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In which we
articulate the
strategy through
a masterplan
detailing all
potential projects
and highlighting
four major schemes
in particular.

MASTERPLAN





RECONNECTION

The first part of the masterplan development has been to reconnect the historic street network. This is based on the historic plan below and has been interpreted in the layout to the left.

The historic street network of Crewe has always been fragmented as a result of the railway lines. As mentioned in earlier sections of the report, this has been exacerbated in recent years as routes have been blocked and in some cases built over. This has caused the town centre to feel cut off from the surrounding areas.

The first requirement is to improve as far as possible the arrival points over the railways. The key bridge in this respect is Earle Street. We have explored the possibility of creating a new bridge from the east but building over the West Coast main line is prohibitive and has been discounted. Our proposal is therefore to improve the bridge by adding pedestrian walkways to the outside of the structure. This

would improve the pedestrian experience and encourage footfall between the retail park and the town centre as well as providing more space for vehicles.

The plan to the right shows the reinstatement of the town's street grid. This incorporates the town centre ring road, West Street, Vernon Street and Oak Street as part of this wider network. It also reconnects the surrounding streets to these through routes. This will require careful design to ensure that the capacity of these routes is not compromised. However the development of the Green Route from the A500 should reduce through traffic in the centre making this possible. The main area of reconstruction on the plan lies on either side of West Street which becomes a major high street unifying the centre and the neighbourhoods to the north. This will require careful design of West Street, a boulevard to allow streets to connect without interrupting the flow of traffic.

To the south of the centre on Mill Street, there was no historic street network because of the railway works. Here the plan creates a new street grid with a central spine allowing for a new route to the station.

The reality is that not all of these streets will be traffic routes because of the danger of creating rat runs through the centre. They should however provide for traffic where possible. Pedestrianised routes only really work in the very heart of the town where there are sufficient people to make them feel lively and safe. Away from the core of the town pedestrianised routes can feel less welcoming especially if they are unable to support retailing. The aim should therefore be to allow traffic to penetrate into the edges of the town centre.





RECONSTRUCTION

Reinstating the street network is of little use if the streets are not enclosed by buildings. Attractive streets run between well proportioned buildings, where possible with active ground floor uses. The next stage of the masterplanning process has therefore been to use the development opportunities in Crewe town centre to promote a series of infill developments.

The first stage of this will be the Modus Development. This is currently very close to receiving planning consent and we are aware that there is limited scope to change this scheme, however the layout we show to the left is slightly different to the current scheme because it keeps open Delamere Street by moving the anchor store northwards. This is something that should be sought if the opportunity arises in the future.

The next opportunity for infill development is likely to be the Mill Street development. There

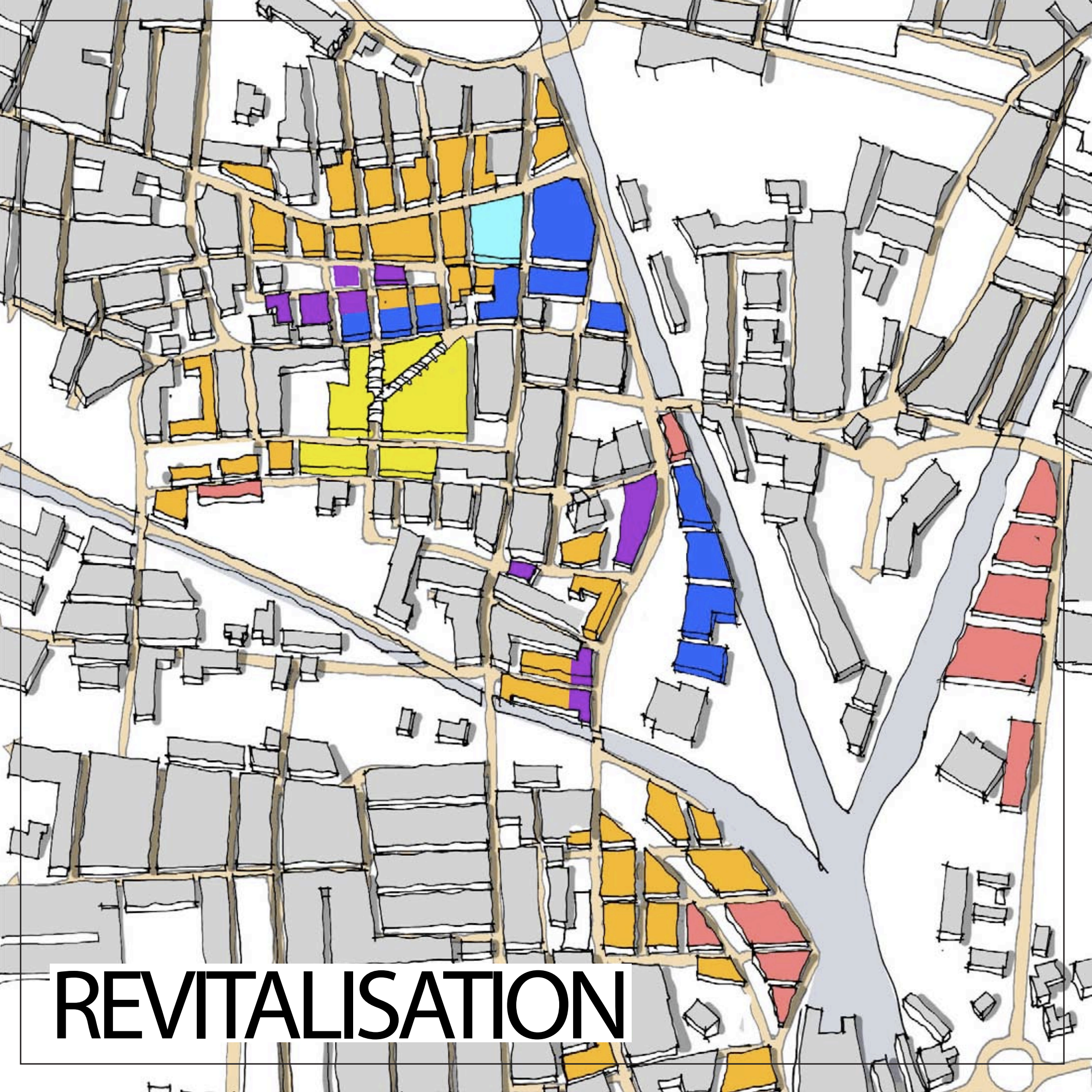
is already development interest in this area and the plan builds upon the proposals for the area to show how a new neighbourhood can be created to provide links from the town to the station.

In the longer term there are two opportunities to redevelop retail sites on the edge of the town centre. The largest lies to the north of the centre where the possible redevelopment of the Asda together with the reconfiguration or redevelopment of the Victoria centre could create the opportunity to completely restructure the northern part of the town centre. This is unlikely to happen in one chunk and cannot be pursued if the landowners are not interested. However the age of the schemes in this area and the likely impact of the Modus development when it is complete, mean that change is likely in the next ten years. It is therefore important for the council to have a plan so that this change takes place in a coordinated fashion.

There is also an opportunity for redevelopment in the retail area to the south east of the town centre. A number of units here have become available and there is the opportunity to reconfigure the area and the Vernon Way link. The plan shows a series of new retail units next to the Tescos with surface parking. To the west of this we have proposed new residential and commercial development around Christchurch. The masterplan retains the current Tesco's although we are aware that they may be looking at redevelopment. This will change the plan but the principles that it enshrines should be respected in any redevelopment.

Finally the plan shows a development on Macon Way. This is a business B1 scheme. It is based on market advice that office space is not currently viable in the town centre but that an accessible business park development could be attractive to developers. This is therefore proposed as a site that is accessible to the station and the road system but is also linked to the town centre and could create a gateway from the east.





REVITALISATION

It's not so much the buildings that are important as the life within them. The next stage of the masterplanning process has therefore been to develop a strong mix of uses that is able to create a 'rounded' town centre.

Retailing

In terms of retailing we have worked within the figures in the Cheshire Town Centre Study. This sees Crewe as one of the main opportunities for retail growth in the region and, following the completion of the Modus scheme, the study suggests that there is scope for up to a further 17,700m² of comparison retailing and just under 6,000m² of convenience space. Beyond this there is scope for significant further retail growth by 2021.

The Modus scheme includes 32,500m² of retailing and involves the demolition of 6,700m² of space so that there will be a net increase of 25,800m². In addition to this the masterplan suggests the redevelopment of just over

30,000m² of retailing (around 7,000m² of which will be convenience retailing). The masterplan replaces this with approximately 38,000m² of new retail space. The scale of new retailing in the masterplan is therefore a good deal less than the figures in the Cheshire Study. They have however been scaled back due to advice about retail demand.

Housing

The scheme includes a number of opportunities for new housing around the town centre totalling just over 12 hectares. This includes the West Street quarter to the north of the town centre where there is scope for around 250 new units, the Mill Street neighbourhood to the south where there is scope for around 350 units and other smaller schemes totalling perhaps another 150 units. This means that there is scope for up to 750 new homes around the town centre which would create a residential community of around 1,500. This will change the nature of the centre, generating activity throughout the day, lights in windows in the

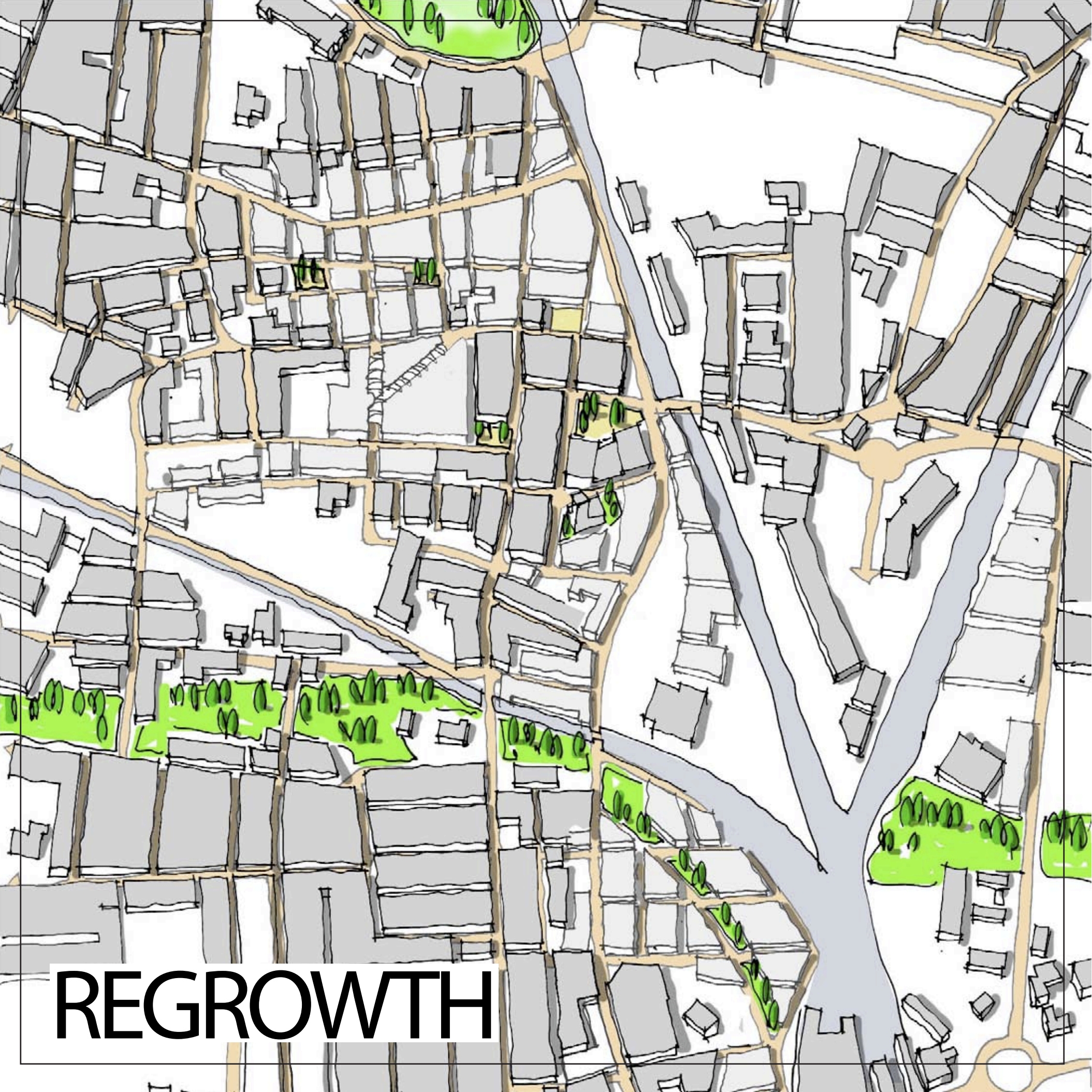
evenings and customers for a wider range of town centre shops.

Office development

The plan includes two main opportunities for office development, On Macon Way and as part of the Mill Street redevelopment. The former would provide around 17,000m² of accommodation and the latter around 5,000m². There is not currently demand for town centre office space. However a business park environment, with good access to the station may be attractive to the market.

In addition to this the plan shows opportunity for leisure development. This will mostly be on the ground floor beneath other uses and will include cafes, bars and restaurants.





REGROWTH



The final part of the masterplan relates to the space between the buildings, the streets and public spaces of the town. The masterplan addresses these at a number of levels, the street hierarchy, public squares, strategic open spaces and landmark features.

Street Hierarchy

There is a need to develop a coherent and consistent approach to the public realm of the town. This will include design guidance about the treatment of different types of street and pedestrian areas plus a legibility and signage strategy. The guidance will probably be based on the specification of municipal square and will allow Crewe to roll out the quality of improvements there to the rest of the town. It will not be possible to do this all at once. Indeed it will take many years to treat all parts of the town centre. However if guidance is in place then opportunities to implement improvements through adjacent developments can be taken.

Squares

There are currently three important Squares within Crewe, Market Square, Victoria Square and Municipal Square. The first two need to be treated to the same quality as the latter. There is also the opportunity to create other squares in the centre, such as the two we have shown in the redeveloped West Street Quarter.

Strategic open spaces

The main strategic open space in the town centre is the green spaces either side of the Valley Brook. This runs to the south of the centre and expands into parks to the east and the west. There is scope to enhance this space as a green fringe to the town centre. We have also proposed that a spur be taken off this through the Mill Street Development to the station.

Landmark feature

As described above, there is also the opportunity for a gateway that is visible to train passengers and motorists passing through Crewe. The most likely opportunity for this the redevelopment of the station either on the Macon Way roundabout or on another site next to the railway.





Key projects

1. **West Street Neighbourhood:** A new mixed-use neighbourhood on either side of a boulevard West Street. This will accommodate up to 350 units plus a range of small-scale retail and office units. This will create a much stronger visual identity for the northern part of the town centre.
2. **New Victoria:** A mixed-use leisure/retail development on the northern side of Victoria Street (integrated with the West Street Neighbourhood). This will be facilitated by the relocation of the Asda to create new street-based retailing and leisure uses around two new public squares to provide a setting for the Limelight
3. **Market Centre:** The development of a new Asda as part of the redevelopment of the Victoria Centre and the refurbishment of Lyceum Square to potentially include new offices for the Council.
4. **Delamere Place:** The scheme proposed by Modus for the development of a covered shopping centre. As described above, the layout shown is slightly different to the current plans in that it keeps open Delamere Street. It is recognised that it is too late to change the scheme. However if this does become a possibility in the future it should be explored.
5. **Municipal Square:** The extension of the public space by removing the raised deck between the Library and the Courts. This space would be refurbished and animated by new ground floor uses including a restaurant, new museum space and gallery.
6. **New Road:** The remodelled Vernon Way that fits more easily into the street grid of the town as well as creating a larger site for the development of new edge of centre retailing.
7. **Christchurch:** A small residential scheme with active ground floor uses to hold the corner of the refurbished and updated the Christchurch block.
8. **High Street:** New night time destination with cafes, bars and restaurants. Enhanced public realm on Market Street, High Street and Edleston Road to improve key routes into town from car parking facilities.
9. **Macon Way:** New office environment to include the relocated Police Station with a star building at the Hungerford Road / Macon Way junction.
10. **Linear Park:** Linking the railway station to town and opening new development sites. Vehicular traffic and parking allowed but only on a shared surface with pedestrians given priority.
11. **Mill Street:** A mixed use quarter with office and residential components and small leisure uses to activate space.
12. **Bridge:** Traffic capacity of bridge enhanced by new retail units that allow the road to be widened and a pedestrian bridge to be added alongside the existing structure.



MILL STREET



The Mill Street area was once the location for large sheds associated with the railway works. The site is now characterised by large sheds and underdeveloped land creating an opportunity to create a new neighbourhood linking the station to the centre.

The Mill street area is located between the town centre and Crewe railway station where the well established Victorian residential blocks to the east fall away to make way for the rail infrastructure and the large, predominantly empty set of sites that separates them.

The northern part of the area is proposed as residential development. This is arranged in a series of perimeter blocks with a mix of apartments and housing. This will be an extension of the residential neighbourhood to the west and link well to the town centre. The southern part of the masterplan includes new office development. This is based on the attraction of the station to potential office developers and will create a gateway to the town.

The area has considerable strategic significance to Crewe town centre because it provides a high quality pedestrian and cycle route between the railway station and the town centre. To the northwest of the area runs the Valley Brook that has the potential to provide an attractive link through the town. The masterplan will extend this route through the Mill Street area to the railway station creating attractive pedestrian and cycle links to the station from many parts of the town.

The Mill street area is visible from the trains slowly coming in and out of Crewe railway station, from the railway station itself and from the large number of passing motorists using the Nantwich Road route. Introducing high-quality residential and office development in this area will have a significant impact on the image of the town. A landmark building on the Nantwich Road in the south east corner of the site will enhance the role of the station as a gateway to the town.



1. View from the Station

Currently the town centre is not easily visible from the train station. Redevelopment in the Mill Street area would help define the route from the station to the town centre.

2. Bike Storage Location

Cycle stores should be provisioned at the station and in the centre to encourage use of the linear park.

3. Surface treatment

The use of shared surfaces should be promoted in the masterplan and the use of unique paving systems should be considered for all areas of the development.

4. Residential Development

Well designed contemporary housing development visible from the railway line.

5. View from Mill Street

The area currently suffers from a lack of quality in public realm and built form. The plans propose a way to address this with ordered intervention.

6. Linear parkway

The link between the station and town will prioritise people over cars and seek to create a humane backdrop for residential development.

7. Railway Sidings

The rail lines are not going anywhere and how development addresses the rail network needs careful consideration and detailing.



Delivery and Phasing Plan

There is already development interest in this area and the land owners Clowes and Network Rail have masterplanning proposals for the area that are not incompatible with this masterplan. The scheme is therefore likely to be developed by the private sector with the council playing an enabling role and seeking to influence the scheme through the planning system. The key parameters are the mix of uses, the views from the railway and Nantwich Road and the open space link to the station.

The main threat to this scheme relates to the future of the station. If Railtrack do decide to relocate the station to Basford East, the office element of the scheme will become unviable. This masterplan supports the position of the Council to oppose the relocation of the station. The Crewe Rail Gateway proposals include a new 1100 space multi-storey carpark to the east of the station and would replace current parking facilities of approximately 550 spaces off Pedley Street. However if Crewe station were to be moved to Basford East the residential elements of the Mill Street scheme would still be possible and could indeed be extended to regenerate the station site.

Timescale - 0-5 years.

MILL STREET