


Garston Masterplan

April 2013





Where we
are up to

Notes

We have reached a critical stage of the study, having completed the baseline work and started to draw conclusions that will feed into the strategy. This presentation is designed as a test run of a potential strategy to allow people to comment on it and shape it before we start

to draw it up. Once we have done this it will be subject to wider public consultation.

We tend to use a medical analogy we have an initial diagnosis and prognosis and are ready to look at potential treatments

Where we
are up to



Workshop themes

- Two separate communities
- An need to improve St Mary's Road
- A positive approach to new housing
- A desire for better open space
- A need to change the image of Garston

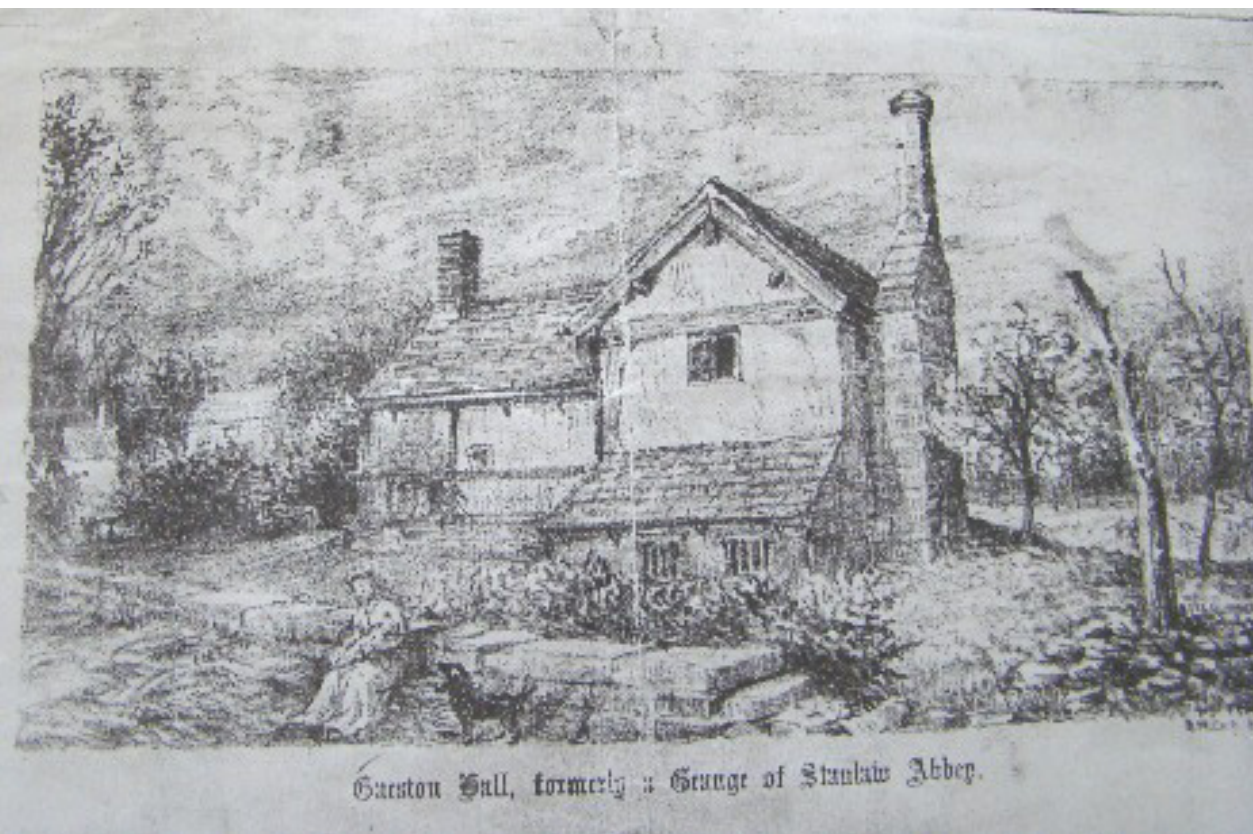




What
We Know
So Far

Garston before

Image Credit:
<http://www.garstonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/>



1840

Notes

Garston is an old place with a history stretching back at least 1000 years. The map shows the township in 1843 when it was a freestanding village. This is prior to the setting out of St. Mary's Road - the main road on the plan is now Chapel Street.

Garston is therefore an 'engulfed' village, somewhere that has been absorbed into Liverpool but predates it. Such places often have a distinctive identity.

Garston
before



1850

Notes

This is only a few years after the previous map but in this short time the port has been built and the railways have arrived, crashing through the mill pond and changing Garston forever.

A detailed historical map of Garston, showing a dense urban layout with numerous streets, buildings, and industrial sites. The River Mersey is visible at the bottom left. A teal circle in the top left contains the text 'Garston before'. A teal circle in the bottom right contains the year '1908'.

Garston
before

1908

Notes

Over the next 50 years Garston was to experience a boom (or was to be smothered) depending on your perspective. The port grew massively and the town developed rapidly to house its workers.

A detailed historical map of Garston, showing a dense network of streets and industrial structures. The map is divided into several sections, with labels for 'GRASSENDALE', 'UPPER WOOD END PARK', 'WOOD END PARK', 'KINGSLINGTON PARK', 'NORTH DOCK', 'OLD DOCK', 'STALBRIDGE DOCK', and 'GARSTON'. A large teal circle in the top left contains the text 'Garston before', and another teal circle in the bottom right contains the year '1954'.

Garston
before

1954

Notes

This is probably the zenith of Garston's industrial development. By the 1950s it has become a huge working class community based around a complex of port related and industrial development.

This plan shows Speke Road soon after it was built running from the St. Mary's Road Church Street junction.



Notes

Garston is however different from the inner city districts of Liverpool like Everton. While these too grew up to house dockers they were very much part of the city. Garston by contrast was cut off from Liverpool by the affluent suburbs around Sefton Park. Garston will therefore have

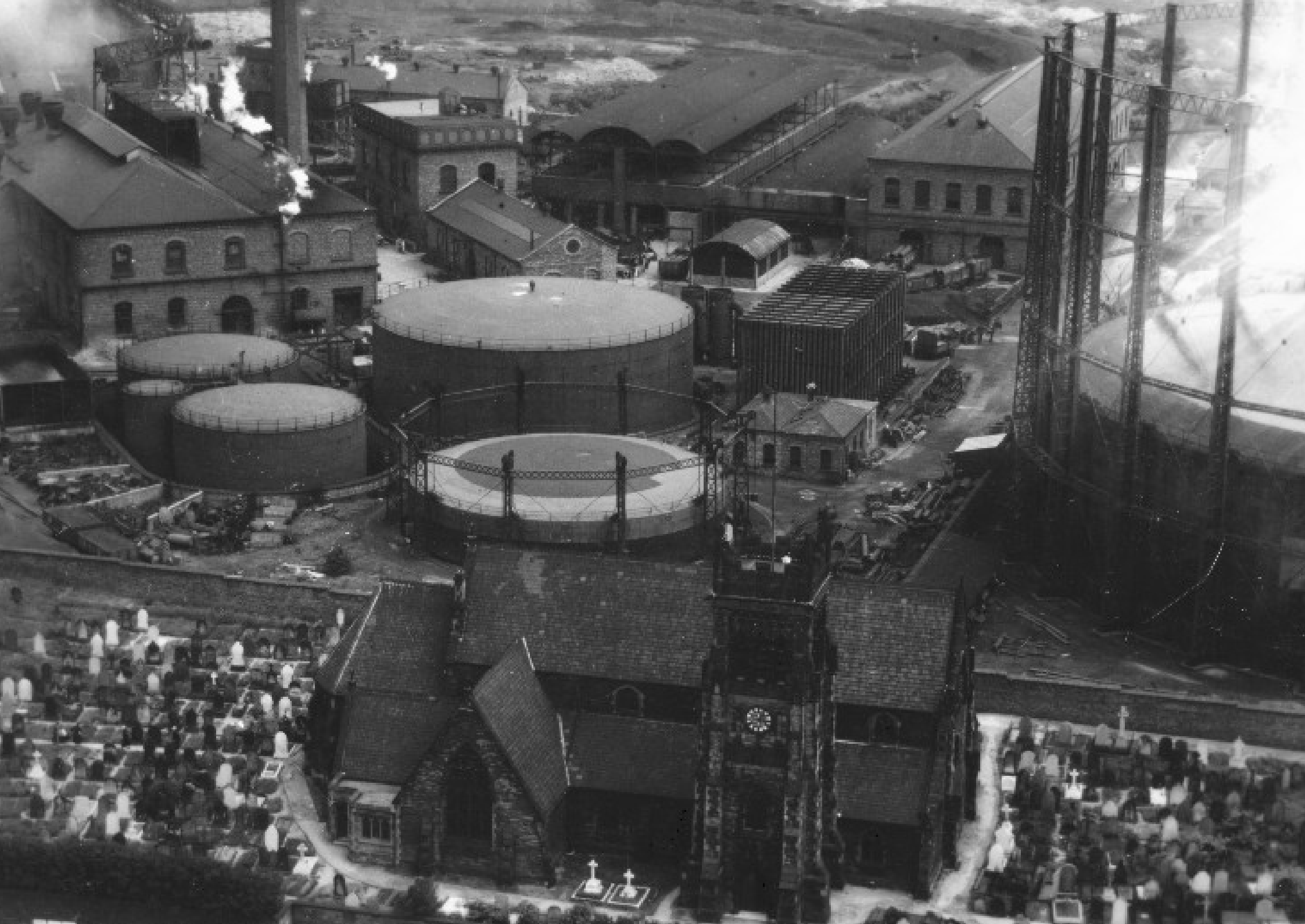
been very self-contained which explains why it has such a large high street. This plan shows St. Mary's Road before it was bypassed when it would have been a thriving retail area.



Notes

Garston at the time would have been an industrial wonder but not necessarily a very nice place to live with pollution, poor housing conditions and a great deal of poverty.

Image Credit:
<http://www.garstonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/>



Notes

This shows the juxtaposition of ancient and industrial. The Parish Church of St. Michael once stood at the heart of the village but was cut off by the railway line and surrounded by industry.

Image Credit:
<http://www.garstonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/>

**Notes**

There was however even then a difference between Garston Under the Bridge and Garston Village which had a higher quality of housing and included some middle class suburbs.

Image Credit:
<http://www.garstonhistoricalsociety.org.uk/>

An aerial photograph of the Garston area, showing a mix of industrial and residential development. In the foreground, there are large industrial buildings, some with blue roofs, and a large body of water (likely a dock or canal). The middle ground is dominated by a dense residential area with many small houses. In the background, there are more industrial buildings, a large green field, and a highway interchange. The overall scene depicts a complex urban landscape with a mix of old and new buildings.

Garston today

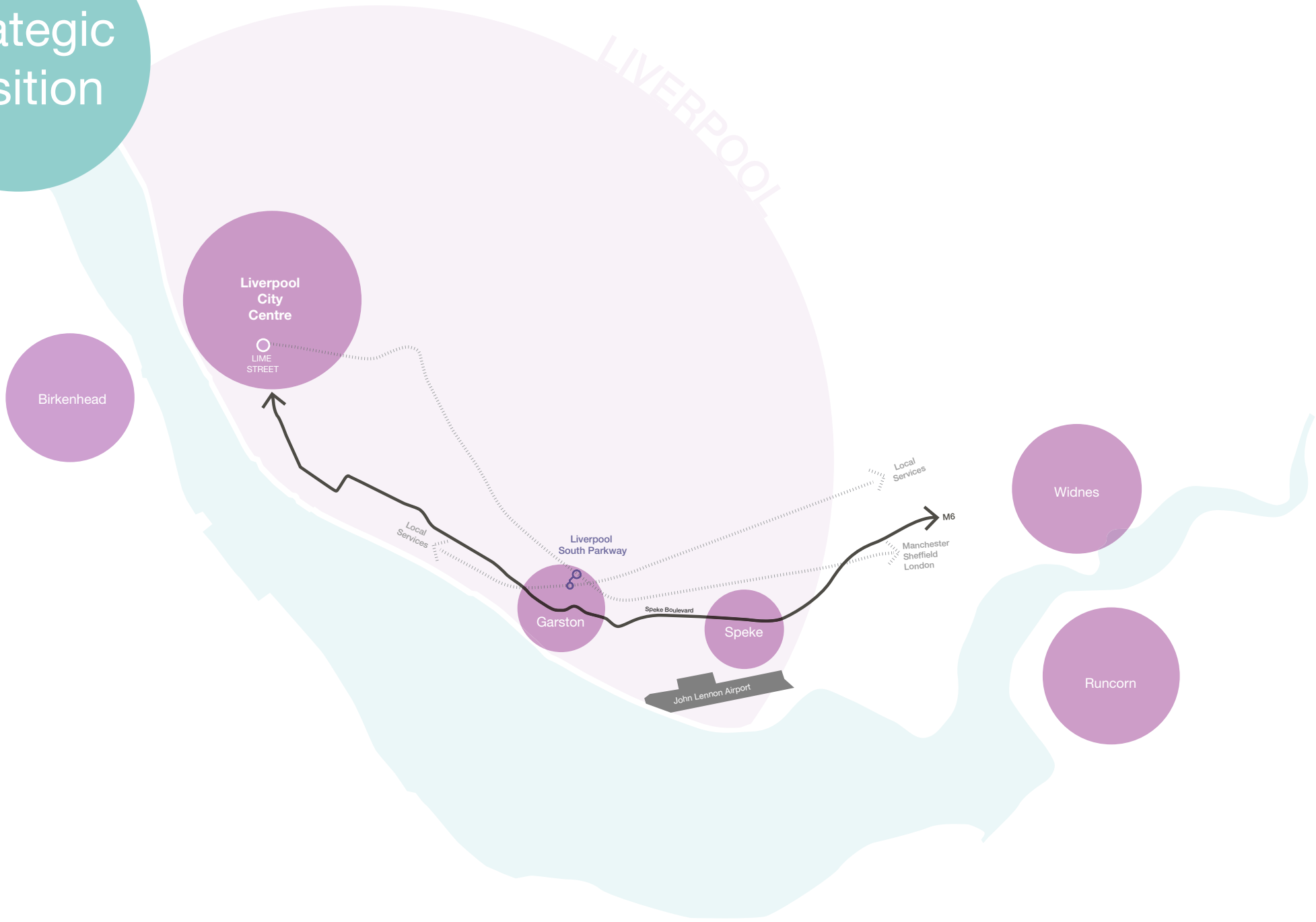
The need to recognise its changing role

Notes

This raises questions about what Garston's role today should be. While the docks and associated industry remain successful and indeed will be expanding their operations they employ far fewer people than they once did and these people do not necessarily live in Garston.

Meanwhile people living in Garston no longer constitute a captive market for St Mary's Road while the bypass means that it has also been cut off from passing trade. Garston needs to recognise that its role has changed and understand how it needs to adapt in the future.

Strategic position



Notes

In this respect the geography of Garston in Liverpool is important. It is incredibly well positioned to access the employment opportunities of Speke and the city centre. The Parkway Station also means that it is incredibly accessible. It is positioned in the suburban belt

of Liverpool and could become an attractive base for people working in the city - who want something different to the conventional suburb.

A map of Garston, London, showing its urban form. The map is a light grey overlay on a white background, with a teal circular area in the top left. The map shows a dense network of streets and building footprints, with a large body of water (the River Mersey) on the left side. The urban form is characterized by a mix of street patterns and building densities, with some areas appearing more developed than others.

Urban form



Notes

Because of its history Garston is an incoherent place. There is very little connection between the Village and Under the Bridge and the communities don't feel part of the same place.

There is a low density of development in the area and it is apparent that the population within the catchment area of St Mary's Road is limited.

There is a low density of development in the

Access

Fore

Road Hierarchy

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Cul-de-Sac

Street Hierarchy

- High Street
- Footpath

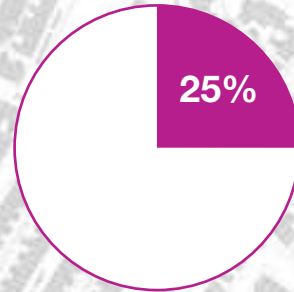
Notes

While on the wider scale Garston is incredibly accessible, locally the area is sliced up by railways and sidelined by the bypass so that the street hierarchy no longer makes any sense.

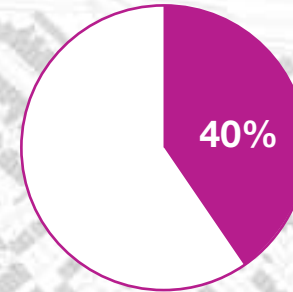
There is a need to improve pedestrian permeability throughout the area and particularly to the station.

There are also parking problems in parts of the area, particularly Garston Village.

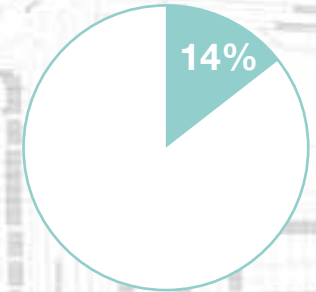
Economy



St Mary's Road



St Mary's Road
inc takeaways and units that appear to be trading but were shut (e.g. Garston Business Centre)



National Average

- Vacant
- To be confirmed
- Occupied



Notes

The economy is a tale of three Garstons:

The housing market has held up well, vacancy levels are low, condition is reasonably good and new houses have been selling well. While Garston remains a deprived community this is

changing as new people move into the area creating the possibility of gentrification.

Meanwhile St. Mary's Road is in a very precarious position. Local people no longer use it as they once did and it has lost all of its

passing trade. With the closure of the Coop there is a danger that it could get a lot worse.

Meanwhile the industry is generally doing well and is keen to stay in the area.

An aerial photograph of Garston Village, showing a dense residential area with a mix of housing styles, green spaces, and infrastructure. A large teal circle is overlaid on the top left, containing the word "Conclusions". A white rectangular box is overlaid on the top right, containing the text "Garston Village is stable with potential for Gentrification - is this a good thing?".

Conclusions

Garston Village is stable with potential for Gentrification - is this a good thing?

An aerial photograph of a residential area. In the foreground, there is a large green wooded area. To the right, there are two large white cylindrical structures, one of which is a tall, skeletal tower. The background shows a dense residential neighborhood with many houses and a bridge crossing a river or canal. The text 'Conclusions' is written in white on a teal circular background in the top left corner.

Conclusions

Garston Under the bridge is also stable, housing has sold well but the area remains isolated

Conclusions

The Port and other industry is successful and has a long term future but doesn't need so much land.



An aerial photograph showing a residential neighborhood on the right and a large industrial yard on the left. The industrial yard is filled with numerous colorful shipping containers (red, green, blue, yellow) stacked in rows. A wide road runs between the two areas. The residential area consists of many small, multi-story brick buildings with dark roofs, arranged in a grid pattern. A church with a steeple is visible in the middle of the residential area.

Conclusions

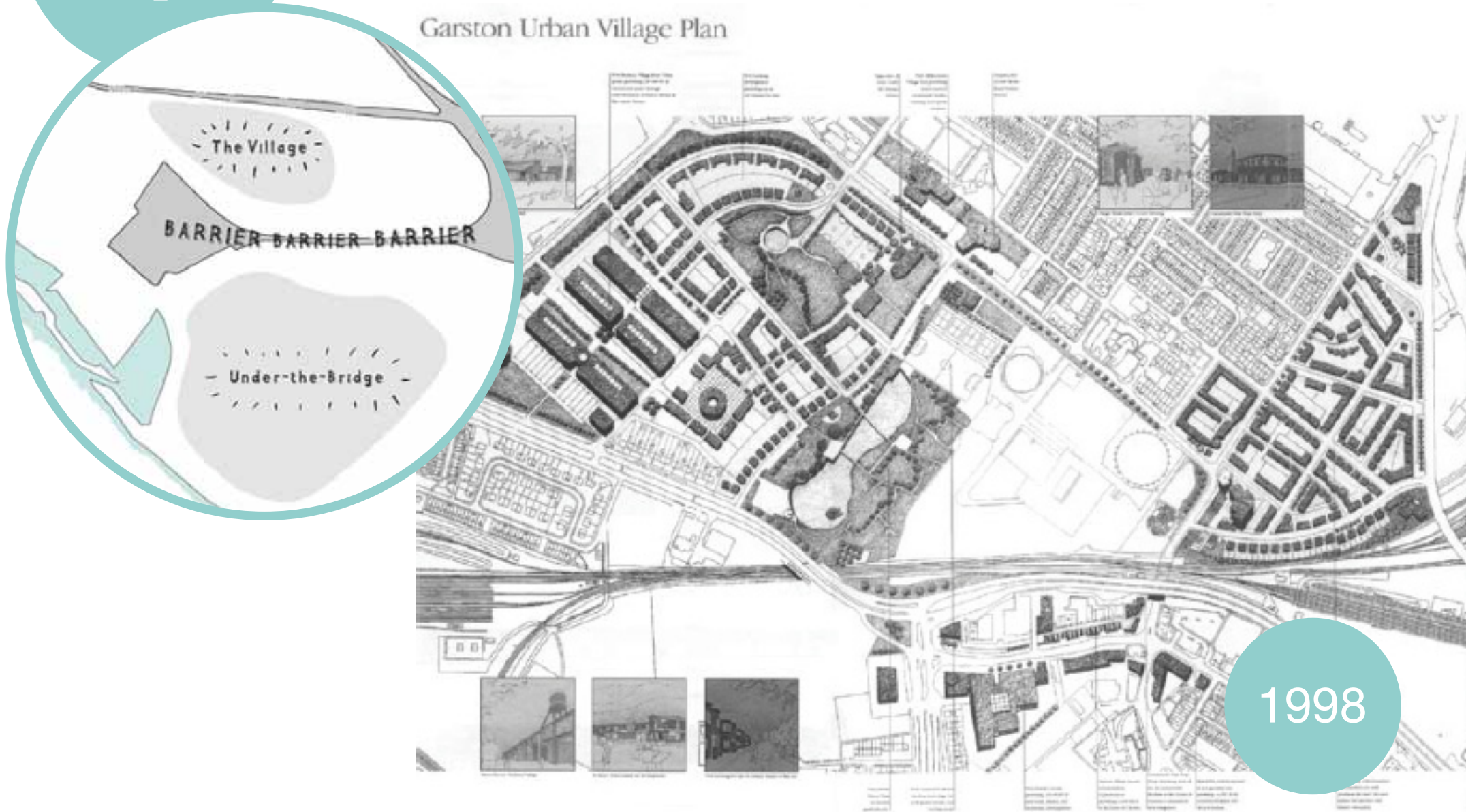
St. Mary's Road is struggling and is in need of investment.

A large teal circle is centered on the page. Inside the circle, the text "Garston Tomorrow" is written in a white, bold, sans-serif font. The word "Garston" is on the top line and "Tomorrow" is on the bottom line.

**Garston
Tomorrow**

1

Image: Revive Garston Urban Village?



Notes

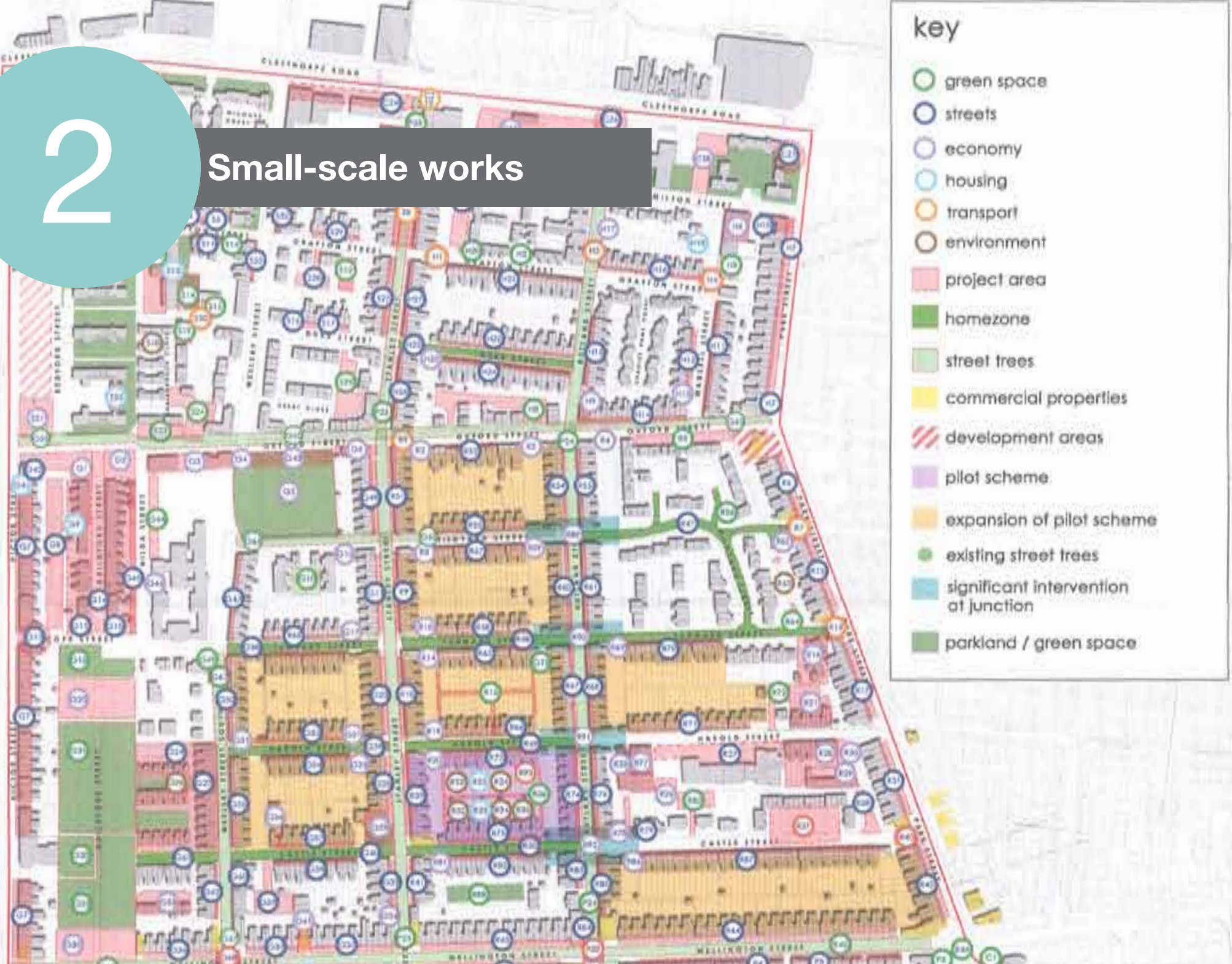
We would like to create an over-arching vision for Garston that builds on its strong and independent identity and also unites Under the Bridge and the Village. The right image can transform a place and make people view it differently as somewhere to live, work etc...

We wondered about reviving the idea of an Urban Village. Fifteen years ago Garston was one of only a handful of places designated as Urban Villages by the Prince of Wales' foundation (now called the Prince's Trust). This

is why the community centre in Under the Bridge is called the Urban Village Hall and it is the basis for the housing development that has taken place in the area (see above plan).

2

Small-scale works



Notes

We conclude that the housing neighbourhoods in Garston are fundamentally sound. They have been subject to housing renewal programmes for a number of years and the worst of the stock Under the Bridge has been demolished.

We therefore envisage no need to drastic action on the housing, but there are rough edges and there could usefully be a programme of minor works to make further improvements. The above map is an example from an Eye study in

which each of the numbers on the project refers to a minor piece of work.



2

Small-scale works

A Community facilities

B Gap sites

C Alley gating

D Energy retrofit

E Tree planting

F Home zones

Notes

This work could include environmental works to streets and back alleys to create home zones. It could include external enveloping works to run down terraces and interventions to fill gap sites.

However the project that we feel has greatest potential is a energy retrofitting scheme using the Green Deal framework. URBED have pioneered a community controlled version

of this in Manchester called the Carbon Cooperative and a similar community controlled organisation could be established in Garston.

3

Rationalising industry



- The Port
- Freightliner
- Gas works
- Blackburne Street

Notes

We have been having conversations with the main industrial users in the area:

The Port is successful and expanding its trade but is interested in reducing the amount of land that they require.

Freightliner is also expanding and has no plans to move. This means that the railhead is still required. The Jack Allen site has consent for a waste transfer station but we don't believe that this is a live project.

We are still trying to get hold of National Grid Transco about the Gas Works. It is mostly

decommissioned except for a gas regulator. This site may therefore become available.

The area to the south of Blackburne Street is successful, the area to the north less so. There is also the issue of the tannery site.

4

Building Housing for sale



- Increases catchment
- S106 contributions
- Potential land receipts



Notes

Ever since the late 1990s Garston has been identified as a location for major housing development. The Wimpey and Lovell schemes are a result of this. There is scope for quite a lot more housing as shown on the following pages.

This has a number of potential benefits - it will bring more people into the area and increase local spending power. The delivery of market housing will also “over time” help to raise funding for other initiatives through land receipts and S106 contributions.

4a

New Cressington?



Notes

The port have already released part of their site for the Cressington Heath scheme. They are exploring the release the remainder of the western part of the site for housing.

This exploits the value of the Cressington area and while it may generate S106 funds it is likely to have no more impact on Garston that the current Cressington area does.

4b

Garston Under the Bridge



Notes

There are three opportunities for new housing development in Garston Under the Bridge:

Dingle Bank - which is in public ownership, has been allocated for housing and received planning consent - now lapsed. It is however

potentially blighted by contamination and the consent for the waste transfer station.

The Gas Works is largely decommissioned and could make a tremendous difference to the setting of St. Michaels. The Eco Park has

nature conservation value but has no funding. Is there the possibility of using part of this site for housing as a way of funding the necessary works?

5

Housing for rent



Notes

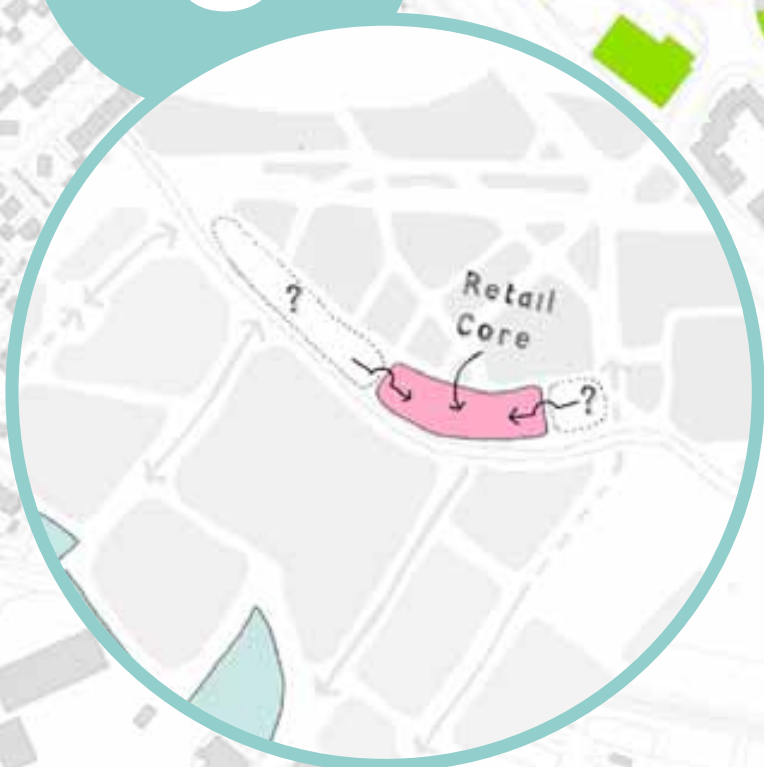
There is demand from housing associations to develop in Garston - this could be for a range of housing from social accommodation to shared equity and sheltered accommodation.

This is could be an opportunity to repair some of the gaps in the existing housing area. The above examples are from Antwerp where housing associations have had a programme of buying up gap sites, running mini architectural

competitions and inserting interesting new housing. This could be a cost effective way of having a large impact.

6

St Mary's Road



- Intensive care needed
- Consolidation
- Use for the Coop
- Plan for the market
- New Anchor?
- Plan for the rest?

Notes

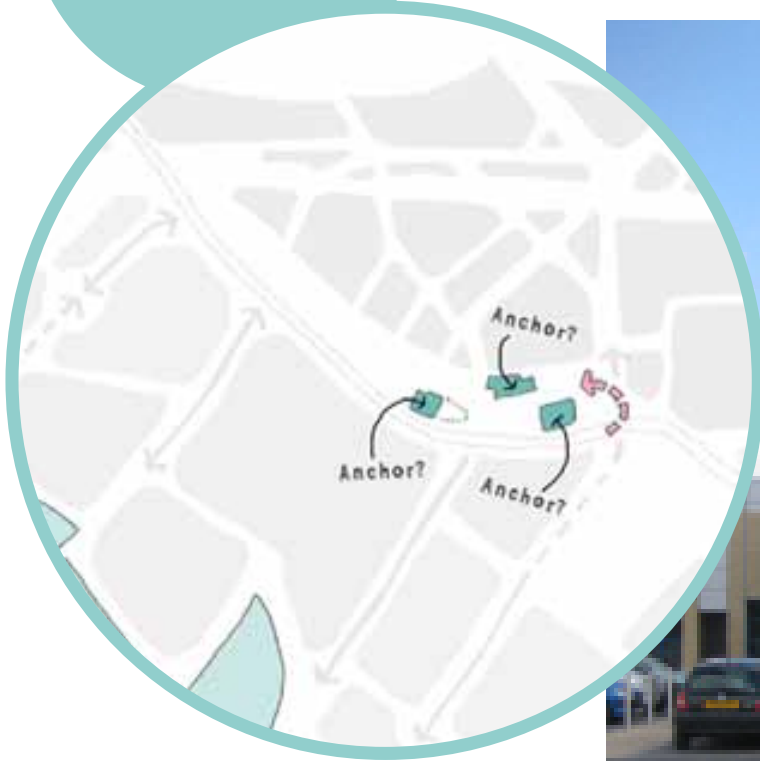
This brings us to a strategy for St. Mary's Road. The high street was once thriving but it has been hit hard by the loss of through traffic and the recession. It is clear to us that something drastic is needed:

The first issue is to consolidate the street. It is too long and needs to focus around the junction of Church Road - exactly where is still a question.

This consolidated centre needs to be anchored which is to do with a new use for the Coop, the market and possibly a new supermarket. Once this is done we need a plan for the rest of the street outside the consolidated core.

6a

A new Anchor?



Notes

There is the possibility of a new anchor supermarket in the centre. Discussions have been had with people like Lidl and Aldi who might be persuaded if the right site were available.

They are more interested in the traffic on Garston Way that the market within Garston so they need to be next to a junction on the left hand side of the road going out. This puts them somewhere around the Horrocks Avenue junction and the danger is that this will have

little impact on the centre. They are probably not interested in the Coop site. However it may be possible to get a value retailer into this space.

6b

Garston Cultural Village



Notes

Which brings us to a strategy for the rest of the St Mary's Road. The first thing to stay is that many of the ideas that we are coming up with have been thought of before. The Garston Cultural Partnership was developed in 2008 and got as far as the formal agreement

of the council and the promise of substantial funding. We still have not been told exactly what happened to this but we are convinced that it was on the right track....



Notes

If we consolidate the high street to the east, we need to deal with the eastern end of St. Mary's Road. We could knock it down, but there is no demand for newbuild, we could convert it to housing, but this is expensive and never works very well for retail units. Better to find

a way of turning all this vacant, cheap space into an opportunity to regenerate the area. This will mean that all the existing businesses in the western part of the street can stay, while the strategy focuses on creating activity in the vacant units that surround them.

This is the way we are thinking and it was of course also the thinking behind the defunct New Slaughterhouse Gallery. Just because this failed doesn't mean it wasn't a good idea.

6c

High Street Regeneration

THE FUTURE OF THE HIGH STREET



“Work-Shops”

The new
“Town Team”
town hall

“The New
Post Office”

“Community
Chest”

Notes

Because it is the same idea that lies behind many of the recommendations to come out of the Portas Review. Work-shops are retail units that also make things and which sell on line - the Liverpool Cake Fairy being a perfect example. The new town hall is a base for local

voluntary groups and the new post office is a delivery centre for Amazon and other on-line retailers. The community chest is then a small pot of money to oil the wheels and allow these things to happen.

6c

High Street Regeneration

THE FUTURE OF THE HIGH STREET

“Community groups should be able to use vacant spaces and have the right to trade in empty property. Why shouldn’t community groups have the chance to open up social and cultural centres in empty high street premises, and drive the vibrancy of the area?”

Notes

And as this quote says - Portas sees this very much as something that can be community initiated, managed and run.



Notes

This is an excellent example of the idea - a local business, employing people making things, that they sell on line across the city, benefiting from cheap space in Garston and not dependent on people coming through the front door.



The principle of 'meanwhile use' is that you reduce the costs and commitment of occupying space to the point when it starts to fill up. If these shops were available at a nominal rent then there are businesses all over Liverpool that could be attracted to occupy them, particularly

if they thought others would do the same. This could be organised as a way of lifting the burden from landlords for a few years while kick-starting the regeneration of the street and ultimately improving the value of their property.

6c

High Street Regeneration



GARSTON SPACE AGENCY

Notes

We could reinvent the Garston Cultural Agency to do this, but our idea is the Garston Space Agency. This would:

Get an agreement with a set of landlords on the street to take on their units for two years.

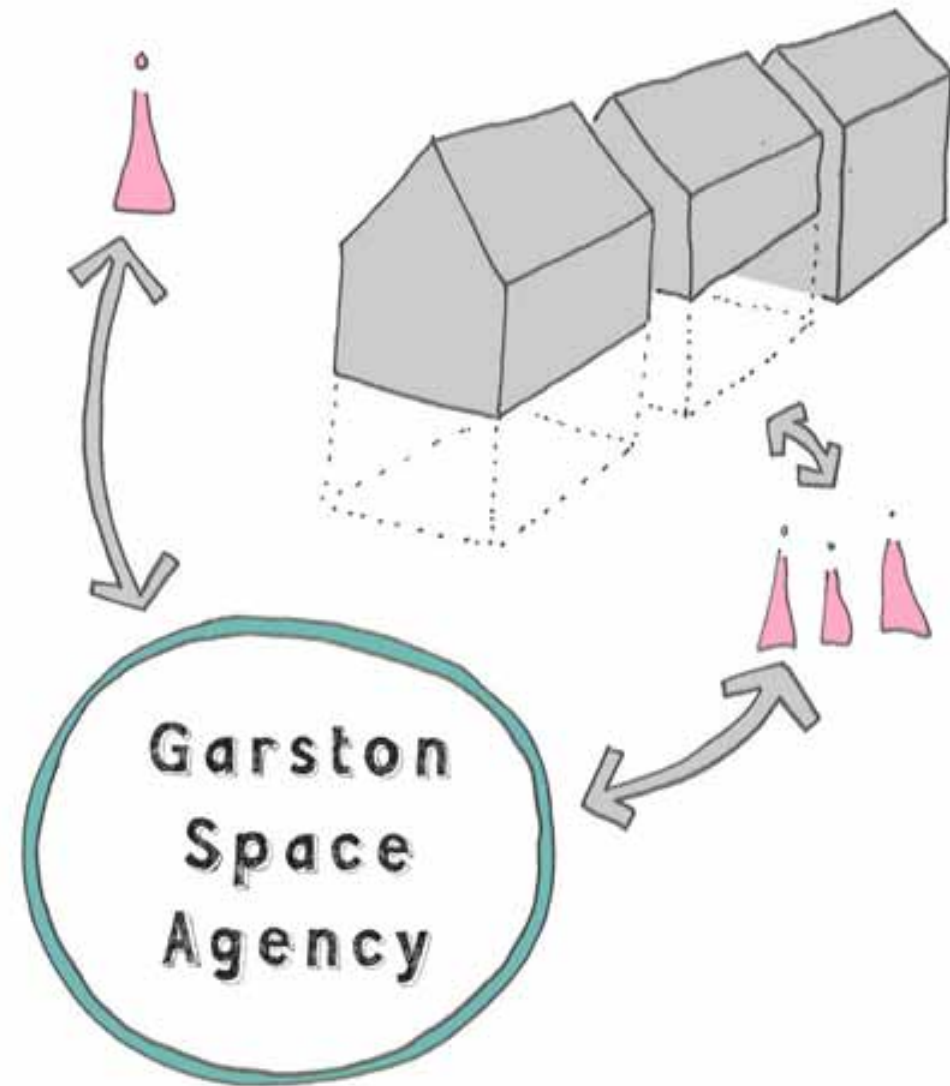
Undertook basic works on the units to make them safe and watertight.

Let these units to creative businesses for nominal rents provided that the businesses paid the rates and occupied the space.

Recycled the income to do the next set of units while offering the first units back to the landlords or rolling them forward in the programme.

6C

High Street Regeneration



Notes

This could happen with a relatively small initial investment of say £250,000. This would employ a couple of entrepreneurial people, give a budget for the initial works to the units, allow for marketing and set up costs.

The organisation would generate revenue which would grow over time and could in time become self sustaining, buying some units out right and possibly also addressing residential use of the upper floors.

This cannot operate as a public agency - procurement rules would get in the way. It has to be a social enterprise, combining community involvement and an entrepreneurial approach.

6C

High Street Regeneration



Notes

The agency could also create new space on the site between Sidwell Street and James Street once the units have been demolished. This scheme in London uses concrete double garage units bought for a few thousand pounds as temporary retail units (which have now been

there for 20 years). Other schemes have used shipping containers to do something similar - maybe in partnership with Freightliner?

6C

High Street Regeneration



EMPTY SHOPS NETWORK

A Revolutionary Arts Project **Empty Shops Network**



Notes

These are not original (or untested) ideas. All of these groups are doing similar things at the moment. The parade of shops above was all vacant and has been brought back to life in exactly the way we have described.

BLOINK



6d

Sorting the Road



Notes

The final bit of the jigsaw is the street itself. The road markings on St. Mary's Road are the same as they were before the Garston Way was built. It is important that the road remains open to traffic and that the 82 bus continues to use the street. However it doesn't need to look the

way it does. There is no need to pedestrian crossings or speed humps. Traffic should be running through the street at 5mph on a shared surface with more space given over to pedestrians.

We know that a traditional scheme to do this is unaffordable - but the above scheme is just done with paint and planters and costs very little.

6d

Sorting the Road



Gehl Architects - Urban quality consultants - www.gehlarchitects.dk



Notes

The previous slide is a scheme by Gehl Associated who are based in Copenhagen and with whom URBED worked in Stoke recently. For those of you who say it can't be done

(mostly highway engineers) these before and after slides show Times Square in New York. If it is possible there, then St, Mary's Road has got to be doable.



Notes

And if you want to get really carried away then this space on the edge of Copenhagen shows what's possible.





Notes

And then when its done we launch the whole this with a street festival. Again its been done before but there is the potential to use the arts community as part of the Biennial



Notes

This is the Gracia festival in Barcelona.



Questions

VISION

- Are we right in our analysis
- How do you feel about the urban Village a concept?
- What care and maintenance projects should we prioritise for the housing neighbourhoods?

PLANNING

- Which sites should be allocated for; housing, industry, open space?

ST MARY'S ROAD

- Do you agree with the idea of consolidation?
- What about a new supermarket?
- What should we do with the market?
- Is the Space Agency a good idea?
- What should happen to the road?