and we believe realistic. This should be pursued as a priority.
- 5.31 Butt Street as it enters the core of the town has the disadvantage of running past Costcutter and Somerfield supermarkets and an unused and boarded up number 6 Butt Street (B listed). Similarly as it crosses Fish Cross and runs south it is not particularly attractive. A combination or redevelopment, improvement and public realm improvement could complete this picture.

Railway Station Gateway

- 5.32 Currently the train station fails to be a successful arrival point for the town. At this arrival point visitors and residents of the town enter and face the back of industrial premises, such as the Post Office sorting office, which

are historical legacies from the development of the town. Current footway provision is unsatisfactory and there is a clear disconnect in terms of footways from the station to the town centre.

- 5.33 Unlike arriving to the town by bus where visitors can orientate themselves as they travel through the town before alighting, arriving by train can be quite disorientating if there are no clear routes when exiting the station. Indeed, this is the case at Annan railway station. Therefore an opportunity exists to not only improve the public realm leading from this area towards the town, but also to provide more sympathetic and attractive development to frame views towards the Central Hotel which then implies a route further north towards the High Street.

Eastern Gateway

- 5.34 Following the development of Tesco at the eastern edge of the town there could be further efforts made to contribute to a more significant Eastern Gateway to the town. In addition to Tesco, the development of the site south of Scott' Street and encompassing the existing scrap yard would help provide a more attractive gateway for the towns central spine.

Northern Gateways

- 5.35 On approach from the north east along the B6357 (Stapleton Road), and on exiting the A75, there is certainly an opportunity to provide either a landscape or artistic feature, potentially as part of the Stapleton Road development, that could not only serve as a welcoming point but also signage to attract visitors off the by-pass.
- 5.36 The B722 provides an important route to the Town's northern hinterland. This route could also be improved in the future to aid vehicle movement between the town and the future redeveloped Chaplecross site. Therefore improvements such as improved lighting and potential art work could provide a sufficient gateway feature.

URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

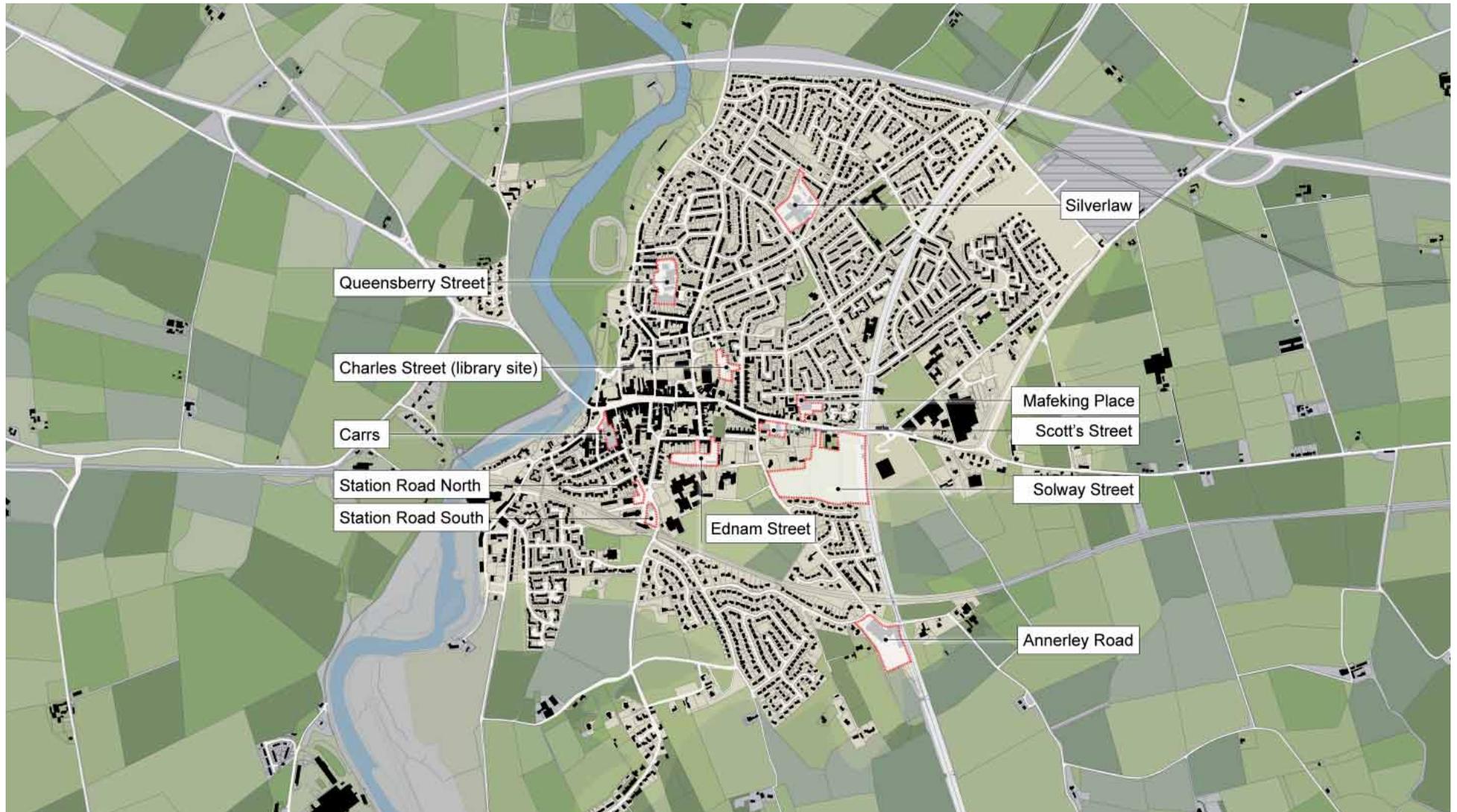


Figure 5.5 - Potential Development Sites

Intensify the Town - Potential Sites Close to the Spine

- 5.37 In our research of Annan to date we feel there is a significant amount of land that sits to the north and south of the High Street that is currently covered by back land development. Much of this is of value, particularly sites which comprise unsuitable town centre uses or buildings / uses that could be better served in a different location. These sites are relatively isolated, divided, poorly connected and not exploited to anywhere near its potential.
- 5.38 Given the market of the town and its economic profile it is questionable whether we could see back land development anywhere near to the scale of mews type approaches in larger towns and cities. However we believe there are significant opportunities for re-development, for improvement and for better organisation of these back land spaces and possibly even connections between them. It is our view that there is a huge untapped resource directly on the edges of the High Street that could become a number of important projects in their own right.
- 5.39 The consideration of back land development is important in the context of the continued growth of the town. Annan is reaching a point where it cannot grow much further to the north and where for environmental reasons there is limited growth opportunity to the south that does not re-develop on greenfield land or potentially even safeguarded recreational space. Never-the-less there is a housing market in the town particularly for affordable housing and particularly for affordable housing for older people or for young couples, single households etc.
- 5.40 Terraced housing or some flatted accommodation is an ideal approach to the development of back land spaces. To the north of the High St there are also significant opportunities for back land development associated with the site of the currently 'dog eared' library. These could provide an ideal base for small local business units sitting in a high quality environment.

Parking

- 5.41 There has been a great deal of discussion throughout the community engagement phase on the limitations or apparent limitations of car parking in the town. From the outside we believe there is a significant amount of free car parking available in the town compared to many of the towns and villages we work and cities we work in. There is a good supply of free parking. The issue is that the parking is no longer directly in front of shops and people's tendency locally seems to be to park very close to the shops that they are going to use and for the shopkeepers obviously this has been a source of much concern.
- 5.42 The parking strategy going forward very much depends on whether parking is located to address this concern or perhaps to address the potential of the site as a visitor attraction. Visitor parking and retail parking are quite different animals with quite different requirements. Any parking strategy therefore must emerge from the overall masterplan approach.

Coach and Overspill Parking at The John Bell Playing field

- 5.43 This 100 place car-park is less than 400m from the High Street junction with Bank Street and Lady Street, between five and 10 minutes walk. The car-park in question is on the John Bell Playing Field and seems to be used exclusively by Hecklegirth Primary School. When not used by the school the gate to the car-park is usually closed and locked.
- 5.44 The land comprising the John Bell Playing Field and car-park is a Common Good asset and while it is used for particular events including the twice yearly Fairs in May and October and the Riding of the Marches, there is the potential for this car park to be better used throughout the year as either overspill car parking for the town centre and potentially for coach parking after dropping tourists in the town centre.

