

A Vision for High Street Regeneration





Foreword

Scotland's Towns Partnership welcomes this blueprint which we hope can be deployed across many Scottish towns and city centres. The town centre issue is complex and often it is the sheer scale, pace of change and complexity that stifles progress. This report shows how leadership, engagement, evidence gathering, innovative thinking and collaboration can support investment in town and neighbourhood centres so that they can become more diverse, sustainable and thriving places.

It builds on current policy and provides a best practice route map to those seeking to deliver the best local outcomes, align policies and target available resources to prioritise town centre sites, encouraging vibrancy, equality and diversity.

Our town and city centres are critical to Scotland's social, economic and environmental geography. Scotland's towns invented much of the modern world and the heritage of these towns is a storybook of our journey as a nation; it's about folklore and myth, wars and kings, poets and parliaments, our churches, landmarks, languages, traditions and industry.

I'm hopeful that this guide can provoke some new thinking to encourage local partnerships to grasp the opportunities presented by changes in the retail environment, our demographic, digital capabilities, climate issues, and our desire for genuine, authentic experiences in great places we can be proud again to call home.

Phil Prentice
Chief Officer
Scotland's Towns Partnership
October 2019

Introduction

This publication is offered as guidance for the central and local government custodians of our town centres on an approach to achieving a co-ordinated vision that re-connects whole communities to their reinvigorated and vibrant town centres.

The shift in retail patterns continues to take a painful toll on High Street retail but it also presents a once in a generation (if not lifetime) opportunity to rebalance the core of our towns away from retail dominance and back to a place with a rich mix of uses where people live, play and work ...and shop. This is also the opportunity to reprofile the High Street to meet the sea changes in technology, demographics and environmental awareness and to recognise town centres as the sustainable hearts of our communities.

Many towns have a Town Centre Action Plan and even a vision. This guide deliberately promotes a vision that illustrates physical and spatial change in a level of detail that breathes life into an inspiring future reality that aligns communities, attracts investment (or government funding) and sets the bar of a town's ambition. We have described the level of engagement, research and analysis that we believe needs to underpin a vision if it is to catalyse change and success.

Much of the content in this document is derived from the Paisley Vision pilot project jointly commissioned in 2019 by The Scottish Government and Renfrewshire Council with guidance from Scotland's Towns Partnerships and input from Revo (the retail property and placemaking community). Paisley was chosen as a pilot as it is Scotland's largest town and, as with most Scottish towns, a post-industrial market town. The impact of changing retail patterns is particularly pronounced in Paisley and the lessons learned carry a broad relevance across most of our High Streets. The Paisley pilot project is a ten-year vision and examples are illustrated throughout this document.

Our passion for, and appreciation of, the value of our High Streets and town centres has been reinforced in delivering the pilot project and in composing this guidance which we hope will help you see a clearer route to a successful and inclusive town centre.

Alan Anthony
Managing Director
Threesixty Architecture
Chairman Revo (Scotland)
October 2019

The High Street: A Manifesto for Change

For any Vision to succeed and bring real transformative change it is imperative to establish and prioritise the key moves and core elements. These need to hold up long term and crucially, need to be bought into by the wider community.

1. Concentrate

Take a deliberately focused approach centred around the High Street as this is the heart of the town, where we can repurpose and protect a valued legacy of buildings, support an improving local economy and create opportunity.

2. Rebalance, Repopulate & Reposition to Create a Re-energised High St.

Employ the strategy through the implementation of the right initiatives to achieve the ultimate goal of the regeneration of the High Street.

3. Establish Your Town's 'Purpose'

Define the unique story and purpose that will underpin any transformational moves. There are many parts to a town's story that could provide a basis for an authentic narrative but it can't be based on only one of these elements.

The richness of the narrative will come from the blend of a number of these strands. Any developed narrative must contain multiple messages and be chameleon-like, resonating differently with different groups. A simple strap-line should be the last thing considered.

4. Identify Repurposing Opportunities and Be Bold.

The changing patterns of retail have given us a once in a lifetime opportunity to rebalance retail dominance by reintroducing uses that meet the community's needs.

Repurposing a large single use asset such as a shopping centre can transform a High Street in one bold move by consolidating retail on the street edges, repopulating the heart of the town centre, increasing permeability with large blocks broken down into new streets and lanes and in so doing permit the introduction of new uses that will attract a greater proportion of the community

5. Consolidate & Reduce Retail Dominance

Replace with a spectrum of other activities that reduces empty and under-let units and better serves the existing community that uses the High Street. Relocate retained retail to street edges, don't bury it deep in the urban block.



A Vision for High Street Regeneration

6. Repopulate the High Street

Introduce significant levels of urban living to the Town Centre through mixed use blocks and a variety of tenures (private for sale, affordable, social housing, elderly – supported / sheltered, student). Bring upper levels over retail space within existing buildings back to life through residential conversion.

7. Introduce Attractors

With uses as varied as community and civic to cinemas and European style food halls, attractors are important opportunities to drive visits into the town centre from the wider community while offering the chance of bringing new life to old cherished buildings.

It is critical to consider the positioning of these attractors and how they can work together to achieve the critical mass to energise a High Street. Visibility/presence, radial influence and approach routes should drive the location of these "Attractors" as they are a major catalyst for positive change and often a once in a generation opportunity to get right.



8. Create Workplace

Repopulation of our town centres cannot be achieved through the introduction of residential alone, as this could lead to areas devoid of life and activity during working hours. The way we work is changing and advantage should be taken of this through the introduction of workspaces that, in tandem with residential, create vibrancy during the day and opportunities for flexible working and a healthy live / work balance.

9. Strengthen the Cultural Offer

The introduction of new cultural uses can have a transformative effect on our High Streets. Look to work with existing institutions and community groups to bring new gallery / performance spaces / museums to the heart of the High street.

10. Change Physical Perceptions

Open up lanes and views that dramatically change what people remember the town to be and provides greater connectivity.

11. Repair the Streets

When repurposing, remove poor quality buildings that offer nothing to the urban environment and replace with contemporary architecture that matches any existing historic facades in quality and ambition.



12. Enrich with Public Art & Light

Public art and dynamic lighting can transform an existing environment for a relatively small outlay. Most importantly, they can be adaptable and used to create a variety of different effects dependent on season and event.

13. Provide Places to Gather

Key to the re-energising of any town centre is the creation of places to hold events that attract both local residents and those from outside the town. These external 'rooms' should support a wide series of events in terms of both their scale and flexibility and should encourage vibrant, all year round use.

14. Ensure Your High Street is Accessible, Legible and Visible

Make your High Street accessible to all, regardless of age or ability, accommodating those with issues of dementia or mobility and providing pause points throughout.

Your High Street will only be successful if people can find it. Create a memorable, cohesive and legible wayfinding strategy that helps people navigate their way to and along the High Street.

Pedestrianisation is not always the answer. This often leads to a lack of visibility for traders on our High Streets.

15. Promote Sustainable Transport

Encouraging the introduction of environmentally friendly public transport and cycling could go a significant way to combatting a lack of visibility on previously pedestrianised areas of High Streets and promote the use of the High Street for low car ownership groups.

16. Develop a Balanced Approach to Car Use

The future trends are likely to be reduced car ownership, driverless cars etc, but in the meantime, cars are not going anywhere anytime soon and so careful consideration must be given to the need for access and parking to encourage the use of the High Street by the wider suburban community.



17. Make People Feel Safe and Welcome

A repopulated, re-energised town centre will be a safer and more welcoming place due to increased activity and passive surveillance from new residents. The introduction of Street Ambassadors has proven successful in many cities across the UK and should be a prime consideration in creating a safe and welcoming High Street.

18. Provide Welfare Facilities

The provision of welfare facilities suitable for all, regardless of age or mobility, should be encouraged. This can have a significant impact on the footfall and dwell time of our High Streets and promote inclusivity.



19. Make Your Town a Hub for Lifelong Learning

Make the most of opportunities where they exist to connect with established education providers and community groups to take space on the High Street. This will encourage people from all walks of life to learn new skills and meet new people, creating a sense of empowerment and helping to combat digital

20. Work With Your Institutions

Key institutions such as education providers and health and civic establishments can be fantastic assets for a town centre, providing essential accessible services right at the heart of the community, enhancing town centre vibrancy and greatly increasing footfall. The implied responsibility and mutually beneficial opportunities should be reinforced.

21. Nurture 'Meanwhile Uses'

Transformation takes time and not all proposals will be delivered in the short term. Where a building or site is vacant, encourage 'meanwhile uses' that benefit the wider community, either through the creation of public space or temporary occupation for curated retail / commercial use.

22. Expand the Evening Economy

Our High Streets for too long have been dependent on retail at the expense of other uses that encourage their use outwith typical 9am-6pm hours. This has led to the creation of empty unwelcoming environments once the shops are closed. A good evening economy requires a change to historical planning law use class and licensing restrictions to bring life to these "dead zones". This will encourage footfall, increase passive surveillance and greatly improve the local economy.

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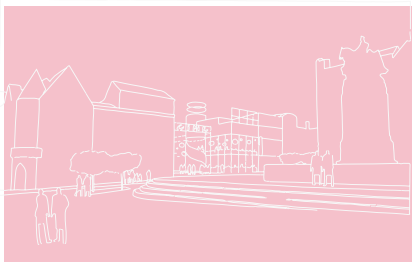
Understanding the purpose and
potential of your High Street begins
with a detailed analysis of context

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Moving Forward: Publishing Your Vision

Effective communication of the vision
is key, to ensure that the fundamental
principles are clearly explained

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The Vision: Why, What, How

The Vision: Why, What, How

Why do you need a Vision?

The change of shopping patterns offers a unique opportunity to prepare a detailed vision to rebalance the retail dominance in our town centres by reintroducing uses that meet the community's needs and by increasing town centre living.

You need a well thought out and visually detailed vision for spatial and physical change that breathes life into an ambitious future for the town. This design led vision will be underpinned by commercial understanding and market knowledge and identify the priorities and sequences of

key physical moves to regenerate your High Street. It will set out a clear approach and purpose that all subsequent town centre development should be measured against and it will maintain the energy and momentum required over the years of implementation.

You need a vision to identify where investment will have the greatest benefit and demonstrate your town's ambition to the community and to outside investors alike and your vision will create ambassadors who believe in your town centre's positive future and make it happen.

Set the Direction of Travel

The Vision should record and respond to the requirements of the community. The co-ordinated Vision needs to be a clear statement of ambition that can achieve alignment of intent and stand as a guideline to assess the appropriateness of future development.



Behavioural Change & Meeting Government Policy

The two key government policies concerning the built environment are Town Centre First and The Place Principle. Along with the environmental agenda, any proposals should enshrine the principles of these policies and recognise the imperative to ensure key players such as education establishments and transport providers stay focussed on the town centre in what they can contribute (vibrancy and connectivity) and how they will benefit and secure government funding.

The current procurement mechanisms and decision-making approach to investment need to change if they are to be able to

recognise the real value of development that safeguards our High Streets rather than favouring the easier answer of edge of town and out of town development that has seen public sector funded education, healthcare and services marginalised when they could contribute to a vibrant town centre. This traditional "best value" approach has been changed in both the Public Sector Finance Manual and the NHS Transaction Handbook in favour of Town Centre First, Place Making and Carbon Reduction. We need all decision makers to presume for town centre investment and to understand the value to our town and our community.

What should the Vision achieve?

The delivered Vision should re-profile the High Street and town centre to be the vibrant focus for the whole community with wellbeing, inclusion and opportunity at its heart. It should provide a consolidated and successful retail offer and new uses that meet the needs of the community and extend into an evening economy. Furthermore, the vision should lead to a repopulated centre and provide workplace and creative space. It should restore pride in the High Street.



“ We need to reconnect to the town centre as a whole community to nurture our sense of belonging to place and enrich our lives.



Why is the High Street important?

A Place of Shared Stories

The High Street is the place of our shared history and stories. It was there long before the retail parks and out-of-town malls and will no doubt be there long after they are gone, dissolved by technology. It is the physical manifestation we remember when thinking of home and it is where we hold ceremony and celebration. It is where we gather to celebrate sporting triumphs. It is where we memorialise our good and our great and those who gave everything and it is open to everyone. For generations the town centre has been the shared landscape of memory and youth and as such, a dementia friendly, positive environment for

an aging population. We need to reconnect to the town centre as a whole community to nurture our sense of belonging to place and enrich our lives by doing so.

Scotland's Towns Partnership and the Scottish Government recognise the importance of town centres in the Town Centre First policy and this is further reinforced in the "Place Principle". They are leading the way in the championing and regenerating our town centres and are seen as being at the forefront of this aspect throughout Europe.



The Vision: Why, What, How

What will the Vision do?

Attract Investment

The Vision should be a statement of intent and positivity about the town and reinforcing it is “open for business”. The stakeholder consultation process should nurture ambassadors for the re-energised High Street of the Vision and the content of any developed vision can be used to attract further investors through a series of developer days and alumni awareness programmes.



Secure Funding

The public purse is tight just now but there is a growing focus on Town Centres e.g. south of the border The Future High Streets Fund has identified 50 towns to share an initial £675M and there has been a recent £50M Scottish Town Centre Fund (although this also included cities). We should use the opportunity to develop and showcase “oven ready” projects that can effect transformational change and ensure that the High Street at the heart of the vision is best placed to benefit from the release of any future funding.

Engage the Community

The published Vision should be used to engage, excite and nurture buy-in from community groups. The power of effective engagement on social media should not be underestimated.

The Vision: Why, What, How

How will the Vision be implemented?

Position Opportunities to Maximum Effect

Some of the proposed moves may be frustrated by ownership and may need to happen in another guise. It is the identifying of the moves and “building blocks” to achieve a re-energised High Street that is the true value of a High Street vision project. Beyond this, the Vision study should highlight the importance of positioning uses (attractors) where they can have the highest impact e.g. we are not just trying to put a cinema into our town centre, we are trying to put it in the right place in the town centre. We are likely to get one chance in this lifetime to get these decisions right.

Work With Your Institutions

Key institutions such as education providers and health and civic establishments can be fantastic assets for a town centre, providing essential accessible services right at the heart of the community, enhancing town centre vibrancy and greatly increasing footfall.

These institutions can draw upon public funding that takes account of Town Centre First, Carbon Reduction and the Place Principle policies providing a mutually beneficial solution for both themselves and the town, where high-quality buildings in a vibrant town centre outweigh an edge-of-town environment requiring car borne or public transport journeys in order to access their services.



Stay the Distance & Experiment

An ambitious Vision cannot be delivered overnight so it is important to identify the quick wins (e.g. wardens and welfare) and programme out the longer-term projects. A stalled spaces strategy and temporary locations can be identified e.g. can we temporarily locate a community cinema in an unused building while looking for a permanent home? Can we set up artists’ studios or collaborative working in unused spaces? Some moves will blossom, others may fail. We need to see the study area as a beta project or test bed for re-invention.

Lean and Effective Leadership

It is imperative to create a concentrated team to deliver the Vision. At its core this might have community “third sector” representation and council with “executive” members from education providers, public transport companies, shopping centre owners, business partners and key retailers, etc. It should focus only on the defined, concentrated vision study area.



The Vision:

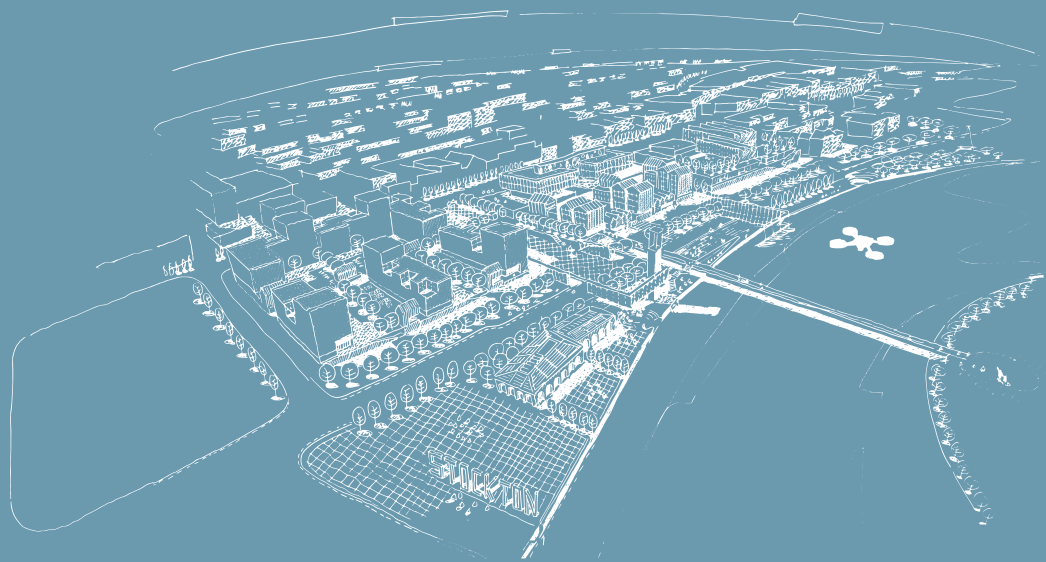
Manifesto in Action

The Vision: Manifesto in Action

Defining the Key Moves

Ways to bring genuine
transformation to our High
Streets.

The success of any project is dependent on creating a
common Vision with broad appeal and support from all
significant stakeholders and the wider community.



Methodology

1.

Define the Study Area

A vision to transform a High Street can only be truly
effective when it focuses on the High Street itself.

Ensure that the study area is focussed.

2.

Outline the Vision Strategy

Rebalancing, Repopulating, Repositioning;
= A Re-Energised High Street

3.

Establish the Purpose

Define the unique story and purpose that will underpin
any transformational moves.

The richness of the authentic narrative will come from
a number of strands that resonate differently with
different groups.

4-22.

Make Key Moves

Refer to the Manifesto earlier in this document for details.

The Vision: Manifesto in Action

1. Concentrate: Define the Study Area



1 Paisley Visioning Project - Defined Study Area
2 Paisley High Street 2019

A High Street Focus

A vision to transform a High Street can only be truly effective when it focuses on the High Street itself. If the study area is extended far and wide, the concentrated effort and impact is in danger of being watered down and the chance to affect real change can be lost. If we get the High Street right, the effect will ripple out more widely throughout the town centre.

Strategy in Practice: Paisley

In the case of the Paisley visioning project, the identified study area centred on the High Street and other directly connected streets that make up the heart of the town centre, focusing efforts on a tight nucleus at the heart of the town centre.



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

2. Rebalance, Repopulate & Reposition

Key Moves to Re-energise the High Street

In many historical town centres, the change in shopping patterns has led to a surplus of retail floorspace and, in particular, large floorplate users are becoming increasingly thin on the ground.

Our High Streets must adapt to this new environment and the solution lies in reducing and concentrating retail space rather than propping up an old retail led approach. This consolidation of retail will allow us to rebalance our towns with the reintroduction of the uses squeezed out by previous retail dominance. These uses will then be in the centre – the most universally accessible location for our community and the highest quality and most meaningful backdrop.

Long ago the logistics of retailing stock systems made the upper floor storage areas fallow and there is now the opportunity to populate this “airspace” and some of the repurposed retail with town centre living and work-place to further energise the town. Retail goes where people go – there will always be a place for it in the High Street, but it will be increasingly independent, compact and experiential and it will add to the unique experience of our town centres to evolve them from the 80’s/90’s “Clone Towns” they once were.



Then: In Town Centres

- All Retail
- Banking
- Civic
- Offices
- Healthcare
- Education
- Sports
- Residential



Now: After 60 Years Erosion

Mainly in Town Centres

- 20% Non-Food Retail / 20% Food Retail, Civic

Mainly not in Town Centre

- 63% Non-Food Retail / 74% Food Retail
- Cinema
- Education
- Healthcare
- Residential
- Offices

Increasingly on Internet

- 17% Non-Food Retail / 6% Food Retail
- Banking
- Education
- Cinema (Streaming)



Next: What We Need Now

- Cinema
- Education
- Healthcare
- Residential
- Offices
- Maker Spaces

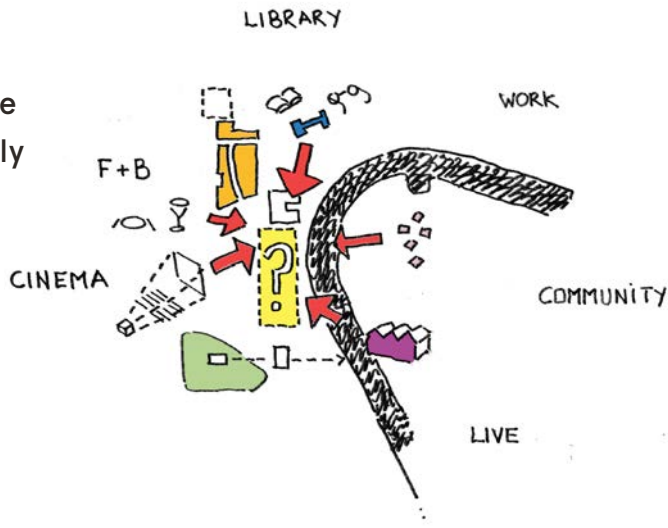
The Vision: Manifesto in Action

3. Establish Your Town's Purpose

Define the Unique Story and Purpose that will Underpin Any Transformational Moves

There are many parts to a town's story that could provide its 'purpose' but the Vision can't be based on only one of these aspects.

The richness of the eventual narrative will come from the blend of a number of these strands. It must contain multiple messages and be chameleon-like, resonating differently with different groups. A simple strap-line should be the last thing considered.



Case Study 1 Wigtown - Scotland's Book Town

Wigtown, a small town in the Scottish Borders has transformed its fortunes through embracing literature. It has been recognised as Scotland's 'National Book Town' since 1998. It is now home to an internationally recognised book festival and contains 14 book shops, which equates to one for every 500 residents. The town, even outwith the festival has become a magnet for book lovers and has developed an extremely successful tourism industry. It was also awarded 'Scotland's Most Creative Small Town Award' in 2012.



Case Study 2 North Coast 500

The North Coast 500 route has proven wildly successful and demonstrates what can be achieved with the right 'story'. Created with very little investment, the route uses existing roads and has resulted in a massive surge in tourism to the Scottish Highlands (bringing with it many challenges).

The brand has a global audience.





A High Street For Everyone

A People Centred Approach

As previously stated, our High Streets offer a rich and authentic environment that for generations has been the back-drop to the ceremonies and memorable events of our community. Furthermore, the health of our town centre reflects the health of our wider community or society. An energised town centre that is open to all and where there is alignment, engagement and transparency on decision making will combat isolation, create opportunity and enrich all our lives.

It is critical that we achieve a perception shift in our communities and stakeholders and reposition the High Street in people's psyche; at the core of this Vision is the need to reconnect all of us to our town centre.

The developed Vision should convincingly describe a better High Street, where the requirements of all, regardless of age, ability or wealth, are accommodated.

“This Vision puts community and social inclusion at its heart

Establish the Purpose – Paisley Visioning

Paisley is Open

In the case of Paisley, the town’s purpose was too complex to be summed up in a simple sound byte. There are a multitude of rich strands and stories that define it as a place. A common thread was found that could be used to tie these seemingly disparate strands together; **openness**.

The vision study for 2030 reverses the perception of a Paisley that is closed, unwelcoming and stuck in the past and weaves a unifying principle of openness to bring a concentrated vibrancy and richness into the town centre to once again become the cultural and economic engine for the whole town. This core promise and principle of openness sets a guideline to assess the appropriateness of future town centre development.

The vision puts community and social inclusion at its heart to propose a centre that is open to all demographics and uses its compactness to ensure no one is excluded.

Paisley is Open

Open to....
Everyone,
Collaboration,
Radical Ideas,
Influencing,
Learning,
Investment.



We have a vision for the town centre of Paisley: open, vibrant, optimistic, community and future focused.

A place to gather, a place to connect, a place to visit, a place to belong. The framework for this vision can be supported by master planning and architecture, but at its heart, it will be powered by people.

All proposals are created to achieve this vision, to provide the context for positive human interaction, exchange of ideas and nurturing the heart and soul of Paisley.

Many elements of this new town centre already exist. This vision is about encouraging the good, creating space and frameworks for the best of our town to flourish and where needed, we must introduce new elements and create new opportunities.

Establish the Purpose – Paisley Visioning

Patterns of Paisley

In the process of the Paisley visioning study, the community and stakeholder representatives were asked “What do I need from my town centre?” and “What would make me live in the High Street Area?”.

The responses were requested from the perspective of the following specific demographic groups in order to ensure that the needs of all of High Street users could be considered within the Vision;

Families with Young Children
Teenagers (13–17)
Young Adults (18–25)
Adults (26–60)
Seniors (60+)

The adjacent extract from the published study demonstrates graphically the imagined pattern of usage within the study area for these age groups based on their responses.

Patterns of Paisley Interactions not Transactions

When our town meets the needs of all sections of society, the patterns of usage intertwine and intersect where key activities happen. This is where community truly occurs.



“...every proposed move was based around how it would improve the lives of people in the town centre.

Establish the Purpose – Paisley Visioning

People Centred Moves

The adjacent extract of the report demonstrates the approach to the Vision as being ‘people centred’, where every proposed move was based around how it would improve the lives of people living, working or spending time in the town centre.

These ‘stories’, based on the community and stakeholder feedback gathered during our research phase of the project were distributed throughout the study but collected here to show the extent of the proposed interventions and their multi-generational appeal and focus.



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

4&5. Identify Repurposing Opportunities

One Bold Move Can Significantly Rebalance the Uses in a Town Centre and Catalyse Change.

The authors of this report, Threesixty Architecture, have carried out studies into repurposing that looks at several Scottish towns, analyses the comparative proportion of uses and demonstrates the level of over-provision of retail. In particular, the study considers the areas prescribed and presents the balance in both unit numbers and floor areas.

From this a critique and approach has been developed that proposes how a struggling shopping centre can save a High street. In essence, the strategy is that an under-performing High street shopping centre is a land bank under one ownership that, in one bold move, can rebalance the uses within a town centre. Beyond the scale, the ownership aspect is the key benefit; the fragmented ownership of a traditional High street presents a far more challenging prospect in terms of strategically rebalancing a town. Furthermore, the

over provision of retail in town centres often means that a large asset is under let, distressed and continuing to drop in value and increase in liability. Such assets are at their lowest value in their lifetime and this is the right time to make wholesale repurposing viable. In many towns the asset could be a redundant bingo hall, department store or mothballed civic building.

The principles of repurposing these large single use assets:

- Consolidated retail on the street edge, not buried in the urban block
- Repopulation of the heart of the town centre
- Increased permeability with large blocks broken down into new streets and lanes
- The introduction of new uses that will attract a greater proportion of the community



Case Study: Bargate Southampton, New Mixed-Use Quarter

The Bargate Centre in Southampton, a failing mostly vacant shopping centre has been demolished and the site re-balanced as a mixed-use quarter comprising 22 street facing retail / F&B units at ground level with 152 apartments and 13,000 sqm of student accommodation at the upper levels. It has transformed the area and reinvigorated the town centre.





This one move will be instrumental
in fixing our High Street.

Identify Repurposing Opportunities – Paisley Visioning

Paisley Vision Pilot: Paisley Centre Repurposing

Out of the 2 shopping centres in the town, The Paisley Centre is faring far less well. It is under-let and the situation is worsening. At c. 17,070sqm sales level area, the centre contains c. 45% of the town centre retail.

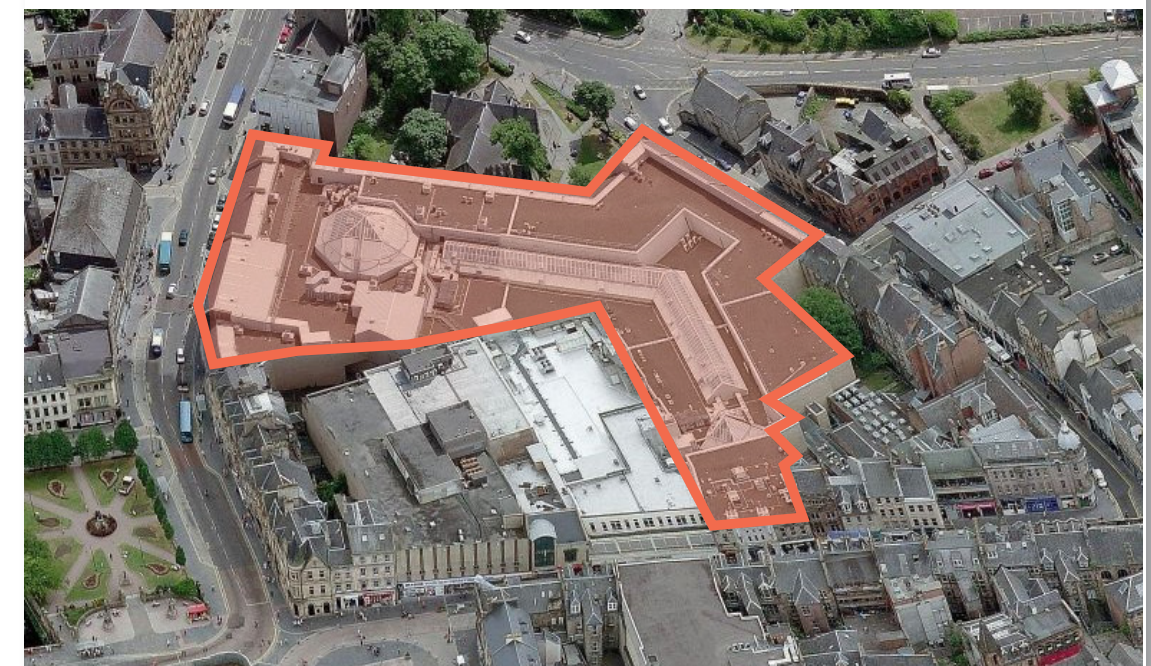
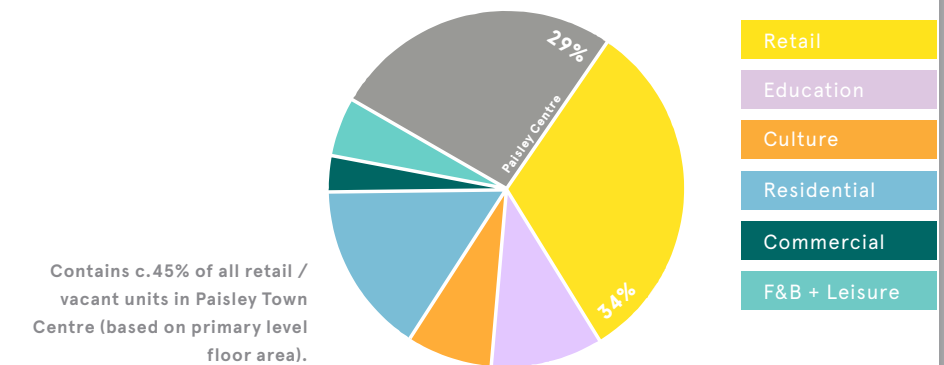
Reversing the Piazza's covering up of the river is a long held ambition but the pilot Vision study does not propose that is achievable in the next 10 years as it is relatively well let with student accommodation, offices and parking above. Conversely, The Paisley Centre is losing value to the owning fund and they have positively engaged with a view to wholesale repurposing and have progressed costed feasibilities to create a residential-led mixed-use quarter on the centre footprint.

As part of the visioning study, proposals that demonstrated the potential of introducing residential into the heart of the town with consolidated retail allowing the retention

/ relocation of the remaining key retailers currently in the Centre were developed. These were presented over several options and showed a new residential development around a north/south wynd creating permeability from the High street and reverentially addressing the Laigh Kirk (Arts Centre) as a centrepiece.

The proposals also showed the street facing ground floor space as consolidated retail alongside other active frontage uses. Key to the commercial viability to all these proposals is the need to achieve adequate density with a mix of single and dual aspect units and development heights appropriate to the centre of Scotland's largest town.

Threesixty
Architecture



Identify Repurposing Opportunities – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

A Rebalanced Town Centre

The adjacent extract of the Paisley Visioning Study shows one of the options proposed for the repurposing of the Paisley Centre Site.

All options rebalance the town centre by introducing significant areas of residential whilst retaining retail at key street front / corner locations.

Four options were explored, namely;

- **Small** – Limited to the Paisley Centre site only
- **Medium** – Adding a vacant retail site on Causeyside Street and a series of mostly vacant units on High Street
- **Large** – Increasing the site yet further by incorporating some adjacent units on the High Street
- **PRS** – An option incorporating a combination of residential units combined with common amenity facilities like residents' lounges, a gym and a reception space.

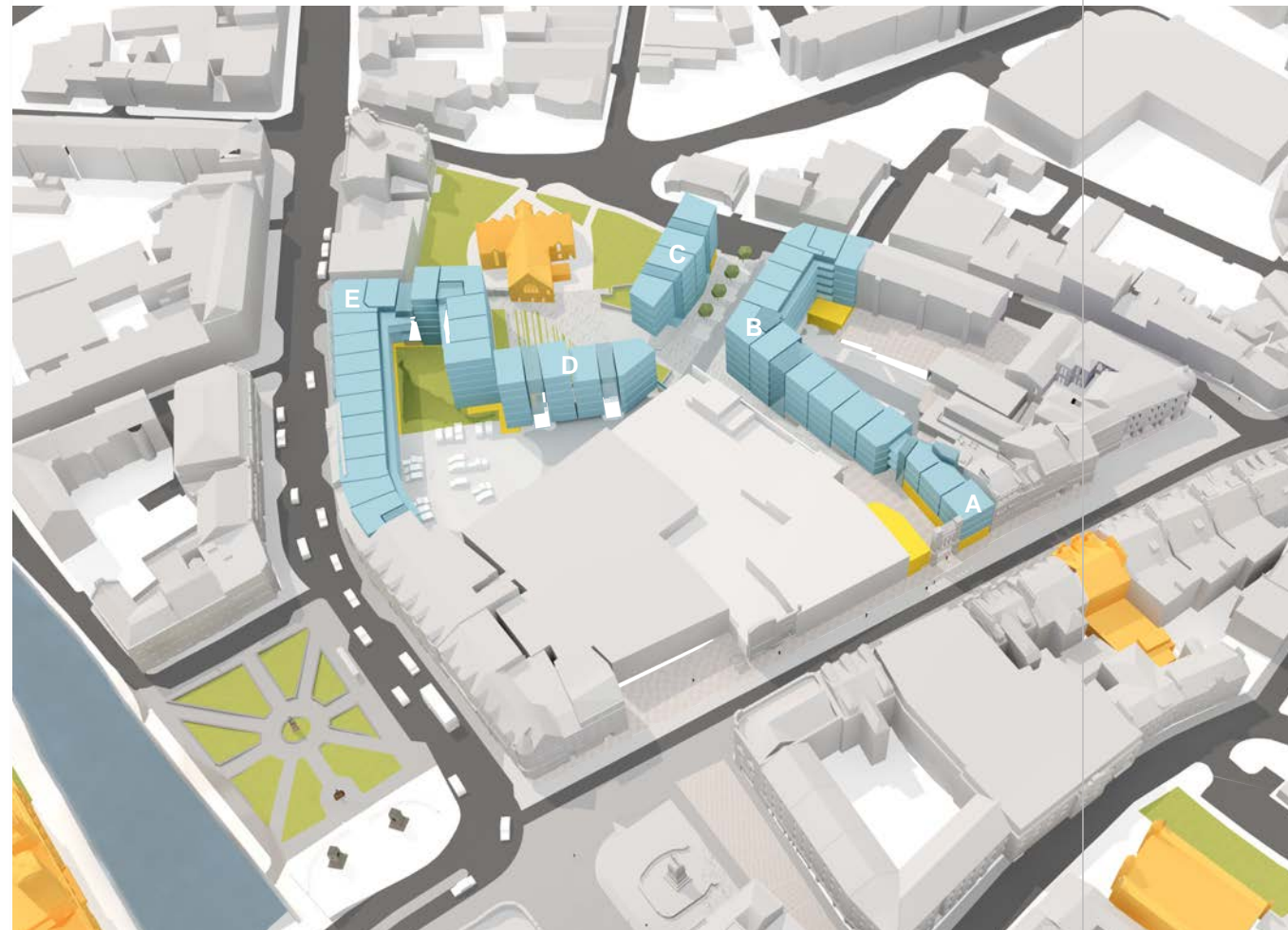
The adjacent extract shows the 'small' option; the proposed 3D massing in context and a schedule of the accommodation created.

The redevelopment option illustrated below is contained within the current footprint of the Paisley Centre, allowing for the retention of key retailers on the High Street.

The existing listed Paisley Centre facade is retained and re-purposed as the entrance gateway to a residential quarter, leading to a new public route that travels down through the site to the Arts Centre on New Street.

Retail / F&B units are retained as part of the masterplan at key corners to maintain street vibrancy but the proposals provide a reduction in Retail Space from 17,070 sqm to 3730 sqm (78% reduction).

New blocks seek to tie in with the existing urban grain and a new civic space is proposed to the rear of the Arts Centre, replicating the historic 'Cumberland Place' that was absorbed into the footprint of the shopping centre.



The existing listed Paisley Centre facade is retained and re-purposed as the entrance gateway to this new residential quarter



Schedule of Accommodation

Block A

Retail / Food & Beverage
Unit 1 200 sqm / 2150 sq.ft
Unit 2 245 sqm / 2635 sq.ft.

Apartments
1 Bed 7 no.
2 Bed 4 no.

Block B

Retail / Food & Beverage
Unit 3 225 sqm / 2420 sq.ft

Apartments
2 Bed 61 no.

Block C

Retail / Food & Beverage
Unit 4 85 sqm / 915 sq.ft.

Apartments
2 Bed 21 no.

Block D

Apartments
2 Bed 22 no.

Block E

Retail / F&B
Unit 5 2975 sqm / 32,020 sq.ft.

Apartments
2 Bed 78 no.

Total Apartments 193 no.

“ the importance of high quality
visuals cannot be underestimated.

Identify Repurposing Opportunities – Paisley Visioning

Illustrate the Vision

In order to tell a convincing story, the importance of high quality visuals that allow people to really see what could be achieved cannot be underestimated.

The adjacent illustration shows the proposals (based on the 'Large' development option that incorporates a number of neighbouring properties) in the wider context of the town centre and demonstrates the truly transformative effect on Paisley town centre, repopulating and greatly increasing permeability.



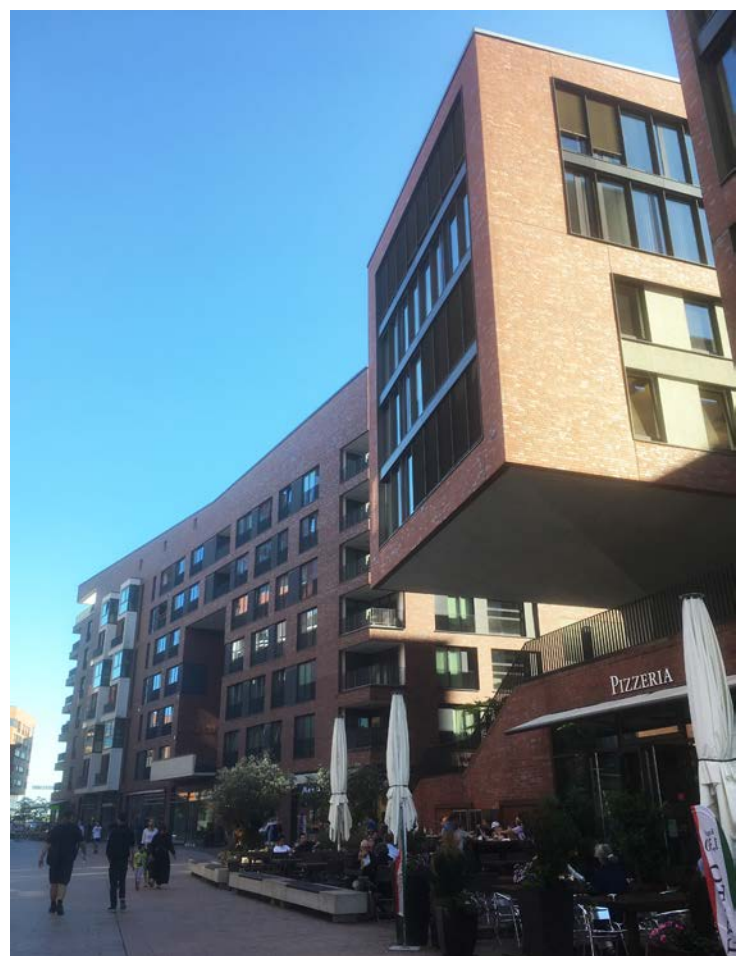
The Vision: Manifesto in Action

6. Repopulate the High Street

Bringing People Back to the Heart of the Town Centre

A key element to rebalance our town centres will be the introduction of significant levels of urban living in mixed use blocks.

It is imperative that in order to match the people focused inclusive ambitions of the Vision that a variety of tenures (private for sale, affordable, social housing, elderly - supported / sheltered, student) is encouraged to engender a sense of belonging within all user groups.



“We all used to live in town centres, why can’t we live there again?”

- Phil Prentice, Scotland’s Town Partnerships

Student Residential

As student numbers increase there will be a need to provide quality residential accommodation that meets their needs and the town centre is the ideal location for this. A student population can bring vibrancy to a town centre and both stimulate the need for part time jobs and fill the positions. A vibrant safe town centre environment for young students away from home can reduce isolation and increase well-being.

Urban Retirement

Town centres are proving increasingly popular as locations for retirement living. They afford the convenience and accessibility of local amenities and are often a place of familiarity and memory. Recent town centre residential developments in Paisley for example have proven very popular with downsizers and those of retirement age.



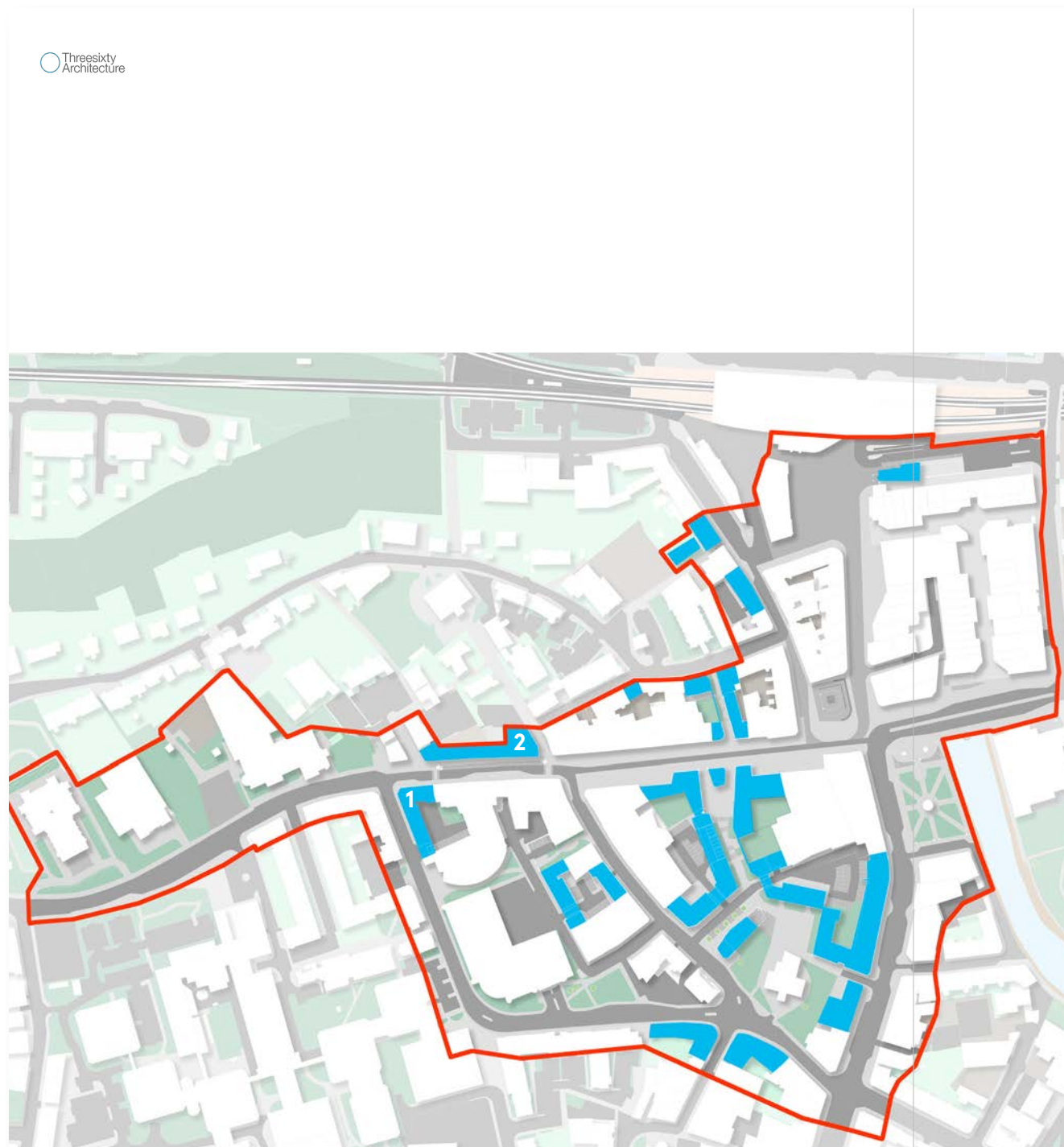
Repopulate the High St – Paisley Visioning

Identifying Opportunities

The Paisley Visioning study identified a number of opportunities over and above the re-purposing of the Paisley centre site to facilitate more town centre living.

These include; the development of existing gap sites, the consolidation of smaller sites involving selective demolition of poor quality buildings and the conversion of vacant upper levels of existing buildings of merit over retail space.

Student residential and hotel uses were also considered as part of the study. Examples of the evaluations can be seen on the adjacent page.



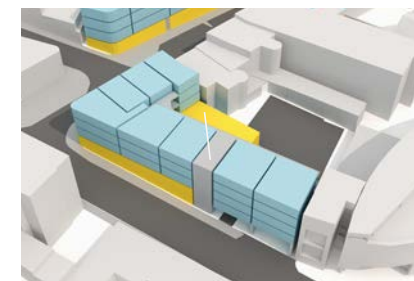
— Study Area Boundary
■ Potential Site

Town Centre Living

1. Leisureland Site



The existing Leisureland building on the corner of High Street & Storie Street is a 4 storey flat roofed building of poor quality, currently home to an amusement arcade, pool hall and cafe. The site also extends to a rear parking / service area adjacent to the UWS Union Building. When combined with the adjacent gap site on High Street it provides an attractive development site for town centre living over a ground floor commercial unit.



Schedule of Accommodation

Site Area 1340 sqm / 14423 sq.ft.

Commercial Units
Unit 1: 593 sqm / 6383 sq.ft.

Residential Units
2 Bedroom Apartments 26no.
(GIA 75sq.m approx).

Parking
18no. Spaces

2. High Street West

This site is formed through the consolidation of a number of partly vacant buildings, a large number of which are in a dilapidated state. The site's location, right on the High Street and close to both the UWS campus and Paisley Museum make it an ideal prospect for a student residential or hotel development.



The site has limited parking to the rear and can be serviced via School Wynd at first floor level.

Schedule of Accommodation

Site Area: 1047 sqm / 11,269sq.ft.

Commercial Unit
Unit 1: 902 sqm / 9710 sq.ft.

Residential Units
Student Studios / Hotel Rooms: 100no.

Parking
12no. Spaces



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

7. Introduce Attractors

Catalysts for Positive Change

Many of the uses a town centre once had have been marginalised to out of town locations or “dissolved” by the internet. This Vision report identifies what uses can be brought back into or introduced to the town centre.

Much can be learned from exemplar case studies and the reintroduction of uses including community services and civic activities such as primary health care, customer service centres, etc. but also including some bold commercial uses such as cinema and contemporary European style food hall. They are all important opportunities to drive visits into the town centre from the wider community and, as developed later in this report, they offer the opportunity to bring new life to old cherished buildings.

It is critical to consider the positioning of these attractors and how they can work together to achieve the critical mass to energise a High Street. Visibility/presence, radial influence and approach routes should drive the location of these “Attractors” as they are a major catalyst for positive change and often a once in a generation opportunity to get right.



Cinemas

Across the country, cinemas are being reintroduced into our city and town centres. At their best they are experimental and experiential and often community led. The new players like Everyman and Light Cinemas continue to expand, harnessing the power of digital media to stream live concerts and theatre from afar and provide an experience that people still increasingly want, including quality, well-run licensed restaurants and bars. Beyond that, avoiding travel costs to out-of-town and other towns makes it accessible to all, not to mention the benefits of “wash through” spend in surrounding businesses and extended evening activity.



Introduce Attractors – Paisley Visioning

Identifying Sites

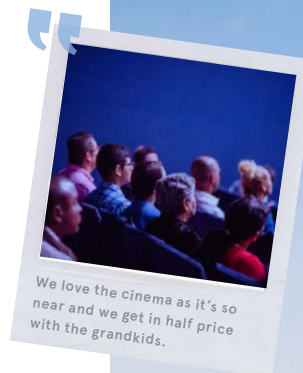
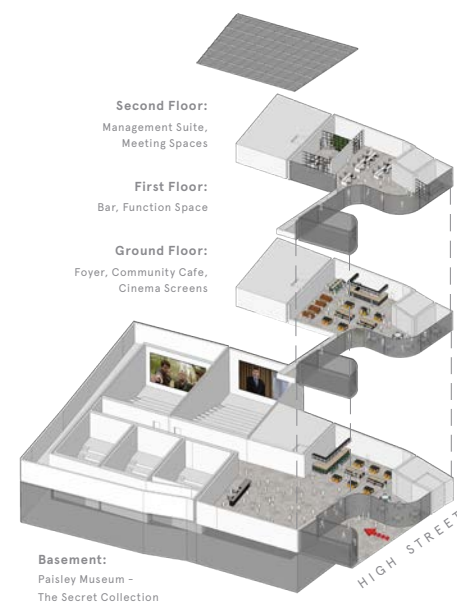
As part of the Paisley Visioning Study, a number of High Street sites were evaluated as possible sites for a new cinema.

Location and visibility were key considerations along with the opportunity to remove poor frontages and the possibility to take advantage of historic resonance owing to the previous presence of cinemas on at least one of the evaluated sites.

The example shown was one possible option that was explored for the following reasons;

- The site has excellent visibility on High Street and on approach from Gilmour Street Station.
- There is historical resonance as this was the location of the La Scala Cinema which was set back from High Street creating a public space.
- The Basement level is home to the 'Secret Collection' publicly accessible museum storage facility operated by Renfrewshire Leisure.
- A new cinema building would permit the creation of a piece of quality architecture that the prominent location deserves, replacing an existing frontage of poor quality.

A High Street Cinema

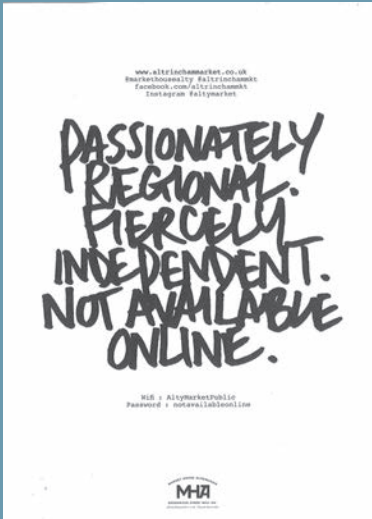


Foodhalls

Revo & Threesixty Architecture have published the only UK research and guidance on the design of the European food hall typology and, in particular, the commercially regenerative effect of the model. Food halls respond to a greater interest in food culture and offer affordable variety in an environment of texture and vibrancy. There is often a focus on regional produce and drink and licensing is a key requirement. They have great potential for incubating small start-up businesses and, in the Paisley pilot project, the opportunity to work with the local college to give students hands-on experience and employment.



A food and drink narrative that reversed a town in decline and reduced vacancies by 73%



Case Study: Altrincham, A Town saved by Food.

Altrincham was suffering a seemingly terminal decline due to changing shopping habits and its relative proximity to Manchester City Centre and the Trafford Centre. The traditional market was reinvented as a European style food hall in 2014, won market of the year in the Observer Food Monthly Awards in 2015 and has led to a significant upturn in the fortunes of this once failing town centre.



“The transformed building becomes
a key attractor on the High Street

Introduce Attractors – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

A New Attractor to Save a Key High Street Asset

Attractors do not only drive footfall and assist with the creation or strengthening of an evening economy but can also be used to breathe life into neglected yet valuable buildings on our High Streets.

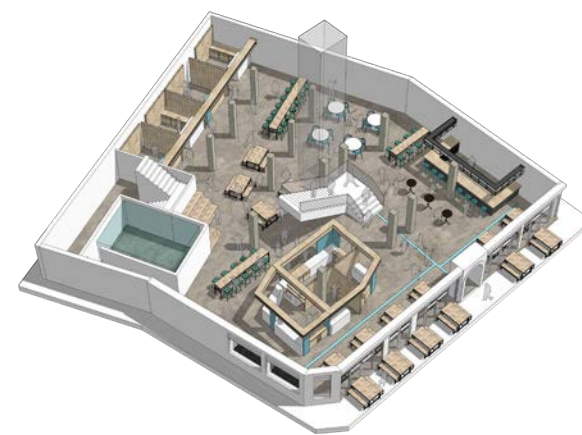
In the case of Paisley, the Liberal Club building is one such example of a building of great quality and historical significance that is sadly lying empty with the exception of the 4 small retail units (with largely transient tenants) at ground floor level.

The proposal seeks to create a new European style Food Hall at ground floor level, connecting directly to the High Street with complementary uses of co-work and exhibition venue spaces on the upper levels.

The adjacent extract from the study shows the transformation of the building and shows how a new Food Hall may look.

A High Street Food Hall

A textured, light filled space with a curated collection of independent food offerings complete with an extensive external seating area on High Street.



Proposed Food Hall Layout

The amalgamation of the existing retail units provides the ideal space with south facing street frontage right on the High Street



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

8. Create Workplace

Opportunities for
Repurposing &
Repopulating

Vibrancy &
flexibility
through
new working
models

Repopulation of our town centres cannot be achieved through the introduction of residential alone, as this could lead to areas devoid of life and activity during working hours.

The introduction of workspaces in tandem with residential creates vibrancy during the day and opportunities for flexible working and a healthy life / work balance.



Co-Work Spaces

There is growing global demand for the collaborative work-space model that provides shared space with admin and technical support. Many models offer business support and help promote business growth. The model can be short-term lets, but is also increasingly 'pay as you go' while it offers small or one person companies work space, meeting space, reduced isolation and greater opportunity to collaborate. In other instances it can offer a productive middle ground between lengthy commutes and working from home.

Artist / Maker Spaces

Spaces that provide a home for artists, artisans and creative people can be powerful drivers for regeneration. The nurturing of a community through shared facilities encourages collaboration and can provide outlets for art works and craftsmanship. A particularly successful example of this is WASPS (Workshop and Artists Studio Provision Scotland). They provide artists, makers & creators with inspiring spaces and places to work from. They operate and manage 20 character filled buildings across the country, providing space for over 900 practitioners & businesses. These spaces can reinforce whole community and lifelong learning.

Create Workplace – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

New Co-work / Creative / Maker Spaces right on the High Street

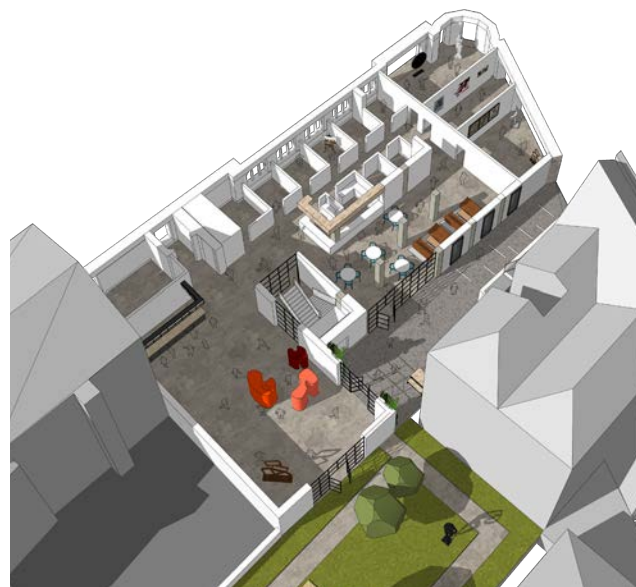
The YMCA building is Grade B listed and has a prominent corner location at the head of the central section of the High Street.

Similar to the approach to the Liberal Club building on the north side of the High Street, the Vision sought to introduce a new 'attractor' whilst safeguarding a key historic building that could potentially be at risk owing to the current lack of a sustainable long term use.

Paisley has a large creative community and a long history of craft and innovation therefore harnessing this and placing it at the heart of the High Street would bring that vibrancy to the wider community.

The building is reimagined as a creative workspace hub for Paisley, safeguarding the future of a key High Street asset.

YMCA Building – New Co-work / Maker Spaces



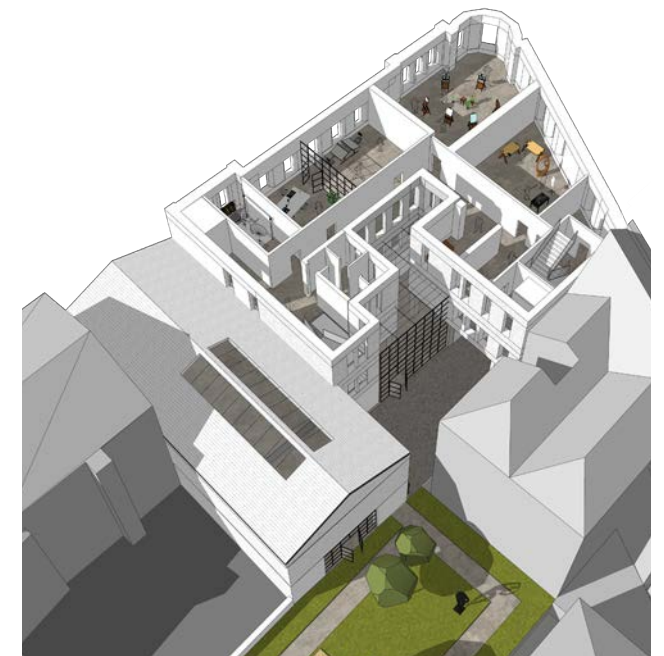
Ground Floor

Maker spaces of varying scales with showroom spaces to High Street, cafe and exhibition space / venue



First Floor

Creative Co-work spaces and upper level of exhibition / venue



Second Floor

Artist Studios / Maker Spaces

The Vision: Manifesto in Action

9. Strengthen the Cultural Offer

Improve and Build on Existing Cultural Assets

The introduction of new cultural uses can have a transformative effect on our High Streets.

Explore working with existing Institutions and community groups to bring new galleries / performance spaces / museums to the heart of the High Street.

Where existing facilities are located within the High Street area, investigate ways to allow them to have a greater influence through improvements to their frontages, new signage and lighting and the adoption of external space. Curate High Street specific exhibitions and events that engage the community and perhaps entice those from further afield to visit.





With the Museum and Coats Memorial
Venue, the TA Building forms a new
'Cultural Campus' on the High Street.

Strengthen the
Cultural Offer –
Paisley Visioning Pilot
Project

The TA Building: A New Cultural Asset on the High Street

Temporary / touring exhibitions have
proven to be very successful in the past
[particularly the record breaking Brick City
Lego Exhibition] and the unused TA building,
located immediately adjacent to Paisley
Museum provides the ideal flexible location
for all manner of exhibitions and events.

These events, due to their temporary nature
provide a changing offer throughout the year
that potentially encourages repeat visits
and can be attractive to a large number of
different demographic groups.

The rear drill hall, a single large volume top
lit space is transformed to create a 'Tramway'
style space for the town and, together with
the Museum and Coats Memorial form a new
'Cultural Campus' on the High Street.

Drillhall: A Flexible Exhibition & Events Space



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

10. Change Physical Perceptions

New Views & Routes that Transform Both the Urban Grain and Perceptions

Investment in physical and spatial change can alter a community's perception of their town centre. This can often achieve a literal change in perception where a new route is opened up to reveal a view or a valued building and create both development opportunity and greater permeability. A fundamental positive change to how we move through a physical environment that has been unchanged for generations is a powerful tool in re-energising the High Street.



11. Repair the Streets

Opportunities to Improve the Quality of the Urban Environment

When repurposing, remove poor quality buildings that offer nothing to the urban environment and replace with contemporary architecture that matches any existing historic facades in quality and ambition. It is most likely a High Street redevelopment location has only one exposed facade and it is important to demand a positive architectural response and legacy.

Change Physical Perceptions – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

Transformed Urban Grain – Greater Pedestrian Permeability and Views

In the case of Paisley, the areas to the north and south of the High Street are currently devoid of permeable routes, partly due to the mass of the Paisley Centre and its internalised mall areas.

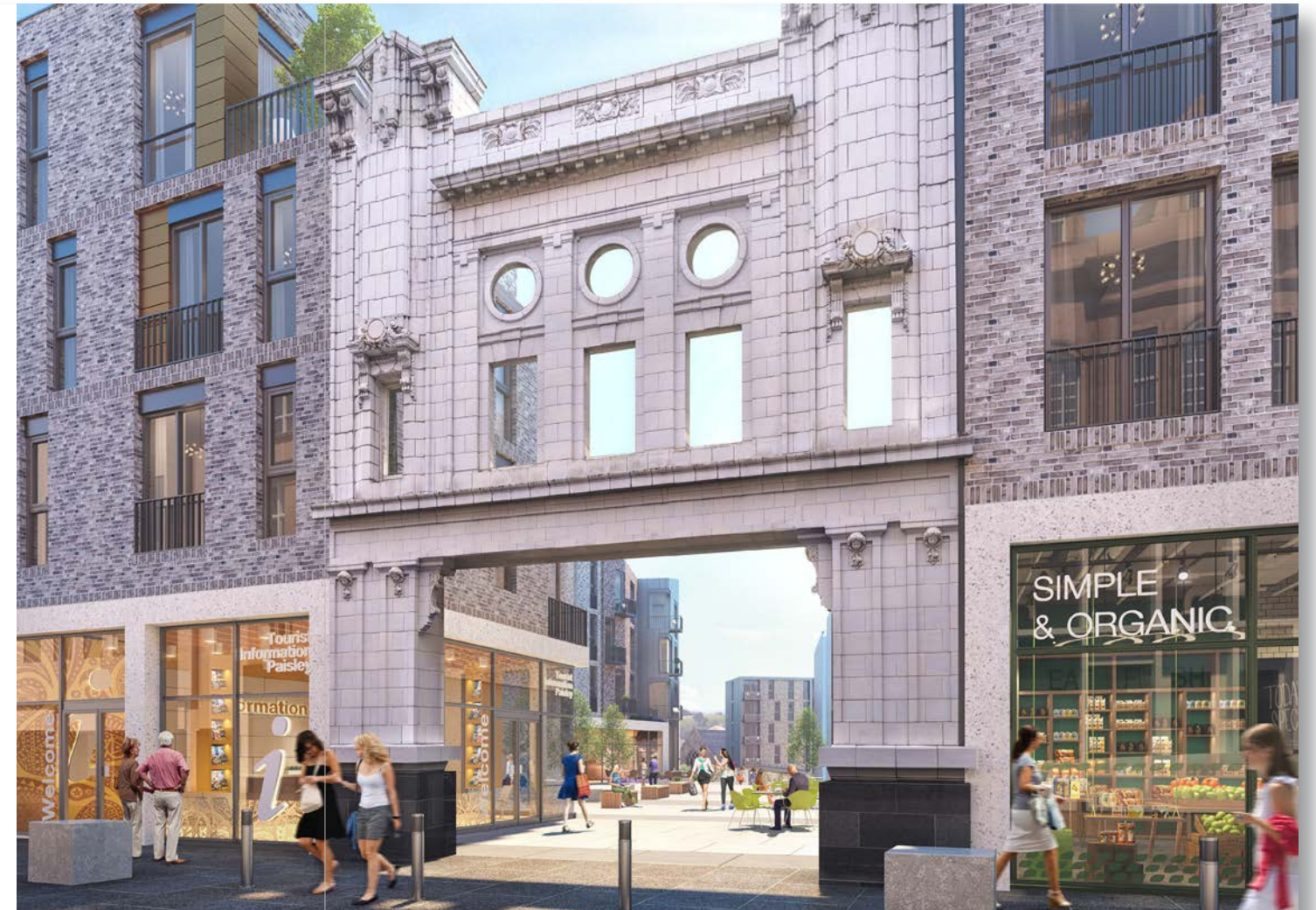
The adjacent extract from the study illustrates a revised urban grain that contains a new series of pedestrian lanes and wynds, combining to offer greater accessibility and connectivity.

These interventions create new vistas that physically transform perceptions of the town centre, opening view corridors connecting to forgotten buildings of merit and the wider landscape while further extending the established language of historic pedestrian routes from Oakshaw Hill to High Street.

The Gateway to a New Residential Quarter

The former entrance to the Paisley Centre is retained as part of the repurposing proposals to provide a new gateway from High Street to the new route driven through the heart of the site, opening up views toward the Arts Centre and Saucel Hill.

“A new series of
pedestrian lanes and
wynds offer greater
connectivity and
perception changing
vistas throughout the
town centre



- Study Area Boundary
- Existing Space improved
- New Public Space
- Existing Pedestrian Route
- New Pedestrian Route



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

12. Enrich with Public Art & Light

Make the Most of Existing Features and Stories

Public art and dynamic lighting can transform an existing environment for a relatively small outlay. They are powerful tools that can be used to reinforce the narrative and purpose of a place, creating unique memories.

By their very nature, lighting and murals provide a changeable and adaptable backdrop to High Street life and can be used to create a variety of different effects dependent on season and event. The wider community can be actively engaged in their selection and, in the case of applied artworks, involved in their creation also. The opportunity exists to work with local groups and education providers in the creation of works and installations to instil a true sense of ownership.



“Lighting and murals provide a changeable and adaptable backdrop to High Street life.

Enrich with Public Art & Light – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

Cost Effective Transformation of the Public Realm

The buildings on the north face of the High Street are of great quality. The proposals seek to highlight these listed facades through the introduction of new lighting and projection that create a dynamic attraction and backdrop for events that can be changed to suit particular seasons and occasions.

The elevated railway lines form a significant barrier between the High Street and the one way system that brings a large number of visitors to the town centre.

There are three primary ‘tunnels’ connecting under the railway and the introduction of new murals / artwork and lighting transform these spaces and provide a recognisable, ‘instagrammable’ series of entry points into the town centre.

Spaces & Connectivity

Lighting & Murals

Illumination of Paisley High Street



Railway Bridges – Transforming a Negative Attribute into a Positive

The Vision: Manifesto in Action

13. Provide Places to Gather

Where Community Truly Occurs

Key to the re-energising of any town centre is the creation of places to hold events that attract both local residents and those from outside the town. These external 'rooms' will support a wide series of events in terms of both their scale and flexibility and will encourage a vibrant all year round calendar that takes advantage of seasonal holidays, local historical events and more.

Every town has its own unique narrative and this can be exploited through the staging of events that bring the community together in celebration.





A Historical Ambition to Widen the High St Realised

Provide Places
to Gather –
Paisley Visioning Pilot
Project

Paisley High Street: Spatial Transformation

The Paisley Vision demonstrates how spatial transformation of the urban realm can have a positive impact, leading to changed perceptions and greater flexibility.

There was a historical ambition to widen the stretch of High St between New St and St Mirren St. When the M&S unit was built a 9m sacrificial zone was built in to achieve similar widening to that outside the YMCA. No doubt this ambition arose prior to pedestrianisation to permit pedestrians and 2 way traffic to co-exist safely.

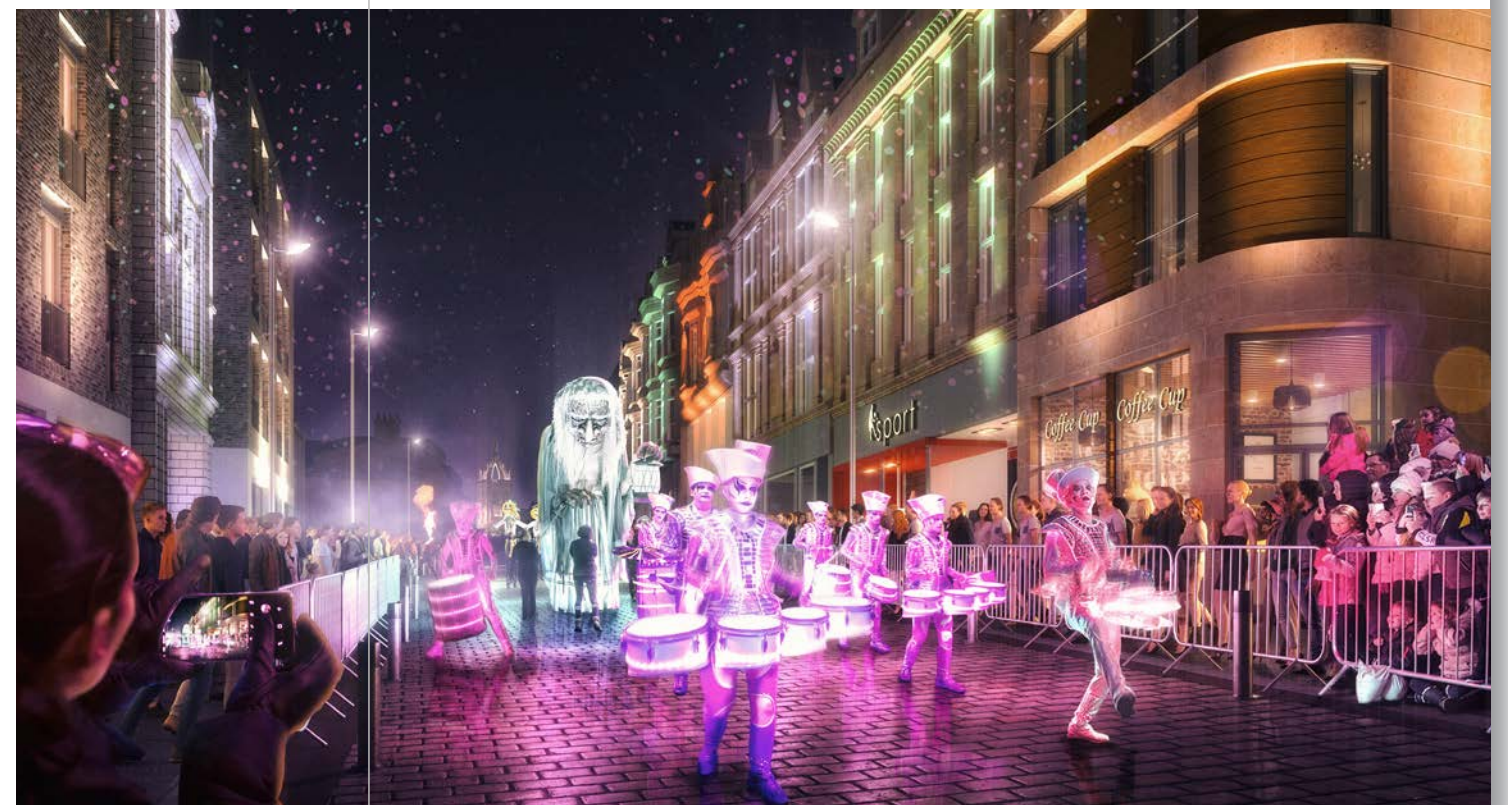
The selective widening of the High Street can create a greater sense of place and host greater on-street activity.

It is envisaged that Paisley will become synonymous with Hallowe'en in the same way that Edinburgh is to New Year. The event continues to grow in popularity and these proposals suggest that a re-energised and potentially widened High St will offer a positive amendment to the Hallowe'en processional route and other major events.

Spaces & Connectivity

A Widened High Street

The widening of the
High Street can create a
greater sense of place



Provide Places to Gather – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

County Square: How to Improve an Existing Well Used Space

County Square performs a multitude of functions, a place to gather for events, a welcome space for visitors and a busy thoroughfare for commuters / tourists due to the presence of Gilmour Street Station and the town's main taxi rank.

It also serves as an access to the basement service yard of the Piazza Shopping Centre and to their multi-storey car park.

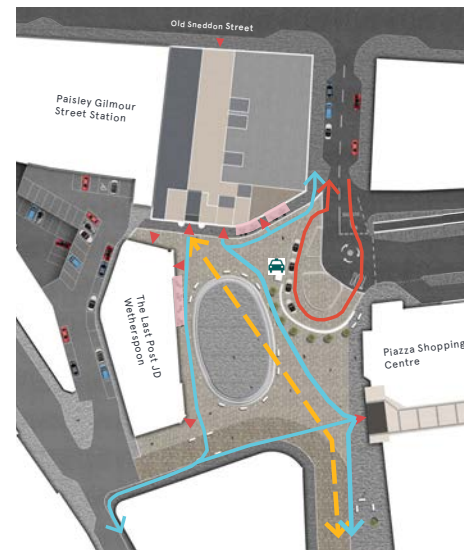
In order to maximise the flexibility of this key civic space within the town centre, it is important to simplify the level challenges and complicated geometry of the current layout. The relocation of the station entrance also removes the complication of huge numbers of train passengers having to cross through, or be corralled around, any events being held.

Spaces & Connectivity

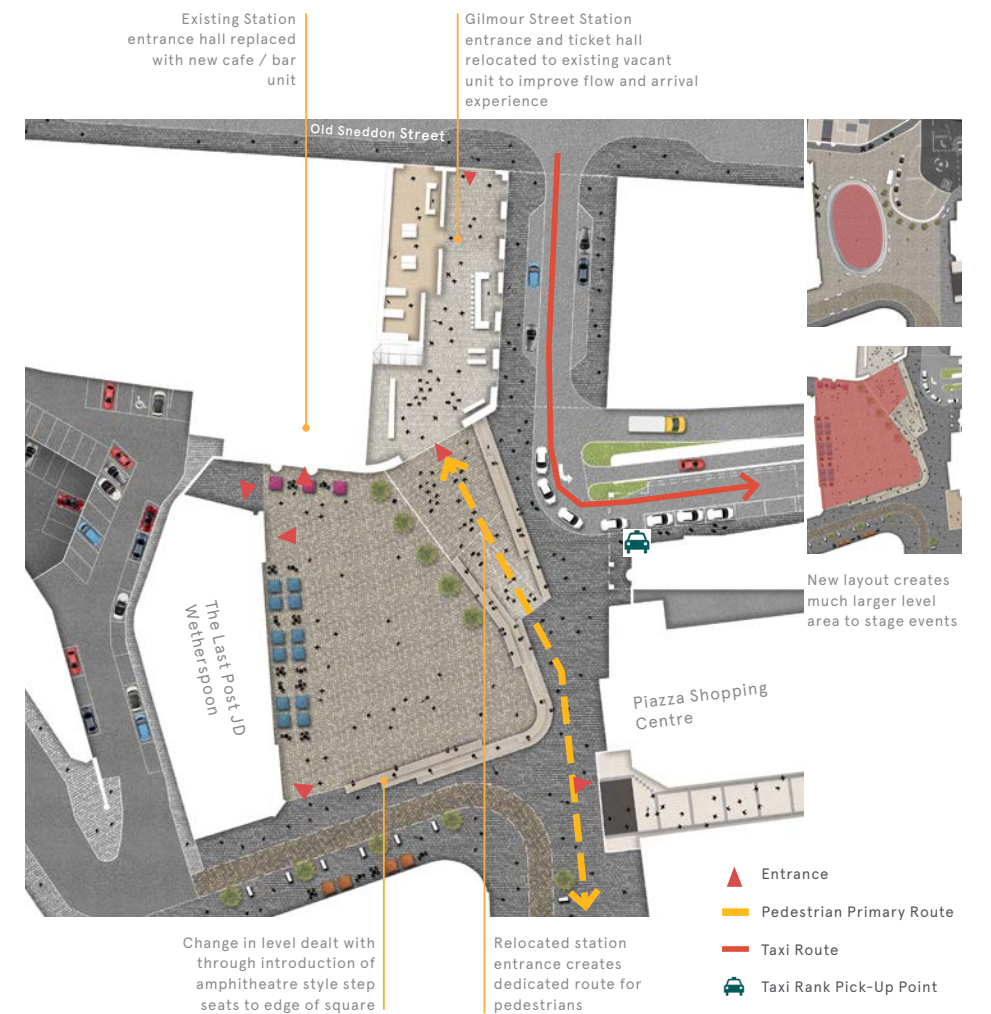
County Square

Existing Layout

The space is currently dominated by an elliptical flat surface surrounded by steps of varying heights and a large taxi rank and turning area.



Proposed Layout: A flexible event space



Provide Places to Gather – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

Introducing New Public Spaces

Keen to expand on the series of successful events hosted by the town centre, the Paisley Vision sought to create a new civic space, facilitated in part by the proposals for the repurposing of the Paisley Centre which unlocked the site of a space that was lost when the shopping centre was developed in the late 80's / early 90's.

This 'New Place' recreates the historic 'Cumberland Place' and provides an external meeting and performance space overlooked by new residential blocks that works in tandem with the Arts Centre and provides a more fitting setting for this significant cultural asset.

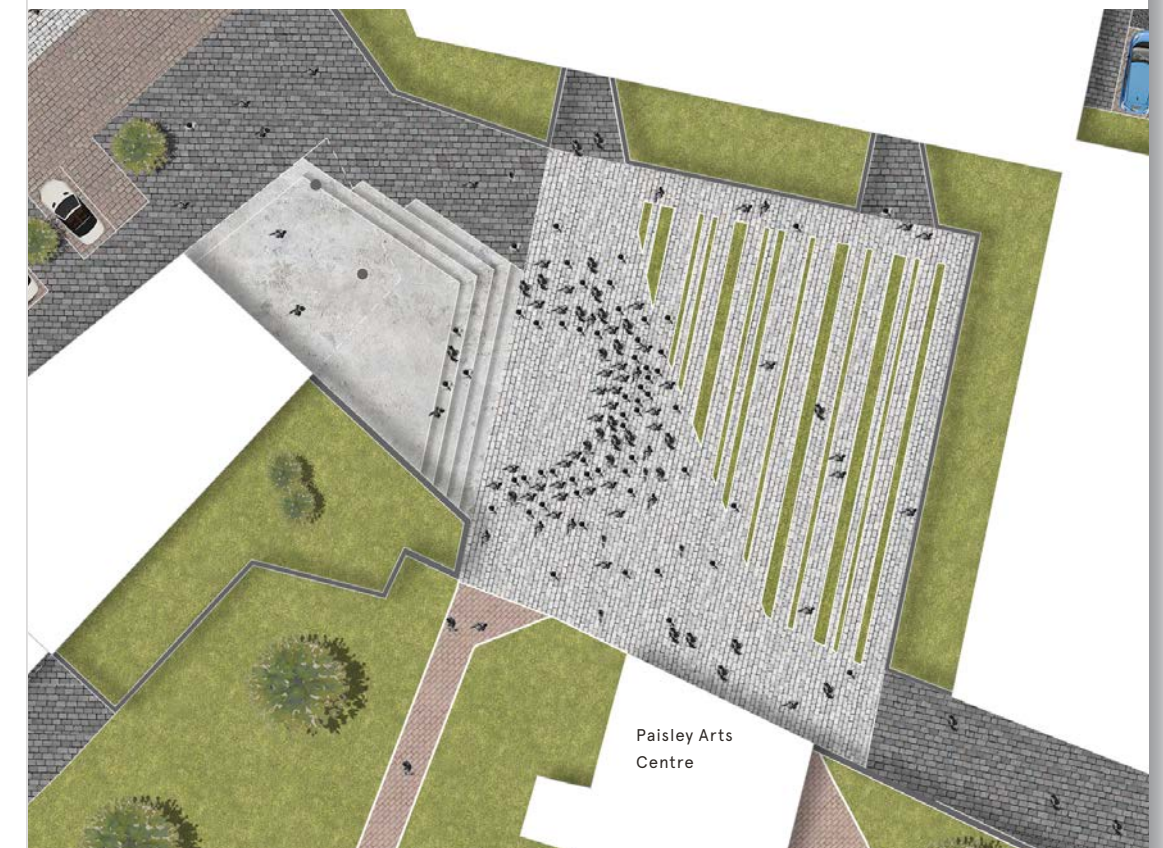
Spaces & Connectivity

New Place

Recreation of a Historic Space Within the Town



New Place provides
a new meeting and
performance space in
the town centre.



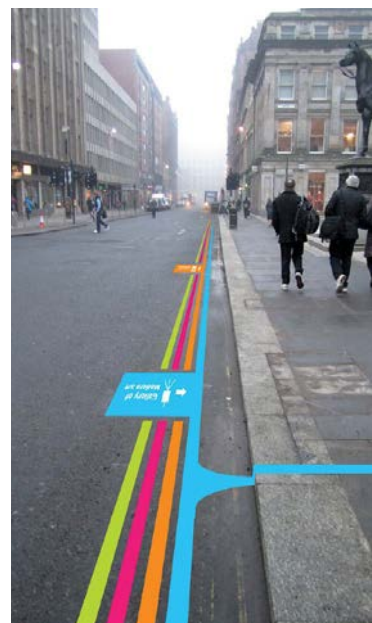
The Vision: Manifesto in Action

14. Ensure Your High Street is Accessible, Legible and Visible

Make your High Street accessible to all, regardless of age or ability, accommodating those with issues of dementia or mobility and providing pause points throughout.

Your High Street will only be successful if people can find it. Create a memorable, cohesive and legible wayfinding strategy that helps people navigate their way to and along the High Street.

Pedestrianisation is not always the answer. This often leads to a lack of visibility for traders on our High Streets.



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

15. Promote Sustainable Transport

Consideration should be given to the introduction of environmentally friendly public transport and encouraging cycling as these initiatives could go a significant way to improving accessibility to and use of the High Street by low car ownership groups.

As part of the "Clone Town" phenomenon in 80's and 90's, High Streets all over the UK were in part pedestrianised. This made sense in many towns at the time as narrow pavements and 2 way traffic were tricky to manage safely and pollution was high. However, the down-side is that often the units on the High Street are "invisible" or, at least much less visible. It can also create an unnerving quiet stretch at night that lacks passive surveillance and activation of passing traffic.

Encouraging the use of cleaner forms of public transport on our High Streets could counter these issues.

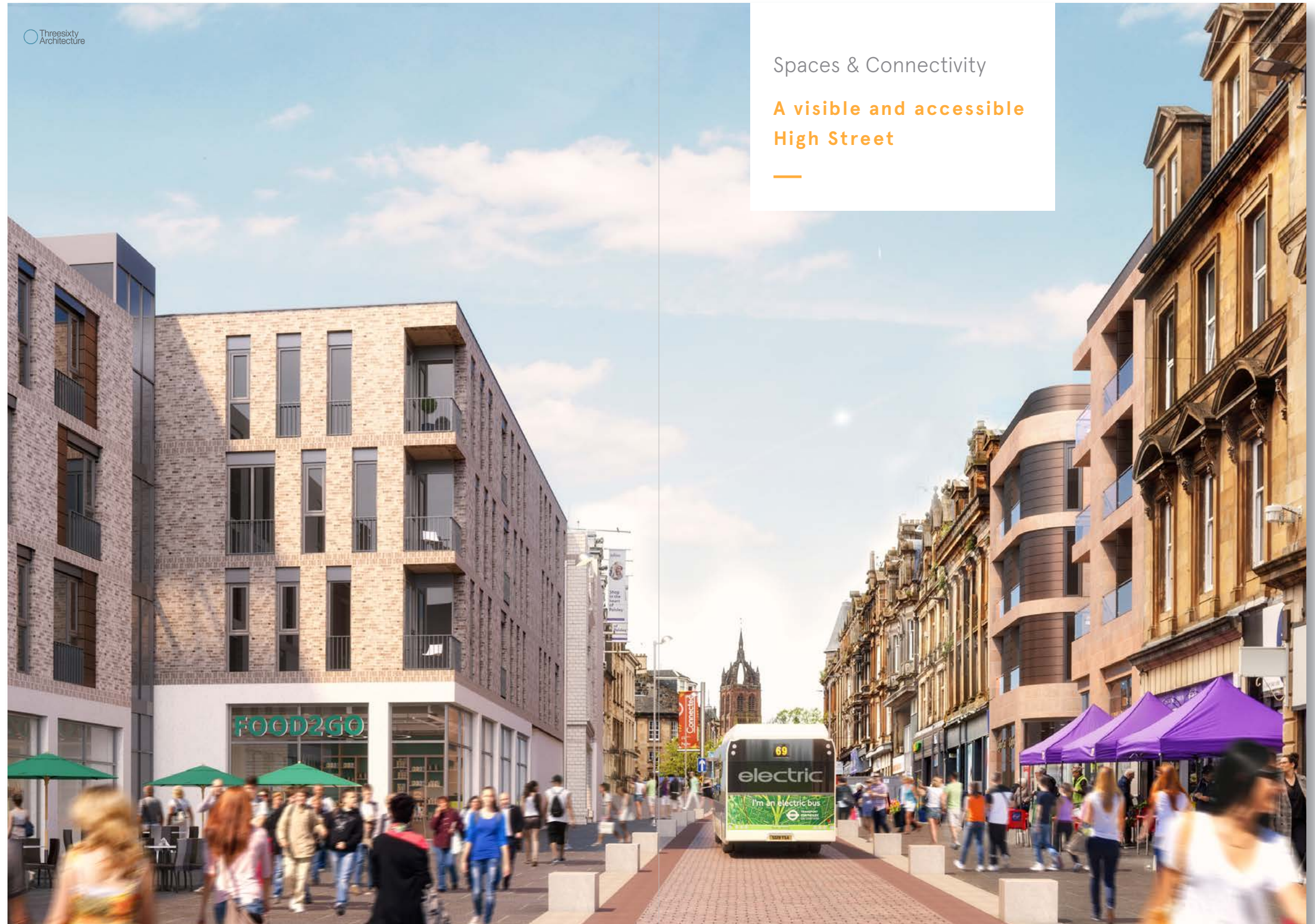
Cycling has become an increasingly popular leisure activity and method of transport enjoyed by people of all ages and types. As a sustainable transport form that also has enormous public health benefits we should ensure that it is actively encouraged by providing the right facilities on our High Streets.

Promote Sustainable Transport – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

Sustainable Public Transport Reintroduced to a Transformed High Street

The Vision for Paisley High Street reintroduces carefully controlled sustainable public transport in one direction (east - west) to provide greater accessibility for all users and visibility to all retailers and cultural / community uses. It also provides a more direct link to the newly transformed Museum at the head of the High Street.

This also helps to reduce congestion in other parts of the town centre.



Spaces & Connectivity

**A visible and accessible
High Street**

The Vision: Manifesto in Action

16. Develop a Balanced Approach to Car Use

Explore Reducing the Impact
of Car Use in Town Centres

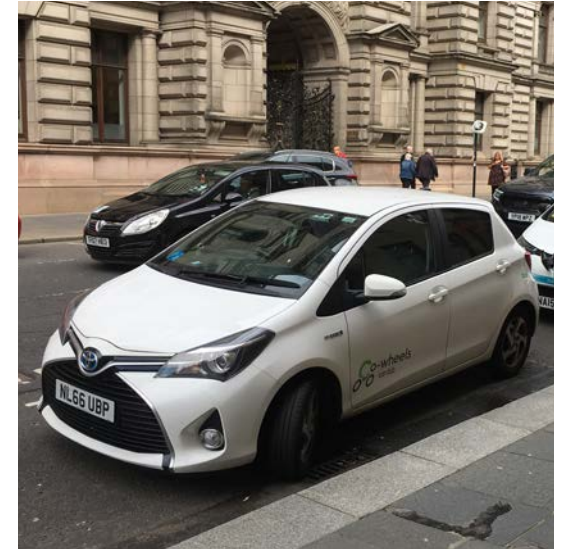
The future trends are likely to be reduced car ownership, driverless cars, etc. but, in the meantime, if the ambition is to encourage the wider suburban community and ensure all parts of society use and invest in our town centres we need to recognise that parking is, for now, important.

Parking needs to be managed in terms of visibility and usage e.g. there is no point in using all the nearest spaces for shop and restaurant staff – manage it to leave them for customers. Furthermore, if you consider how shopping centres capitalise on the footfall on the journey from car park to cinema for example, very deliberate strategies for the routes between concentrated parking and future key attractors should be developed.

Car Clubs: Access Without Ownership

Car Clubs are proving increasingly popular, providing people with the convenience of a car when they need it without the requirement for ownership and, from a spatial perspective, without the need for large areas of additional parking.

This type of scheme has been successfully implemented in a number of towns and could be a welcome addition to other town centres to complement any new residential developments proposed.



Case Study: Roeselare, Belgium

Roeselare has introduced a number of digital signs showing availability of parking and improved wayfinding for those travelling by car into the town centre.

More recently, they have introduced 'shop and go' a scheme that through the use of sensors, permits 30 minutes of free parking in the town centre. There is no need for ticket machines and wardens are sent a notification via an app to inform them when a car has overstayed its allotted time. This has proved particularly popular with residents.





The Vision: Manifesto in Action

17. Make People Feel Safe and Welcome

The increased repopulation of High Street areas will resolve the “deadzone” effect in the evening and provide passive surveillance but, for any residential development to be successful and for the High St to attract the wider community, we must ensure the environment and behaviour is safe and welcoming. Beyond this, to be truly inclusive, there needs to be specific welfare provision that supports age specific requirements and all abilities.



Town Centre Living: Activity & Passive Surveillance

A repopulated, re-energised town centre would be a safer and more welcoming place to be due to the increase in activity and extensive passive surveillance offered by new residents who have made it their home.

Street Ambassadors: Welcoming Yet Vigilant, Providing a Necessary Presence

The introduction of street ambassadors would transform the town centre for both visitors and residents. This initiative has been adopted by a multitude of towns and cities throughout the UK with great success.

They can transform perception of a place as safer and more welcoming and would be an essential component in attracting people back to living in the town centre.

Street ambassadors are often an initiative of local councils or BID groups. They provide a welcoming face for all town centre users and work alongside key relevant partner agencies such as the Police to report crimes / vandalism and anti social behaviour while those appointed by BIDs, liaise with local businesses.

A number of towns and cities also employ evening ambassadors to assist those visiting the town centre for entertainment, leisure and pleasure after hours allowing a town to develop a stronger evening economy.



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

18. Provide Welfare Facilities

Welfare Facilities Suitable for All – Essential to Town Centre Inclusivity

As part of our stakeholder discussions, we posed the question ‘what do I need from my town centre?’ and elicited responses from the attendees based on their demographic groupings. The provision of welfare facilities was brought up by the majority of groups but particularly by families with young children and by seniors.

Welfare facilities are also of great importance to people of all ages with mobility and medical issues and the availability of spaces to facilitate adult changing etc. are increasingly being provided in public buildings and in retail centres as they are viewed as attractors and a means to increase dwell time.

This same principle would be applicable to the High Street.

The adjacent diagram demonstrates the average time spent by the demographic groups in performing the functions described and if, rather than be returning home, these can be accommodated in situ, it would encourage longer stays on our High Streets.



Case Study: Richmond Community Toilet Scheme



The scheme encourages local authorities and businesses to work together to meet the demands for welfare facilities in their communities. Local business such as bars, cafes, restaurants and shops provide both customers and non-customers with access to their toilet facilities. With financial aid from the local authority, the toilets are kept clean, safe and to hygienic standards.

Local businesses are not only providing a service to the public but may also experience an increase in trade from the potential customers that use the facilities.

Several local authorities in the UK are now taking part in community toilet schemes, Richmond Upon Thames being one of the first. They currently have nearly 70 premises signed up to the scheme, with 34 providing disabled access and 22 with baby changing facilities. The council attributes £600 annually to each member of the scheme to maintain and help run the facilities. Participant businesses receive stickers for the window of their premises while street signage indicating the location of facilities is provided by the local authority.

The Vision: Manifesto in Action

19. Make Your Town a Hub for Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning is Key to Social Inclusion for All Demographics

We can have towns of opportunity and social contact for all citizens; college and university students, industry related apprenticeships, sixth year students, school placements and retirees.

This focus on learning should have the High Street at its epicentre, providing the familiar and accessible backdrop for all, regardless of age, mobility or financial means.



This is a bold vision for the long-term future of the University's estate which will enhance the presence and profile of the University at the heart of the City and support its wider regeneration and development.

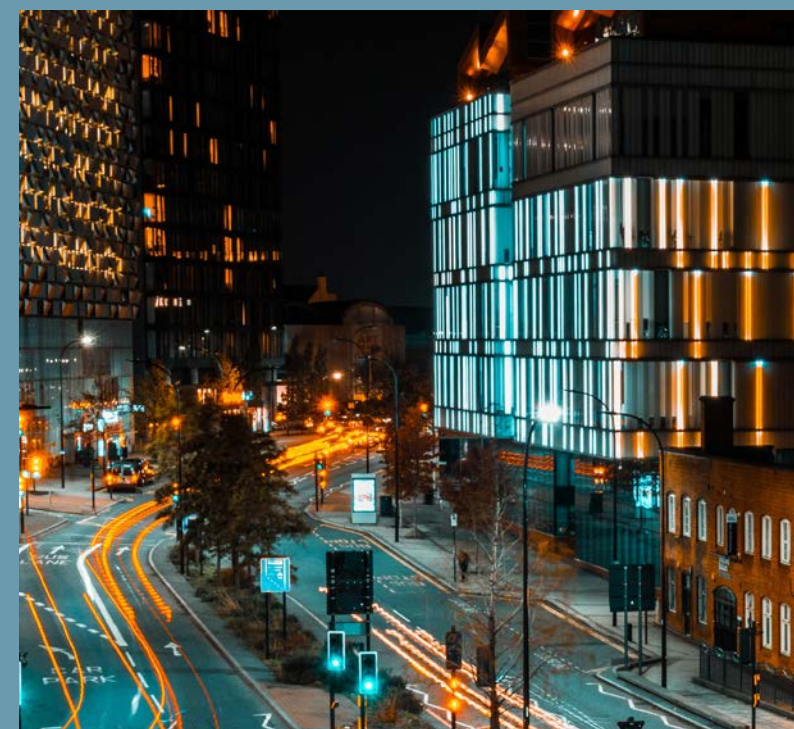
Prof. Sir Chris Husbands, Vice Chancellor,
Sheffield Hallam University



Case Study: Sheffield Hallam, Urban Campus

Sheffield Hallam University is located at the heart of the city centre

They have recently launched a new campus masterplan, a 20-year proposal to create a sustainable and flexible campus that will allow Sheffield Hallam achieve its ambition of becoming the world's leading applied university, actively contributing to the city centre.



A Hub for Lifelong Learning – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

Learning as a Catalyst for Regeneration

Paisley benefits from being home to the campuses of two major education providers, UWS, right on the High Street toward the west end of the town and WCS, located on the fringes of the town.

The Vision demonstrates how the creation of a new education campus on the site of the Paisley Centre, at the heart of the High Street could provide a new home for either establishment, or a location for shared facilities where curriculum crossovers could radically transform the High Street.

Over and above this benefit to the High Street, the relocation could potentially free up either one or both of the existing campus locations as large scale residential led, mixed used quarters, either in the town centre or, in the case of WCS on Renfrew Road, close to established neighbourhood communities.

Learning for All

A New Town Centre Learning Campus

Placing Education at the Heart of Paisley's Regeneration

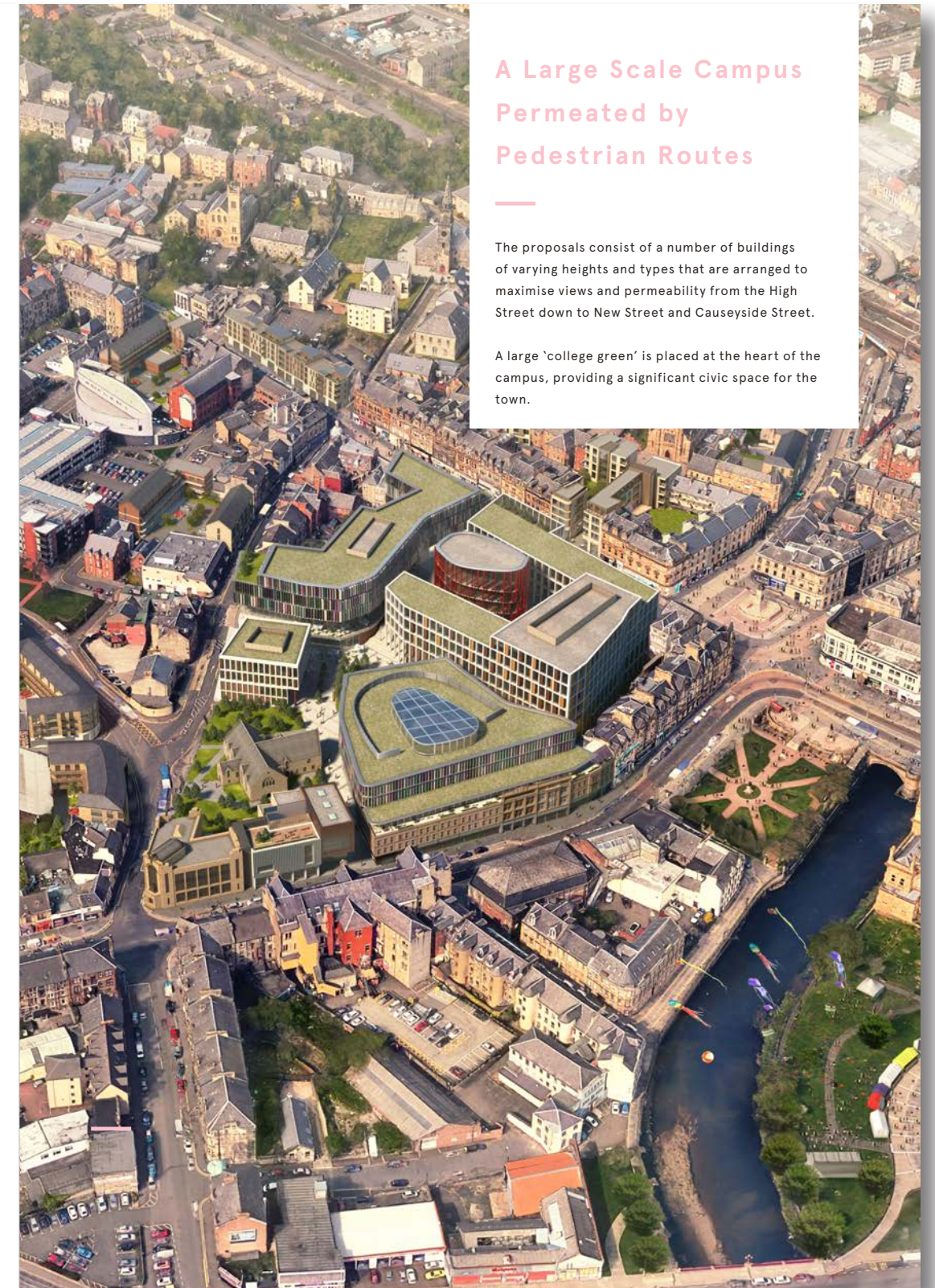
As part of our stakeholder engagement we met with representatives of both major educational establishments, UWS and WCS. They both have ambitions to transform their respective campuses, with UWS reporting that they have the most dilapidated campus of its type in Scotland.



A Large Scale Campus Permeated by Pedestrian Routes

The proposals consist of a number of buildings of varying heights and types that are arranged to maximise views and permeability from the High Street down to New Street and Causeyside Street.

A large 'college green' is placed at the heart of the campus, providing a significant civic space for the town.



The Vision: Manifesto in Action

20. Work With Your Institutions

Key institutions such as education providers and health and civic establishments can be fantastic assets for a town centre, providing essential accessible services right at the heart of the community, enhancing town centre vibrancy and greatly increasing footfall.

These institutions can draw upon public funding that take Town Centre First, Carbon Reduction and the Place Principle policies into account. This provides a mutually beneficial solution for the institutions themselves and for the town, where services offered in high-quality buildings in a vibrant centre outweigh those offered in an edge-of-town environment which can only be accessed by public transport or car.



21. Nurture 'Meanwhile' Uses

Opportunities for Experimentation and Community Engagement

Transformation takes time and not all proposals will be delivered in the short term. Where a building or site is vacant, encourage "meanwhile uses" that benefit the wider community, either through the creation of public space or temporary occupation for curated retail / commercial use.

22. Expand the Evening Economy

Increase Vibrancy and Bring an Economic Boost to your High Street

Our High Streets for too long have been dependent on retail at the expense of other uses that encourage activity outwith typical 9am-6pm hours. This has led to the creation of empty, unwelcoming environments once the shops are closed. A good evening economy brings life to these 'dead zones', encourages footfall, increases passive surveillance and greatly improves the local economy. It is critical to create an environment that nurtures an evening economy on our High Streets, particularly by removing historical restrictions on licensing.



The Project Brief:

Your Town's Specific Manifesto

The Project Brief:

Your Town's Specific Manifesto

Ensuring that key aspirations are considered and deliverables are identified.

The success of any project is dependent on creating a common vision with broad appeal and support from all significant stakeholders and the wider community.

The initial client brief should be interrogated and developed alongside information detailing context, constraints and opportunities and to ultimately identify project outcomes.

Key reference documents and policies such as Town Centre / Economic Action Plans, together with Government guidance (Town Centre First and The Place Principle) and input from Scotland's Towns Partnerships should be central to the formation of any brief.

The draft strategic outcomes should form the basis of the wider community engagement events, stakeholder workshops and individual consultations with potential third party and insight specialists.

Only once this extensive research and consultation is completed, the insight considered and the outcomes peer reviewed by an expert panel, should the final project brief be published.

This robust process ensures that the project can move forward, secure in the knowledge that the aspirations of all those within the client body, the community and key stakeholders have been heard and that no-one feels excluded or ignored. This will ensure enthusiasm and engagement in the process, creating 'ambassadors' for the Vision as it develops.

Methodology

1.

Define the Study Area

Outlined in the Vision Strategy Section of this Document

2.

Understand Existing Policy Goals

National: The Place Principle
Town Centre First

Local: Town Centre Action Plan
Strategic Economic Framework

3.

Engage the Community

Consultation Event & Insight Survey
Key Stakeholder Engagement

4.

Establish the Purpose

Outlined in the Vision Strategy Section of this Document

5.

Distil the Gathered Information

Create a Draft Project Brief
Interrogate via Expert Review

6.

Publish Detailed Project Brief



Draw Architecture / Threesixty Architecture

The Project Brief

Community Engagement

Any Vision must be built on wide-ranging community engagement using a variety of means, from social media and online questionnaires, to the more traditional workshops, meetings and events to ensure that as many voices as possible are heard.

For our town centre to thrive all stakeholders need to push forward together. Community engagement needs to be maintained throughout the process, ensuring transparency and honest feedback. There needs to be real openness.



The Project Brief

Insight Survey

No two places are the same and the journey to understanding their purpose and potential should begin with a detailed analysis of context.

Data driven insight provides a robust evidence base to inform a compelling design response for a Vision that leads to an understanding and identifying of purpose. It provides tools to shape a town centre Vision that reimagines spaces so that they engage with and support the need of the local population by understanding how and why visitors interact with a location, what motivates them and what ultimately drives vitality.

The Project Brief

Stakeholder Engagement

Key to the success of any Vision is to really engage Stakeholders, to enthuse and convince them and to use the initial interfaces to “sell” to them the benefits of participation and assure them that the Vision will be truly transformational.

First and foremost in achieving this is a well prepared, stimulating, structured and effectively managed session. Many localised stakeholder groups can react against “experts from out of town” telling them what they want and therefore it is imperative to be informed, rigorously prepared and to ensure the stakeholders know their opinion is valued.

It is important to employ techniques to ensure that not just the loudest voice is heard as we can get caught up on one point (normally a vested interest or pet hate). This can be achieved through splitting into smaller groups, inviting post-it comments or using feed-back forms.

Follow-on individual stakeholder consultations are also extremely valuable in gaining real insight into what each party really wants to see on the High Street.



Stakeholder Engagement - Paisley Visioning



The purpose of the day was not to educate but to gather the ideas of those in attendance

Stakeholder Event

8th February 2019

The stakeholder event was attended by a wide cross section of those with an interest in the Town, including Secondary School Pupils from both Paisley Grammar & Castlehead Schools, members of Community groups, representatives of the business community, private developers and others from the further education establishments UWS and WCS. It was explained that the event had been set up to help shape the brief for a visioning project for the High Street area in Paisley Town Centre and to understand where the key stakeholders can contribute to the process.

The purpose of the day was not to educate but to gather the ideas of those in attendance. It was hoped that everyone in attendance would approach the series of workshops with the best interests of Paisley at heart and that they would become ambassadors for the visioning project within their respective organisations and communities.

The invaluable and extensive consultation undertaken as part of the Paisley 2021 UK City of Culture bid was acknowledged and it was hoped that the groups in attendance who had been involved in this process would retain their enthusiasm for this new visioning exercise.



Four workshops were run over the course of the day with the following titles;

Workshop 1

SWOT Analysis

(Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats)

Workshop 2

What is Paisley's Future Story?

Workshop 3

What do I need from my Town Centre?

What would make me live in the High Street area?

For this workshop, attendees were split into 5 demographic groups, to obtain responses from specific perspectives.

Workshop 4

How can my Organisation Invest more in Paisley Town Centre and why should we?

In order to take full advantage of the disciplines represented by key stakeholders present, this exercise looked to create three groups, each focussed on a particular interest; Education, Commercial and Residential, with community-based attendees then distributed amongst them.

Published Stakeholder Event Report Document

The outcomes of the workshop sessions were summarised and published in a report document that in turn informed the development of the detailed project brief for the visioning study.

Expert Panel Review

It is beneficial to learn from other experienced place makers and incorporating these events into the methodology can only lead to a more considered vision. In order to make the most of the collective assembled experience, it is important for any design team to be passionate but not precious.



Expert Panel Review -
Paisley Visioning

Threesixty
Architecture

Paisley Expert Panel Review, 29th April 2019

A select panel of property industry professionals was assembled to discuss the emerging work on the development of a vision for the future Paisley town centre. Attendees were invited who had experience in delivering regeneration in urban centres – and who also know Paisley and its qualities as well as its issues. Full minutes of this workshop/review are included in the appendices.

Following an in-depth presentation on brief and progress the agenda was structured around the following questions:

Question 1

How do we best present the proposals working around sensitivities to deliver physical change?

Question 2

What is Paisley's Narrative – what is the story / narrative that we test all proposed and future moves against?

Question 3

How do we give this vision relevance and how do we move the vision forward after this first phase?

Published Expert Panel Review Report Document

The outcomes of the review were summarised and published in a report document that in turn informed the development of the detailed project brief for the visioning study.

The image shows a document titled "Paisley Expert Panel Workshop". It contains a table of attendees, a list of topics, and a section for notes. The attendees table lists names and roles, such as "John Smith, Project Manager" and "Jane Doe, Project Manager". The topics listed include "Introduction", "Paisley's Narrative", "Physical Change", "Future Moves", and "Conclusion". The notes section contains a list of bullet points summarizing the workshop's outcomes.

The Project Brief- Paisley Visioning

Published Brief: A Strong Foundation for the Vision

The success of any project is dependent on creating a common vision with broad appeal and support from all significant stakeholders and the wider community. This cannot be achieved without alignment on the project aims and outcomes from the start.

In the case of the Paisley visioning project briefing sessions were held with multiple stakeholders and a detailed brief document was formulated that structured the myriad of aspirations and opinions into a hierarchy of shared ambition.

Subsequent sessions to sign off the brief were held with the client body to ensure that the project was built on a strong foundation of clarity, alignment, and clearly identified deliverables.

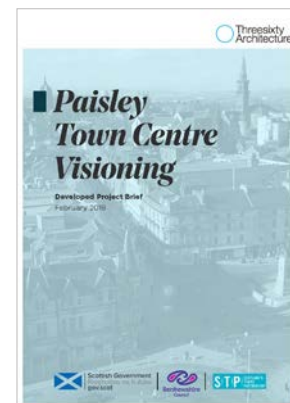
Project Brief

Paisley: Project Brief

The developed project brief is summarised in the following main moves and required the vision show the bold physical and spatial interventions that enshrine the principles to be applied to re-energise the High Street area.

It was recognised that in order to achieve a step change in how we perceive, value and prioritise our High Street, the proposals within this vision could not get bogged down in the complexities and minutiae of ownership and legal burdens.

Some proposed moves may not be easily / readily achievable due to ownership but they will be shown to be relevant (economically, socially and culturally). It was understood that the identification of the moves and "building blocks" would be the true value of this ten year vision project.



Opportunities for physical and spatial change to demonstrate:

- What a re-invented and re-energised High Street will look and feel like
- Unique stories and narrative that will positively position the High St
- Viable commercial potential, attractive to investors
- Opportunities for town centre living
- How the High St area can further support events
- How to accommodate work place and collaborative working
- How the quality of the townscape can be capitalised on
- How to improve the accessibility and legibility around the High St area

**Solutions that put the needs
of the community first, based
on value not cost**



Insight:
Get to Know Your Town

Insight

Detailed Analysis

Why is this Important and How Does this Inform the Vision?

Every town, and in turn every High Street is different with its own unique characteristics and challenges.

Ensuring that all proposed moves are developed from an informed position on the economic, cultural, demographic and physical context of the High Street being considered is invaluable to the success of any Vision.

This key information provides the necessary intelligence to indicate opportunities and areas requiring particular focus, leading to responses that are specific to place, not generic solutions developed on the ill-informed basis that 'one size fits all'.



Methodology

1. See the Bigger Picture

National & Regional Perspective
Economic Analysis – SIMD
Government Policy & Guidance

2. Evaluate Physical Attributes

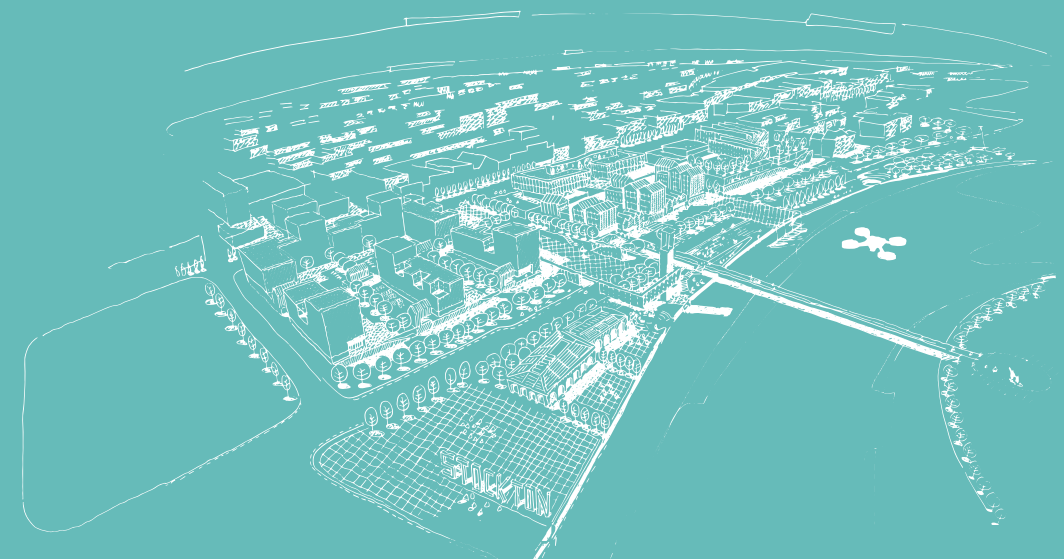
Urban Grain
Frontages
Built Heritage
Topography

3. Establish the Purpose

- Ground Floor Uses
- Upper Floor Uses
- Extents of Ownerships

4. Explore Known Initiatives

Community / Cultural
Residential
Commercial
Leisure



See the Bigger Picture – Paisley Visioning Pilot Project

Setting the Study in a Wider Context

The wider contextual analysis of Paisley was key to highlighting both the significant benefits and challenges facing the town due to its proximity to Glasgow and the significance of the town from the perspective of its position as the key settlement of Renfrewshire. Paisley has a huge catchment within easy reach to draw on to re-energise its High Street.

When considered alongside the impressive transport links and the opportunities being created by Glasgow Airport Innovation District, home to AMIDS, (Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland) the insight gathered informed a number of the developed transformational moves within the published vision.

Paisley Today

Wider Context

Part of Scotland's Largest City Region & Principle Settlement of Renfrewshire

Glasgow City Region is Scotland's economic powerhouse – it accounts for 32% of Scotland's GVA, 33% of jobs and 29% of businesses. Almost three million people live within a 60-minute commute. Paisley is the largest urban settlement outwith Glasgow City within the region.

Renfrewshire borders the south-west of Glasgow. The region also has boundaries with North Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire, Inverclyde and West Dunbartonshire. Although by area one of Scotland's smallest unitary authorities (excluding the cities), it is one of the country's most populous areas, being the fifth largest unitary authority and the ninth largest including the city authorities.

Paisley is the largest town in a region that includes Renfrew and Johnstone, smaller towns such as Erskine and Linwood, and villages such as Bishopton, Bridge of Weir, Elderslie, Houston, Inchinnan, Kilbarchan, Langbank, and Lochwinnoch.

Almost 175,000 people live in the area, in nearly 81,000 households. There are more females (52%) in the area than males (48%). Over two-thirds of the Renfrewshire population are of working-age.



GAIA, home to AMIDS Innovation District

The Glasgow Airport Investment Area (GAIA) is a signature project of the £1.13 billion Glasgow City Region City Deal.

GAIA is Home to the £65 million (€72.8 million) National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland, the location of the Lightweight Manufacturing Centre opening in May 2018.

The Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District Scotland (AMIDS) will be an internationally recognised centre for innovation, research and manufacturing in Scotland's industrial heartland. It will be home to the new National Manufacturing Institute for Scotland, the catalyst for the development of Scotland's advanced manufacturing sector.



Glasgow Airport / AMIDS Connectivity

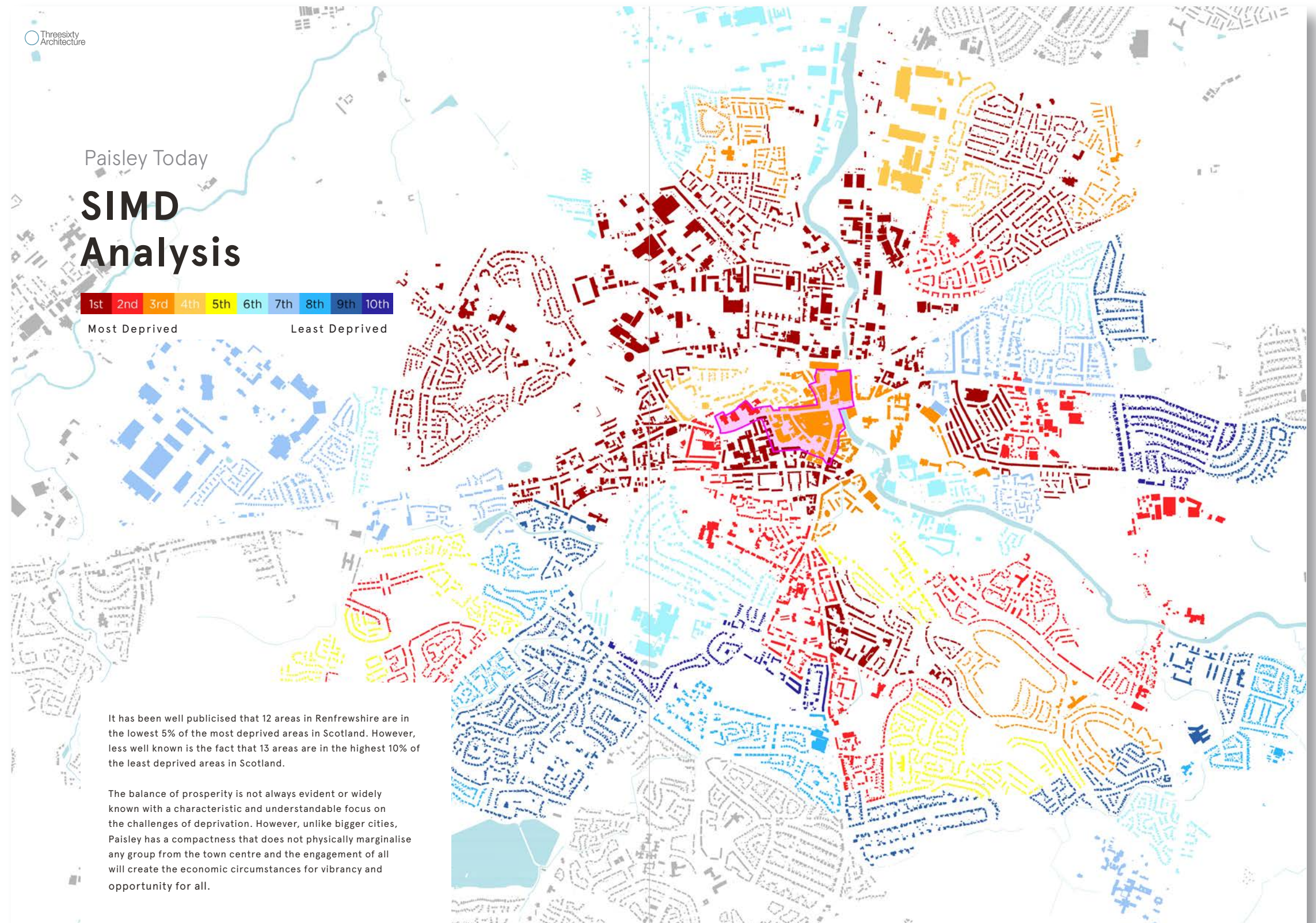
Fast and reliable public transport between Paisley and Glasgow Airport has been a long-held ambition. A further signature project of the Glasgow City Region City Deal is the delivery of the Glasgow Airport Access Project that will link Glasgow Central and Paisley town centre with the airport and potentially serve AMIDS as well.

Business casework is now focussed on rapid transit systems, examples of which can be seen at Stanstead and Heathrow airports.

See the Bigger Picture – Paisley Visioning

SIMD Analysis: Providing Key Insights into the Wider Area Demographic

The importance of analysing the wider SIMD information cannot be underestimated in terms of how it can be used to 'change the narrative' of the known economic story of an existing town and by extension its town centre and High Street. This was especially relevant in the Paisley Visioning Study.



Evaluate Physical Attributes – Paisley Visioning

Identifying Opportunities and Constraints to Physical and Spatial Change

The Paisley Vision was underpinned by a detailed analysis of all physical aspects of the town centre in order to identify issues that may have proven to be particularly challenging to transformation or to offering opportunity.

The following characteristics of the town centre were identified and recorded;

- Frontages
- Urban Grain
- Topography

Paisley Today

Physical Characteristics

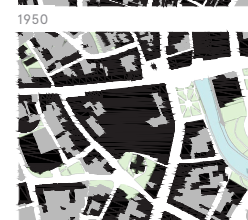
Urban Grain: Mapping development of the town centre.

Historically, the High Street has always been a relatively narrow thoroughfare. The first efforts to create a wider space can be seen on the adjacent 1910 map, where the YMCA building has been constructed on the southern side of the street, set back from the building line.

By 1950, only the adjacent building and the La Scala Cinema create additional width. The M&S store, constructed in the 1960's was built containing a 9m deep sacrificial zone to allow further widening but this was not continued with later developments. The urban blocks to both the north and south of the High Street have always been relatively impermeable with no discernible pedestrian routes through.

The southern block once contained 'Cumberland Place' to the rear of the congregational church building but this was lost, as was the vast majority of external space upon the development of the Paisley Centre in the late 80's – early 90's as can be seen in the 2019 map.

“Historically, the High Street has been a relatively narrow thoroughfare.”



2019

Frontages: The backdrop to town centre life.

Paisley has a wide variation of frontages of both a positive and negative nature.

The High Street in particular contains a large number of high quality listed facades on its northern side, contrasted with the relatively negative modern frontages of the large retail units on the southern side.

Some buildings however may have poor quality shopfronts at street level but provide a positive contribution to the streetscape due to the quality of the overall facade.

This exercise assisted in the identification of a number of potential development sites where the removal of negative frontages would be beneficial to the town centre streetscape.



Positive Frontage
Negative Frontage
Blank Frontage
Culture / Community



Topography: Paisley Town Centre has challenging levels.

From the lowest point on the banks of the White Cart Water to the highest point at the top of Church Hill, home to Oakshaw Trinity Church at the heart of the Oakshaw conservation area, there is a dramatic and significant change in level that has its challenges but creates fantastic layered views and vistas throughout the town centre.

Most critical for this study, is a 9 metre change in level from the middle of the High Street to the base of New Street / Causeyside Street that could prove problematic to those with mobility issues or families with young children.

The area of High Street itself within the study area has a continual gradual climb from the Cenotaph to the east all the way to The Thomas Coats Memorial Church and the UWS campus to the west.

Evaluate Physical Attributes – Paisley Visioning

Built Heritage: Working with the Asset of the Existing Urban Fabric

The quality of architecture and place that exists should be the yardstick for the quality of the built environment we introduce while helping us to decide what we need to remove.

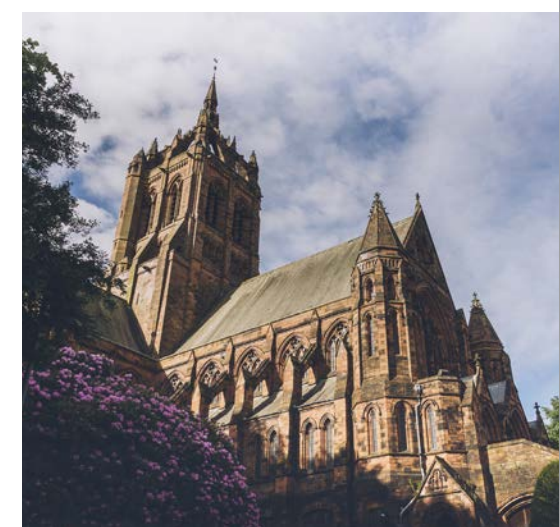
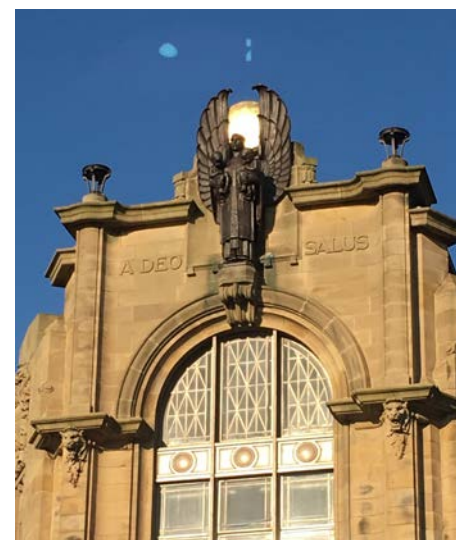
Paisley has a rarely rivalled legacy of a quality built environment; a reminder of a thriving economic past and in no small part an outcome of benevolent mill owner dynasties competing to the benefit of the townscape.

The vision for Paisley celebrates and showcases this legacy while firmly looking to the future.

Paisley Today

Built Heritage

Paisley has
the largest
concentration of
listed buildings per
capita in Scotland
outside Edinburgh



Record Existing Uses – Paisley Visioning

Existing Uses: Identification of Opportunities to Rebalance

A recent study of Scottish towns shows that an average of between 10% and 14% of retail space is unoccupied and, even before factoring in the floor space that is under occupied (short term rental, discounted rents, rates only) it is clear that our town centres are over-provided with retail.

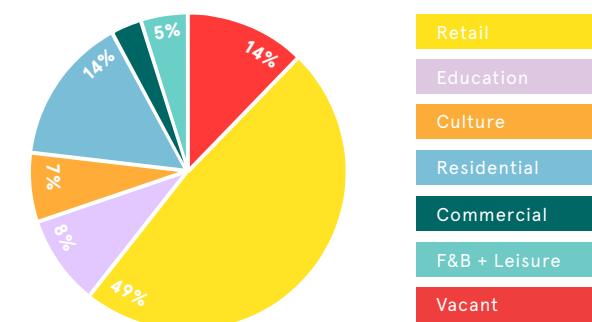
This issue is endemic across the UK and reflects our changing shopping patterns. The need for retail (particularly large format retail) is likely to continue to decrease.

Modelling the 3 dimensional occupation of the town centre gives a better understanding of mix of uses and a clearer understanding of the opportunities.



Paisley Town Centre: Significant Over Provision of Retail Space

The combined 3D model demonstrates that there is already a level of mixed use in the town centre but the dominance of retail and vacant retail is evident and a healthy town centre will offer a greater level of diversity. A key outcome of this study is to rebalance the high street through the re-purposing and reduction of existing retail space.



Paisley Town Centre Uses as Existing
(based on primary level floor areas)

Explore Known Initiatives – Paisley Visioning

Acknowledgement of Existing Positive Moves

It is important to establish where positive moves have already been made or where proposals exist that could complement any interventions within a Vision.

Identification and evaluation of these moves also demonstrates where there is a pre-existing appetite for particular uses.

In the case of the Paisley Vision, the desire of a number of community groups to bring leisure and entertainment venues to the heart of the town centre was highlighted.

The research also reinforced the validity of town centre living as a strategy to re-energise the High Street owing to the success of a number of recently completed and proposed residential developments of a variety of tenures.

Paisley Today

Known Initiatives

A Greatly Improved Cultural Offer

A number of significant cultural and community projects have recently been or are being delivered by Renfrewshire Council within the town centre as part of a £100 million pound investment;

- Paisley Town Hall Refurbishment
- Paisley Museum Project
- Paisley Arts Centre Refurbishment
- New Central Library & Learning Hub
- Paisley Museum Store: The Secret Collection



“...once in a generation £100 million investment in the town centre – transforming Paisley Museum and Town Hall, key outdoor spaces and more...life changing cultural experiences on our doorstep and our heritage preserved..”

Recent Residential Developments

Recent years have seen the completion of several successful residential developments within Paisley town centre.

Additionally, there are a number of new projects either in the pipeline or nearing completion, proving that there is demand for town centre living and the convenience it brings. This is multi-generational, popular with both young professionals, families and downsizers alike.



Potential Leisure / Commercial.

There are a number of leisurebased proposals taking shape within the town centre. Coats Memorial Church, an icon of the Paisley skyline will be transformed into a multi-purpose arts venue. Fundraising is underway with an aim to be operational by April 2020.

Paisley Community Trust have spearheaded the drive to bring a cinema back in to the town centre. They have embarked upon a study in conjunction with Renfrewshire Council to identify the most appropriate location within the town centre.

Moving Forward

Publishing Your Vision

Effective communication of the vision is key. It is essential to ensure that the fundamental principles are clearly explained and illustrated in an attractive, coherent and legible document that convinces the reader not only of the credibility of any proposals contained within, but also that the vision can be delivered.

The document needs to work on a number of levels, it should not only demonstrate the depth of research that has gone into its creation for those interested in the finer details but also be front loaded with convincing visual imagery, diagrams and simple explanatory text that sells the vision, suitably engaging the reader to encourage further exploration.

In order to reach as wide an audience as possible and all demographics, publication of the final vision in both hard copy and online is recommended.



Publishing Your Vision – Paisley Visioning

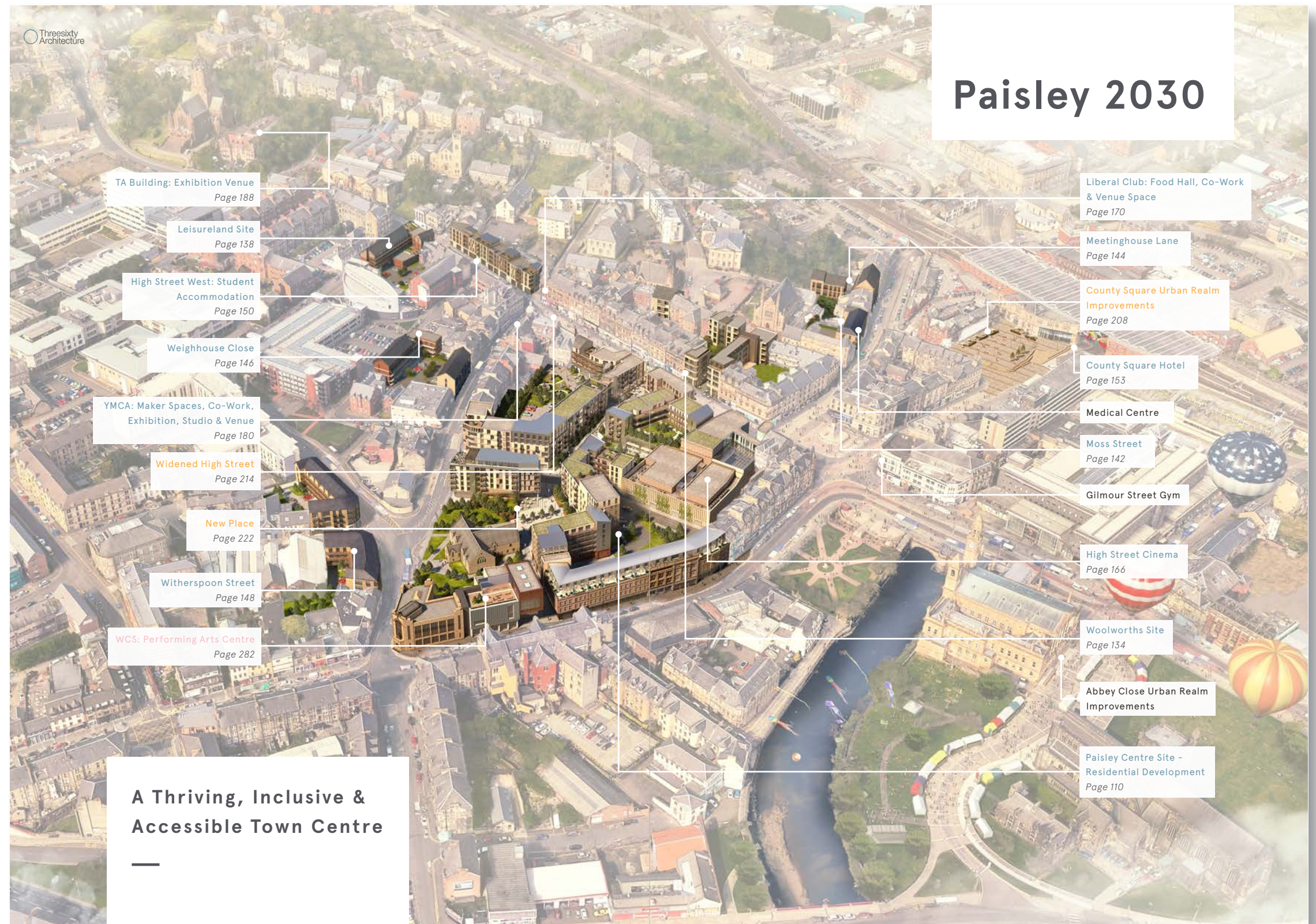
The Final Vision Document

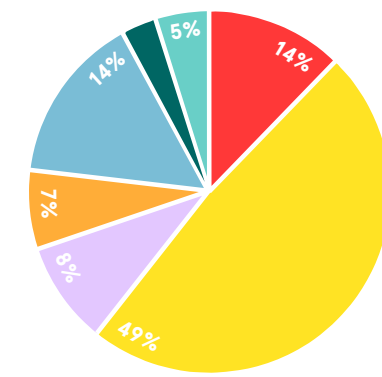
‘Paisley is Open: A Vision for Paisley Town Centre 2030’ received board approval within Renfrewshire Council on 18th September 2019.

It was launched in Paisley in January 2020.

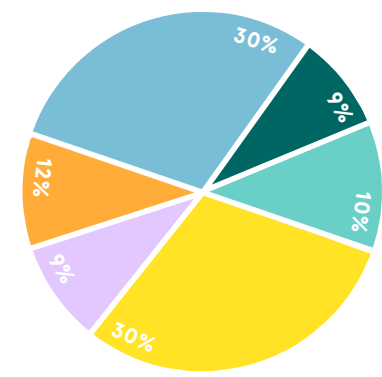
The Vision is an important contributor to the Future Paisley Exhibition, to be held in the town centre .

It is anticipated that it will be used for developer days to set opportunities in a positive context and to assist in making a prioritised case for any funding that may become available.





Paisley Town Centre Uses as Existing



Paisley Town Centre Uses as Proposed

- Retail
- Education
- Culture
- Residential
- Commercial
- F&B + Leisure
- Vacant

Paisley 2030: A Rebalanced Town Centre

The combination of moves and interventions shown on the previous page creates a town centre no longer dominated by retail but balanced with healthy amounts of new residential space and increased elements of commercial, leisure and community uses.



A Vision for High Street Regeneration

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