



LISBURN CITY CENTRE MASTERPLAN REVIEW

LCCC
Lisburn &
Castlereagh
City Council

February 2019 | Draft for Public Consultation

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Introduction

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1. Introduction

The Lisburn City Centre Masterplan was published in August 2010, providing a vision which was designed to ensure that Lisburn plays a more significant role within the region and develops the range of facilities and attractions that are expected of a regionally significant city. The 2010 Masterplan was designed to help make this vision a reality and achieve its full economic potential. In essence, it provided:

- A series of regeneration objectives to guide development;
- A spatial plan to help guide appropriate development to the right locations where it would have the greatest impact;
- A series of strategic projects that are pivotal to the success and competitiveness of the City Centre in the future; and
- Design principles to guide development and ensure that the highest standards of design quality are achieved in all development.

Since 2010 there has been considerable progress made on many of the projects outlined in the Masterplan. This includes the delivery of the first phase of the City Centre Public Realm Scheme and progress towards the comprehensive redevelopment of the Laganbank Quarter.

It is important to review the strategic context. For example, the Regional Development Strategy has been revised, the draft Programme for Government 2016-21 has been published and the Strategic Planning Policy Statement developed. In addition, a new Community Plan has been developed and the Local Development Plan is emerging for Lisburn and Castlereagh.

Sections 2-3 present the revised Masterplan, with the updated vision and objectives, a new spatial framework and details of the key projects and initiatives.

Our Renewed Vision and Objectives

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2.1 Vision

The Regional Development Strategy highlights the opportunity to enhance the retail offer and create a high-quality office offer through the creation of employment in business services. This will build upon Lisburn City Centre's strategic location at the meeting of key transport corridors. Potential also exists to grow the leisure offer, enhance connectivity with Lisburn Leisure Park and create a new driver for the night-time economy.

There is potential to attract a strong City Centre population attracted by the jobs, leisure offer, heritage, value and connectivity to Belfast.

2.2 Refreshed Regeneration Objectives

To help achieve this vision, nine regeneration objectives have been established. Some are new and others are adaptations of those set out in 2010.

1. TO CONTINUE TO REVITALISE MARKET SQUARE AS THE HEART OF THE CITY CENTRE

The City Centre Public Realm Scheme, continued revitalisation projects and promotion of events has transformed Market Square in recent years, however there is opportunity to enhance the space further. In 2010 a proposal for reusing part of the Linen Centre for an alternative use such as a bar or restaurant was highlighted in the Masterplan.

However, this proposal was not implemented and in 2017 the Council initiated a review of the Irish Linen Centre and Linen Museum. The review has recently been completed and the Council are currently considering proposed options in conjunction with the review of the Masterplan going forward.

2. TO ATTRACT DIVERSE AND HIGH-QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AT KEY STRATEGIC SITES AND REINFORCE THE GATEWAYS TO THE CITY CENTRE

The City Centre has several key strategic sites, some of which are in public ownership. This provides an opportunity to lead by example and set the bar for future schemes throughout the City Centre. Through well-defined development briefs, the Council can strive to attract high-quality and diverse developments, whilst maximising the contribution to the other regeneration objectives.

This Masterplan will inform the emerging Local Development Plan and the determination of future planning applications therefore will encourage diversity and quality in all future developments.

3. TO UTILISE PUBLIC SECTOR ASSETS AS OPPORTUNITIES TO PROVIDE REGENERATION

There is a real opportunity for the public sector to support the regeneration of Lisburn City Centre. This may include bringing key development sites to the market to encourage uses which contribute to the regeneration objectives. Publicly owned buildings such as the Irish Linen Centre also provide an opportunity to proactively address gaps in the City Centre offer.

The riverside park within the Laganbank Quarter is another public-sector asset that provides the opportunity to enhance leisure and recreation.

There is an opportunity to review the potential for the relocation of the Island Arts Centre to a City Centre location which will serve to enhance the City Centre provision and complement the evening economy. This should be explored.

4. TO REINFORCE THE CORE RETAIL FUNCTION OF LISBURN CITY CENTRE

The City Centre Health Check indicates that the overall vacancy rate is 21% (unit basis), which is slightly higher than the vacancy rates in selected comparator towns. There are wide variations within this proportion, with 9% in the primary retail frontage areas (Bow Street/ Market Street and part of Chapel Hill), but over 30% vacant in Bow Street Mall and 48% in Lisburn Square. Research by CBRE suggests that there have been some signs of improvement in recent years, with previously underutilised areas such as Lisburn Square, Bridge Street and Railway Street attracting new tenants.

CBRE highlight that for a shopping destination to be successful it now must deliver 40% leisure/ food and beverage, 40% retail and 20% other. Currently Lisburn delivers 54% retail, 15% Leisure/food and beverage and 31% other.

A survey undertaken for the Health Check and Masterplan indicated that one third of respondents felt that 'more / better quality shops' would make them visit the City Centre more often.

Sprucefield provides opportunities for large scale retailers demanding large footprints. It will be difficult for Lisburn City Centre to accommodate these footprints.

The Masterplan explores opportunities for small and medium sized retailers which will complement the diversity of the City Centre offer, these will generally be seeking units in the region of 2,500 – 5,000 sq. ft.

5. TO IMPROVE THE LEISURE, VISITOR AND EVENING ECONOMY

The Lisburn and Castlereagh Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 highlights that Lisburn and Castlereagh attracts the lowest number of overnight trips to any council area in Northern Ireland. It has only 255 hotel rooms within its boundary, none of which are currently located in Lisburn City Centre. The recent approval of a new apart-hotel at Lisburn Leisure Park, coupled with the ongoing plans to develop a hotel on Castle Street has the potential to transform the tourism potential of the City Centre.

Footfall is crucial to the vitality of a City Centre and to the success of the retail offer. Lisburn's lack of evening trade may be due to its proximity to Belfast with its strong hotel offer and well developed food and beverage offer. The arrival of new food and beverage businesses at Lisburn Square has seen an increase in customers visiting the Square in the evening.

In Lisburn Square the opening of new businesses which operate later in the day has resulted in an increased footfall in the evenings in this area. Similar changes to the tenant mix and late evening provision in Lisburn City Centre could see similar increases in footfall and improvements in evening trade.

The objective is diversity and quality. The survey evidence confirmed that people want more and better restaurants and shops. The aim is to maximise the opportunity for people to visit the City Centre, whether it be for food, entertainment, shopping or just to relax.

Lisburn Leisure Park is a crucial element of Lisburn's leisure and recreation offer. It is important that the Leisure Park continues to complement the traditional City Centre and retail core, therefore the physical and perceptual barriers need to be broken down to entice people to move more freely between the two.

6. TO ENCOURAGE COMMERCIAL OFFICE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CITY CENTRE

All successful City Centres need to provide job opportunities. Office development creates footfall which is increasingly important to the success of the retail and leisure sectors. There is an opportunity to provide commercial office space which is attractive, well connected, with a range of unit sizes which will be attractive to businesses.

The Masterplan seeks to utilise key public-sector sites as the catalyst for the commercial office market, with LCCC taking a proactive role in attracting private sector investment.

7. TO RECONNECT THE CITY CENTRE WITH THE LAGAN CORRIDOR

The 2010 Masterplan sought to achieve connections with the Lagan Corridor through the development of an ambitious mixed-use regeneration scheme known as the Laganbank Quarter.

It is important to reconsider how these connections can be made with a focus on smaller more deliverable solutions. The Masterplan seeks to establish this connection through enhancements to the open space, a pedestrian bridge and innovative use of small development opportunity sites on both sides of river. The development of Laganbank Quarter Car Park will also begin to reduce the visual and physical gap between the City Centre and River Lagan.

8. TO IMPROVE CONNECTIVITY THROUGHOUT THE CITY CENTRE

Parts of Lisburn City Centre are quite heavily dominated by transport infrastructure, including highways and surface car parking.

The recently completed Car Parking Strategy promotes rationalisation of car parking throughout the City Centre, with the aim of maximising the use of existing multi-storey car parks. To complement this strategy the Masterplan encourages improvements to signage and wayfinding throughout the City Centre to ensure drivers are directed efficiently to the main car parks and pedestrians are directed to the many services and facilities within and around the City Centre.

This will be complemented with further phases of the City Centre Public Realm Scheme and a new pedestrian / cycle connection across the River Lagan.

Connectivity between the retail core and Lisburn Leisure Park is also crucial to enhance the interaction between the retail and leisure offer.

9. TO ENCOURAGE CITY CENTRE LIVING

There is an exciting opportunity to encourage City Centre living by providing residential accommodation in key locations in the City Centre (with good access to local amenities and connections to other areas) as part of mixed use developments.

The benefits of residential development include natural surveillance in areas that would otherwise be neglected, which will strengthen the vitality of the City Centre. The strong retail offer that exists and excellent train links to Belfast and other towns by train should act as a draw for new residents.

Opportunities exist for city centre living at various locations, including Jordan's Mill and Laganbank Quarter. The 2018 masterplan explores these sites and tests their suitability for residential development.

The Revised Masterplan

3

3.1 Introduction

Potential exists for a number of inter-related projects to support the achievement of the vision. The projects form a framework of interconnected sites, that should be developed in an integrated way to create a critical mass of interventions that will bring real benefits to Lisburn.

Some projects will build upon those already put in motion since the development of the original masterplan, such as the next phase of the high quality public realm scheme proposed along key streets. Continuing this approach to decluttering streets focusing on improving the pedestrian experience within the City Centre is an important priority

The proposed framework of projects will act as a basis for consolidated interventions and development sites. This activity will maximise efficiency of outputs and create streamlined, manageable projects that will also be attractive to external developers.

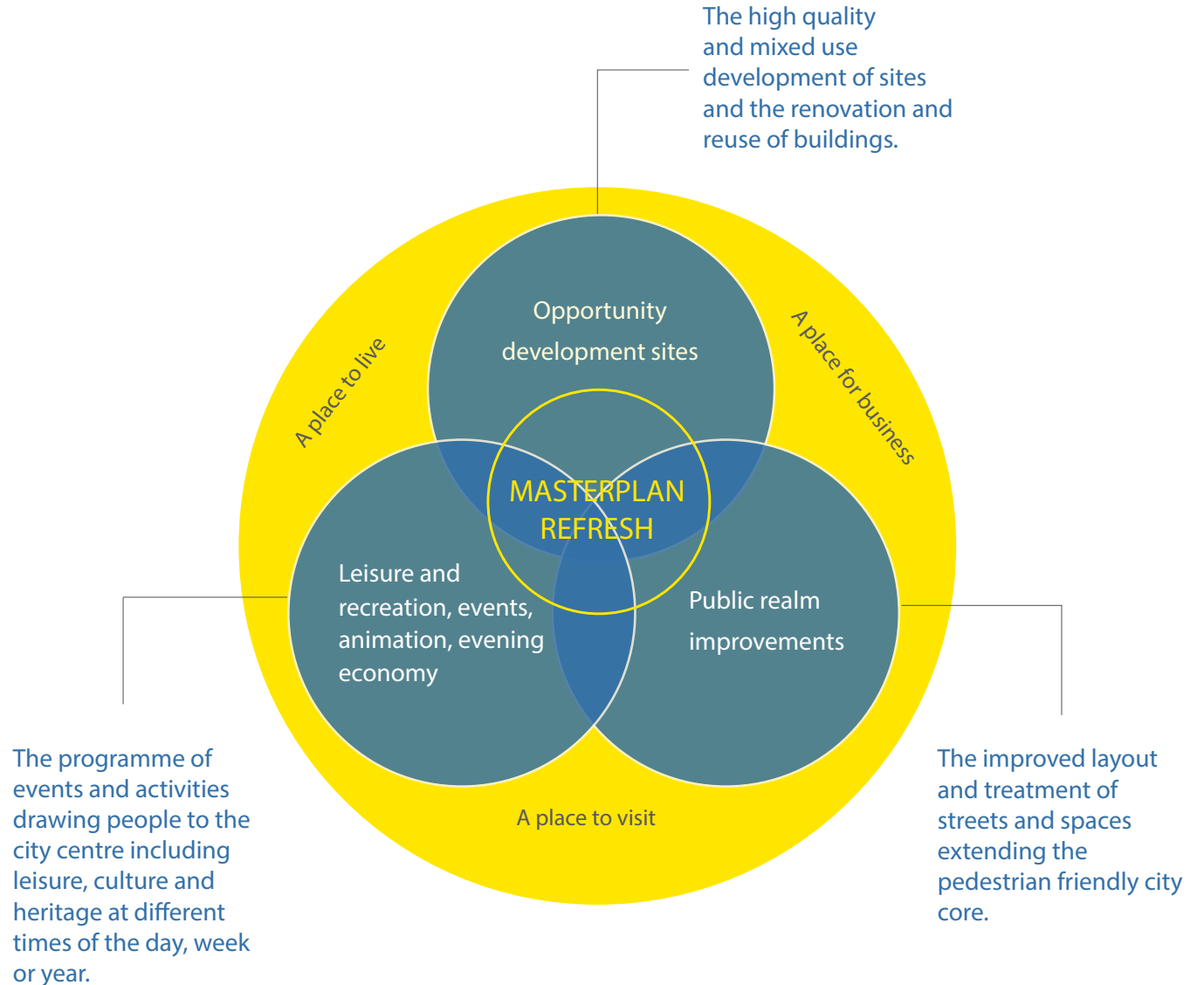


Fig. 1. Masterplan refresh strategy diagram

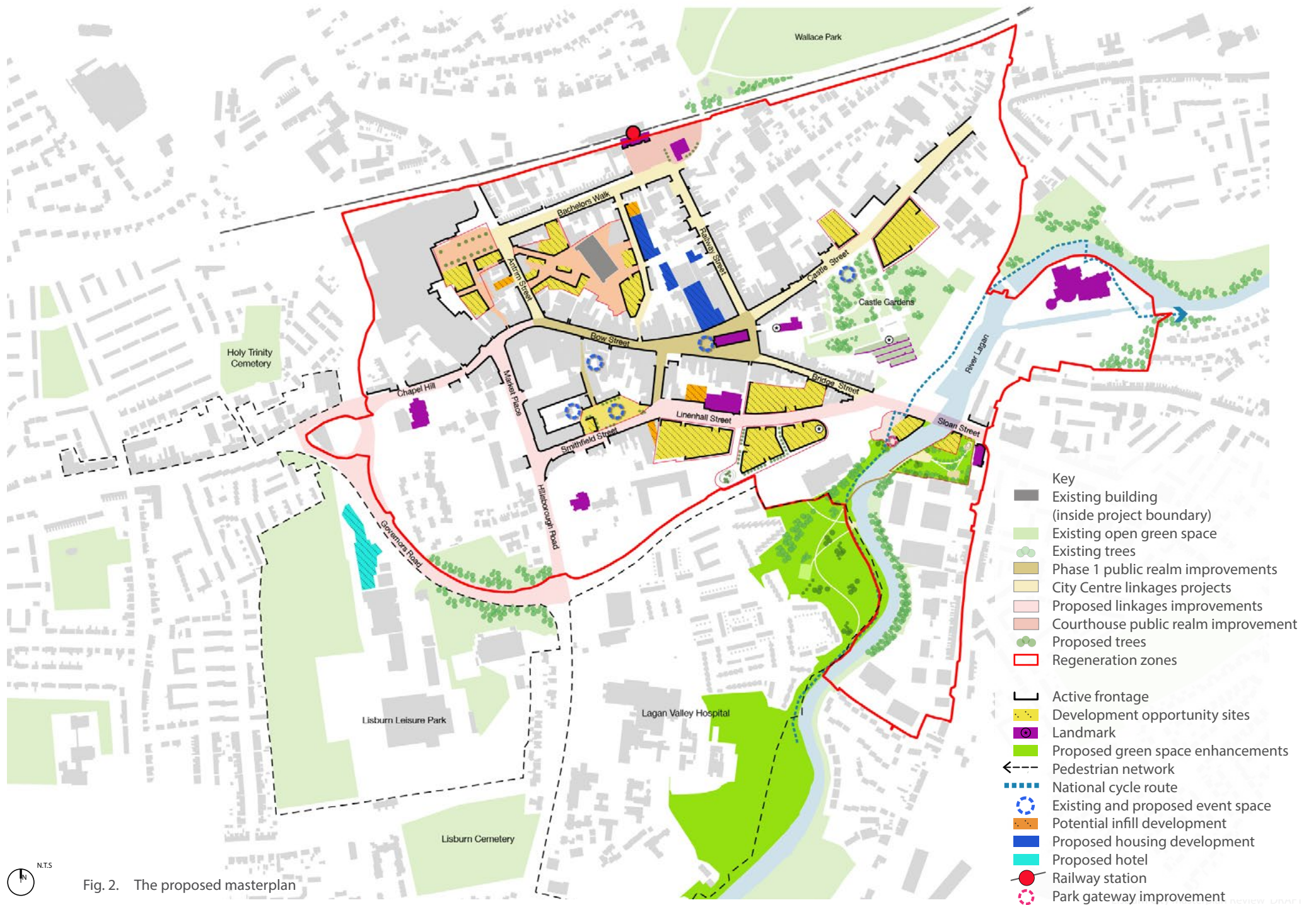


Fig. 2. The proposed masterplan

3.2 The Revised Masterplan

The revised Masterplan for Lisburn City Centre aims to be aspirational yet deliverable. Delivering the large-scale development proposals set out in the 2010 Masterplan has proved challenging due to market conditions. The private sector emphasised the importance of bringing opportunities to the market in bite size chunks. Taking this approach, the revised Masterplan sets the framework for development but allows flexibility for sites to be delivered individually. There are several key areas that, when regenerated will have a real impact on Lisburn City Centre. This includes revised proposals for the Laganbank Quarter, Smithfield Square and Jordan's Mill areas.

It is proposed to improve, where possible, the streets and public realm that connect these opportunity sites, so that the areas of change read as a coherent whole. These public realm improvements can be an extension of the City Centre Public Realm Scheme delivered to date.

The Lagan Navigaton corridor remains an underutilised asset which presents an opportunity to provide high quality space for leisure and recreation within minutes of the City Centre core. Temporary and meanwhile uses have also been proposed within the revised masterplan, to allow for more flexible use of public spaces. This is proposed at Smithfield Square, which is connected to Bow Street and Linenhall Street. This would complement the weekly Market, providing a space for small events and exhibitions, enhancing the footfall already attracted to the area.

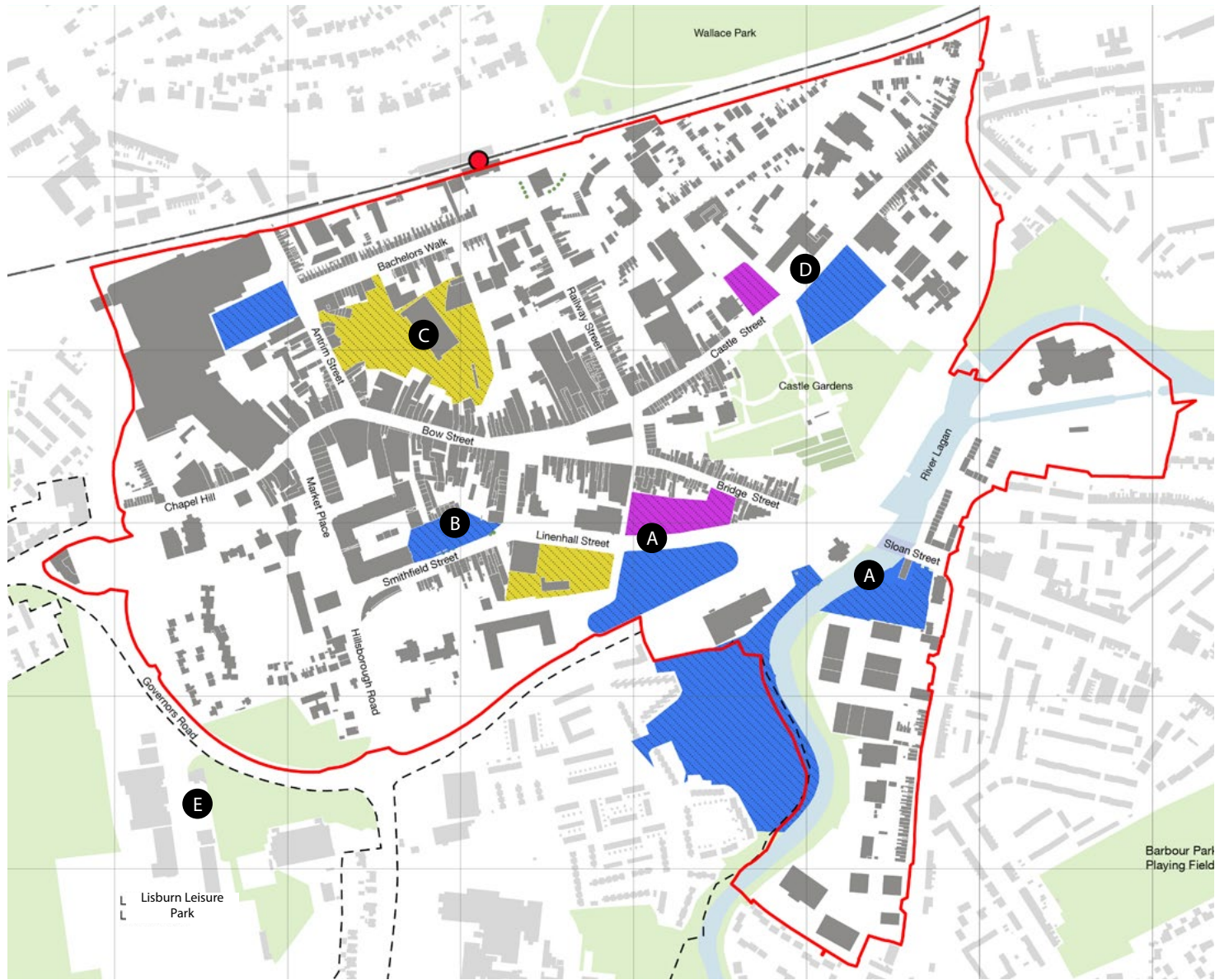
3.3 Key Development Sites

There are a limited number of development opportunity sites within Lisburn City Centre. The Masterplan must encourage the most beneficial land use and scale of development which meets the nine regeneration objectives outlined. Opportunity sites need to be maximised to create job opportunities, places to live and places to socialise.

The scale and type of change in the areas of proposed development will vary. For example, the Laganbank Quarter has the potential for significant and comprehensive change. This could take the form of a new landmark hotel, along with residential development or Grade A office development with a taller element (7/8 stories) to reinforce the sense of arrival into the City from the east.

Other projects can be less comprehensive, but will still have a marked effect on the operation of the City Centre. Smithfield Square as it exists today is a successful, well-used surface car park, and is well connected to the public realm improvements already completed at Haslem's Lane and Bow Street. The space lends itself to more flexible, temporary uses which would work in tandem with Lisburn Square. These interventions, although minor in scale, will have a strong impact on pedestrian movement and experience.

Within the Masterplan each area of change is explored in more detail, with urban design principles highlighted and potential land uses proposed.



- A** Laganbank Quarter
- B** Smithfield Square
- C** Jordan's Mill
- D** Castle Street
- E** Lisburn Leisure Park

- Key
- Project boundary
 - - - Potential growth area
 - ▨ Key opportunity site in LCCC ownership
 - ▨ Key opportunity site in private ownership
 - ▨ Key opportunity site in public ownership
 - Open green space

Fig. 3. Key development sites

A. Laganbank Quarter

Located on a key gateway to the City Centre, Laganbank Quarter consists of two distinctive areas: Linenhall Street and the Lagan Corridor. Linenhall Street consists of three important sites, including the current Lisburn Health Centre site (in public ownership), Laganbank Road Car Park (in LCCC ownership), and potentially the Royal Mail Sorting Office over the longer-term.

A1 Linenhall Street & Bridge Street

Laganbank Road Car Park is a major opportunity as a potential development site and could equally accommodate commercial office development or a medium sized hotel and associated conference centre. More appropriate may be a mixed-use scheme which includes elements of office development alongside the hotel development and residential use. The site is highly visible from Union Bridge and a two-minute walk away from Market Square. There is scope to develop a taller landmark element which would be an attractive gateway feature. The key urban design principle here is to create a vibrant street frontage on Linenhall Street.

A stronger street scene will be created on Laganbank Road, whilst bridging the gap between the City Centre and Lagan Corridor.

The built form could be set back slightly to allow for a tree lined avenue to act as a buffer between the road and buildings. The building frontage on Linenhall Street could be deliberately recessed so as not to compete with the distinctive Lisburn City Library corner, visible from Sloan Street. To maximise the development potential of the Laganbank Quarter Car Park, car parking could be located underground any development with access from Linenhall Street. Likewise, on the Health Centre site there may be the potential to create an under-croft car park on part of the site with development above, however it will remain desirable that active frontages are achieved onto Linenhall Street.

The Retail Health Check carried out as part of the research indicates that Bridge Street has one of the lowest footfall counts within Lisburn City Centre, therefore the development of the Health Centre site including frontage on to Bridge Street has the potential to increase footfall in this area

and act as a catalyst for regeneration of the remaining undeveloped/unoccupied properties.

The Lisburn and Castlereagh Tourism Strategy 2018-2022 identifies Bridge Street and the wider Lisburn Historic Quarter as an area that could accommodate arts orientated businesses, for example:

- Books and literature, following in the footsteps of places like Hay on Wye, Oxford and Edinburgh with their second-hand bookshops and book / literature festivals;
- In Lisburn Historic Quarter this could be augmented with film, photography and digital arts; and



Fig. 5. Indicative site principles plan - Laganbank Quarter (Linenhall Street)

Key

- Existing building
- Existing green spaces
- Focal points
- Building frontages
- Active frontages
- Key views
- Public realm improvement
- Courtyard
- Pedestrian links
- Vehicle access
- Proposed open green space
- Indicative storey heights
- Potential pedestrian crossing



Fig. 6. Hammarby Sjöstad - example of mixed use development softened by tree lined avenues.

- Complemented with artist's studio, craft workshops, and specialist retail units and cafés of more off-beat, quirky food and product offerings in the same areas – emulating the experience to be found at Granville Island in Vancouver or the Hops at Dartington in Devon.

A2 Lagan Corridor

The site at the western end of Union Bridge has the potential to provide a high-quality waterfront residential or office led scheme, and could act as a major landmark on the arrival point to the City Centre from Sloan Street.

Green space within or adjacent to the City Centre is a considerable public asset. However, unlike Wallace Park and Castle Gardens, the park alongside the River Lagan and Hill Street is underused. Currently the park is poorly lit and lacks facilities to attract regular footfall.

By firstly improving connections to this space and enhancing the entrance off Laganbank Road, more people can be guided to the improved open space. There is an opportunity to create

a strong gateway to Lagan Valley Regional Park at this point. It would also benefit from views towards the proposed pocket park at the opposite side of the river. Increasing the usage of the park throughout the day will improve the sense of safety.

Light touch improvements to the Riverside Centre Retail Park on the eastern side of the River Lagan can have considerable benefits to usage of both the retail units and the associated open space. By allowing units to overlook the river, and minor improvements to the public realm (better access to the rivers' edge), a more attractive area can be realised. This could then lead to the development of a new pedestrian footbridge linking east and west, which was initially proposed in the 2010 Masterplan but not yet realised.



Improving connectivity to Lagan Valley Regional Park will increase its daily use, and therefore its safety.



Fig. 7. Site location and proposed land use plan





Light touch improvements could be incorporated at the entrance to the park.

Key

- Existing building
- Existing green spaces
- * Focal points
- Building frontages
- Active frontages
- Key views
- Public realm improvement
- Courtyard
- Pedestrian links
- Vehicle access
- Proposed open green space
- Improved gateway to Lagan Valley Regional Park

Fig. 8. Waterfront Park

B. Smithfield Square

Situated adjacent to Lisburn Square, Smithfield Square car park is a key car park in Lisburn City Centre. It also acts as a venue for the Tuesday outdoor market.

There are several buildings which back on to the car park, and sit in contrast to the high-quality refurbished units at Lisburn Square. There is also a requirement for servicing access to these buildings off Smithfield Square. It is proposed to rationalise the road layout around the square, with a defined gated entrance to the servicing area, concealing the vehicles behind it.

Meanwhile and temporary uses are well suited to this location, as Smithfield Square is well connected to the pedestrianised Bow Street, and immediately adjacent to the Bus Station. A new pavilion building could be developed to overlook the square, which acts as both car park and flexible event space. The pavilion would provide a flexible indoor space which could accommodate bespoke activities / events and complement the Tuesday variety market.

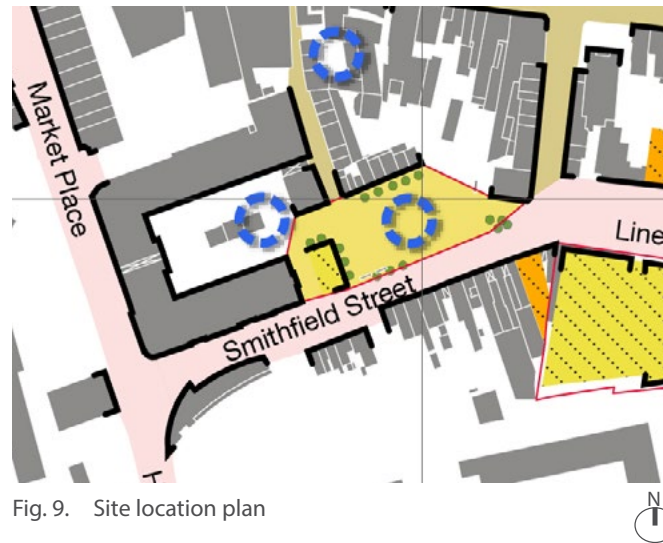


Fig. 9. Site location plan

The LCCC Car Park Strategy is currently being finalised. The strategy will provide guidance for the Council to determine the future use of Council car parks and identify possible sites as long-term development opportunities. This particular site could attract a high-quality office or residential scheme in the future.



Fig. 10. Boxpark Acoustic Stage - temporary pop up event space using shipping containers



Fig. 11. BMW Guggenheim Lab - public gathering space and urban think tank



Fig. 12. Indicative site principles plan - Smithfield Square

Weekly Outdoor Market

As part of the Masterplan review consideration was given to the suitability of the current location of the Tuesday market, this included the possible relocation of the market to an alternative location. Possible sites have been identified in the table below.

Possible sites for relocation	Comments
Market Square	Accommodating the market in this space may prove problematic due to current footfall, layout of the space and access issue for trader's vehicles. Damage to the natural stone surface may be incurred over time by increased vehicular traffic and the market stalls.
Antrim Street	This is a well-used car park in the City Centre and does not present as a better option in the short term, however should the proposal for a new public plaza and entrance to Bow Street Mall be implemented, Antrim street Car Park could be considered as a more permanent location.
Jordans Mill	Jordans Mill is in private ownership and currently has planning permission for redevelopment.
Laganbank Road	This is a potential location, however this site does not provide any tangible benefits over the current location. The site is further away from the City Centre retail core which may impact on footfall between the market and the retail core.
Conclusion	
Smithfield Square	Smithfield Square currently presents the most suitable location in the short-medium term and could support a revitalised market offer if the public realm was improved, with the potential to host events at other times of the year.

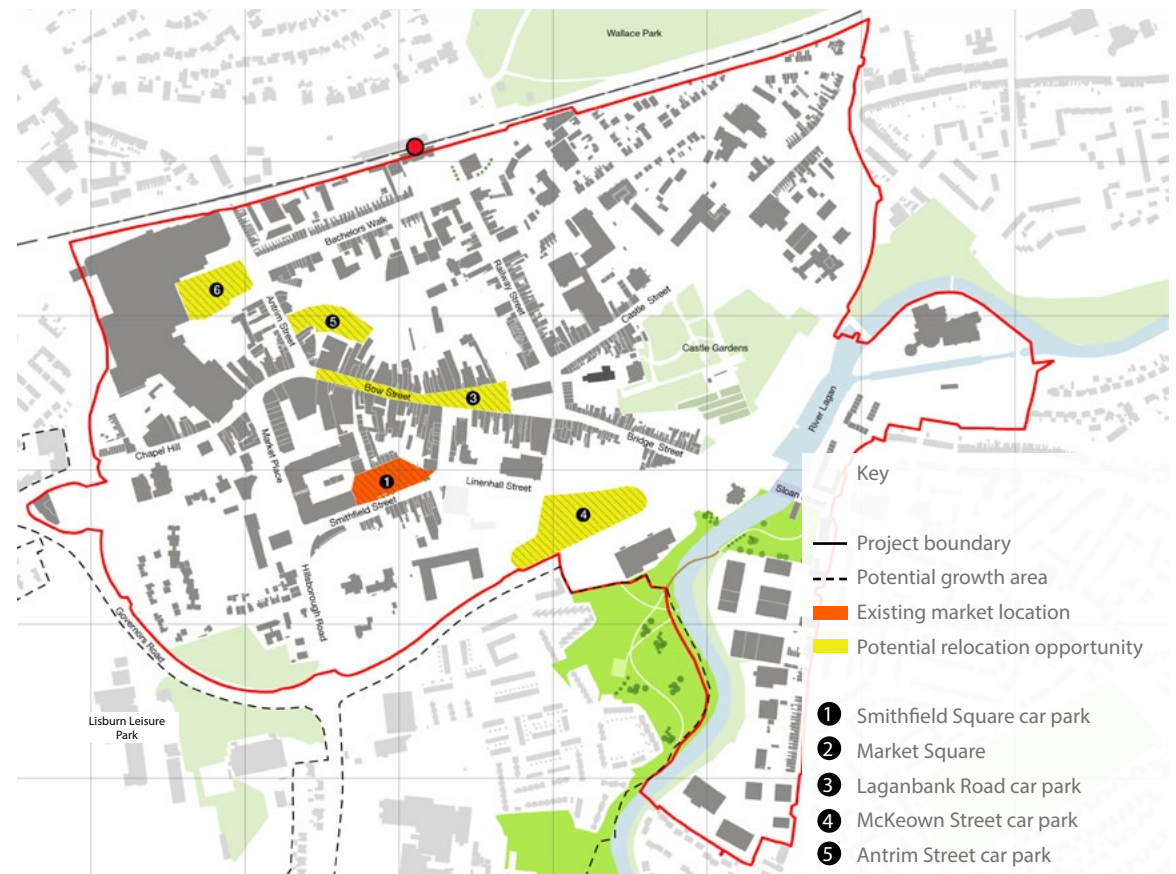


Fig. 13. Potential areas to relocate the market



C. Jordan's Mill and Antrim Street

C1 Jordan's Mill

Jordan's Mill is a substantial development opportunity situated in the heart of the retail core. The current layout includes an open site with a disjointed perimeter block. Various pedestrian alleyways connect to this area, but are poorly lit and insufficiently overlooked.

Within Jordan's Mill wider area there are three distinctive plots which would be suitable for redevelopment and together can transform this area.

- (1) Vacant site between Antrim Street and McKeown Street.
- (2) Lands between Bachelors Walk and McKeown Street.
- (3) Lands at Graham Gardens.

Site 1 has recently been granted planning approval for a mixed-use development comprising 49 apartments, 4 retail units and 3 offices. The scheme is designed around an

internal courtyard with basement car parking and ranges between 3 and 6 storeys.

Site 2 consists of land between Bachelors Walk and McKeown Street which is primarily utilised for surface car parking. The future development of this site should provide active frontage on to both Bachelors Walk and McKeown Street. A commercial or retail use with office or apartments above would be appropriate.

Site 3 currently accommodates a range of 1-2 storey retail units and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Grants office. Generally, the units are inward facing which creates a poor frontage on to Graham Gardens. An opportunity exists for a higher density development which compliments Graham Gardens whilst overlooking the back-land areas. This again should encourage commercial or retail uses on the ground floor with office or residential above. The surface car park in front of the multi-

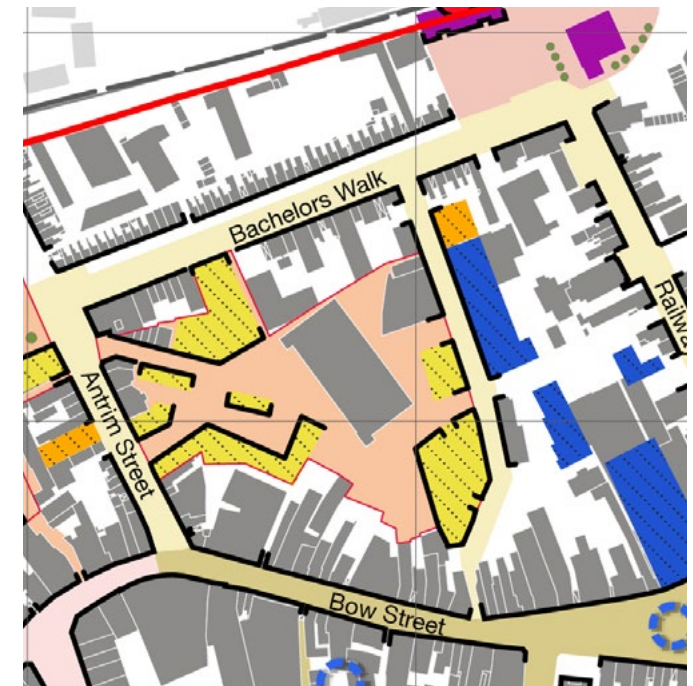


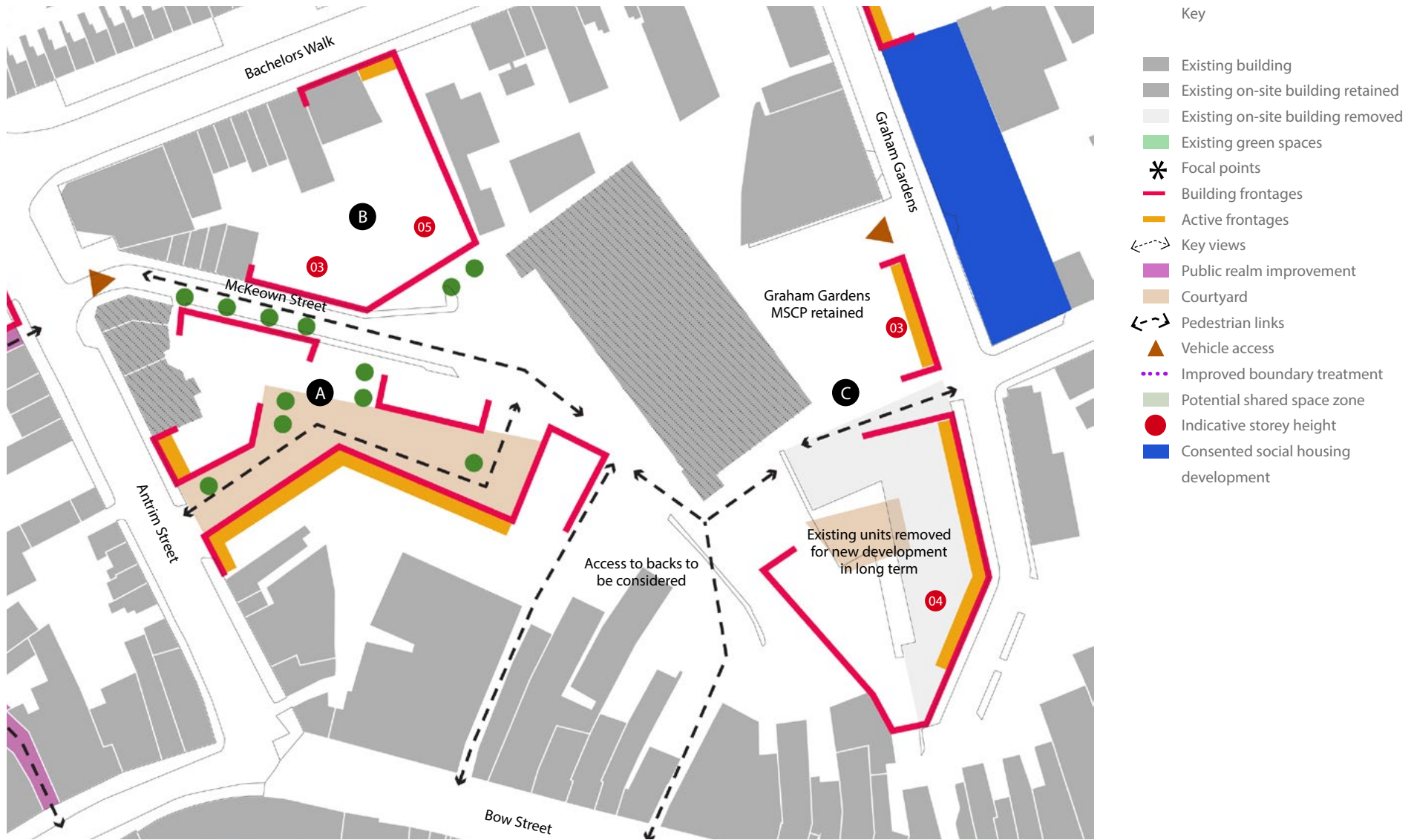


Fig. 14. Site location plan

-  Proposed infill development
-  Proposed development

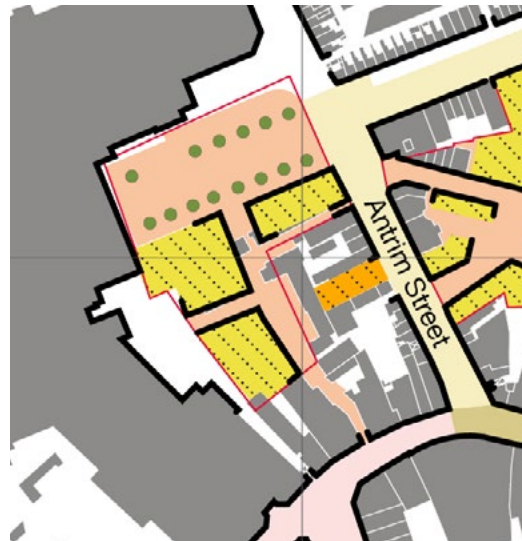


storey and fronting Graham Gardens could accommodate development whilst only losing a small number of spaces. This would help achieve a cohesive built form along Graham Gardens and reduce the visual impact of the multi-storey car park. Pedestrian connectivity should be improved throughout the Jordan's Mill site.

C2 Antrim Street

There is an opportunity to create a new distinctive and prominent entrance to Bow Street Mall, with public realm improvements reinforcing the importance of this retail development to the City Centre.

There are currently two buildings adjacent to the LCCC owned Antrim Street car park which could be redeveloped to provide an exciting development overlooking a new civic plaza. Bow Lane would be reconfigured and enhanced to emerge on to the new plaza.



- Key
- Existing building
 - Existing on-site building retained
 - Existing on-site building removed
 - Existing green spaces
 - Focal points
 - Building frontages
 - Active frontages
 - Key views
 - Public realm improvement
 - Courtyard
 - Pedestrian links
 - Vehicle access
 - Improved boundary treatment
 - Potential shared space zone
 - Indicative storey height
 - Proposed infill development
 - Proposed development



Fig. 16. Indicative site principles plan - Antrim Street

N.T.S.

D. Castle Street

Located between the City Centre and merging into Seymour Street, Castle Street exhibits important public features including frontage and access into Castle Gardens and the South Eastern Regional College.

The vacant site adjacent to the South Eastern Regional College lends itself to a range of uses including residential and office use. There may also be an opportunity to create an innovation hub or co-working space for start-up businesses with links to the adjacent South Eastern Regional College. Any new development should be sympathetic to the character of the adjacent listed building.

It is proposed to redevelop the surface car park next to Castle Gardens. This location overlooks the historic Castle Gardens park, with mature landscape and vistas across Lisburn. This site is also visible from Castle Street, and could accommodate a mixed-use development, with the potential for residential development and / or a landmark hotel for the City Centre. A hotel at this location would complement and balance the new hotel proposed for Lisburn Leisure Park.



Fig. 17. Site location plan

- Proposed infill development
- Proposed development



Fig. 18. Indicative site principles plan - Castle Street

E. Lisburn Leisure Park

LCCC are currently exploring the potential of formally including Lisburn Leisure Park within the boundary of Lisburn City Centre. This will be achieved through the Local Development Plan process.

An apart-hotel comprising 70 bedrooms and 60 suites has recently been granted planning permission. This scheme will be located on the existing surface level car park north of the Omniplex. In physical terms, the implementation of this scheme will help weave the Leisure Park into the fabric of the traditional City Centre. The increase in footfall that would be created by this scheme further highlights the need to improve connectivity with the traditional City Centre. The NEMS household survey carried out to inform the Health Check and Masterplan showed that 81% of people normally use a car to visit the City Centre and 8% normally travel by bus. The challenge is to entice people to combine visits to the traditional

City Centre and Leisure Park and consider the two areas as complementary. In reality, the Leisure Park is only a short walk from the traditional retail core, however it is often perceived as being a much greater distance. The greatest impact in terms of connectivity is likely to be improved wayfinding and directional signage to encourage movement between the two locations.

It will be important to ensure that any further development in the Leisure Park complements the traditional City Centre and retail core. Retail and office development should continue to be directed towards the traditional City Centre and retail core.



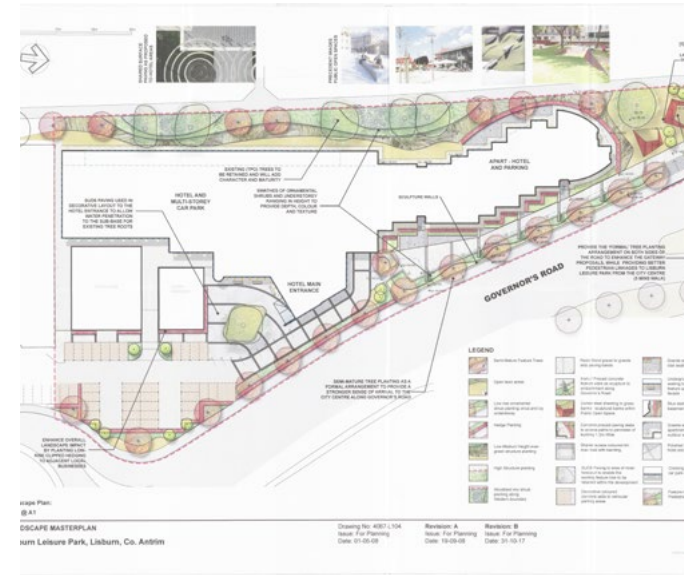


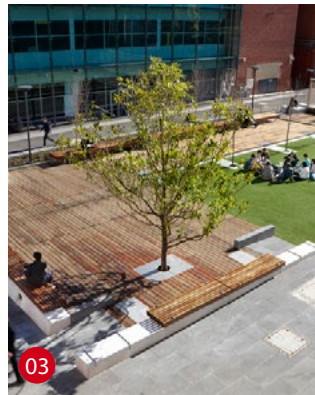
Fig. 19. Proposed apart-hotel development at Lisburn Leisure Park (plans and elevations sourced from the Planning Portal)

3.4 Public realm improvements

There is scope to continue improving key streets and spaces within the City Centre, to integrate with the previous improvements at Bow Street, Market Square and Haslems Lane. These high quality improvements will uplift secondary pedestrian routes and interconnect new developments. They will also help to create a more welcoming and visually cohesive streetscape.

Public realm improvements could include the following:

- Pavement widening and resurfacing;
- Street tree planting;
- Co-ordinated street furniture and lighting to reflect the previous public realm improvements at Bow Street and Market Square;
- Pedestrian wayfinding units;
- Opportunity spaces for pop up and meanwhile uses; and
- Opportunities for flexible, temporary event spaces.



- 01 High quality public realm improvements at Library Park, Oslo
- 02 Flexible street furniture to encourage social interaction in courtyards, 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands
- 03 Courtyard space, 's-Hertogenbosch, Netherlands
- 04 Opportunity for flexible, temporary event spaces at Puigcerda, Spain

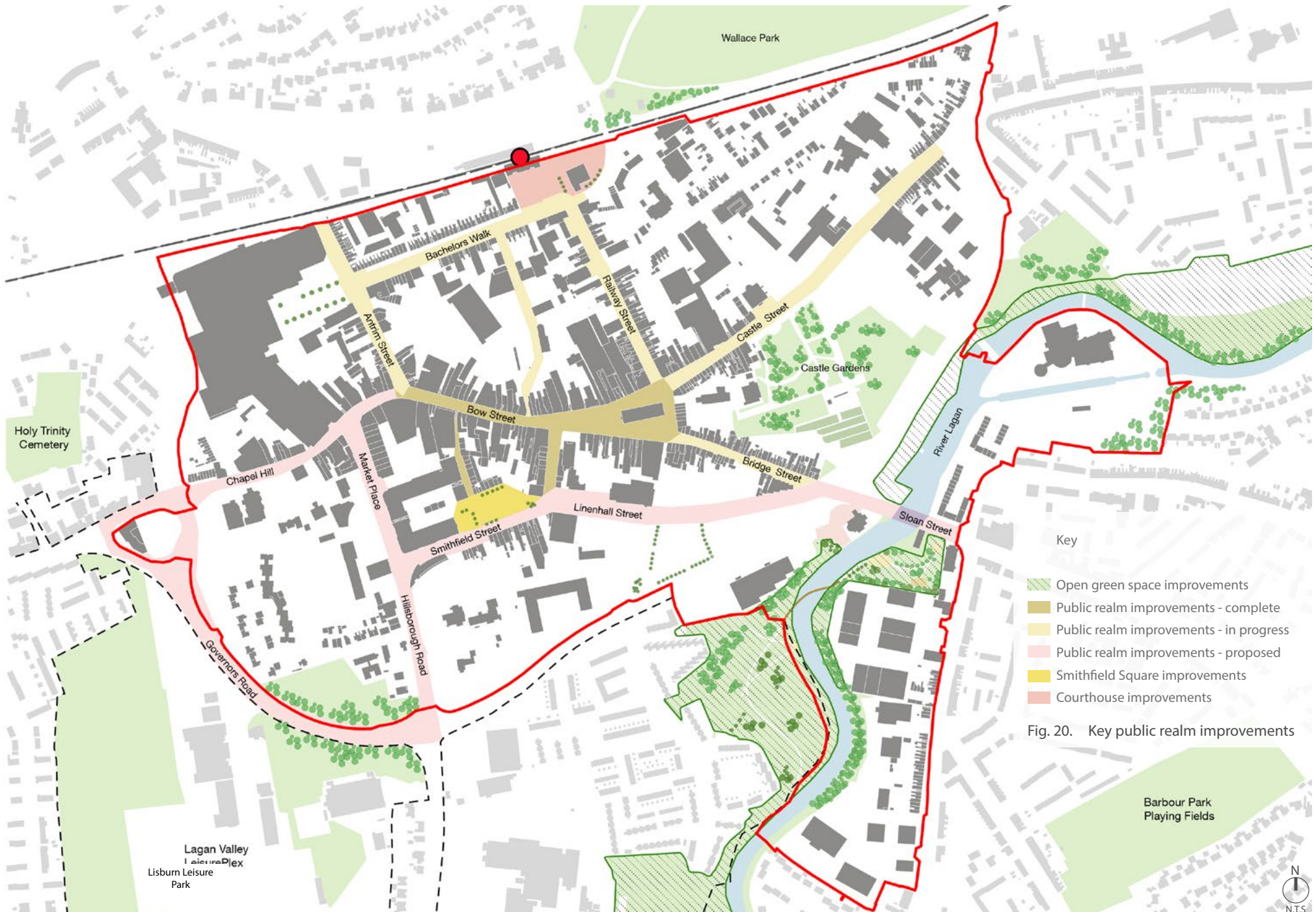


Fig. 20. Key public realm improvements

3.5 Leisure and Recreation

River Lagan Towpath

The Lagan Navigation Towpath provides 11 miles / 17km of continuous off-road public access linking Belfast and Lisburn. The towpath takes the walker or cyclist along the river and canal system through a variety of wetland, riverside meadows and mixed woodland. Home to a variety of wildlife, the canal system dates to the late 18th century and many features still give an insight into the majestic era of the lighter - the name for the boats that originally travelled on the Lagan Navigation.

The towpath is a key feature of the Lagan Valley Regional Park and an asset with greater potential to contribute to the central area. It can be accessed at Lagan Valley Island and via a pedestrian link off Laganbank Road. The latter pedestrian link is not particularly visible for the first time or occasional visitor despite signage at the immediate entrance to the towpath.

The link to the park from Laganbank Road and the City Centre needs to be improved and supported by advance direction signing provision. The Laganbank Road frontage site comprises a vacant former bar and restaurant building and surface car parking. Redevelopment of this site should incorporate measures to improve visual linkage and physical access to the riverside path which links to Union Locks the southernmost point of the towpath.

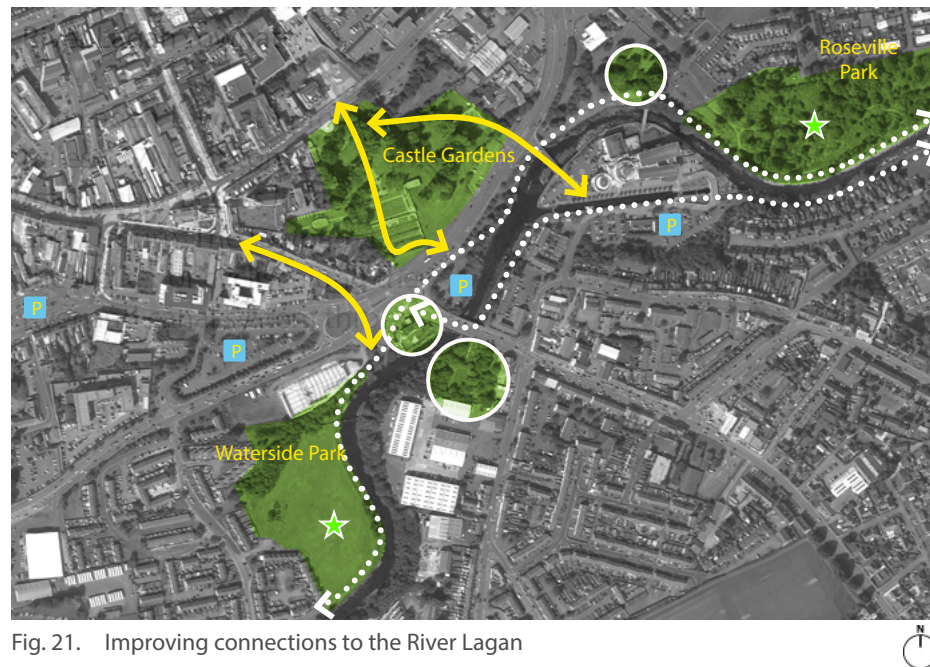
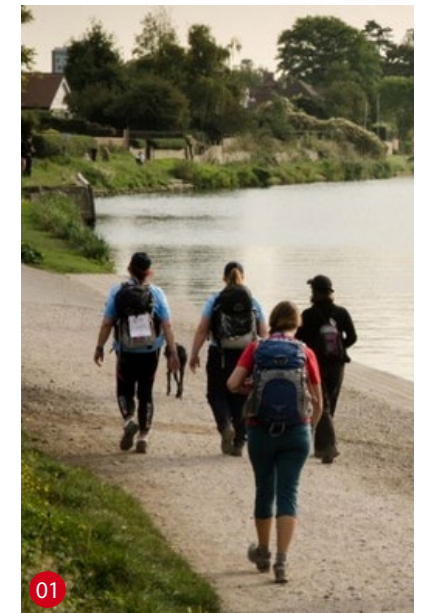


Fig. 21. Improving connections to the River Lagan



The opportunity exists to encourage walkers and cyclists using the towpath, and who may have accessed it at points further towards Belfast, to take the opportunity to visit Lisburn City Centre. Raising visitor awareness of what Lisburn City Centre has to offer, could be achieved via wayfinding and information provision in terms of signing, print and digital media and organised events such as walking festivals or a connecting City Centre trail loop. It is recognised that sections of the towpath need improvement to increase their attractiveness to regular users and visitors.

Walking and cycling tourism is increasing as is awareness of the consequent health and wellbeing benefits. Urban centres that can provide a range of accommodation options, an interesting evening economy including a food and drink offer, secure cycle parking and access to bike hire or cycle maintenance services will be in a good position to attract activity seeking visitors.

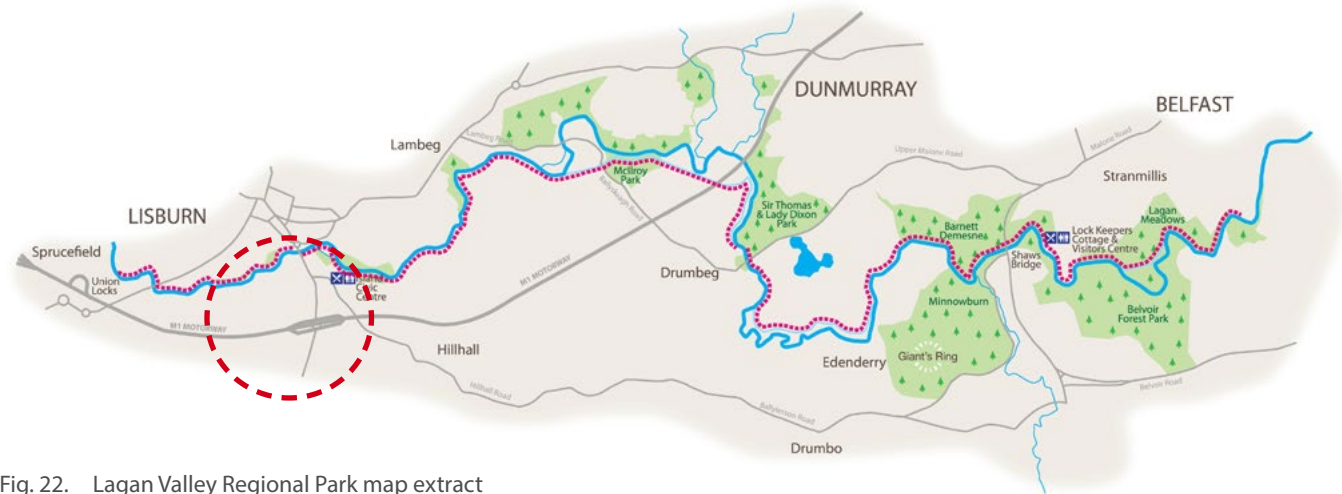


Fig. 22. Lagan Valley Regional Park map extract



- 01 Riverside walkers
- 02 Events occurring on the waterfront
- 03 Leisure uses on the water

3.6 Events, animation and the evening economy

Events

Since the publication of the 2010 City Centre Masterplan and subsequent investment in the public realm, the number of events in the City Centre has increased greatly.

There is now a well-managed programme of events across the year that animates and enhances the vitality of the City Centre. LCCC have invested in equipment such as deck chairs, tables and chairs and children’s games which allow public spaces to be used daily by users of the City Centre.

It is crucial to continue to invest in the existing programme of events and continue to explore new events which will encourage people to spend more time in the City Centre, especially in the evenings.

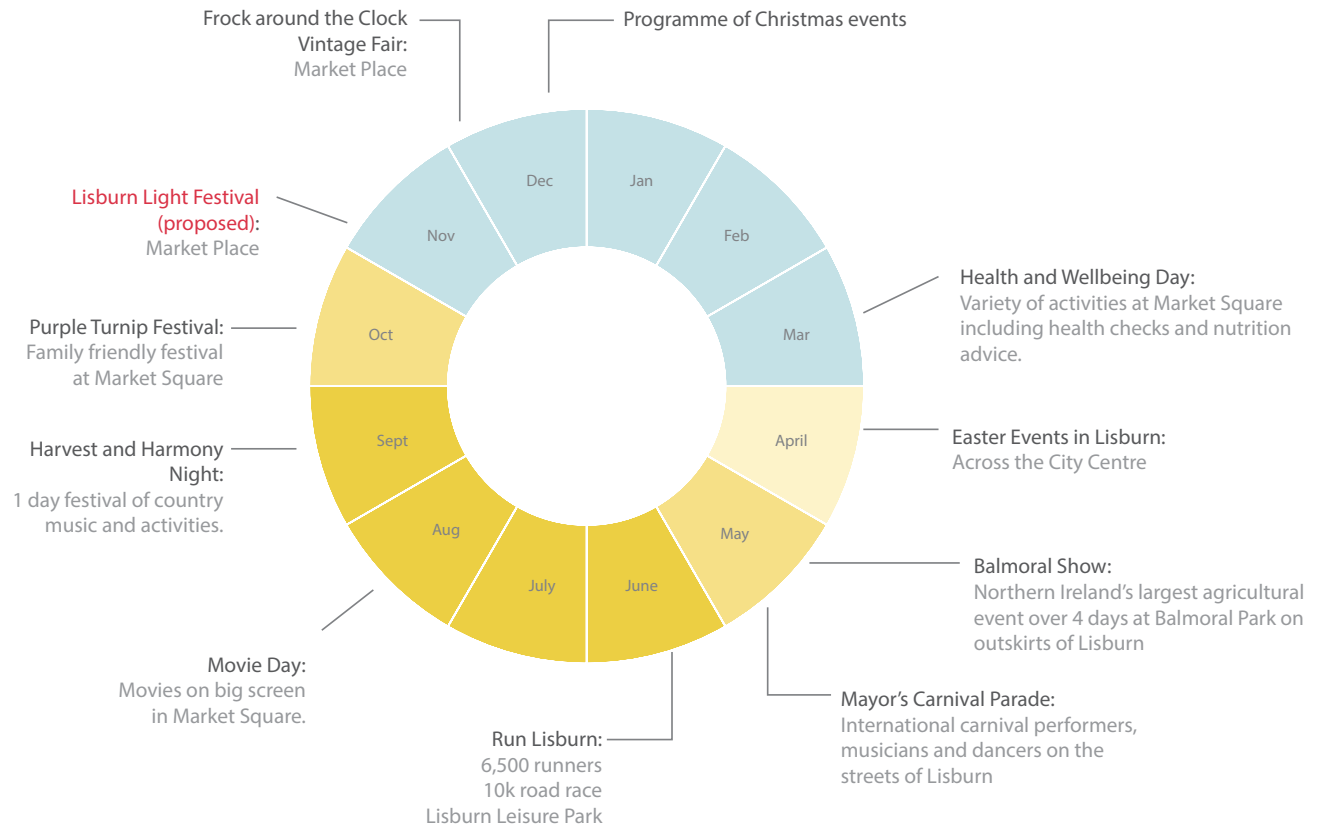


Fig. 23. The growing annual schedule of events in Lisburn City Centre

The power of light

Many cities have developed lighting festivals or curated lumière events and attracted thousands of visitors. Most famously the Lumière festival of light in Lyon, France has inspired many. The festival exploits one of the perceived negative aspects of winter, namely lack of daylight and uses this as a canvas to showcase works by various lighting artists across the city. In recent years London Lumière and Durham Lumière, have emerged as successful partner events. Light works relate to installations, lighting of bridges and structures and the projection of light works or moving images on building façades.

An outdoor lighting event has been approved for Lisburn City Centre which will build on the bespoke light installations that are already part of the events space in Market Square, including the interactive LED light floor and lighting columns. The event has been commissioned for a 3-year period to run initially from 2018 – 2021. The Lighting Festival will:

- Provide a major new event attracting visitors during the quiet winter months;
- Stimulate the evening economy;
- Provide invaluable marketing through both established media channels and informal social media; and
- Assist in the branding of Lisburn as a short break destination.



Fig. 24. Above two images, Durham Cathedral projection installation.
Below, temporary installation at London Lumière



Examples of meanwhile uses, events and festival spaces

Meanwhile uses

Meanwhile use is often seen as the first stage of a longer-term regeneration programme which can be a low cost and low risk opportunity for local businesses and enterprises.

Lisburn City Centre already has an emerging meanwhile uses scene. The Penny Square Market initiative on Haslem's Lane has transformed a small disused plot of land into a unique space providing new and independent businesses a place that supports them in setting up shop and a shared space for skills and ideas. Albeit small in scale this interesting initiative in combination with regular markets helps to differentiate the City Centre offer and support the visitor experience.

Temporary buildings and structures can range from prefabricated modular units, often utilising modular storage units such as cargo containers, to those which are purpose designed and low cost and those which are demountable and inhabit a space for a few days.

An up-scaled meanwhile uses approach to some of the key development sites could in the first instance be considered in combination with the development of the annual events programme. Meanwhile use such as food outlets could add to the attractiveness of visiting an event and complement existing cafés and food outlets already located in the City Centre. Alternatively, the temporary reuse of a vacant building for business or gallery purposes could be considered. Several towns and cities have adopted this approach utilising land and property in public sector ownership and in some cases linking with local arts organisations or educational institutions.

Evening economy

The respondents were asked what improvements would make them visit the City Centre more often in the evenings, with more and better restaurants being mentioned most frequently.

A key objective is to improve the leisure, visitor and evening economy for Lisburn City Centre. Alongside this it is recognised that there is an opportunity to utilise public sector assets as a catalyst for regeneration.

There has been a substantial rise in the number of restaurants, cafés, pubs and take-aways in recent years. These generate footfall, complement the retail offer and provide essential facilities to attract people to live in the City Centre. It will be important to continually encourage new businesses to locate in the City Centre.

There is an opportunity to review the current use of the Irish Linen Centre and the potential for this to be a key driver for the cultural / evening economy.

At present the Island Arts Centre is well located for those travelling by car, however does not encourage the use of local bars and restaurants within the City Centre core. The relocation of the Arts Centre to a more central location has many benefits. Crucially, it will drive footfall in the evenings which will complement the retail and leisure offer. It would encourage people to have an 'evening out' in Lisburn City Centre where they can have dinner, see a show and finish the night at a local bar. There are several sites which could accommodate the Arts Centre, for example the Laganbank Quarter or Jordan's Mill, however the feasibility of this proposal will need to be explored further.

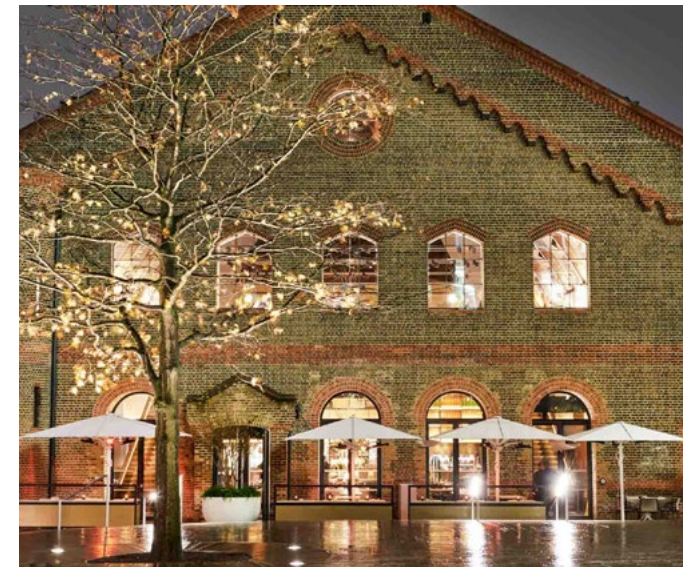


Fig. 25. Successful regeneration of existing historic buildings at the German Gymnasium at King's Cross, London, and the Distillery District, Toronto

Next steps

Public consultation

To get to this stage we have spoken to a range of stakeholders. Now that we have developed some ideas for the City Centre we want to hear the views of as many people as possible, from those working and living in the area to those who visit and pass through it. This consultation is open to everyone who would like to comment on the future of the City Centre.

Your feedback will be invaluable. It will allow us to determine if the is moving in the right direction and is meeting the needs and aspirations of everyone. Your views will help us develop the final 2018 Masterplan which will be published later this year.

Providing feedback

There are several ways to provide feedback:

Online:

Please fill in the online questionnaire at the Council's website - <https://www.lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk>

By email:

Please email your questionnaire or comments to:

Yvonne.Burke@lisburncastlereagh.gov.uk

Speak to the team

We will also be holding a public drop in event on **Thursday 7th March 2019 at 6.00pm, Lagan Valley Island, Lisburn**. Please come along and speak to the team if you have any questions or queries regarding the draft masterplan refresh.



For further information please contact:

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