



# COCKERMOUTH MARKET PLACE AREA MASTERPLAN PROSPECTUS



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## Forward

I believe this Prospectus will accelerate **appropriate and sustainable investment** into the Market Place Area of Cockermouth. Investment in the Market Place Area will bring our heritage alive and further rejuvenate the town. The exciting Vision captured here is ambitious and challenging. The Market Place is the historical and cultural heart of Cockermouth and this is a once in a generation opportunity to breathe new life into the area, driven by **sympathetic investment in the quality of our cultural, built and natural heritage**.

The Prospectus sets out clearly and for the first time, a way in which the Cockermouth Partnership and all our partners can confidently address and more importantly **deliver on the real challenges and opportunities** that confront the Market Place Area now in the early twenty first century.

I have been particularly impressed, that the intensive process of preparing the Prospectus, has been a **real partnership effort** led by the Douglas Wheeler Associates Team, but with the very active involvement of the Cockermouth Partnership, our partner agencies and above all business and residents from Cockermouth and in particular those from the Market Place Area.

Private and public investors can make decisions about the Market Place Area in a clear context. **The Prospectus is the common agenda** that will raise quality, ensure a consistent 'joined up' investment and provide confidence about the future of the Market Place Area.

I am delighted to commend our Prospectus for the Market Place Area to you.

*Margaret Jackson*

Chair of the Cockermouth Partnership

June 2006



# Introduction

In 2012 the Market Place Area is transformed as a very distinctive, vibrant, mixed use people friendly place.

This is where visitors can go at a slower pace, linger and discover the built, cultural, natural and economic heritage of Cockermouth.

The interaction of heritage makes the place unique and now very much alive and celebrated.

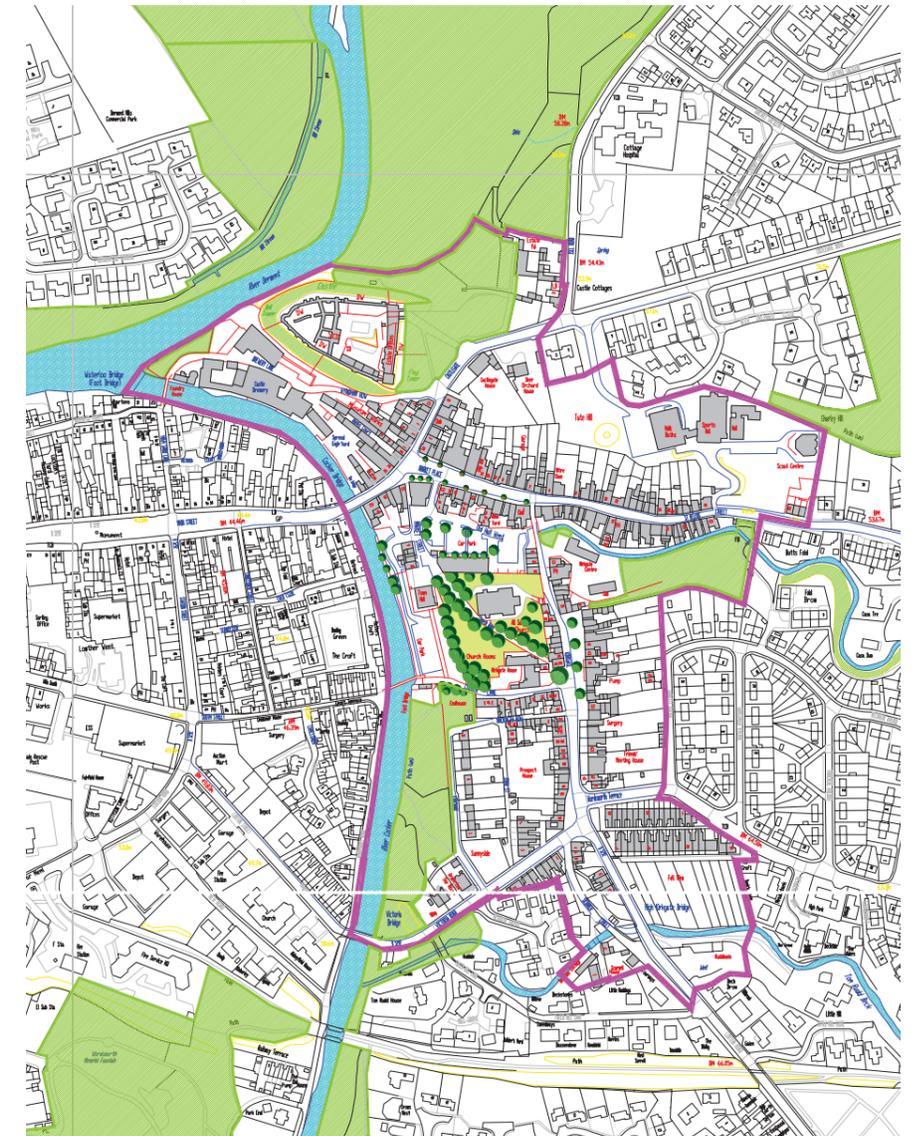
This Prospectus is a statement of what the Cockermouth Partnership sees as the key elements of the Masterplan for the Market Place Area of Cockermouth. The starting point is that heritage of the Market Place Area is an undoubted asset. The Prospectus summarises the analysis, vision, programmes and key projects that will use this asset and build on the town's strengths and traditional values to **breathe new life into the heritage of what is the oldest area of Cockermouth**. The aim over the next six years is to use our cultural, built, economic and natural heritage to regenerate and improve the quality and interest of the Market Place Area as a high quality designed and people friendly place

The Market Place Area is the historic heart of Cockermouth with a number of important historic buildings and once was the commercial centre of the town but whose fortunes have declined as the centre of the gravity of Cockermouth has moved south. Today the area is tired but despite the lack of footfall and the closure of the traditional street market there are some very promising signs particularly with the Kirkgate Centre and the vibrant cluster of **galleries, restaurants and independent businesses** that have been established and now need to be encouraged and reinforced with other investment.

The Market Place Area is a living place that has had a special past and we are convinced by working with our private and public sector partners to implement our shared vision we can deliver the kind of quality place where people will want to **spend time discovering and revisiting**. Market Place Area can become a European beacon for the organic rejuvenation of a historic area of a small market town and rural service centre. This rejuvenation will make life better for the community, attract investment and visitors and create jobs and a viable future.

Cockermouth Partnership has worked closely with a specialist team lead by Douglas Wheeler Associates (DWA Team) to prepare the Market Place Area Masterplan. The DWA Team and their roles are:

- Douglas Wheeler Associates: Integrated economic development, community involvement & project direction
- Gray, Marshall & Associates: Urban design & architecture
- Faber Maunsell/AECOM: Movement, parking, structural engineering & costs
- Donaldsons: Property



Cockermouth Masterplan Study Area

## Market Place Area Masterplan: Brief

The main requirements of our brief for the Masterplan were to:

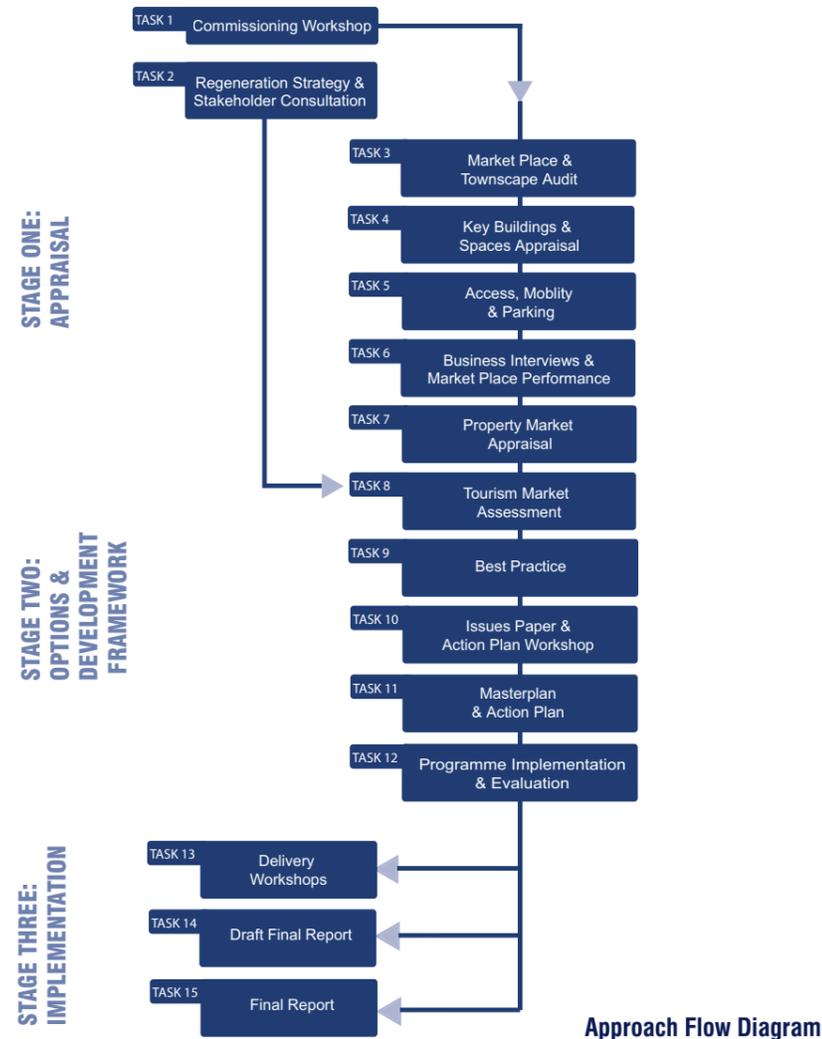
- Prepare a strategy with practical projects that could be implemented in the short/medium term
- Stimulate tangible economic & environmental regeneration
- Promote organic and incremental development that respects the 'spirit of place' of the Market Place area
- Encourage very high quality design & architecture
- Ensure the future economic prosperity of the Market Place Area and encourage a vibrant social and cultural scene
- Ensure that the Market Place Area plays a key role in Cockermouth's future development



Aerial Photograph Looking Northwards

## Approach To Masterplan

The Masterplan was prepared over an intensive four month period commencing in January 2006 and the key tasks that were undertaken are summarised in the Flow Diagram below.



A crucial principle that has driven our approach to the preparation of the Market Place Masterplan has been to **develop a small number of well considered tangible projects** and targeted economic development initiatives **that can be implemented**. These will consolidate what has already been achieved in the Market Place Area and accelerate the process of establishing a new focus and function for the area within Cockermouth. Initial funding of £574k has been ringfenced by Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA) to implement suitable economic development projects in the Market Place area in 2007/8. This would be 50% 'match funded'.

## Community & Business Involvement

The preparation of the Market Place Area Masterplan was founded on an extensive process of consultations and collaboration with our partners including Cockermouth Town Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, voluntary organisations, other agencies and in particular businesses and residents in the Market Place area. We have also used a series of regular local press releases to keep the community well informed of progress.

Two well attended Workshops were held at the Kirkgate Centre namely:

- Action Plan Workshop: 16 February
- Delivery Workshop: 29 March



Youth Workshops were held on 16 February and 29 March. Detailed notes of the Workshops are presented in the Annexe. Fundamentally the workshops gave the participants the opportunity to identify and discuss key issues and so help shape a broad consensus on the vision for the Market Place Area and on priority programmes and projects. Cockermouth Partnership is grateful for the constructive contributions and we hope the Prospectus does justice to the quality of inputs from the various Workshops.

COCKERMOUTH

Contribute to the Cockermouth Market Place Area Masterplan



Have your say on the **Market Place Area (including Kirkgate, Castlegate & Brewery area)**



Douglas Wheeler Associates is working with the Cockermouth Partnership to develop an Action Plan for the Market Place Area in Cockermouth.

As part of this process all residents and businesses are invited to an:



**Action Plan Workshop**  
7pm Thursday 16 February 2006  
Kirkgate Centre

For further information contact:  
Gillian Macfarlane  
07764 605726

*Come along - and have your say !  
Everyone is Welcome*

## Prospectus Structure

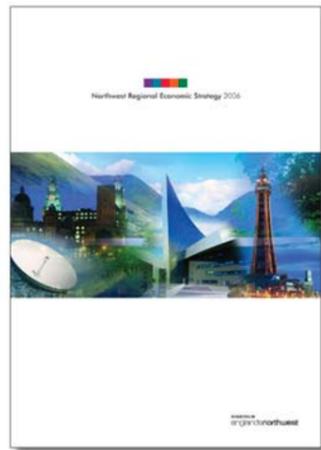
The prospectus is presented in five sections namely:

- Policy Economic & Business Overview
- Market Place Area: Buildings & Spaces; Access & Mobility
- Market Place: The Vision
- Action Plan: Programmes & Projects

# Market Place Area: Policy, Economic & Business Overview

## Policy Context

The Market Place Area Masterplan needs to sit within a complex framework of economic, social and physical policies, plans, funding programmes and priorities that span from the national, regional, Cumbria, Allerdale to the Cockermouth level. Effective integrated regeneration requires strategically driven action from agencies working at a variety of different scales. The Prospectus has been developed within this framework and this section briefly summarises the relevant regional, Cumbria and Cockermouth strategies and policies to highlight the implications for the Market Place Area. Annex 1 includes a full and detailed review of the ten main relevant strategy and policy documents, highlighting key objectives and the implications for the Market Place Area.



### Regional: Northwest Regional Economic Strategy 2006

The Strategy was published in March 2006 and is the 'blueprint for sustainable economic growth in the region' over the next 20 years. The Regional Economic Strategy analyses the region's strengths and weaknesses and sets out prioritised actions that

the region should take to maximise its sustainable economic performance. The overall vision of what the Northwest would be like if its potential was realised is:

**'a dynamic, sustainable international economy, which competes on the basis of knowledge, advanced technology and an excellent quality of life for all'**

The Strategy is based on six goals that underpin the vision and these include:

- Where **productivity and enterprise levels are high**, driven by innovation, leadership excellence and high skills; and carbon emissions are low
- Where **key assets are fully utilised** including the Natural Environment especially the **Lake District and the Rural Economy**
- The economies of East Lancashire, Blackpool, Barrow and **West Cumbria** are regenerated

The three major drivers to improving the Northwest's economic performance and achieving the overall goals of the vision are:

- Improving productivity and growing the market
- Growing the size and capability of the workforce
- Creating the right conditions for sustainable growth and private sector investment.

The Strategy sets out 122 actions for achieving the vision split into five themes of Business, Skills and Education, People and Jobs, Infrastructure and Quality of Life. The relevant actions for Cockermouth Market Place Area include:

- **4. Improving the formation, survival and growth of enterprises.** Reviewing the business support needs of and focus support of (among other priorities) businesses in the rural economy
- 10. Develop **growth and innovation in the tourism sector** through the continued implementation of the Regional Tourism Strategy
- 21. Support **ICT usage and digital content development.** Encourage homeworking and mobile working via ICT usage
- Develop a **skilled workforce in rural areas** to enable business to diversify and expand
- 51. Diversify the economic base and support sectors with growth potential in the rural economy focussing on the **lagging rural areas** including Allerdale
- 56. Implement plans to ensure **ongoing growth in the rural economy** as part of the Regional Rural Delivery Framework
- 83. Invest in **quality business accommodation/workspace** and focus on two priorities that includes the rural areas
- 89. Deliver plans that support **sustainable growth within and adjacent to the Lake District National Park**
- 95. Promote the image of the region, **develop and implement marketing programmes** to promote a positive image of the benefits and diversity of the Northwest as a location for business, visitors, investors and as a place to live
- 101. Develop the **quality of the visitor experience.** Improve the product associated with the region's 'attack brands' and 'signature projects' identified in the Regional Tourism Strategy, in line with market demand
- 104. Develop and implement a **Visitor Information Strategy** for the region

- 119 Invest in **quality public realm, green space and environmental quality focused on** (among other priorities) **Key Rural Service Centres.**
- 121. **'Future proof' physical development projects** to ensure that they meet the demands of future generations.

### Creative Cumbria & Cumbria: 'Desire Lines': A Cultural Assets Investment Strategy for Cumbria (2005)

Creative Cumbria is the sub regional creative industries agency for Cumbria and is actively pursuing indigenous economic development and inward investments opportunities arising from the wealth of creative talent that Cumbria's breathtaking landscape and seascape have inspired.

Creative Cumbria has highlighted that one of the key reasons that Cumbria's economy is lagging other sub regions is that Creative Industries in Cumbria are grossly underperforming and have not provided the 'replacement' economy that has been achieved in many other regions. Currently the sector employs between 2% and 4.5% (4,000 and 10,000 people) of the workforce. In Cumbria there are few Media and Advertising businesses because the underperforming local economy prevents the 'flowering' of these types of businesses, even though they are sub sectors that provide key high added value. There is however disproportionately high activity in sectors that produce the least GVA (gross value added) e.g. Designer Fashion, Design and Craft, pointing to the preponderance of 'lifestyle' business.

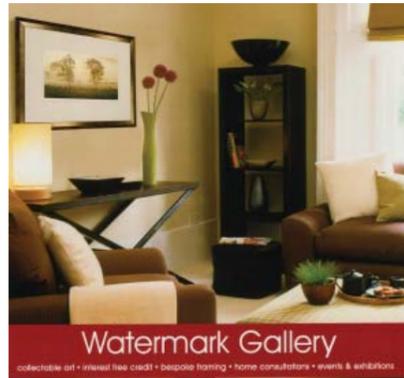


As a result, Creative Cumbria has identified the following challenges for the Creative Industries in Cumbria:

- Geographical clusters are too widely spread or too remote from each other
- Information, support and funds available from disparate sources, but not easily found
- Comparative lack of learning, training and business development opportunities
- Current sector initiatives are fragmented, small scale, dislocated and lack critical mass
- Too many lifestyle businesses which engender a lackluster sense of competition
- The net graduate loss and aged population creates critical recruitment and skills gaps that are key success factors in these sectors
- Working with partners to provide affordable housing to encourage indigenous growth and inward investment in the creative industries
- The internal market is too small and therefore need to focus on external markets

To respond to these challenges Creative Cumbria is promoting an ambitious high level objective: to at **least double the size of the sector** which is currently valued at around £104 million in GVA. This will be delivered by promoting a two-pronged strategy namely:

1. Create a new market based on **inward migration** of businesses locating in Cumbria to serve national and international markets.
2. Maximise the development of **indigenous business** in sub sectors where Cumbria has real strengths and real opportunities.



The fundamental justification for this approach is that the internal market within Cumbria has too small a critical mass to encourage the formation and survival of significant new numbers of creative businesses in Cumbria. Therefore by using Cumbria's USPs to attract new entrepreneurs to live in Cumbria, but operate globally in external markets, they will eventually not only produce higher GVA from Cumbria, but also start to provide employment opportunities for indigenous Cumbrians. As part of the Market Place Area Masterplan there are real opportunities to focus on opportunities to **attract inward investment** in the creative industries as well as to provide a range of services dedicated to maximising the growth opportunities of existing and new **indigenous** businesses.

'Desire Lines' will also help to inform future investment in cultural and the creative industries in Cumbria. The study is the result of Cumbria Vision working closely with its partners Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Cultural Forum, Arts Council England, NWDA and West Lakes Renaissance. Desire Lines has identified the potential of Cumbria's built and natural environment, in the key creative and cultural industries sub sectors, to promote national and international centres of excellence.

**Cockermouth together with Keswick has been identified as one of seven Centres of Excellence** which will be a focus for promotion and investment. The Keswick – Cockermouth Centre of Excellence is based on:

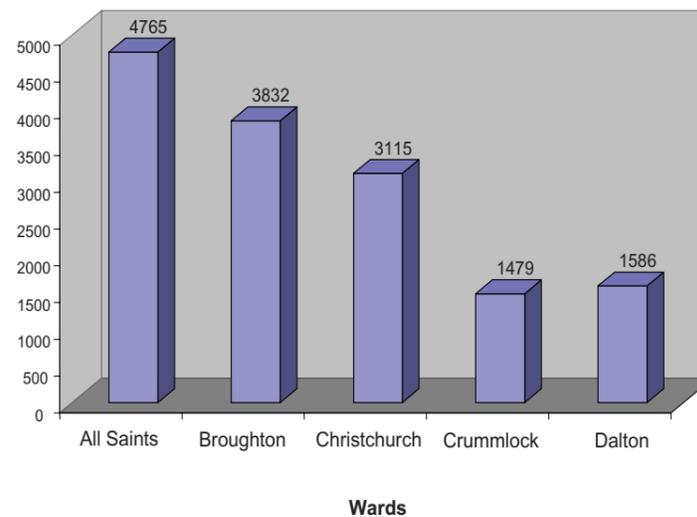
- Visual arts, galleries, crafts & design
- Performing arts & music
- Creative education & lifelong learning
- Writing & literature
- Spirituality & religion
- Screen based media



## Cockermouth Partnership

At a **local level Cockermouth Partnership** was established in 1999 and now delivers the Community Action Plan and the Market Towns Initiative. The *Cockermouth Partnership Action Plan* (2003) was informed by extensive community consultation and identified **Market Place environmental enhancement as a landmark project**. Market Place was identified as a priority through a number of the topic groups as the area of the town that most needed regeneration. It is the historic core of the town and is included in the Conservation Area.

The Partnership recently commissioned a Conservation Appraisal, Management Plan and Design Guide that are in the focus of being adopted by Allerdale Borough Council. The Appraisal highlights the unique attributes of the Conservation Area and the Market Place Area in particular as **the highly defined northern edge of the historic core of the town** and the impressive viewpoints including All Saint's Churchyard. The Appraisal also identifies the opportunity to **improve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area** by the removal, redevelopment and improvement of buildings and spaces including the Depot Building and public toilets in the Bitterbeck car park.



**Figure 2.1 Cockermouth Population**

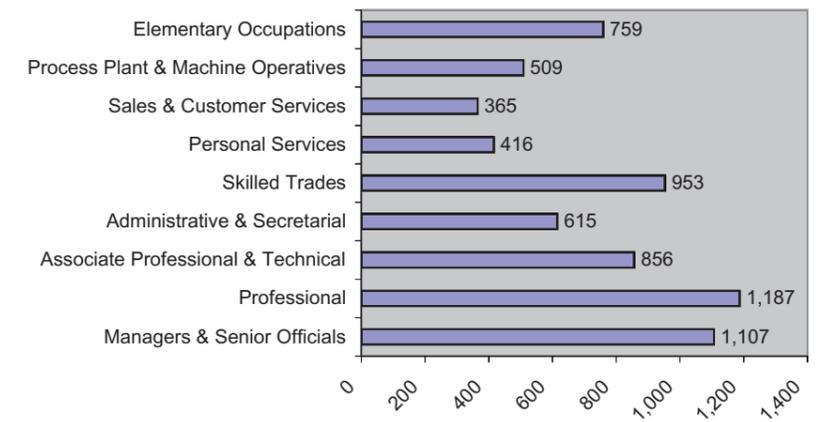
Source: National Statistics, Census (2001)

The statistics show that there is a **higher proportion of the 45-59 age-group** living in Cockermouth compared to the GB average and reflects the number of managers and professionals who live in the town but who travel to other areas particularly on the West Cumbria coast to work. The **smaller proportion of 18-29 year-olds** in Cockermouth indicates the migration of young people, when they go to university and then do not return to the local area once they have gained their qualification and the limited availability of affordable housing. There are also a slightly higher proportion of people aged 65 and over in Cockermouth, highlighting the importance of providing appropriate public services for these age-groups.

## Economically Active & Employment by Occupation

In Cockermouth a **higher proportion of people aged between 16 and 74 are economically active** than the GB average of 76% with 81% in All Saints and 77% in Christchurch ward. In Cockermouth the highest proportion of people are employed full-time. The proportion of retired people is the second largest at 17.1% in Cockermouth, followed by 15.2% part-time employed or part-time self-employed. The CACI/ACORN (market research industry standard) profile shows a higher proportion of **'wealthy achievers/comfortably off'** in comparison with the UK average. Interestingly 'struggling families' also shows a higher than UK average and earnings generally are below the North West/England average and highlights local issues of poverty, deprivation and isolation that can be hidden within what appears a relatively 'wealthy town'.

Figure 2.2 shows that more than 33% of employment in Cockermouth is in the managers, senior officials and professional category. It is notable that more than a quarter of the employed people in Cockermouth (28.6%) work in the public sector, emphasising the importance of this sector in maintaining the local economy.



**Figure 2.2 Cockermouth Employment by Occupation**

Source: National Statistics, Census (2001)

## Youth

Within Cockermouth there are good schools, many organisations, sports clubs and support groups including the Reef Youth Centre. Two workshops were held with young people at Cockermouth School to get their views on the emerging vision for the Market Place Area. A number of the young people who attended felt that facilities for young people could be further improved.

# Business Base

## Town Centre: Context

Despite the challenges facing the Cumbrian economy including an above average dependence on declining and vulnerable industries and a lower than average presence in emerging sections, Cockermouth performs well as a rural service centre for North West Cumbria.

Although Cockermouth is located outside the Lake District National Park **tourism** is important in the local economy. The Tourist Information Centre located in the Town Hall typically records around 30,000 annual visitors. Market research and discussions with the existing local hotels has highlighted the relatively high occupancy at 80/85% based on corporate business often driven by the 'nuclear industry' on the West Coast' during the week and short break market at weekends. Clearly there is a seasonal trend to the short break market with fewer visitors and lower occupancy in certain winter months and Sunday evenings are generally reported to be quieter.

In general, Main Street is well kept, with very few vacant units. There are some units that are tired looking, but on the whole it is a bustling, lively street, obviously popular and frequented by both tourists and locals. Main Street is occupied in the majority by independent, local businesses, with some national multiples present too. Located just off Main Street, on South Street, is the relatively new (2003) Sainsbury's superstore.

In the town centre there are:

- 151 retail outlets this equates to 259,000 sq ft.
- 8 vacant units, which equates to 8,000 sq ft.
- 25 multiple outlets – including Boots, Sainsbury's, Wilkinson
- 24 convenience outlets – 58,000 sq ft
- 70 comparison outlets – 106,000 sq ft
- 49 service outlets – 87,000 sq ft

## Creative Industries

The 'Cultural Assets Mapping Appendix' in Desires Lines identifies 10 visual arts, galleries, crafts and design establishments in the wider Cockermouth area and a number of networks of independent artists are emerging that highlights Cockermouth's continuing role as a place of inspiration with a very high quality of life.

## Market Place Area: Business Base

In April 2006 out of a total of 50 businesses identified in the Market Place area, 42% (21) were interviewed. A selection of relevant key statistics is outlined below. A full summary of the business interview consultations is contained in the Annexe.

## Market Place Area: Company/Business Prospects

### Company Details

- 43% of respondents have been established as a business for less than 5 years. A third of businesses are well established and have been operating for over 15 years
- 57% respondents have been in the Market Place area for less than 5 years
- All businesses interviewed were **independent** and therefore not part of a large group

### Location

- 67% stated that the reason they operate in Cockermouth Market Place was due to the availability of a building of appropriate size or that the building itself was of particular interest
- 24% identified affordable rents as the main reason for choosing the Market Place

### Customers, Employees and Trade

#### Customers

- 35% spend £10-£25 per transaction and another 40% spend more than £25 per visit
- All businesses interviewed rely on 50% or more of their trade from regular customers; 37% of trade is from passing trade
- Although almost 60% of businesses interviewed stated that a third of their business comes from Cockermouth residents, 77% say that over one third of customers come from further afield, indicating that the Market Place area draws a significant amount of **trade from outside the local area.**

#### Employees

- There is almost a 50:50 split between full time and part-time employees
- There is an average of over 5 employees per business. **Around 250 full/part time jobs are estimated to be based in the Market Place Area**
- The largest employers interviewed (excluding the Brewery which employs 70) were: St Helen's Dental Practice, The Bitter End and the Allerdale Court Hotel.
- 67% of respondents had 3 or less full time or part time employees
- Almost all of employees live in Cockermouth or the immediate area



### Turnover

- 65% of businesses interviewed have **experienced increased, or better than expected turnover** in the last 3 years; only 20% experienced a reduced turnover

## Property Expansion and Business Development Advice

### Expansion

- 2 businesses interviewed had expansion plans and a further 4 may consider relocation if larger premises became available

### Business Development Advice

- 38% of the businesses interviewed have a requirement for **Information Technology advice** in relation to developing their business
- A further 20% indicated a requirement for **marketing or networking advice**

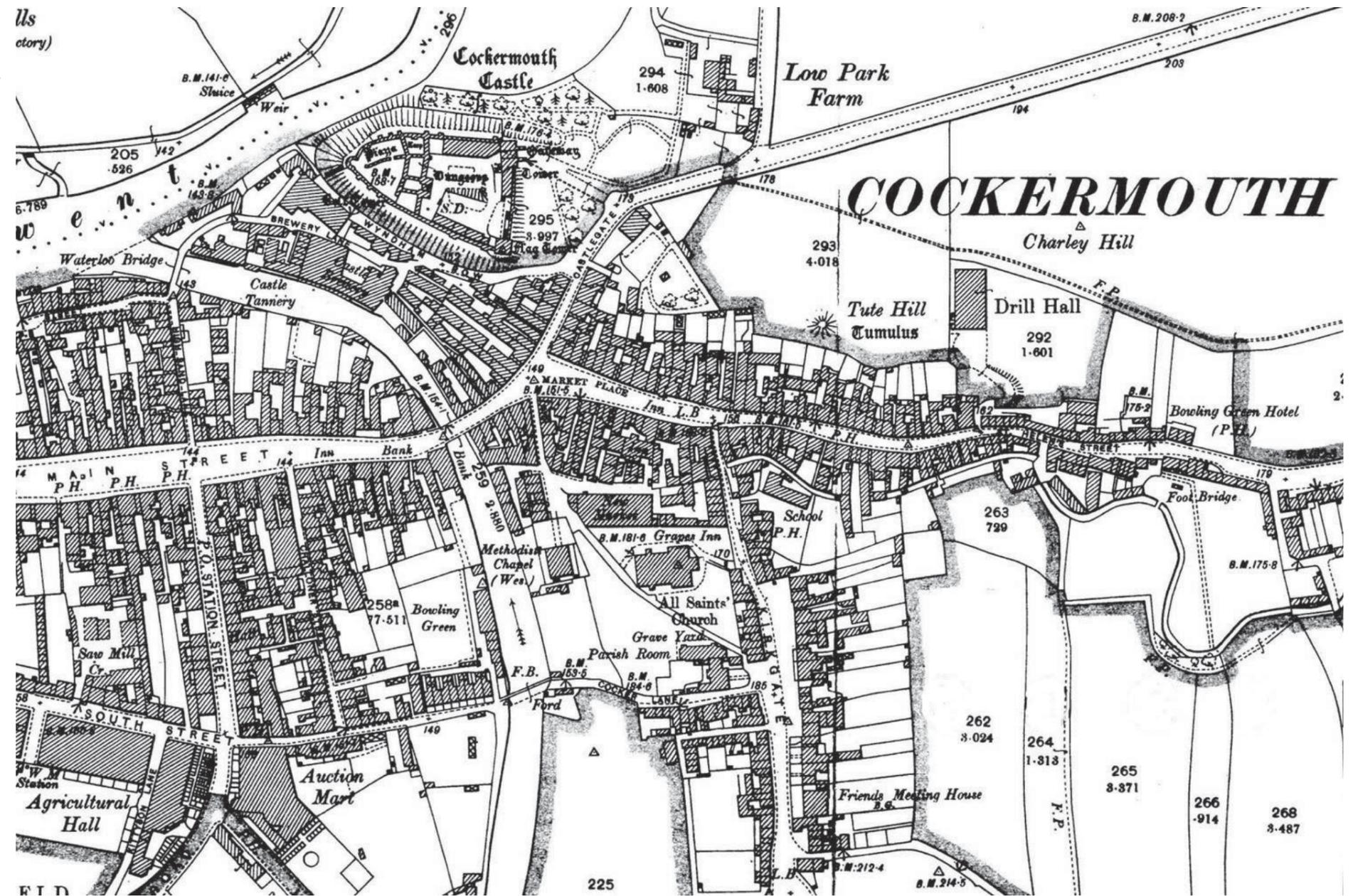
## Market Place Area: Policy, Economic & Business Base Conclusions

### Strengths

- Very supportive and current policy framework for the economic regeneration of the Market Place Area, particularly the Northwest Economic Strategy 2006, Cumbria Desire Lines and Cockermouth Partnership Market Towns Initiative
- Cockermouth has a compact town centre with good access between the Sainsbury's supermarket and the rest of the town centre to encourage linked trips
- Attractive, riverside location with a range of tourist attractions – Brewery, Castle, William Wordsworth House
- High quality, independent businesses with retailers offering a wide range of crafts, gifts, and furniture in the town centre
- Impressive cluster of galleries and restaurants in the Market Place area including Castlegate that has an international reputation and the award winning Quince & Medlar Restaurant
- The Market Place Area accommodates around 50 businesses creating around 250 full and part time jobs
- The Kirkgate Centre is widely acclaimed as a performing arts venue for the town and wider rural area
- Joint marketing with existing attractions in wider area and build on the success of the Georgian Fair and the Marvejols Town Twining; Cockermouth is already on the Cumbria 'Ale Trail'
- Cockermouth together with Keswick has been identified as one of seven Centres of Excellence in the key creative and cultural industries and this is an opportunity to accelerate an arts and cultural led regeneration
- The friendly Tourist Information Centre is located in the area and has more than 30,000 annual visitors.
- There are fewer empty properties in the Market Place area compared to three years ago.

## Weaknesses

- Market Place area needs to improve the general appearance; footfall and parking issues to be tackled; occupiers on Market Place need to be sufficiently different to occupiers on Main Street, to provide visitors with a reason to go to the Market Place
- Visitor attractions – no single main attraction to draw in high visitor instead a number of small, individual attractions that could be improved
- Signage and wayfinding is poor in terms of car parking, interpretation and tourist information centre
- The Depot Building gives a poor impression
- Town Hall is in need of maintenance and remedial work
- Limited access to the Castle
- Continued inertia/deterioration of buildings, facilities and the environment in the town (i.e. doing nothing!)



Cockermouth: 1898

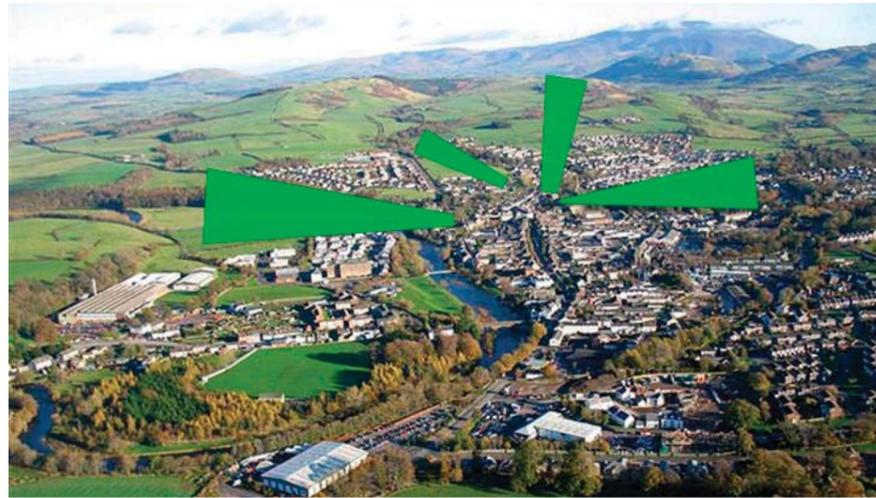
# Market Place Area: Buildings & Spaces; Access & Mobility

## Context

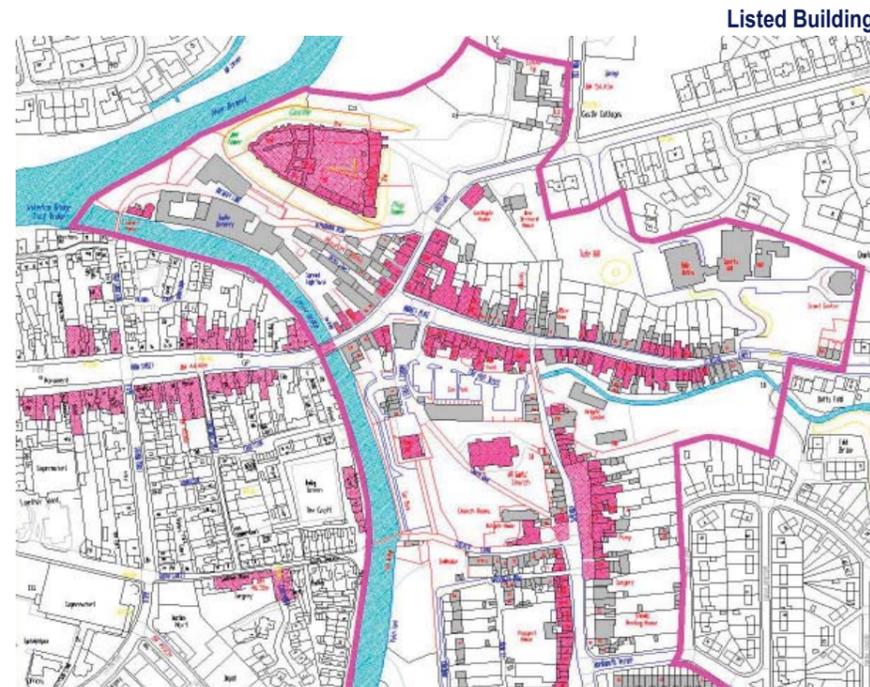
This section summarises the townscape of the Market Place Area and builds on the Conservation Appraisal commissioned by the Cockermouth Partnership (see page 4). Analysis on the ground and of historic plans (see 1898 plan opposite) and photographs of the Market Place Area highlights the **importance of the landscape setting**. Initial impressions of Cockermouth revolve around the urban space and as a market town, the built fabric has a strong character.

Main Street and Market Place are well defined. Market Place, perhaps because pressure for development, or redevelopment, has shifted elsewhere, has retained much of its historic fabric. Within the town the landscape setting is masked by the tightness of the urban grain. The Market Place area is included within the Cockermouth Conservation Area and includes a number of listed buildings. The Castle is somewhat reduced and ruinous and is partially concealed by trees, while All Saints Church, although on a prominent ridge, is partially obscured by surrounding buildings, especially the poor quality Depot Building.

The ridge on which All Saints Church sits is a distinctive landscape feature as is the ridge running down from Cockermouth School, past the sports/swimming centre and terminating with the Castle on its promontory at the junction of the River Cocker with the River Derwent. The ridges provide strong positive features around which the town has developed. The ridges and related 'green wedges' should and can act as wildlife and recreation corridors and continue to provide a strong element within the town, however for a number of reasons the effect has been broken and diminished.



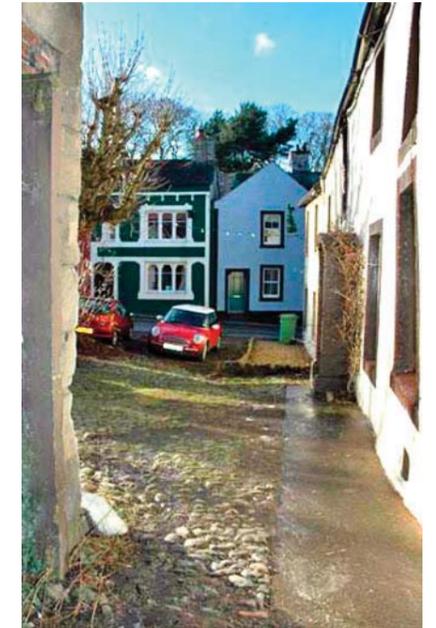
Green Wedges



Listed Buildings



Historic Kirkgate



Historic Urban Grain



Parkland Approach to Kirkgate



All Saints Church Yard



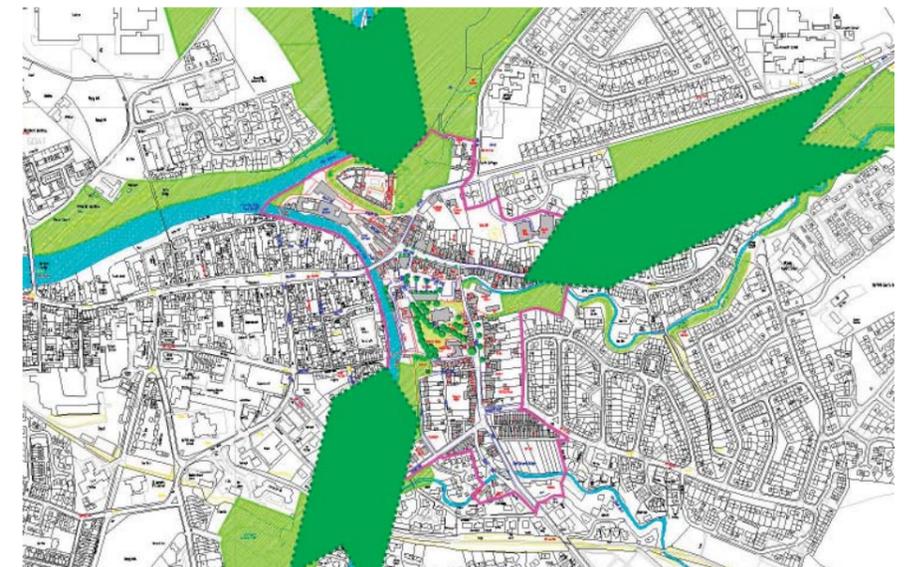
Riverside View to All Saints Church Spire



Mature Grounds of All Saints Church



Riverside and Landscape Setting



Green Wedges

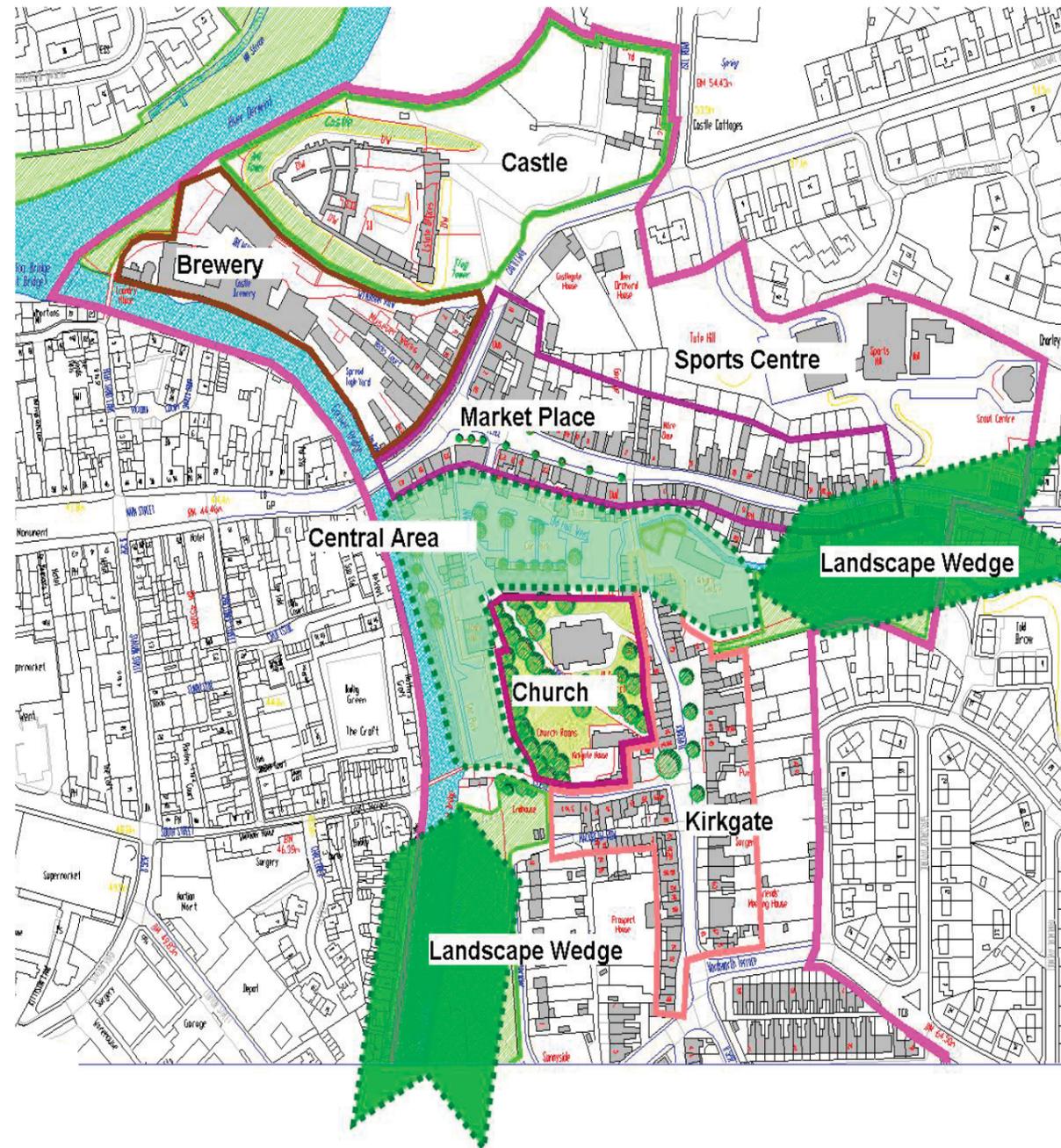
## Market Place Area

The Market Place area has a **number of strong elements**, each with a distinct character namely:

- Market Place
- Jennings Brewery and pattern of  
wents leading from Market Place
- The Castle
- All Saints Church and Churchyard
- Kirkgate

The strength of these highlights the negative areas which can be seen as:

- The car park and adjoining areas between All Saints Church and Market Place in the 'Central Area'
- The area around the sports/swimming centre



## Central Area

This summary suggests that a priority is to address the **amorphous 'L' shaped area** from the river bank around the Town Hall through to the Kirkgate Centre. A key aim would be to seek solutions which reinforce the landscape and pedestrian connections. In this way a strong **network of linking pedestrian routes** can be created, uniting disparate elements such as the Town Hall, Kirkgate Centre and Bitter End pub.

## Depot Building

The present, low grade use of the **Depot Building contributes little** to the cultural or business activities of the Market Place Area and the town. In addition:

- The building blocks views of All Saints Church from the north
- The 1997 structural report identifies that the present building sits on the remains of the remains of an earlier market hall and that structural defects are evident in the main walls
- Any new use or re-use will require the building in its present form to be demolished



Eastern Gable



Depot Interior

Other townscape issues around the Bitterbeck Car Park Area:

- Town Hall obscured by toilet block
- Dominance of parked cars
- Surfaces designed as roadways: not pedestrian-friendly
- Poor link to Kirkgate



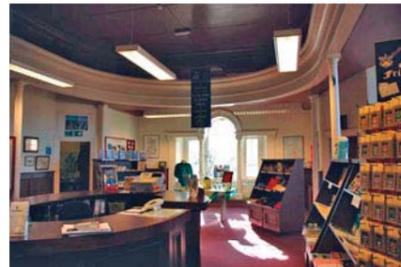
Town Hall Approach

### The Town Hall

The Town Hall is pivotal to the future of the Market Place Area. At present it appears run down, in need of essential repairs and appears under-utilised in relation to the architectural quality of the building. Essentially proposals need to increase its visibility and link to the town and regain its importance as a **cultural focus and civic meeting place** for Cockermouth.



Upper Floor



Ground Floor

### Kirkgate Centre

There is also an opportunity to improve the entrance/foyer of the Kirkgate Centre as part of comprehensive proposals for the Market Place Area.



### Market Place & Castlegate



Of equal importance to the 'Central Area' is the need to create a meaningful identity for the Market Place area as a whole. Focussing on the **creative industries, visual and performance arts with the galleries** and the Kirkgate Centre, related activities and support uses such as cafes, restaurants and specialist independent retailers will create an attractive and distinctive place for local people and visitors. Physical improvements need to be aimed at reducing the impact of vehicles and increasing pedestrian enjoyment of the space.

### The Brewery and Wents

This is a distinctive area of the town with particular character that could be further **improved in visual terms to better connect the Jennings Brewery** to the wider Market Place Area. The links through the wents are not immediately obvious and the partly completed link to the pavement at the end of the Cocker Bridge gives a tantalising hint of how the links could be strengthened and improved in a relatively straightforward way.



Banks Court



Went leading to Spread Eagle Yard



Toy Museum Interior

### Former Toy Museum

There could also be an opportunity to introduce a new creative industries incubator and **affordable work space for artists** into the former Toy Museum building.



### North Area

The area around the sports/swimming centre is effectively cut off from Market Place. Ideally a **new pedestrian route** using one of the wents could provide a useful link. This could also divert pedestrian movement away from Castlegate. **Additional parking** could also be considered in the vicinity of the sports/swimming centre. A pedestrian link to Market Place would be advantageous and make the use of parking in this area more popular.

## Access, Mobility & Parking Appraisal

This section summarises the Access Mobility and Parking Appraisal with a brief analysis of the existing problems and an identification of possible ways forward in developing the Masterplan. A more detailed analysis is provided in the Annexe. The appraisal has highlighted the effect of transportation issues on the day to day operation of the Market Place Area and the linkage between the Market Place Area and the surrounding town centre and residential areas. Our starting point is to consider the intervention required to ensure the sustainable organic regeneration of the Market Place area, to create an enjoyable place to live and work that is accessible to all.

### Pedestrian

The Local Transport Plan recognises the dangers present in town centres where narrow footways force pedestrians to walk in the carriageway. The Market Place area has a number of reasonable quality pedestrian routes. There is however several pedestrian pinch points on route to the Market Place where narrow footways restrict safe and free pedestrian movement. Our aspiration is to create an environment, within the Market Place area, which is a **safe pleasant place in which to be a pedestrian** and where travel by foot can be enjoyed by every user of the area. Key locations for improvements include Castlegate, Cocker Bridge and Kirkgate.



Castlegate



Kirkgate

### Rivers Cocker and Derwent

Two sides of the Market Place area are bounded by rivers: the west side by the River Cocker and to the north by the River Derwent. Pedestrians, cyclists and traffic is well provided for with a number of crossings over the Cocker however to the north there is no crossing of the River Derwent restricting access to the Market Place area especially by foot and bicycle.



Cocker Bridge

### Pedestrian Signage

There are a number of pedestrian signs within the area however the majority do not appear to be coordinated with a confusing variety of formats and important changes in direction missing for example from the car parks and from the town centre.

### Pedestrian Crossings and Disabled Pedestrian Facilities

There are no formalised pedestrian crossing facilities within the Market Place Area and this can be particularly problematic for disabled pedestrians/ families with buggies. Market Place at its junction with Castlegate is very wide for anyone to cross without a centre island. The problems are further compounded by the volume of u-turning and reversing traffic using the junction as a turning area at certain times.



Reversing Lorry Market Place/Castlegate



Market Place Pedestrian Signage

### Cycling

The Local Transport Plan states that West Cumbria has an extensive off-road cycle network, but in Cocker mouth there are key access points and links missing. Certain sections within Cocker mouth are under-used because they are less well maintained. The Local Plan for the area identifies a number of priority links for development of the existing cycle network and also identifies an aspiration for a riverside footpath along the Cocker.

Regional Cycle Route 10 represents the only cycling facility within the Market Place area. It is entirely on street but is provided with very little infrastructure bar some poor signing. It is also surprising that no bike parking facilities are provided in the area. A commitment to providing cycling parking within the Market Place as part of a **concerted effort to promote the facilities to cyclists** should also be included within the Masterplan.



### Public Transport

Cocker mouth has a number of local and regional bus services but none of these stop within the Market Place Area. Our aim is to promote improvements in Cocker mouth's public transport which will contribute to relieving some of the other transport related problems in the Market Place Area.

### Traffic

The Local Transport Plan states that in Cocker mouth tourist and visitor parking results in a wide variation on demand and peak period capacity problems have been identified around key junctions. Access to the Market Place area is essential to maintain and improve the area's attractiveness as a place to live, work and visit. The Partnership recognises the important role private vehicles play in the economy of the area and therefore we aim to promote schemes which improve traffic circulation effectiveness. The main consideration on traffic issues will be pedestrian and driver safety. The effect of any potential solution on the sensitive historical fabric of the Market Place area will also need to be scrutinised.

The two main access and mobility issues in the area are: traffic management/circulation and vehicle parking.

### Traffic Management and Circulation

#### Town Centre

The narrow streets of Cocker mouth pose significant problems for traffic travelling through the town. A traffic management system has been introduced by Cumbria County Council and it appears to have only had limited success improving traffic circulation. A by product is that traffic has rerouted, travelling through Market Place and Kirkgate causing an increase in traffic flow through the junctions in the Market Place area.



Kirkgate/Market Place Junction

#### Kirkgate

The Kirkgate/ Market Place junction is the most problematic in the area with the increase in traffic exacerbating its existing problems. Kirkgate is a two way road but as it narrows to a lane which can only accommodate one vehicle with very narrow footways and this effectively results in one way working.

#### Castlegate

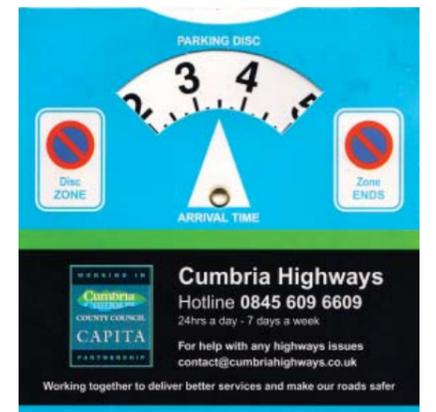
Traffic using the Castlegate also suffers from a carriageway with restricted width. The two way road has only sufficient width for one vehicle, none the less vehicles can be routinely observed mounting the narrow footways to pass oncoming vehicles. Brewery traffic from Wyndham Row tends to turn left up to Castlegate Drive and u-turn in the sports/swimming centre exit rather than turn right directly into Castlegate. These u-turns and the frequent u-turning of heavy vehicles at the Market Place/Castlegate junction are undesirable.

### Parking

All parking within Cocker mouth town centre is currently regulated. On street parking is restricted by a disc system with only short stays allowed. There are also a number of Council operated off street car parks which operate a pay and display system for all day parking.

#### On-Street Parking

The majority of streets in the Market Place area are covered by the disc zone which allows for either 1 or 2 hours parking in designated bays. The disc system should provide convenient short stay parking for shoppers and visitors to the town, with spaces turning over regularly. There is a need to provide clear information and directions particularly for visitors so that they are not discouraged from visiting local shops and attractions.



## Off-Street Parking

A total of three Council operated car parks are located within the Market Place area. They offer long stay parking for up to 12 hours. In total the 3 car parks provide approximately 140 car park spaces. The majority of these spaces appear to be used by local commuters with annual passes which are available for around £115. Riverside and Bitterbeck car parks appear well used with a low turnover in spaces, however directional signage to all three is poor and All Saints appears under used because of this. In addition the Sports/Swimming Centre and Community Complex free car park is provided for the users of the facilities.

Consideration has also been given to the reorganisation of the on street parking scheme within the area as part of the Masterplan. The most straightforward proposal for on street parking would be to replace the disc parking areas with a more simplistic Limited Waiting and residents bay scheme.

The signing and availability of **long stay off street car parking** is a major issue for the Masterplan to address. The annual permit scheme for locals appears to clog up the

available parking, making it difficult for shoppers and tourists to find 'short term' spaces. For the first time visitor, signing to the car parks is inadequate and needs improvement.

In due course a comprehensive parking study of the whole town should be undertaken to examine the turn over of spaces throughout all car parks in Cockermouth.

## Traffic Management and Circulation: Market Place

At present the Market Place is a wide thoroughfare with parking on both sides and feels dominated by the car. **It does not now provide the attractive civic space that was originally intended.** The Masterplan should promote proposals to widen and improve the quality of the existing footways and a rationalisation of the parking to create a more pedestrian orientated space. As part of any plan for the Market Place proposals should also be considered to improve the situation on the Kirkgate and Castlegate.



Bitterbeck Car Park

## Conclusions: Strengths & Weaknesses

### Strengths

- Distinctive setting at the confluence of two rivers
- Strong landscape features: promontory with castle; ridge with church, rivers
- Well defined Market Place area; contained by buildings of consistent age and quality
- Visually important and attractive brewery buildings
- Historic pattern of wents leading to brewery
- Visually dominant All Saints Church on ridge
- Mature church yard provides fine landscape setting
- Excellent views out from churchyard
- Kirkgate area is well defined with a distinctive character
- Numerous pedestrian connections
- Emerging cluster of galleries & restaurants/cafes
- Relevant and recently completed Conservation Area Appraisal, Design Guidance and Management Plan
- All Saints Church Rooms are being refurbished as a quality venue for functions

### Weaknesses

- Market Place is perceived as 'off centre' in Cockermouth
- Some vacant space in upper floors
- Town Hall is in need of repairs
- All Saints Church is visually cut off from Market Place by Depot Building
- Streetscape and signage is poor
- Wents appear semi-private - Brewery is difficult to access
- Pedestrian routes often tortuous and not well signposted
- Potential of the rivers is not maximised
- Castle not (generally) open to visitors, All Saints churchyard somewhat isolated from other areas
- Lack of convenient short stay parking



# Market Place: The Vision

The last two sections have summarised the analysis that underpins the Prospectus. This section confirms that fundamental challenges that the Market Place Area faces and captures our Vision for the Market Place Area.

## Fundamental Challenges

Based on the analysis, consultations and workshops the four fundamental challenges facing the Market Place Area are:

### (i) Encouraging Small Independent Businesses

The business interviews highlighted the significant number of small independent businesses who are located in the Market Place Area (50 businesses and around 250 jobs). The thriving mix of independent businesses gives the Market Place Area a real character and sense of place that defies the 'identikit chain stores' that are emerging in most town centres. The trend of shop



closures in the Market Place is starting to be reversed and there is now an emerging cluster of restaurants/cafes like Oscars Bistro and Quince & Medlar and well respected galleries like Castlegate House, Percy House and Neo. The challenge is to ensure that these kinds of **small independent businesses are encouraged** to start up, develop and further invest in their property in the Market Place Area with the active support of public sector planning and economic development agencies. A quality market that complements local businesses needs to be re-established with the support of 'Made in Cumbria'.

### (ii) Arts and Creative Industries Leading Rejuvenation

There is a strong platform to use **arts and the creative and cultural industries as a catalyst** for accelerating investment in the Market Place Area. The success of the four galleries, the emerging network of creative businesses and working artists in the wider Cockermouth area together with the continued success of the Kirkgate Centre through the efforts of local people, charities and local businesses are strong foundations. This has now been acknowledged in the emerging *Desire Lines Strategy* where Keswick-Cockermouth has been identified to be promoted as a **centre of excellence**. The challenge for the arts and creative industries to 'raise their game'. A viable package of projects should be identified that could include affordable creative and cultural incubators, studios, live/work space and business support.



Exhibition Space



Artist's Studio



Temporary Outdoor Market



Locally Produced Crafts



Pavement Cafe



Encourage Cyclists

Our aim must be to continue to build a critical mass of experienced, confident and talented professional practitioners making work that grows from the unique Cockermouth context. We also need to attract artists not only for commissions but to live and base themselves in Cockermouth as well as to enable regional/ national based professional talent to work locally.

### (iii) Celebrating the Built and Natural Heritage of the Market Place Area

The townscape analysis and the Conservation Appraisal, Design Guide and Management Plan have demonstrated the **importance of the Market Place Area** as the historic core of Cockermouth. The area helps to make the town a unique identifiable place with a medieval street layout, an intimate inward-looking world of yards, courts and narrow passageways and All Saints Churchyard with its impressive viewpoints. The preservation of the character and appearance and thereby the special interest of the Market Place is essential.

The Town Hall is in need of serious remedial work and at the same time has been consistently identified as an opportunity to provide additional education, heritage, social and community uses for the Town. The challenge is to identify a **secure future and clear local role and function for the Town Hall** that will help justify the capital investment required to tackle the remedial work. The removal of the Depot Building has strong public support and the Conservation Area Appraisal confirms that the building has a negative impact and removal and improvement will substantially enhance the character and appearance of the area and the setting of the Town Hall and create a 'town events space'.

### (iv) Investing in the Public Realm and Improved Pedestrian Links

**Investing in the public realm of the Market Place area is essential** as this is the 'glue' that hold the various attractions and facilities ('magnets') in place. Improving the pedestrian links in Market Place and Castlegate that connect the Market Place to the town centre, Town Hall/TIC, All Saints Church, Kirkgate Centre and Jennings Castle Brewery for example are essential and improving signage and interpretation is crucial. This will encourage more footfall and cater for events and festivals. The challenge is to propose a public realm project that can be **afforded and implemented** in the short term. There are also opportunities to promote quality specialist street markets and improve parking management and facilities for cyclists.



## Market Place Area: Vision

In order to respond to these challenges the overarching Vision for the Market Place area is set out below and illustrated in the Diagram.

In 2012 the Market Place Area is transformed as a very distinctive, vibrant, mixed use people friendly place.

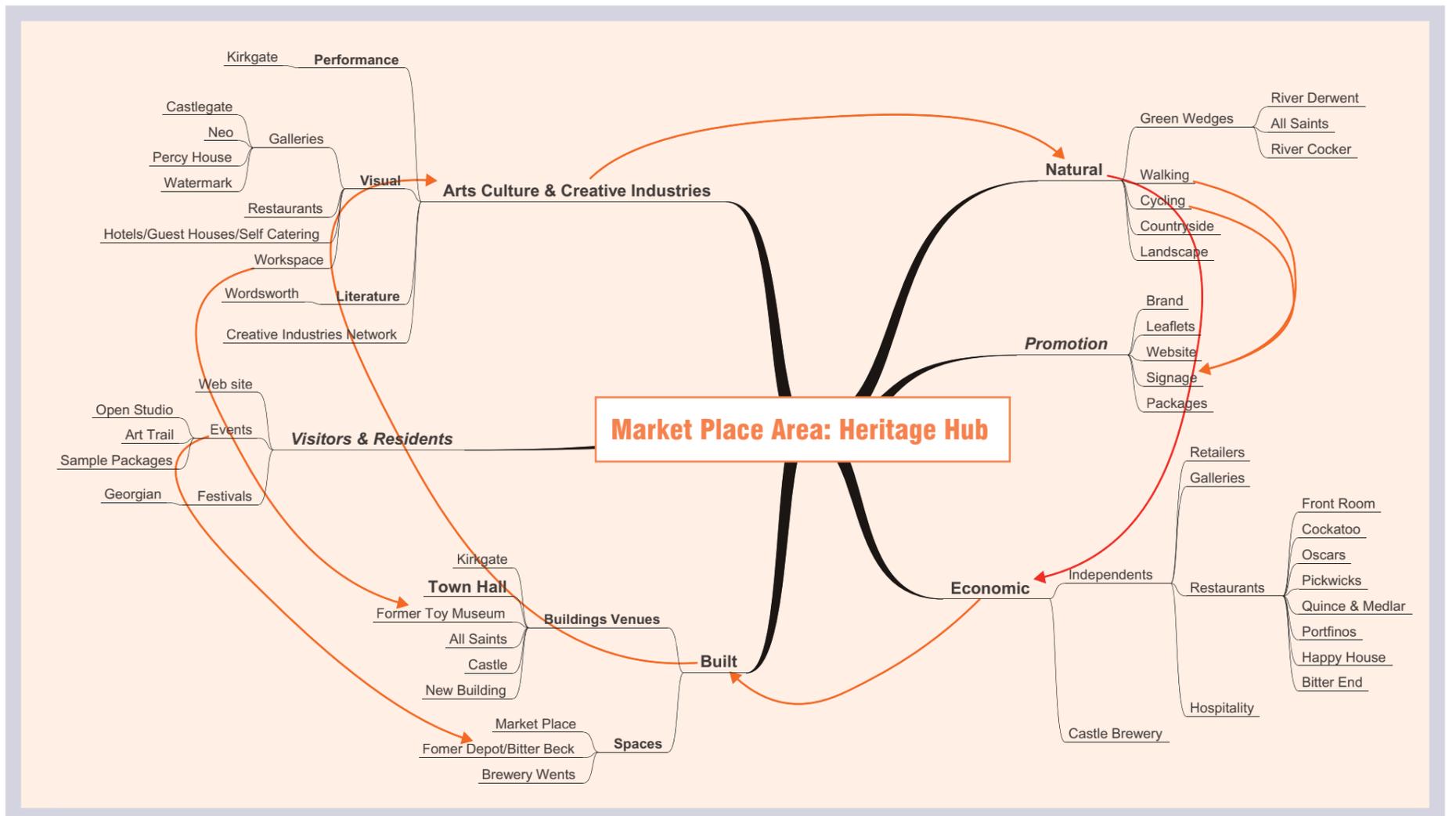
This is where visitors can go at a slower pace, linger and discover the built, cultural, natural and economic heritage of Cockermouth.

The interaction of heritage that makes the place unique and now very much alive and celebrated.

The landmark Town Hall has a new life as a civic and commercial meeting place and this is complemented by the 'must see' award winning design new building.

The transformation has galvanised the community and the area is now a hub of independent business, enterprise and a centre of excellence in arts and the creative industries.

The Market Place Area attracts investment and international visitors with quality galleries, creative talent, restaurants and a regular programme of street markets, events and national festivals generating long term jobs and a sustainable future.



Since William Wordsworth, this area has always had a strong connection with literature. Today we have the hugely successful Lakeland Book of the Year Awards - Cumbria being the only region of Britain with such an institution - showing that our local writers, poets, novelists and artists are alive and doing well . . .

*Hunter Davies*  
Writer and local resident

As well as providing a great quality of life, this area has always fostered creativity and forward thinking and provides an excellent base from which to run a successful modern business

*Malcolm Wilson*  
Former World Rally Champion and Managing Director M-sport,  
Dovenby Estates near Cockermouth

## Strategic Objectives

To achieve this Vision we have identified three strategic objectives. They are as follows:

### 1 Promoting Enterprise Culture & Creative Industries.

To work with the existing businesses in the Market Place area and encourage the **formation, survival and growth of independent enterprises** including those in the creative industries that are knowledge based, widely traded and have accelerated growth potential. We want to promote an entrepreneurial culture that celebrates business success and highlights the opportunities for young people. This includes maximising the potential of ICT and encouraging homeworking to reduce CO2 emissions.

To use the **arts, culture and heritage to accelerate regeneration**, generate pride and make Cockermouth an attractive destination for discerning visitors as well as competitive rural service centre. Culture and leisure activity is an essential ingredient to a lively and vibrant town and helps stimulate social and economic well being. Building on existing strengths they attract people to live in or visit an area and encourage businesses to locate there. In the Market Place Area the Kirkgate Centre, galleries, restaurants and local cafes all help to define the character of the place. In the future we need to ensure that there is a **critical mass** of locally based experienced, confident and talented professional creative practitioners as well as to enable regional/national professional talent to work in Cockermouth.

### 2 Investing in Existing Buildings & Venues

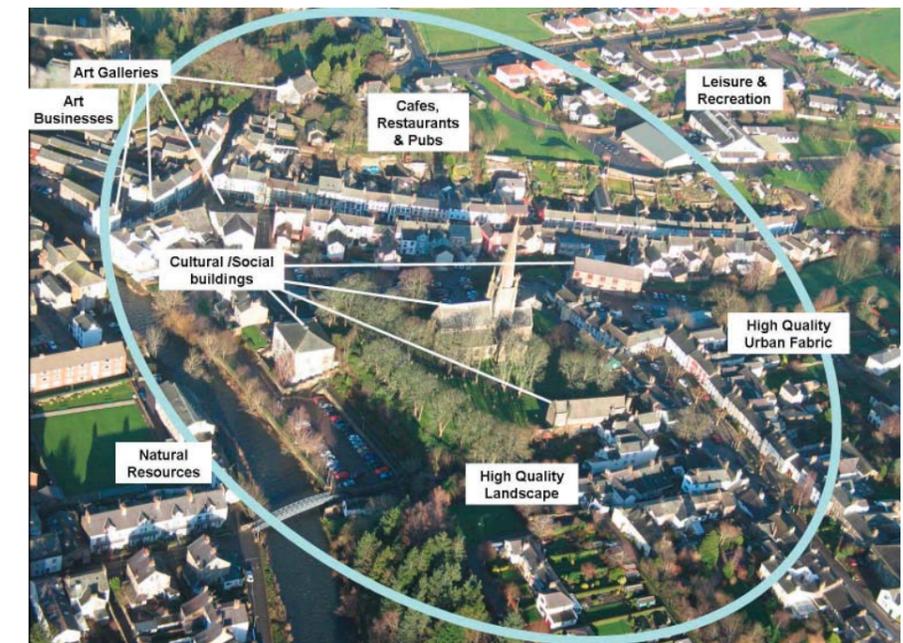
To encourage the **viable reuse of buildings** and build on the Cockermouth's history and past strengths but also to welcome **good new creative approaches to design**, movement and management. We believe good new design can create specific economic and social benefits to Cockermouth. This will bring vacant sites and buildings into sustainable uses in a unique high quality market town environment. The Masterplan recognises that the Market Place Area will need to accommodate continual change in its uses and activity in order to maintain its viability. This will involve high quality conversion and refurbishment of existing key buildings and in some cases well designed entirely new buildings. The aim in both conversion and new build at the design stage is to 'future proof' buildings to take account of use changes and minimise energy use.

### 3 Creating a People Friendly Environment & Attracting Visitors

To create a **high quality and safe public realm** with a **well maintained green environment** and lively and attractive public places. The aim is to increase the number of visitors to Cockermouth and improve the town centre visitor offer so that it meets and exceeds expectations. We aim to ensure that visitors make return visits, linger, discover, stay longer and spend more in Cockermouth.

Overall the aim is to improve access to and within the town centre and make the Market Place Area more user-friendly by infrastructure improvements, improved management of car parking and encouraging alternative modes such as cycling and walking. The aim is to reinforce the pedestrian/cycle network in the town centre and provide sufficient convenient short stay car parking and encourage increased usage with appropriate signage and information.

The strategy objectives and priority projects are illustrated in the Diagram below and the Action Plan of priority projects is summarised in the next section.



Distinctive, Vibrant Pedestrian-Friendly Place



Central Area: Existing View



Central Area: Proposed Indicative View

# Action Plan: Programmes & Projects

We have developed an Action Plan based on the three strategic objectives and comprising 14 specific measures. The action plan is summarised below and will be implemented over a four year programme starting in Spring 2007. Transformational projects are identified with the following symbol: Outcomes and outputs are summarised on Page 30.

## Theme 1: Promoting Enterprise, Heritage, Culture & Creative Industries

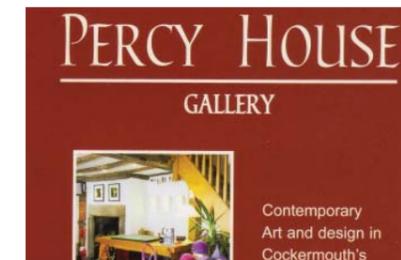
### 1.1 Business & Skills Development

Description	<p>One of the strengths of the Market Place area is the extensive base of around 50 independent retail, restaurant, gallery and other service businesses. This project will support independent businesses through targeting existing business support, training for example ICT, broadband/e business, skills development, joint marketing initiatives and investment in equipment or business space. The secondary aim is to encourage the take up of existing MTI/Partnership initiatives like business development support and the Cockermouth Area Facelift Scheme and to further strengthen the Chamber of Trade with business in the Market Place area.</p> <p>Skills and business development are closely aligned. Part of the approach in Cockermouth will be to identify requirements and deliver skills development to the cultural and creative industries locally through formal networks including Cumbria Cultural Forum, West Cumbria Development Agency, Business Link Cumbria and West Lakes College and more informal business networks. Tools and information could be provided on defining your work, pricing &amp; financing, planning &amp; budgets, tax, NI, PAYE, ICT, best practice promotion &amp; marketing.</p>										
Timescale	<p>Months 1-3: refine package of business development &amp; training proposals using general &amp; specialist advisers.                  Months 4-12 &amp; Year 2: deliver package                  Year 3: mainstream funding</p>										
Lead Agency/Support	Partnership, NWDA, Cumbria Cultural Forum, West Cumbria Development Agency, Business Link Cumbria, Chamber of Trade, Cumbria Vision										
Indicative Budget	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Y1</th> <th>Y2</th> <th>Y3</th> <th>Y4</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>£20k</td> <td>£30k</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>£50k</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total	£20k	£30k			£50k
Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total							
£20k	£30k			£50k							
Funding Sources	NWDA, Rural Regeneration Cumbria/Cumbria Vision										
Outputs	<p>Number of clients provided with guidance &amp; assistance                  Number of clients receiving training</p>										
Outcomes	Increasing the turnover, profitability and 'gross value added' of the existing independent businesses										

### 1.2 Heritage Culture & Creative Industries: Network Development

Description	<p>Cockermouth already has informal networks for example the four galleries in the Market Place area are in regular communication and grass roots visual arts networks are emerging. The aim is to strengthen the local heritage, culture &amp; creative industries network as part of the objective of establishing a national and international 'centre of excellence' and cultural arts cluster with Keswick. Secondary aim is to ensure that there is a critical mass of locally based experienced, confident and talented professional practitioners, a supportive environment, as well as to enable regional/national creative professional talent ('inward investors') to work in Cockermouth. This will attract new investment into the local creative industries.</p> <p>Strengthening the local network as part of the Cumbria Network will enable the economic development agencies like Cumbria Vision, NWDA and West Cumbria Development agency to reach the local sector more effectively, to better understand the local and sector specific market for their services. A strong local network will also allow the sector to better organise itself and so have a more effective voice to articulate its needs and demands. Establishing closer links with Cumbria Network, Cumbria Cultural Forum, Creative Cumbria, Arts Time Space Money, Cockermouth School and West Lakes College will be essential. Particular initiatives to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a flexible Cockermouth arts development budget to meet identified gaps and commission new events and initiatives</li> <li>Facilitate access to market information &amp; opportunities</li> <li>Establish a web based talent portal</li> <li>Develop local networking capability and links with commercial galleries</li> <li>Launch initiative using leaflet, prospectus, web site</li> <li>Establish <b>one stop</b> web based advice with specialist support using intermediaries to deliver "on demand advice" and signposting</li> <li>Regular programme of seminars, training &amp; events</li> <li>Commit to a monitoring &amp; evaluation framework</li> </ul>
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Timescale	Year 1: Based on the May event look to establish a local network with Keswick, hold an inaugural event in late summer 2006, arrange a series of relevant seminars, training and networking events using specialist advisers as necessary; Years 2 & 3: Further develop and deliver the series of seminars, training and networking events.										
Lead agency/support	Partnership, Cumbria Network, NWDA, Cumbria Vision, Cumbria Cultural Forum, Creative Cumbria Arts, Council England										
Indicative budget	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Y1</th> <th>Y2</th> <th>Y3</th> <th>Y4</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>£8k</td> <td>£8k</td> <td>£8k</td> <td></td> <td>£24k</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total	£8k	£8k	£8k		£24k
Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total							
£8k	£8k	£8k		£24k							
Funding Sources	NWDA, Cumbria Vision, Arts Council England, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Northern Rock										
Outputs	<p>Number of clients within network &amp; number of events                  Number of clients provided with guidance &amp; assistance                  Number of clients receiving training                  Number of new business start ups                  Investment in the sector</p>										
Outcomes	Increasing the number, critical mass, turnover, profitability and 'gross value added' of the cultural & creative industries businesses										



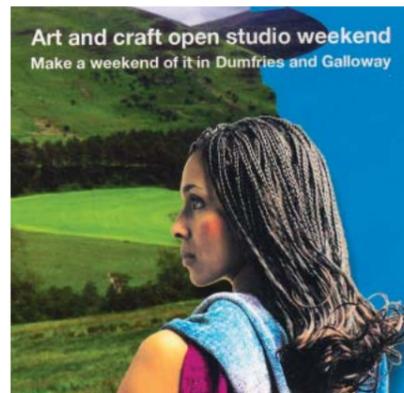
### 1.3 Arts Packages: Market Development & Place Marketing

Description	To further stimulate customer and consumer demand for heritage, culture & creative industries work in Cockermouth and focussed on the Market Place area. The aim is to initiate a series of heritage, culture & creative industries events and marketing initiatives that builds upon and connects existing activities and services. The events could include Art in The Market Place events to show locally produced work, using vacant shop units on a temporary basis, home studio/studio/galleries 'open house weekend' as well as building on the success of the Malcolm Wilson Rally and Georgian Fair. In Cockermouth there are opportunities to major on both the production and consumption of contemporary visual arts and to assemble packages that include tasters, tuition, artist in residence with quality local accommodation and using local restaurants. (e.g. www.handmadeinamerica.org)  Develop a strong and attractive market position and image with a local artist designed logo, banners, signs, website and leaflet.				
Timescale	Year 1: Refine, develop and deliver a trial package and identify a programme of events. Establish a web site with Cumbria Tourist Board; Years 2-4: Deliver a programme of events and packages.				
Lead Agency/Support	Partnership (Marketing Manager), NWDA, Chamber of Trade, Cumbria Vision, Made in Cumbria, Cumbria Cultural Forum, Cumbria Tourist Board				
Indicative Budget	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
	£10k	£10k	£8k	£8k	£36k
Funding Sources	Cumbria Vision, NWDA, Cumbria Tourist Board, Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council, private sector				
Outputs	Number of enquiries Number of visitors Number of packages delivered Number of visitors on packages Number of clients receiving training				
Outcomes	Attracting visitors and increasing local participation and appreciation of the arts. Increasing spending in the local economy and so improved turnover, profitability, and 'gross value added' of the existing independent businesses				

### 1.4 Develop Affordable Studio Spaces for Artists and Incubator/Accelerator Space for Creative Businesses

Description	To establish an arts and creative industries affordable and accessible workspace in an existing building (possibly the former Toy Museum) or as part of a mixed use new building. The workspace together with an incubator /accelerator space targeted at growing the creative industries in Cockermouth will make a vital contribution both to the ability of artists to make new art and to the regeneration of the Market Place area. The aim is to encourage a critical mass of indigenous professional creative talent. and inward investment. The project will provide accommodation for which there is unmet demand especially from local creative talent; generate interest and footfall and greater demand for local services. The spaces need to be developed with artists and be affordable with all inclusive rates and service charges. Two projects are proposed:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A creative industries studio complex with in house business development support services &amp; 'showcase space'</li> <li>■ A longer term demonstration live-work complex that provides both affordable housing and working studio space possibly managed by a trust</li> </ul>				
Timescale	Year 1: Appoint project manager, negotiate a lease on suitable premises, design the conversion/refurbishment, work with Creative Cumbria to identify targets, secure planning/building regulations, let building contract, negotiate occupier licences; Year 2: Affordable workspace complex opens. Undertake detailed feasibility for live-work complex				
Lead Agency/Support	Partnership, NWDA, Cumbria Vision, Arts Council England (Creative Workspaces), Cumbria Cultural Forum, Creative Cumbria, Cumbria Institute of the Arts, the emerging University of Cumbria, local housing associations & private sector				
Indicative Budget	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
	See Project 2.3				
Funding Sources	NWDA, Cumbria Vision, Arts Council England (Creative Workspaces: Artists Time Space & Money), private sector				
Outputs	Sq m of refurbished floorspace Sq m of new build floorspace Number of clients occupying space Number of new business starts Number of clients provided with guidance, assistance receiving & training				
Outcomes	Increasing the number and sustainability of culture & creative industries business				

the cumbrian network  
a hub for artists to exchange information, resources and action



## Theme 2: Investing In Existing Buildings & Venues

### 2.1 Town Hall Upgrade

Description	<p>Cockermouth Town Hall is a Grade 2 Listed Building and was originally a Methodist Chapel. Cockermouth Town Council originally leased the building from 1993 (when Allerdale Borough Council's Planning Department relocated from the building). The Town Council purchased the freehold from Allerdale Borough Council in 2005.</p> <p>The building is currently used as a Tourist Information Centre at ground floor, with the Council Chamber, meeting rooms and offices at first. The basement (lower ground floor) is used as a day centre. The building has undergone many changes, although these have been mainly by addition of partitions and services. One exception is the removal of the staircase to the east (left) of the main entrance. A remnant of this can be seen internally. The original first floor galleries around the open oval balcony would have had raked/stepped seating – the sloping soffits can be seen in a number of places at ground floor and it appears that the first floor has been placed over the existing structure (opening up is required to verify this). Another alteration has been the relocation of a first floor window in the south elevation to a central position within the Council chamber.</p> <p>Many original elements remain, such as the cast iron columns at ground and lower ground floor, windows and externally the key architectural features.</p> <p>Overall the building is in poor condition for its age. Although the internal services and finishes appear servicable, the fabric is suffering from severe dampness problems. Plasterwork is, in many places, deteriorating as a result of penetrating dampness. Some other key elements, such as the gutters are in poor condition. The slating appears reasonable from a distance, although a number of slipped slates were noted. The windows are in mixed condition with a number showing rotten cills and decayed timber.</p>
Proposals	<p>The building needs a renewed life as a cultural focus and civic meeting place for Cockermouth. It is vital that a series of new uses are promoted in the building together with a programme of comprehensive repairs and upgrading to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Remove cement render, repair/repoint brickwork, repair/replace stone elements, re-render brickwork using lime based render with lime wash finish</li> <li>■ Replace rainwater goods</li> <li>■ Repair and repaint windows. Some may need replacement</li> <li>■ Examine and repair roof. Allow for re-slating</li> <li>■ Remedy penetrating/rising damp – remove unsuitable modern plaster. Liaise with English Heritage and examine alternative of strapping and lining walls internally</li> <li>■ Repair/restore original joinery/timber finishes</li> <li>■ Examine and upgrade heating</li> <li>■ Examine and upgrade electrical and water services</li> <li>■ Install up to date IT facilities for current uses</li> </ul>

Proposed Uses	<p>At this stage a number of existing and new civic uses could be accommodated within the building. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>First Floor</b> Retain as <b>Town Council meeting chamber, community rooms including for the Kirkgate Museum Group and consider locating Registrar.</b></li> <li>■ <b>Ground Floor</b> <b>Relocate TIC</b> within the existing space and re-organise and open up ground floor to serve wider range of uses – <b>exhibition, museum, public meeting space</b></li> <li>■ <b>Lower Ground Floor</b> Refurbish as <b>day centre, meeting and community rooms.</b></li> </ul> <p>In addition however the installation of a lift and up to date WC and services provision may prove disruptive to the historic fabric. It may be possible to <b>extend the building</b>, allowing the existing building to be opened up at ground floor to reveal more of the original fabric, while concentrating elements such as the lift, WC's and catering facilities in the new extension. This is considered in Project 2.2 - see outline plans overleaf.</p>										
Timescale	An outline business plan. Feasibility study and application to Heritage Lottery Fund in Year 1.										
Lead Agency/Support	Town Council, Partnership, Cumbria Vision, Allerdale Borough Council										
Indicative Budget	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Y1</th> <th>Y2</th> <th>Y3</th> <th>Y4</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>N/A</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>N/A</td> <td></td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A
Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total							
N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A							
Funding Sources	Heritage Lottery Fund, (Heritage Grants, Local Heritage Initiative) Big Lottery Fund (People's Millions), Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council, NWDA, Cumbria Vision										
Outputs	<p>Sq m of refurbished floorspace</p> <p>Sq m of public space</p> <p>Sq m of new build floorspace</p> <p>Number of community groups using space</p>										
Outcomes	<p>Active public building &amp; civic meeting space</p> <p>Increasing the number of visitors and return visits</p>										





**Description**

An opportunity to promote a building of the **highest architectural and design quality** has been identified on the Riverside in the Market Place Area. The Town Hall together with the proposed new building would provide a very high quality civic focal point and 'heritage hub' in the Cockermouth Market Place Area. This would be a focus for many of the Town's cultural and civic activities and a place that local people and visitors can thrive in and **take pride in for generations to come**. Procuring the new building through private investment could also allow for the possibility of 'cross subsidy' of new community or arts facilities in the Market Place Area.

The Town Hall itself is a fine building that could be restored as the centrepiece of the regenerated Market Place Area. The building however may have insufficient space to provide for all the activities that could be centred there. At this early stage the new building could be **'stand alone' with a commercial element** or as an **extension to the Town Hall**, intended to work seamlessly with the existing building to accommodate civic facilities e.g. the library, meeting rooms, social spaces, etc. As an extension it could also accommodate the ancillary facilities for both buildings in terms of catering, WCs and better organised/less cramped circulation spaces and improve disabled access to all parts of the combined building.

**Design Principles**

The building should **contribute positively to the riverside setting** of the Grade 2 Listed Town Hall and enhance the landscape in this important part of Cockermouth. It should not detract from the historical features of the town, in particular All Saints' Church and the Town Hall itself. A very high quality design and landmark architecture is essential and will require careful consideration and should not be set apart but **woven into the fabric of the Market Place Area**.

The **footprint of the building** should not project beyond the existing Town Hall building towards the riverside. The new building could be linked to the Town Hall **without obscuring the prominent 'Venetian window'** on the south façade. It is important to ensure that the **new structure retains and emphasises as many good features** of the existing building as possible.

The building should **sit under the escarpment/ retaining wall**, ensuring that the view across the river to the churchyard and All Saints' Church is not interrupted. The idea of a continuous landscape of grass, shrubs and trees leading to the church yard and church above **suggests the use of a low profile 'green roof'**.

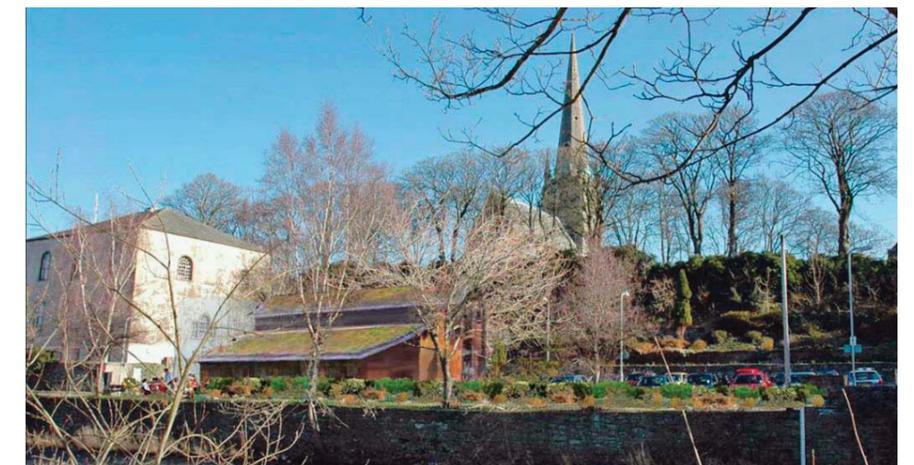
The riverside should be landscaped in such a way that the footpath and car route to the town hall are **pedestrian friendly** and contribute positively to the riverside setting. The new building should have some **'spill out' area linking with the green space** of the riverside so that this becomes truly a space to be enjoyed. Car parking should be located where it is **hidden from sight**, preferably underneath the building.

The building should be designed as an **exemplar** with a 'BREEAM' certificate of environmental excellence to reduce carbon emissions, include low energy technology, recycle rain water and be very energy efficient.

<b>Description</b>	<p><b>Functions</b> could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disabled access and provision of good quality circulation areas</li> <li>Commercial use: hotel, quality business or live-work space.</li> <li>Library/lifelong learning/information</li> <li>Reading area &amp; internet access points</li> <li>Flexible space for meetings, temporary exhibition, event space with river view</li> <li>Catering facilities for café bar / larger events / restaurant</li> <li>WCs and Store</li> <li>Improved Fire Escape</li> </ul> <p><b>Option 1</b> Assuming the TIC, Council Chambers and Day Care centre remain in the existing building and that the Registrar's Office also moves into the existing building.</p> <p>First Floor: Library and reading room</p> <p>Ground Floor: Cafeteria and exhibition/ internet points, meeting rooms and function spaces</p> <p>Lower Ground Floor: Car parking</p> <p><b>Option 2</b> Stand alone quality small four star hotel/restaurant, high specification small business or live-work space. This option reduces the flexibility of potential uses for the Town Hall, but could promote private investment and allow for 'cross subsidy'.</p>												
<b>Timescale</b>	Over the next nine months the key steps are to further test options, confirm land ownerships, formalise the design principles with Allerdale Borough Council, prepare a detailed design and development brief with Allerdale Borough Council, initiate a CABE design review, finalise the design and development brief and invite architect/developer submissions.												
<b>Lead Agency/Support</b>	Partnership, Town Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria County Council, Cumbria Vision, CABE, DTI (Low Carbon Buildings Programme)												
<b>Indicative Budget</b>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Y1</th> <th>Y2</th> <th>Y3</th> <th>Y4</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>N/A</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total								
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A								
<b>Funding Sources</b>	Private investment, Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery Fund (People's Millions, Cumbria C-ounty Council, Allerdale Borough Council, NWDA, Cumbria Vision												
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>Sq m of new build floorspace</p> <p>Sq m of public space</p> <p>Sq m of hotel/business space</p> <p>Number of community groups using space</p>												
<b>Outcomes</b>	<p>Very high quality public/ commercial building</p> <p>Range of economic, social and environmental benefits</p> <p>Exemplar safe beautiful and efficient to run building</p>												



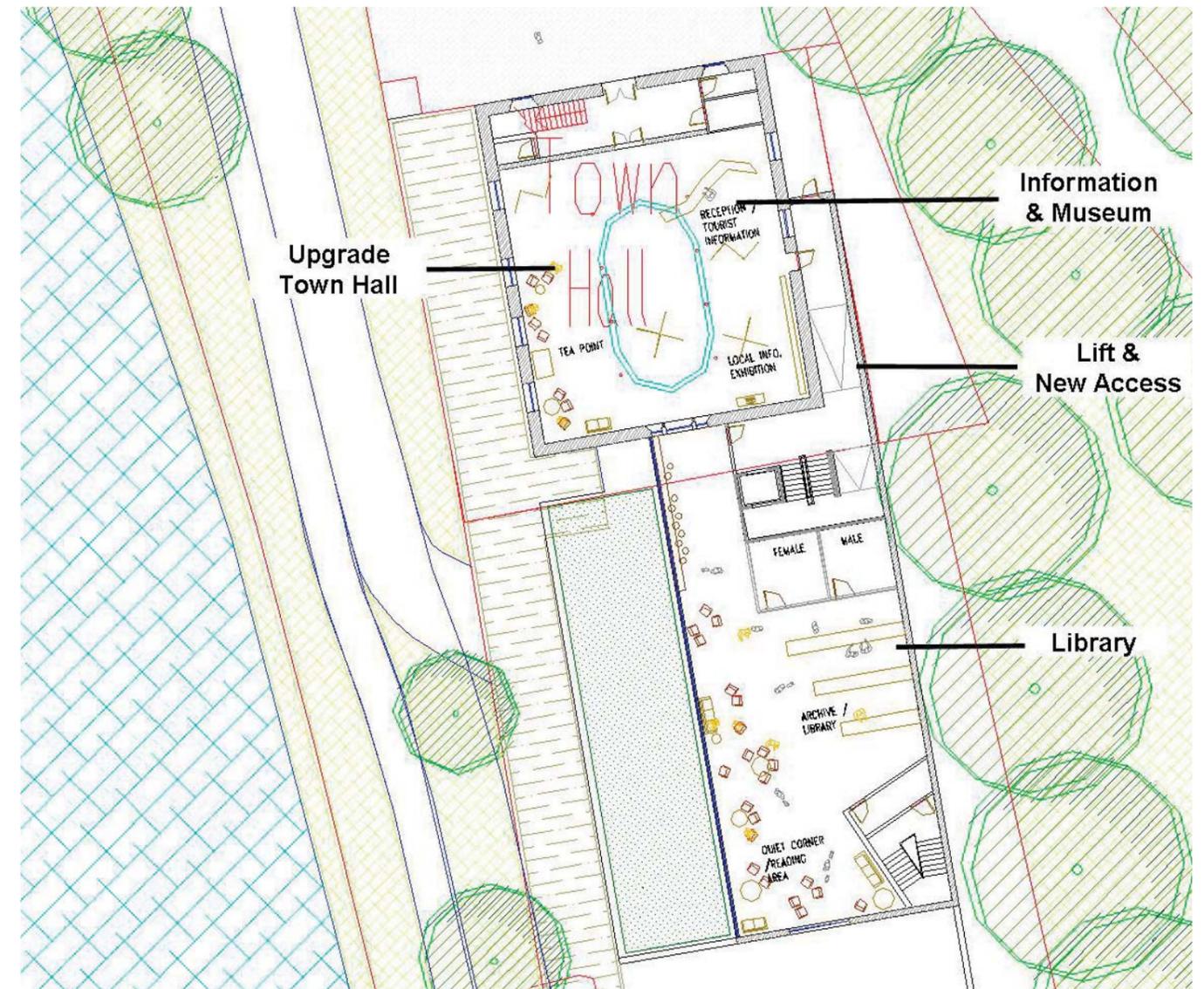
Existing View



Indicative Visual Impression of New Build



Ground & Lower Ground Levels: Proposed



Upper Levels: Proposed



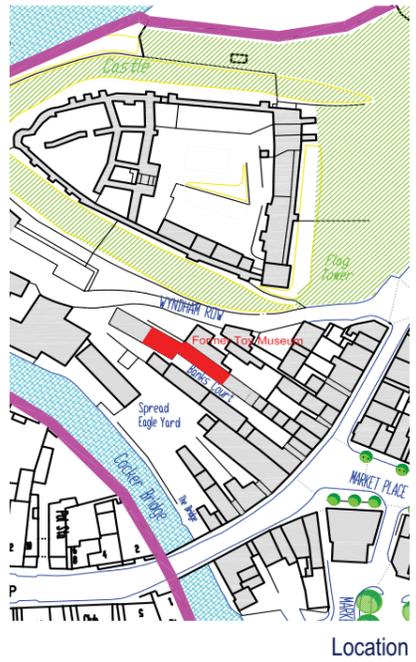
**2.3 Former Toy Museum: Affordable Studio Spaces for Artists: Incubator/Accelerator Space for Creative Businesses (see Project 1.4)**

Description	<p>The former Toy Museum comprises two adjoining (and connected) buildings forming the middle section along the north east side of Banks Court. They are narrow, traditional brick built buildings with slated timber roofs. The westmost building is three storeys high. The eastmost building is two storeys high.</p> <p>The buildings are in need of comprehensive improvement. The ridges to the slate roofs are uneven and some repairs and roof strengthening work may be required. The external walls are in mixed condition. The front wall of the westmost building has been partially covered with vertical slate hanging, although the slates have been removed from the upper levels. Some of the window openings have been blocked up. Elsewhere the brickwork is in need of repair and repointing.</p>										
Proposals	<p>In the short term the aim is to fund minimal small scale building improvements, employ a part-time project manager and promote a series of arts projects, workshops, competitions, residences and exhibitions to stimulate the local arts and creative industries scene. In the longer term and responding to demand the building can be comprehensively improved as a 'creative business incubator' to provide up to nine business or creative arts units. Communal facilities, such as reception, meeting room and WC's with a shared entrance, although the configuration (long and thin space) also suggests that independent access to the end units will avoid long corridors. Upgrading work would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comprehensive external upgrading - repairs/reslating to roof, repair and repointing of brickwork, possibly with some rendering, repairs/replacement of windows and doors, new rainwater goods and redecoration.</li> <li>Internal upgrading – replacement of internal linings, new partitions, repairs and upgrading of floors (to include provision for services distribution), new services (lighting, electrical supplies, IT provision, heating and ventilation).</li> <li>New signage.</li> </ul>										
Timescale	<p>Year 1: negotiate a lease on the premises, appoint project manager, promote a series of arts projects, workshops and competitions, design and cost the conversion/refurbishment. Year 2: secure planning/building regulations, let building contract, negotiate occupier licences; Year 3: incubator complex opens.</p>										
Lead Agency/Support	<p>Partnership, NWDA, Cumbria Vision, Cumbria Institute of the Arts, University of Cumbria, Arts Council England (Creative Workspaces), Cumbria Cultural Forum &amp; private sector</p>										
Indicative Budget	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Y1</th> <th>Y2</th> <th>Y3</th> <th>Y4</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>£30k</td> <td>£100k</td> <td>£20k</td> <td></td> <td>£150k</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total	£30k	£100k	£20k		£150k
Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total							
£30k	£100k	£20k		£150k							
Funding Sources	<p>NWDA, Cumbria Vision, Arts Council England (Creative Workspaces: Artists Time Space &amp; Money), private sector</p>										

Outputs	<p>Sq m of refurbished floorspace          Sq m of new build floorspace          Number of clients occupying space          Number of new business starts          Number of clients provided with guidance, assistance receiving &amp; training</p>
Outcomes	<p>Increasing the number and sustainability of culture &amp; creative industries business</p>



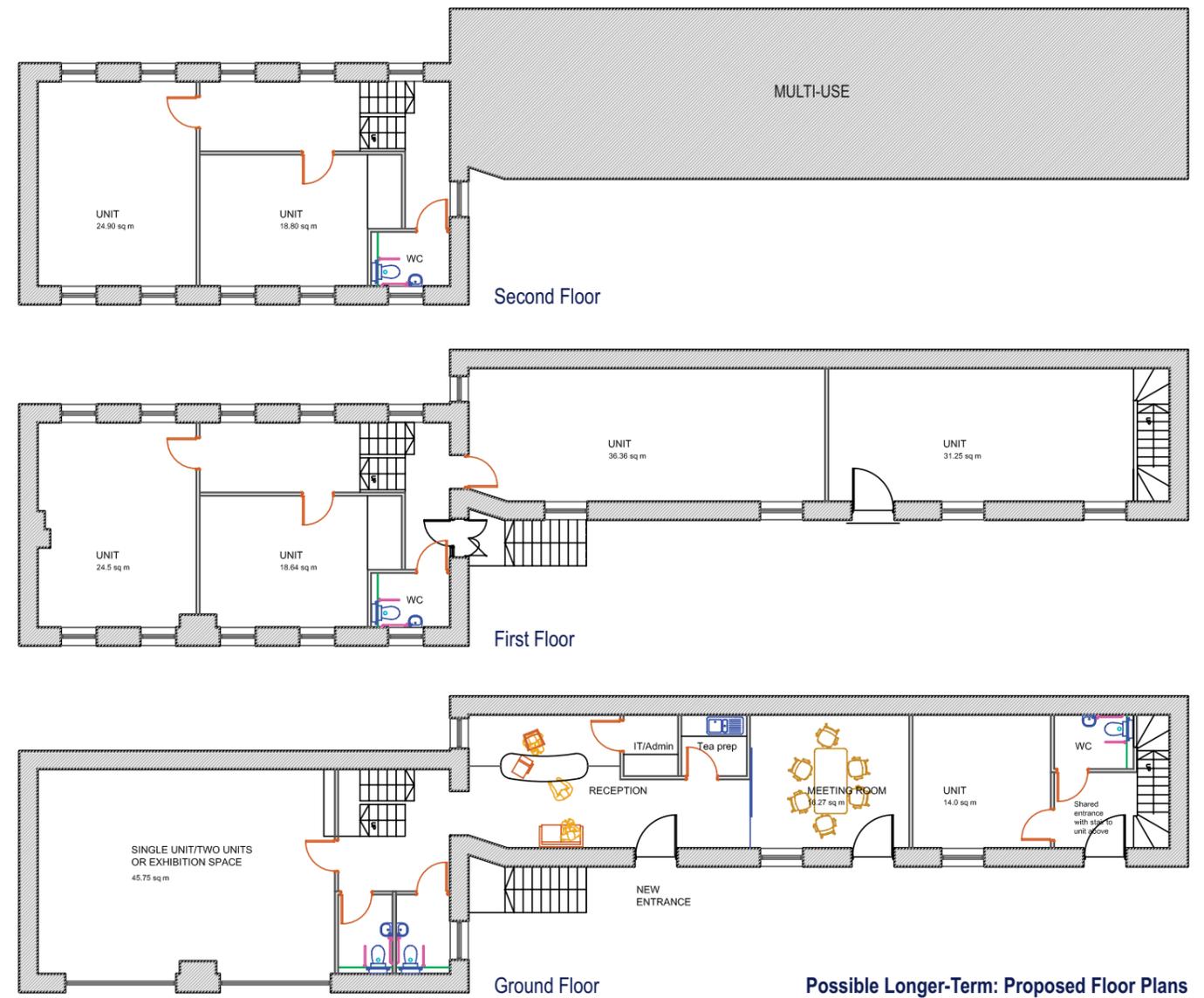
Existing Interior



Location



Existing Exterior



Possible Longer-Term: Proposed Floor Plans

## 2.4 Kirkgate Centre

Description	The Kirkgate Centre is a volunteer run arts centre occupying a traditional stone built former school. It was converted about 10 years ago and is a very well used community and arts asset. The Centre has been recognised by the Arts Council England as an exemplar of best practice in community-led arts provision.				
	The building generally is in good condition, although ten years of use has led to some wear and tear. The theatre/cinema fit-out in particular requires to be overhauled and upgraded.				
	The main spaces in the building work well; however there is a lack of social space and the entrance and office area is cramped. The centre is inward looking with little outward evidence of its many uses.				
	The proposal is for Kirkgate Steering Committee to take the lead to create a new foyer to provide:				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ A signal for a new phase of arts development so that the Kirkgate Centre can play an even stronger role in delivering the vision for the Market Place Area.</li> <li>■ Foyer and social space for those attending performances and functions within the building</li> <li>■ The space could include a café/servery and extend the range of activities</li> <li>■ Improved access to the first floor theatre</li> <li>■ A greater presence within the town – allowing internal activities to be seen and displayed</li> <li>■ Foyer, café, social space</li> </ul>				
Timescale	Detailed feasibility study in Year 1				
Lead Agency/Support	Kirkgate Steering Committee, Partnership, Cumbria Vision				
Indicative Budget	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
		N/A	N/A		N/A
Funding Sources	Big Lottery (Community Buildings Programme), Arts Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria Vision				
Outputs	Sq m of refurbished community space				
Outcomes	Increasing the number of visitors and return visits				



Indicative Impression of New Frontage

### Theme 3: Creating A People Friendly Environment & Attracting Visitors

#### 3.1 Market Place & Castlegate Public Realm Improvements

**Description**  
The Market Place is the historic central space within Cockermouth. The form and pattern of buildings and streets is unique and reflects the historic development of the town. The scale and character of the buildings is appropriate to the both the history of the area and the civic function of the space.

**Elements**  
The pollarded trees are of historical significance (having been planted as part of a town-wide project to mark Queen Victoria's jubilee).  
The proposals are designed to restore the space as a vibrant commercial area to encourage more footfall and increased turnover for the existing and new arts and restaurant/café business. The design is also intended to create a favourable environment for re-establishing the traditional market place activities, allowing for periodic specialist street markets and so create additional economic impact. The high quality proposals include:

- Widening pavements to give priority to pedestrian space, while also allowing space for street cafes/restaurants.
- Reducing the carriageway width to the minimum, while at the same time retaining parking/loading bays. With effective management these will be able to increase parking/loading in relationship to the existing shops and businesses. On market days the bays can be used for stalls
- Making the east section one way. This involves opening up access from Kirkgate to Old Hall Went to provide traffic circulation. Advantages include relieving the present conflict at the north end of Kirkgate and reducing the dominance of vehicles in Market Place
- Re-surfacing Market Place in good quality local materials appropriate to the area. Natural stone paving with granite kerbs and stone setts are envisaged, although some use may be made of the traditional diamond patterned pavoids (e.g. at parking bays).
- Pedestrian crossing facilities
- New high quality surfacing including natural materials, lighting and street furniture
- Involve local artists in the detailed design
- Traffic speed control
- Integrate the Market Place Area with the wider network of footpaths and walks around Cockermouth as a start/finish point
- Formalised car and cycle parking
- Widened footways or a shared surface in the Castlegate
- Improved shopfront and sitting out areas
- Facilities for quality specialist street markets

Formal public consultation will also be undertaken as part of the design process.

**Timescale**  
2006/07: Detailed design, planning, traffic and resident/business approvals and construction design  
Year 1: Implementation

Lead Agency/Support	Partnership, NWDA, Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria Vision				
Indicative Budget	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
	£700k				£700k
Funding Sources	NWDA, Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria Vision				
Outputs	4,800sq m of public realm improvements 3 training places 6 person years FTE construction jobs				
Outcomes	A quality public realm for all users of the Market Place to enjoy Improved footfall Reduce the risk to pedestrians. Improve specialist street market facilities				



Proposed Public Realm Improvements



Proposed Circulation



Market Place: Indicative Impression



Market Place: Existing



Pavement Activity

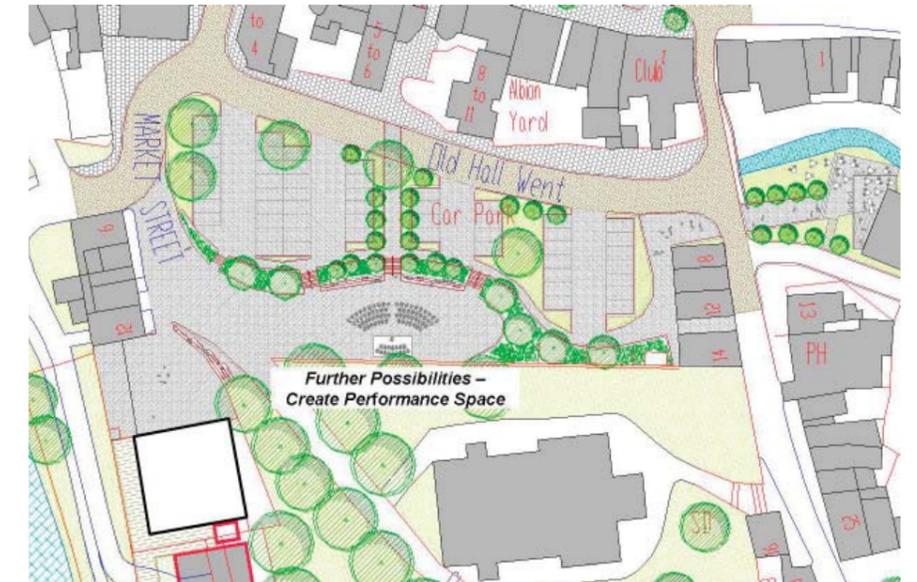
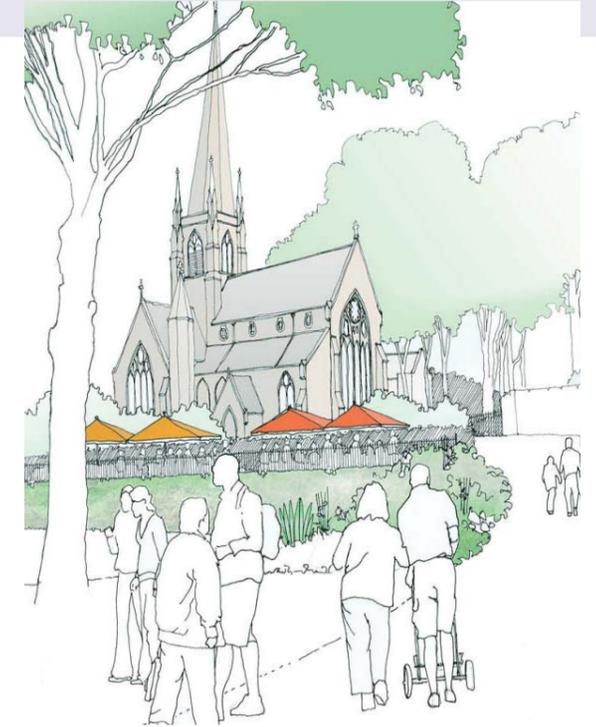
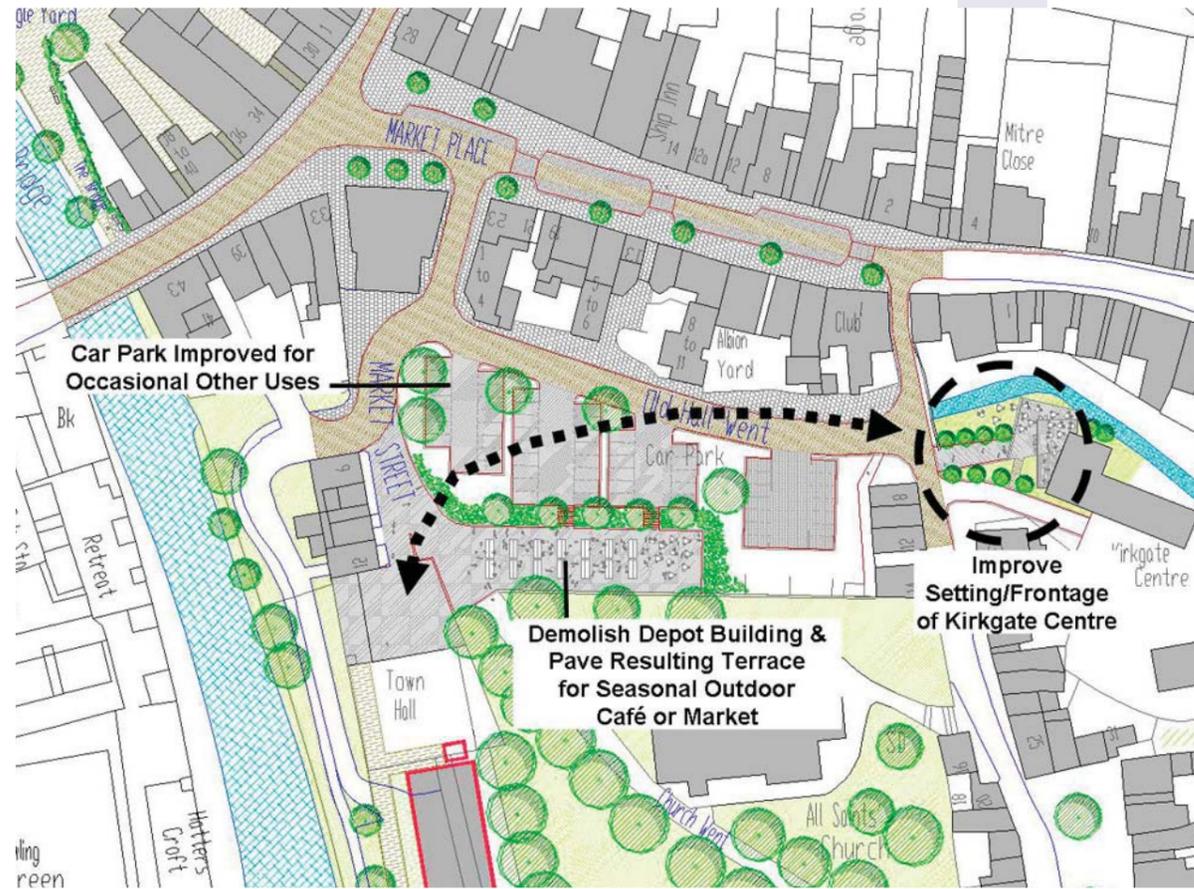


Quality Materials

3.2

**Depot Building Removal, Environmental Improvements & Events Space**

Description	The Depot Building/public toilets in the southwest corner of Bitterbeck car park is an acknowledged eyesore and the roof structure of the Depot Building in particular has deteriorated. The building and adjacent public toilet block is to be demolished and the area landscaped as a town events space with the involvement of local artists and for additional car parking. The events space could accommodate a temporary covered stage area with appropriate services and be used for sub regional and town events including visual and performance arts, outdoor exhibitions and even an outdoor cafe/restaurant in summer. A small section of new link road will be introduced to maintain east-west movement and allow the improvements to the Market Place.				
Timescale	2006/07: Confirm structural issues, detailed landscape/ car park design Year 1: Let contract, demolition, implementation of improvements and arrange a regular programme of events.				
Lead Agency/Support	Partnership, NWDA, Allerdale Borough Council, Heritage Lottery Fund (Landscape Partnerships, Big Lottery Fund (People's Millions), Chamber of Trade, Cumbria Vision				
Indicative Budget (Environmental Improvements)	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
	£130k				£130k
Funding Sources	NWDA, Allerdale Borough Council, private sector				
Outputs	500 sq m: Depot Building and toilet block removed 1,500 sq m of improved landscape, public realm and parking.				
Outcomes	Improvement in the character of the Conservation Area Improved views of All Saints Church. Removal of a building that has a negative impact. Increase parking and a new events space More visitors, more spending and therefore turnover for local businesses.				



### 3.3 Brewery Wents: Environmental Improvements

**Description**

The Brewery Wents comprise a number of passages connecting Market Place and Jennings Castle Brewery. They are significant historically in that they are part of the surviving mediaeval pattern of development of the town and in townscape terms by the way small scale, intimate pedestrian spaces connect key elements of the town.

At present the various lanes are in mixed condition with some showing historic finishes. These include stone flags, setts and examples of diamond pattern pavoids which have survived well in a number of places. Other lanes have lost original materials or have had these replaced by modern surfaces. A number of the wents are in private ownership but some have 'rights of way'.

The buildings that form the framework of the area are generally surviving traditional buildings with several of considerable age, including Percy House, thought to be the oldest house in Cockermouth. It is the combination of buildings and spaces that give the area its essential character.

Unfortunately the routes are poorly defined and in the case of a key potential route from Main Street, via the Cocker Bridge, to the Brewery, the footpath is not connected (the route traverse Spread Eagle Yard). The route has been partially surfaced with modern pavoids, with some landscape elements such as railings, however the area is now somewhat neglected and the landscaping is untidy.

The area would benefit from a co-ordinated programme of improvements which could include:

- Completing the connection from Spread Eagle Yard to the Cocker Bridge, by forming a ramped footpath/stairs up to a new access formed at the east end of the bridge
- Landscaping the riverbank and areas along the length of the route, including key planting at selected locations
- Replacing poorly finished surfaces (e.g. gravel) with good quality traditional paving materials (stone flags, setts and traditional pavoids)
- Repairing and repointing existing traditional surfaces
- Encouraging building owners to repair and renovate their buildings.
- Improved lighting
- Signposting and wayfinding

**Timescale**

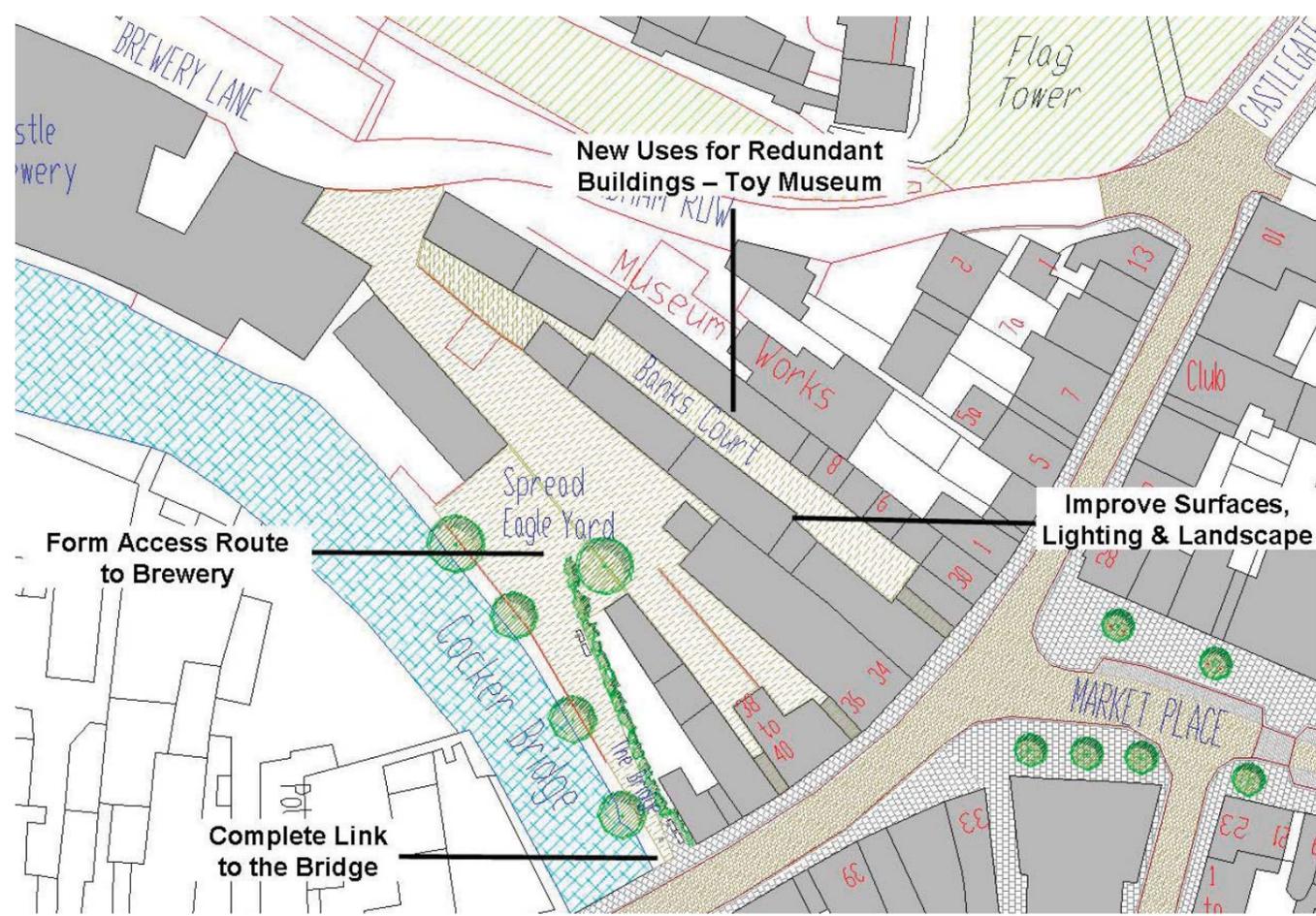
Months 1-6 initiate discussions with Jennings Brewery and local owners to identify priorities  
 Months 7-12 work up detailed designs with local artists and agree implementation with local owners.  
 Year 2 implement improvements

**Lead Agency/Support**

Partnership, Allerdale Borough Council, private owners, Cumbria Vision

Indicative Budget Contribution	Y1	Y2	Total
		£10k	£10k

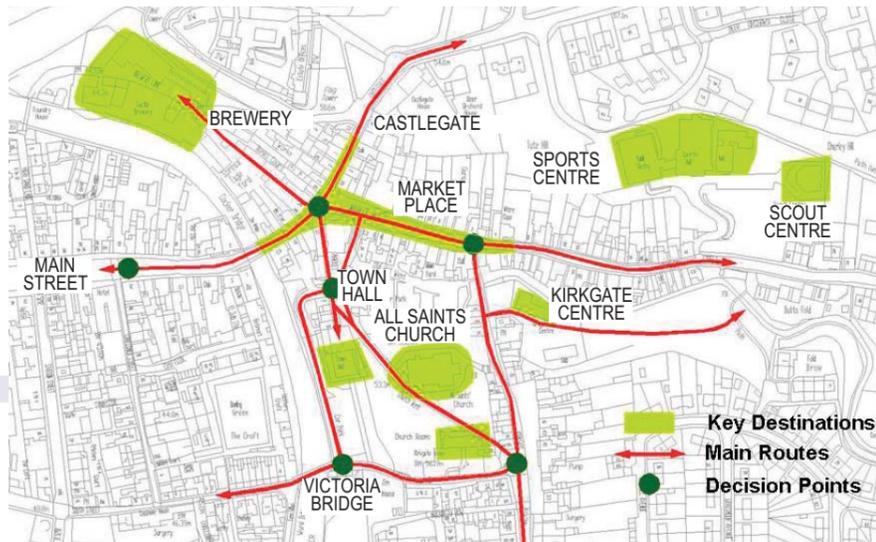
<b>Funding Sources</b>	Local businesses, NWDA, Allerdale Borough Council, Cumbria Vision, Cumbria County Council
<b>Outputs</b>	Sq m of improved public realm Improved access for locals & visitors
<b>Outcomes</b>	Increasing the number of visitors , return visits and more spending in local shops, galleries & restaurants



Proposed Pedestrian Access Improvements to Brewery

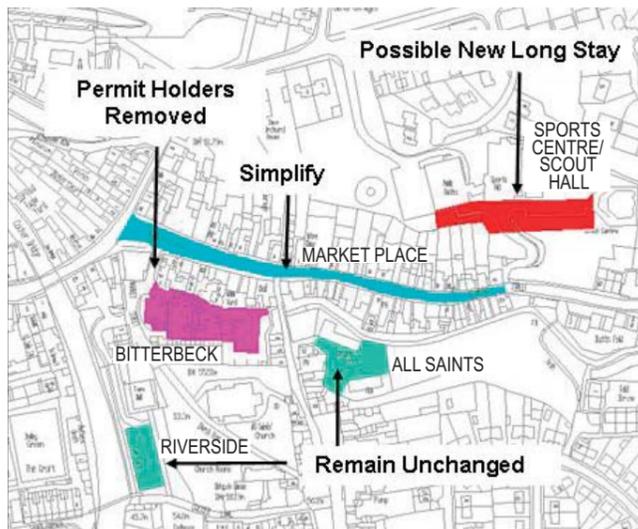
### 3.4 Wayfinding & Signage

Description	Newcomers to Cockermouth can struggle to find their way around. Existing signage has been poorly positioned & routes are incomplete.  The aim is to provide coherent signage throughout the Market Place and Cockermouth. Includes improving the local pedestrian, cycle & car park directional signage in the Market Place Area. An orientation map and leaflet should be prepared. Key destinations, main routes and decision points are highlighted in the plan.  In the medium term devise a comprehensive signage strategy for the whole of Cockermouth and featuring a unique brand.				
Timescale	4 months				
Lead Agency/Support	Partnership, NWDA, Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council				
Indicative Budget	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
	£8k				£8k
Funding Sources	Cumbria Vision, NWDA, Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council, private sector				
Outputs	A small number of well designed and effective signs for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists				
Outcomes	An excellent first impression for visitors More visitors to the Market Place Area Visitors spending more time and money Return visits Increase turnover for local business				



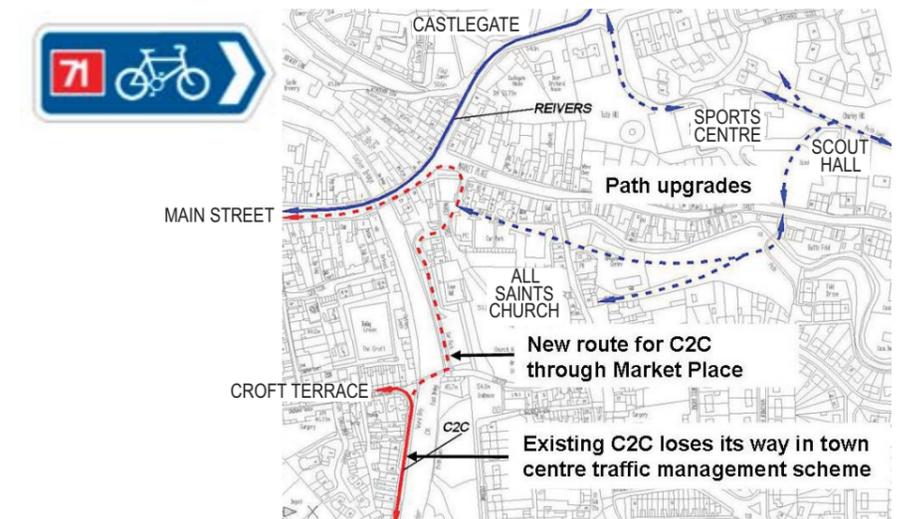
### 3.5 Car Parking

Description	Short term parking availability is perceived as a significant problem, in Cockermouth particularly during the summer months. The aim is to promote a parking initiative to make the Market Place area a more convenient place for shoppers and visitors to access.  This will involve in the short term a redesignation of existing car parking spaces to create available short stay parking in Bitterbeck. Residents and town centre workers would be encouraged to use Riverside, All Saints and eventually a new long stay car park. In the long term, preparing a parking strategy for the whole of Cockermouth and implementing its recommendations will be crucial.				
Timescale	2006/07: Conduct a parking study over the whole of Cockermouth. Year 1: Redesignation of existing car parking spaces in Bitterbeck and implement car parking strategy recommendations				
Lead Agency/Support	Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council				
Indicative Budget	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
	£20k				£20k
Funding Sources	NWDA, Cumbria County Council, Allerdale Borough Council				
Outputs	Good first impression for visitors: view spread by word of mouth Available short stay parking Comprehensive parking strategy for Cockermouth				
Outcomes	Increase in number of visitors Visitors spending more time and money Return visits Increase turnover for local business				



### 3.6 Cycling

Description	The Market Place area needs make more of the cycle routes it has. NCR 71 (C2C) loses its way as it enters the town centre and RCR 10 (Reivers) has a low profile through the area.  Short Term: Upgrade the surface of NCR 71 between the Greenway & town centre. Reroute through the Market Place.  Strengthen the presence of the Revivers Route.  Short/Medium Term: Provide cycle parking in the Market Place conjunction with the public realm improvements.  Upgrade existing footpaths to shared cycleways.				
Timescale	Months 1-3: finalise designs/locations to improve signage and routing improvements Months 4-9: Implement improvements and cycle parking provision in conjunction with public realm improvements				
Lead Agency/Support	Partnership, Sustrans, Cumbria County Council				
Indicative Budget	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Total
	£8k				£8k
Funding Sources	NWDA, Cumbria County Council, Sustrans Allerdale Borough Council, private sector				
Outputs	Miles of upgraded infrastructure for cyclists Improves facilities for cyclists				
Outcomes	More cyclists using the routes through Cockermouth More cyclists stopping off and visiting local cafes, restaurants, guest houses/hotels and shops Visitors spending more time and money Return visits Increase turnover for local business				



# Conclusions: Implementation & Effective Delivery

## Challenging Complacency

The Market Place Area is the historic heart of Cockermouth with a number of important historic buildings like All Saints Church, Town Hall and Kirkgate Centre located at the confluence of the Rivers Cocker and Derwent. This was once the commercial centre of the town but whose **fortunes have declined** as the centre of the gravity of Cockermouth has moved south. Today the area is tired.

The Cockermouth Partnership is clear that despite the lack of footfall and the closure of the traditional street market there are some very promising signs. They include the growing cluster of **galleries and restaurants** that have been established and the **strong base of more than fifty independent businesses** located in the area. This kind of investment and enterprise needs to be encouraged and reinforced with investment to improve the environment and to make the Market Place an even more people friendly place. This is a defining point, we cannot be complacent and the Market Place Area needs to confront a number of fundamental challenges.



## Market Place Area: Fundamental Challenges

Based on the analysis, consultations and workshops the four fundamental challenges facing the Market Place Area today are:

### (i) Encouraging Small Independent Businesses

The business interviews highlighted the significant number of small independent businesses who are located in the Market Place Area. The challenge is to ensure that these kinds of **small independent businesses are encouraged** to start up, develop and further invest in their property and so strengthen the Cockermouth economy.

### (ii) Arts and Creative Industries Leading Rejuvenation

There is a strong platform to use **arts and the creative and cultural industries as a catalyst** to accelerate investment in the Market Place Area. We need to work with Creative Cumbria and other partners to build on the success of the four galleries, the emerging network of creative businesses and working artists in the wider Cockermouth area together with the continued success of the Kirkgate Centre. The challenge is for the arts and creative industries focussed on the Market Place Area to 'raise their game', **create more of a critical mass** as a vibrant arts location, and so attract further investment to create additional economic impact.

### (iii) Celebrating the Built and Natural Heritage of the Market Place Area

The townscape analysis and the Conservation Area Appraisal, Design Guide and Management Plan have demonstrated the **importance of the Market Place Area** as the historic core of Cockermouth. The Town Hall however is in need of serious remedial work. The challenge is to identify a **secure future and clear local role and function for the Town Hall** that will help justify the capital investment required to tackle the remedial work. Removal of the Depot Building has strong support and this will substantially enhance the character and appearance of the area and the setting of the Town Hall and provide a new space for town events and activities.

### (iv) Investing in the Public Realm and Improved Pedestrian Links

**Investing in the public realm of the Market Place area is essential** as this is the 'glue' that hold the various attractions and facilities ('magnets') in place. Improving the pedestrian links in Market Place and Castlegate that connect the Market Place to the town centre, Town Hall/TIC, All Saints Church, Kirkgate Centre and Jennings Castle Brewery for example are essential and improving signage and interpretation is crucial. This will encourage more footfall and cater for specialist markets, events and festivals.

## Market Place Area: The Vision & Strategic Objectives

In order to respond to these challenges the ambitious and dynamic overarching **Vision for the Market Place area** is described and illustrated on Pages 13 and 14. To achieve this Vision we have identified **three strategic objectives** and **fourteen projects**. They strategic objectives are as follows:

- Promoting Enterprise Culture & Creative Industries.
- Investing in Existing Buildings & Venues
- Creating A People Friendly Environment & Attracting Visitors

Section four of this Prospectus summarises the Action Plan and identifies 'transformational projects'. Now for the first time the Cockermouth Partnership and all our partners can confidently address and more importantly **deliver on the real challenges and opportunities** that now confront the Market Place Area. Investment in the Market Place Area will bring our heritage alive in a dynamic way and further rejuvenate the town. The Market Place is the historical and cultural heart of Cockermouth and this is the once in a generation opportunity to breathe new life into the area based on **sympathetic investment in the quality of our cultural, built and natural heritage**.



## Implementation & Effective Delivery

Cockermouth Partnership will drive forward implementation. Our principles for successful delivery of the Market Place Area Masterplan are to simplify delivery, work in a transparent, methodical way and to actively involve business residents and our public and private sector partners. We will prepare a summary annual progress report that will include performance against a series of targets that are summarised below.



## Performance Monitoring & Evaluation Framework: Outcomes & Outputs

Performance Indicator	Measurement	Target Dec 2011
Commercial Investment: Firm Formation & Job Creation	New business start-ups Refurbishment of existing buildings Businesses who have improved their floorspace Number of jobs created as a direct result of above	10 4 6 50
Independent Creative Industries Businesses	The number of independent creative businesses	10% increase
Arts Events & Take-up of Packages	Increase in number of local, regional and eventually national events. Take up of 'arts packages.'	10 events & 30% year on year increase in take-up of arts packages
Commercial Property; Rents and Yields	Indication of what the market believes is happening in Market Place Area, with a lower yield indicating increased confidence. Rentals are currently £10-£12 psf.	Rent to £15 psf and yields at 5%
Car Park Capacity and Usage	Analyse car park usage to indicate improved short term use by visitors	30% increase
Visitors to Market Place: footfall	Number of visitors	50% increase
Physical Regeneration	Sq m public realm improvements Amount spent Construction/training jobs created	3,500 sq m TBA TBA
Business & Skills Development	Number of local business people/creative industry business taking 'training' as a result of business and skills development initiative	30
Community Businesses	Number of community businesses established	2

TBA = To be agreed

## A Confident & Sustainable Future

The Market Place Area is a living place that has had a special past and we are convinced by working with our private and public sector partners to implement our shared vision we can deliver the kind of **quality place where people will want to spend time discovering and revisiting**. Market Place Area can become a **European beacon** for the organic rejuvenation of a historic area of a small market town and rural service centre. This rejuvenation will make life better for the community, attract investment and visitors and create jobs and a sustainable future.







### Contact

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