Turning our town around

The Vision for Ipswich

East Anglia's Waterfront Town

July 2015

Prepared in association with barefoot & gilles

Foreword

Ipswich is a great and ancient town with an exceptionally promising future. We are well placed to become one of the most exciting places in Britain. We sit in the middle of a golden triangle that connects leading global centres of research and development with the world's capital of finance. Suffolk and East Anglia boast an unbeatable quality of life. Ipswich is in the middle of all of this and set to capitalise on its good fortune. If we get this right, Ipswich will become considerably more prosperous, offering many new opportunities to those who work here and the people who call Ipswich home.

But for Ipswich to succeed, we need a successful town centre. We know that the perceptions of it are varied – and, all too often, not positive. There is much that is beautiful about our town centre and some parts that are great. However, it does not measure up to what Ipswich and Suffolk people expect and deserve. The range of shops needs to be extended; beautiful buildings need to be showcased; significant parts require redevelopment; pedestrian routeways could be improved; and more can be made of our great civic assets – the Town Hall, Corn Exchange, Cornhill, theatres, museums and parks.

What has emerged from the recession is the new 'experiential' town centre. This goes far beyond mere bricks and mortar occupied by retailers. The 'experience' that businesses, customers and investors now demand is about seeing and feeling something that cannot be found on the internet and is not available in other competing locations. It seamlessly combines work and play in a single location.

We think that Ipswich has the potential to be a very special kind of place. Perceptions of the town are not what they should be. Yet, visitors to the town and newcomers alike continue to be surprised by its combined offer and, most of all, its potential.

That is why we have come together to produce this shared Vision and a shared Delivery Plan for our town – Suffolk's county town. The only way we will restore people's confidence in their town and in those responsible for its future is if we demonstrate that things are changing for the better. That is why we have come together: not to talk, but to deliver and we are proposing that a new Vision Board is established to ensure that words lead to actions.

There have been so many plans produced – often with similar elements but also with different ideas. We acknowledge that this has not helped and we have decided to start afresh.

So why is this a 'first'? It is a first because now all key partners have come together and signed up to a single Vision. It is a first because it is not just a Vision that we will leave on a shelf gathering dust or expect others to deliver. It is a first because it comes with a commitment to making it happen through a prioritised Delivery Plan within it and a dedicated body to ensure that it is delivered.

This Vision and this Plan will inform the Local Plan as it makes its way through the planning system. It is a clear sign to developers and investors of what all partners in the town, including the local authorities responsible for planning, highways and economic development, want to see done to make our town centre prosper again. We are stating our Vision clearly now, conscious that we need that clear indication even before the planning framework is formally adopted following its legally driven processes.

We know that not every part of this Vision and this Delivery Plan will appeal to every single person in the town. We also know that because we have tended to fail to take risks in the past, and to not move quickly enough when the moment was right and as a result we have collectively missed many opportunities. We are determined not to make the same mistake this time. That is why we have decided that it is better to agree on one Vision of the future of our town so that we can begin our collective action quickly and with determination.

We all promise to ensure that this plan comes to life. In so doing, we will restore the centre of our great town and help Ipswich realise the potential we all know that it offers. This is an exciting document, but only by making it happen will we ensure that Ipswich has the exciting future that it deserves.

Richard Lister
Provost
University Campus Suffolk

Mark Pendlington
Chair
New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership

Councillor Colin Noble
Leader
Suffolk County Council

Terry Baxter
Chair
Ipswich Central

Councillor David Ellesmere
Leader
Ipswich Borough Council

Ben Gummer
MP
for Ipswich

Professor Dave Muller
Chair
Greater Ipswich Chamber of Commerce

"We share a drive and determination to turn our Vision into reality."

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Background and progress

Ipswich is the county town of Suffolk and has a population of over 350,000 in its catchment area. The town lies to the north of the A12 / A14 junction and is 10 miles in-land (up the River Orwell) from the country's largest container port (Felixstowe). The town's two largest private sector employers are both in the insurance sector (AXA and Willis) and BTs international research base (Adastral Park) lies on the very edge of the built up area. The Port of Ipswich remains the largest grain exporting port in the UK.

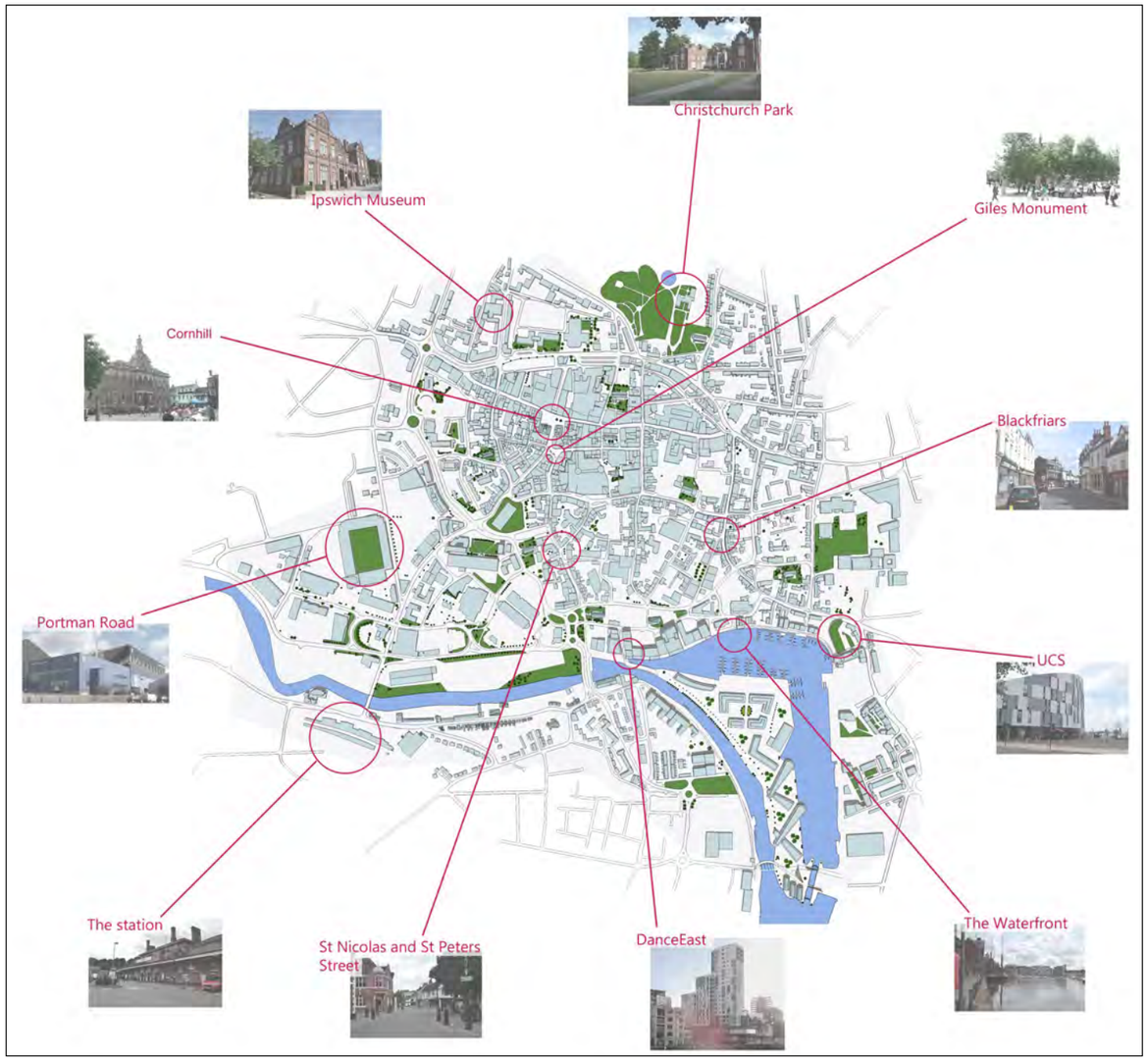
The town is steeped in history: it is one of England's oldest towns and had already seen six centuries of occupation when it received its Royal Charter in 1200. It is the birthplace of Thomas Wolsey and has hundreds of listed buildings with a strong concentration in the town centre. The railway came to the town in 1846 and the town benefits from regular services to London Liverpool Street, some taking as little as an hour's travel, and should soon see improved rolling stock, speeds and reliability delivered via the 'Ipswich in 60' campaign.

All is not perfect though. In recent years, parts of the town centre have struggled economically and in reality the retail offering is not as good as anyone would like it to be. The town now stands in 58th place in the CACI retail rankings, behind Norwich and Cambridge, and recently Bury St Edmunds has been improving its position. South of the town, Colchester competes for consumers and Westfield Stratford is within easy reach. There has been limited new retail or office construction even prior to the recession.

That is not to say that there have not been changes and developments in the last decade of which we are all proud. Some of these include:

- University Campus Suffolk (UCS) has been born and now boasts over 3,000 students studying for their degrees in Ipswich;
- Creation by Government of the country's 11th City Deal focussed on skills and training, leading to the opening of the MyGo employment advice centre in Princes Street;
- New life has been breathed into most of our wonderful historic churches (St Lawrence, St Nicholas and St Peters);
- The Salthouse Hotel has been extended, a new Travelodge and a new Premier Inn have opened near the Waterfront and a new Penta Hotel has opened near the station;
- Christchurch Park has been restored and has excellent Trip Advisor and Green Flag recognition and the Grade 1 Listed mansion is home to the largest collection of Constable and Gainsborough's outside London;
- DanceEast has a new home in the Jerwood Dancehouse and the town is home to six Arts Council recognised National Portfolio Organisations (more than in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire combined);
- The town has received Purple Flag accreditation for the management of its night time economy;
- Giles Circus has been transformed – 'Grandma' given an appropriate setting – and new statues to Prince Obolensky, Sir Alf Ramsay, Sir Bobby Robson and Thomas Wolsey erected;
- St Nicholas Street and St Peter's Street are fully occupied with a delightful mix of independent retailers, restaurants and businesses;
- The Waterfront continues to develop as a dynamic mix of business, cultural, educational, leisure and residential uses;
- Multi-million pound investment has been committed to the redevelopment of both Sailmakers (formerly Tower Ramparts) and Buttermarket shopping centres.

Ipswich is not there yet, though. There is a need for a shared Vision for the future and a concerted effort to ensure its delivery.



What is our Vision?

To create and deliver a vision requires courage, imagination, collective belief and sheer determination.

The Ipswich Vision is to create ‘East Anglia’s Waterfront Town’ and demands:

- A town centre that will attract new investment
- A town centre that is true to its history
- A town centre that is bold and ambitious
- A town centre that recognises the need for change
- A town centre that will excite those who visit it
- A town centre that will appeal to those beyond its immediate catchment

If it is to succeed, the Ipswich Vision, as with any other viable vision, must be connected and anchored by three aspects:

Historical – the Vision must be consistent with the reason why the place first developed and should embrace and celebrate the past as a portside town, alongside the many historic assets that deserve to be celebrated.

Physical – it must be capable of being delivered by changes - however ambitious - to the physical infrastructure.

Emotional – people must see, feel, contribute to and understand the changes as they happen around them and be inspired by them.

Above: Ipswich Central Vision Statement

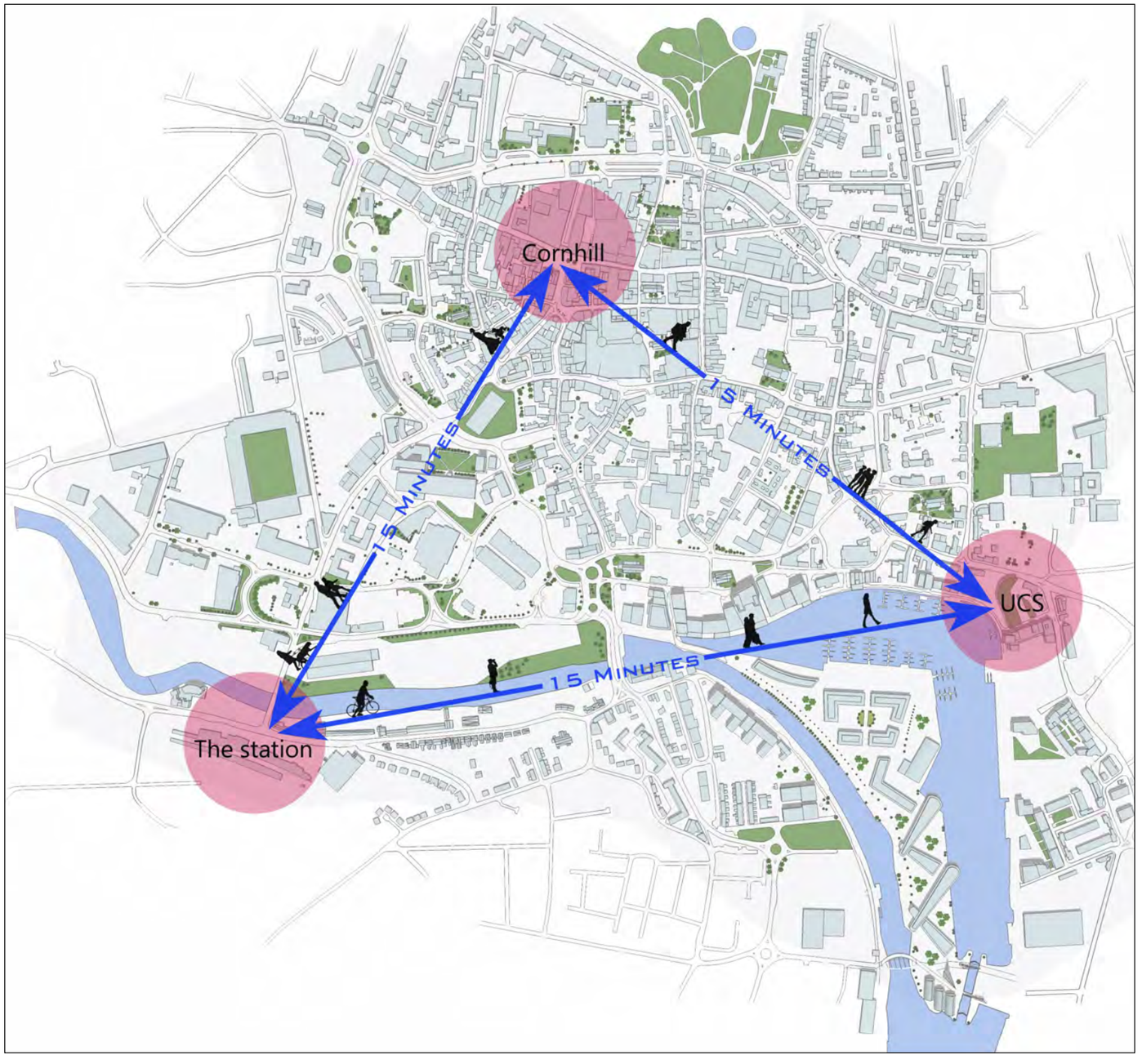
Realising the Vision

Our Vision aims to set out a process by which Ipswich can further deliver on its ambition to become a unique and sought-after destination as 'East Anglia's Waterfront Town'. This proposition to businesses, customers and investors is distinguishable from other, competing locations.

To succeed, it requires a greater appreciation of the opportunities of the town (a gateway to Europe, relatively low housing costs, commuter distance from London, the beauty of Suffolk, high employment rates, etc.) and an approach to tackle its challenges (poor perception, fragmented feel, poor retail line-up, strong competitor line-up, lack of a major visitor attraction, perceived high car parking charges, lack of recent public realm investment, etc.).

To prosper, the town centre cannot be thought of as a collection of different elements. It is neither large enough nor varied enough to sustain this approach. The 'experience' that town centres must provide, needs to be unified and consistent.

For this reason, the Ipswich Vision assigns a key role to each area of the town centre and explains how these areas can be improved and can then work together as one. The aim is to connect the area around Christchurch Park and the Museum to the north, with the Waterfront to the south – thereby sustaining a single, integrated experience. To achieve this, the town has to fully commit to a new north-south axis, and assign the former east-west trajectory (along the so-called 'golden mile' of Westgate, Tavern and Carr Streets') to history.



Three key, anchor sites in Ipswich have been identified as the train station (where a large amount of pedestrian traffic arrives in the town), the Cornhill (seen by most as the centre of the town) and the university campus on the waterfront.

What makes Ipswich easily accessible to those living in, working in and visiting the town is that the walking distance between and two of these sites is just fifteen minutes. With this in mind, the Vision for Ipswich will look to improve on provisions for pedestrians in the town, making it effortless for them to move around and reach all areas.

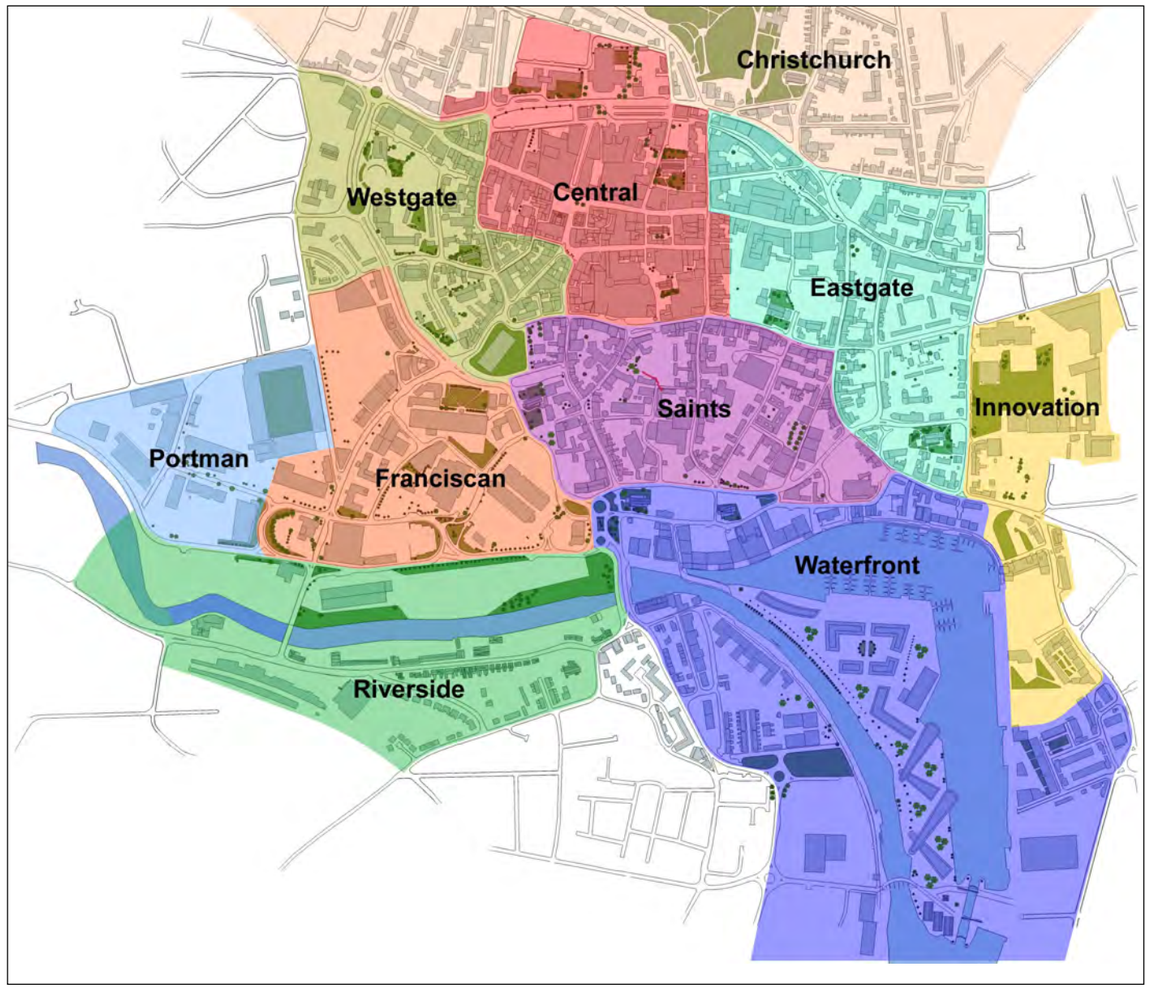
Quarters within the Vision

We have identified the essential elements that the town needs to deliver to establish itself as the place to be in Suffolk but these need to be subject to an overall strategy which identifies specific areas or Quarters. Each Quarter will have its own distinct identity and make its own contribution to the revitalisation of the town centre.

Our strategy in identifying these Quarters has been either to build upon the established uses or to put forward radical new proposals. The Quarters that we have identified create a cluster of ten separate areas - as shown - and the following pages describe the unique quality of each Quarter and how they will interact to create a vibrant, attractive and viable town centre.

In identifying these quarters the conscious decision has been made to concentrate the town's retail offer within the Central Quarter with supporting smaller scale retail in the Saints Quarter and the Waterfront Quarter. This concentration is a response to the changing nature of retail which has been modified by internet shopping and the proliferation of out of town retail parks. Together these three areas will interact to create a dynamic north-south axis that will act as a 'driver' for each of the surrounding Quarters.

Further work will be done on the details and plans associated with each Quarter. In the meantime, the town will start to consistently talk about and promote the individual Quarters within publications, communications, signage and mapping. Progress could be made towards distinguishing one Quarter from the other by use of distinctive colouring, lighting, street furniture, planting, streetscape, etc.



1. The Christchurch Quarter – an area of high value housing clustered around Christchurch Park, the Mansion and the Museum.

2. The Central Quarter – a distinctive retail and leisure offer, with some associated employment uses, all within a predominantly pedestrianised environment.

3. The Eastgate Quarter – a mixed area with expanded areas of urban living supplemented by retail, leisure and entertainment uses alongside car parking.

4. The Westgate Quarter – a mixed area including residential, car parking and leisure surrounding the New Wolsey Theatre.

5. The Saints Quarter – a mixed area structured around north-south routes bringing together new residential developments with supporting and experimental independent retail and leisure uses.

6. The Innovation Quarter – an exciting learning and creative area surrounding University Campus Suffolk and Suffolk New College.

7. The Portman Quarter – an area of commerce, public authorities and complementary employment and sporting uses.

8. The Franciscan Quarter – an employment area surrounding the new Princes Street office corridor and Cardinal Park, a leisure and entertainment park.

9. The Riverside Quarter – an area to the west of the waterfront incorporating new waterside residential developments, car parking and river walkways leading to and from the station.

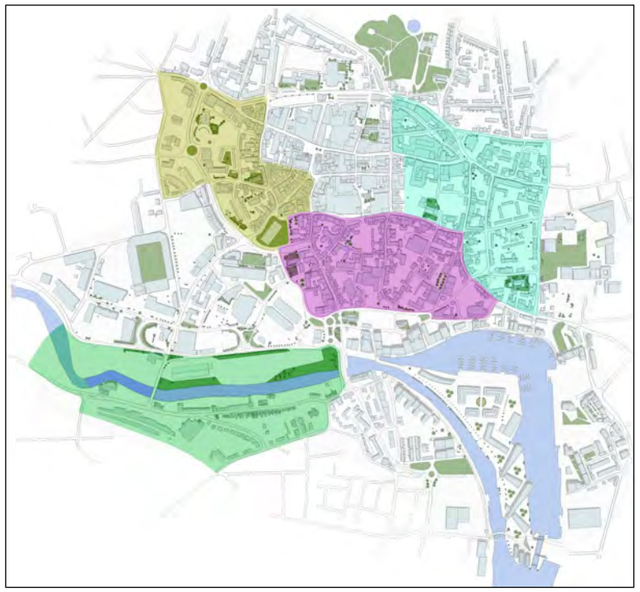
10. The Waterfront Quarter – the amphitheatre surrounding the marina and incorporating an island site and within which business, enterprise and leisure uses are encouraged,

Revitalising Ipswich

Businesses, visitors and investors will expect a fully integrated 'experience' combining history, culture, retail and leisure. In order to achieve this there are a number of priority areas that must be addressed.

Homes

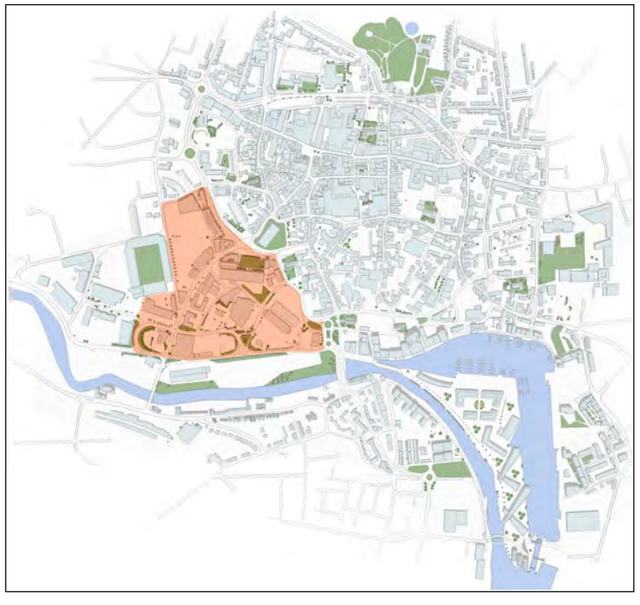
New homes will revitalise the town centre and there is considerable opportunity to develop new residential accommodation within The Eastgate, Westgate, Waterfront, Riverside and Saints Quarters. However, this should be more than just flats and apartments and must incorporate town housing, particularly for families, young people, supported living and more elderly residents to complement development elsewhere. Restrictions on ground floor development within the Waterfront Quarter and elsewhere can be overcome with two to three-storey housing of high design quality.



There is an opportunity for up to 2,000 new homes in the town centre over the next 10 years. Where possible, newly constructed town houses will combine with those created from the conversion back to housing of historic buildings – much of which has most recently been used for office accommodation. This will necessitate improvements to the town's streetscape and fabric.

Workplaces

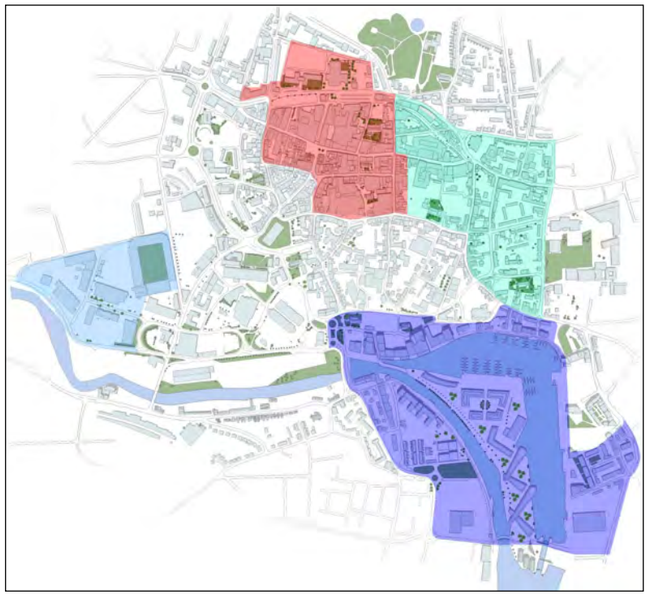
Demand for office space will be improved through the removal of the over-supply of competing, now poor grade accommodation from the market and allowing its use to change, particularly to residential and perhaps student accommodation. New high specification office developments should be located in The Franciscan Quarter along the Princes Street corridor from the station to the Willis building.
Lower property prices and reduced staff costs for employers combine with lower living costs for employees – thereby offering Ipswich as a viable alternative to London and as competition to places such as Norwich and Cambridge.



Parking

Ipswich has lots of car parking, but too much of it is of poor quality and badly distributed around the town.

The town needs new, high-quality car parks. In the short term new parking is needed at Crown Street in The Central Quarter, with vastly improved pedestrian links to the Sailmakers Shopping Centre. A new Strategy will be produced to determine the location and form of parking throughout the town. This will focus on number of spaces, types of spaces, the quality of the car parks, role and extent of park and ride, better signage and information (including variable message signing) and the pricing strategy.



For instance it is possible that further new car parks will be required on (i) the Cox Lane site alongside future developments on Upper Brook Street and in The Eastgate Quarter; (ii) as office development along Princes Street and in The Portman Quarter happens, a multi-storey may be required to support the developments and to free up existing surface spaces for more development; and, (iii) as the vacant sites within The Waterfront Quarter (again currently being used as temporary surface car parks) are developed a new multi-storey may be required to meet the demands in this area.

We are committed to Ipswich being known to have the best value parking of any large town in the region.

Transport

The town has two bus stations but a single hub would be more desirable in the longer term. Realistically, this may not be sited on the existing Cattlemarket site and, therefore, it will be available for redevelopment as part of the Saints Quarter in due course. Bus routes will need to be reconsidered to support these plans. Museum Street, High Street, Upper Brook Street and Northgate Street should all prioritise pedestrian users with cars and buses largely or wholly removed.

Improvements to the station forecourt will soon be underway and present an opportunity to lead on to further improvements to the Princes Street bridge crossing. We share an aspiration to cut rail journey times between Ipswich and London to 60 minutes.

Proposals for a wet dock crossing should lead to a remodeling of the Star Lane Gyratory, thereby reconnecting the waterfront with the town centre. It may also help to relieve pressure on the Orwell Bridge.

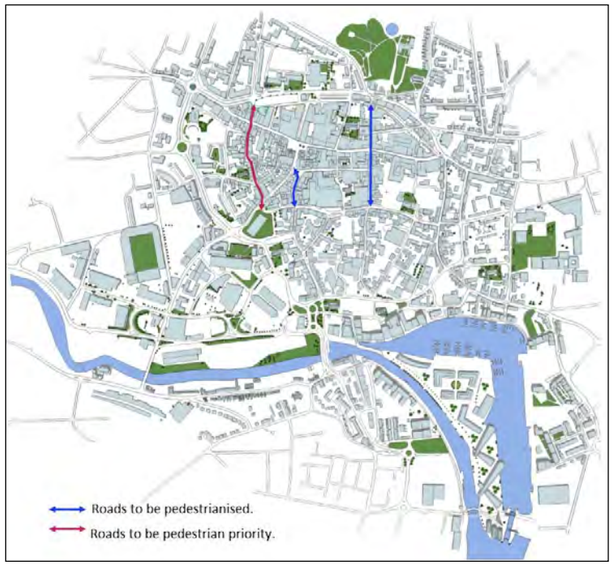
Improved access and facilities for cyclists will be delivered.

Revitalising Ipswich

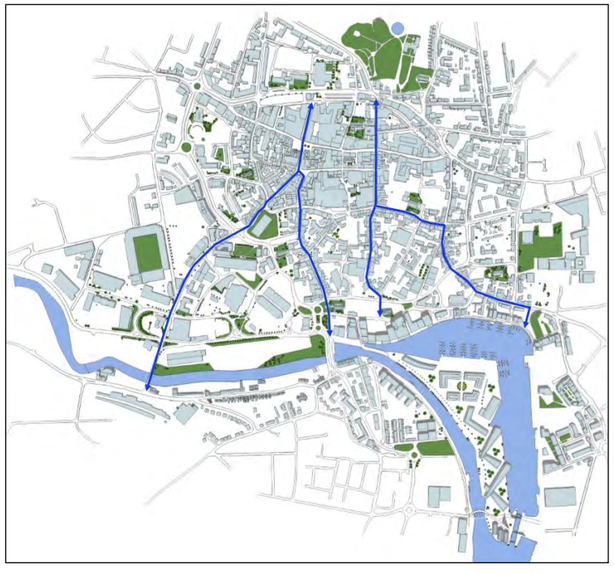
Streetscape

The streets of Ipswich town centre are amongst the oldest in Britain and contain some of the most lovely buildings in our county. Their presentation will be key to providing the exceptional shopping and leisure experience that we need to create if Ipswich is to succeed. There is now a detailed plan to make the Cornhill a unique and special place.

But the Cornhill should only be seen as part of a wider programme of renovation. An opportunity exists to improve significantly the town's streetscape, including extensions to pedestrian-priority areas and green walkways. Queen Street and Princes Street are due to be renovated in 2016 but we also need all the others in the town centre to be improved, from Upper Brook Street in the east to Museum Street in the west: Tavern Street, Butter Market, Westgate and all the connecting roads, lanes and walks in between. Our aspiration for the quality of work is as great as for the town centre as a whole: exceptional design and exceptional materials.



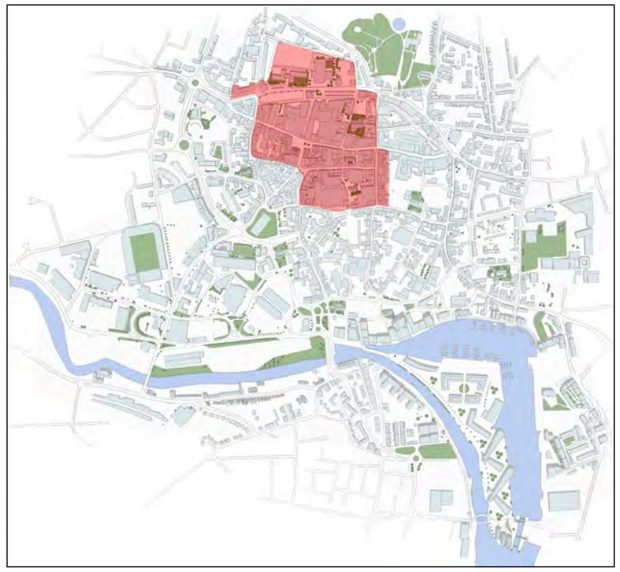
Pedestrianised areas have generally worked better for shopping and leisure. As soon as pedestrianised zones are interrupted by traffic, footfall suffers and business demand for space tends to weaken. As part of our new public realm strategy, the future use of Upper Brook Street, Northgate Street (south), Museum Street and High Street (south) also need to be considered with a view to making them more pedestrian friendly. As part of this, bus routes will need to be reviewed to support these plans – this will include consideration of the role and future of the existing bus gyratory system.



Four primary routeways should be clearly signposted to connect the town with the waterfront and railway station. These are (1) St Nicholas and St Peter's Streets, (2) Lower Brook Street and (3) Tacket Street and Fore Street. A new north-south routeway should be established leading from (4) an upgraded station forecourt, across a dramatically improved Princes Street bridge, and along Princes Street itself where new office development will dominate.

Visitors

Ipswich must begin to present itself as the place to stay when visiting Suffolk. A boost to its visitor economy requires its historical, cultural, food and drink and retail offer to be further improved and promoted. However, a plan to improve and simplify the offering, together with simple, consistent consumer messages about what Ipswich is and what it will be like when visited, will attract increased visits.



Consumers no longer differentiate between retail or leisure outlets. However, within The Central Quarter there is a need to concentrate the retail offering in and around the new Sailmakers (Tower Ramparts) development with the focus for leisure facilities being within the re-developed Buttermarket Shopping Centre.

There is an urgent need to improve and develop the retail offer and attention needs to be focused upon The Central Quarter. This is most likely to come through the construction of modern, box-style retail units with adjoining car parking.

There is an opportunity to redevelop the site adjoining Cardinal Park (currently Jewsons) within The Franciscan Quarter.

To add to this, Ipswich is served with an abundance of cultural experiences and there is a need to highlight these to the public and capitalise on the attention they bring to the town.

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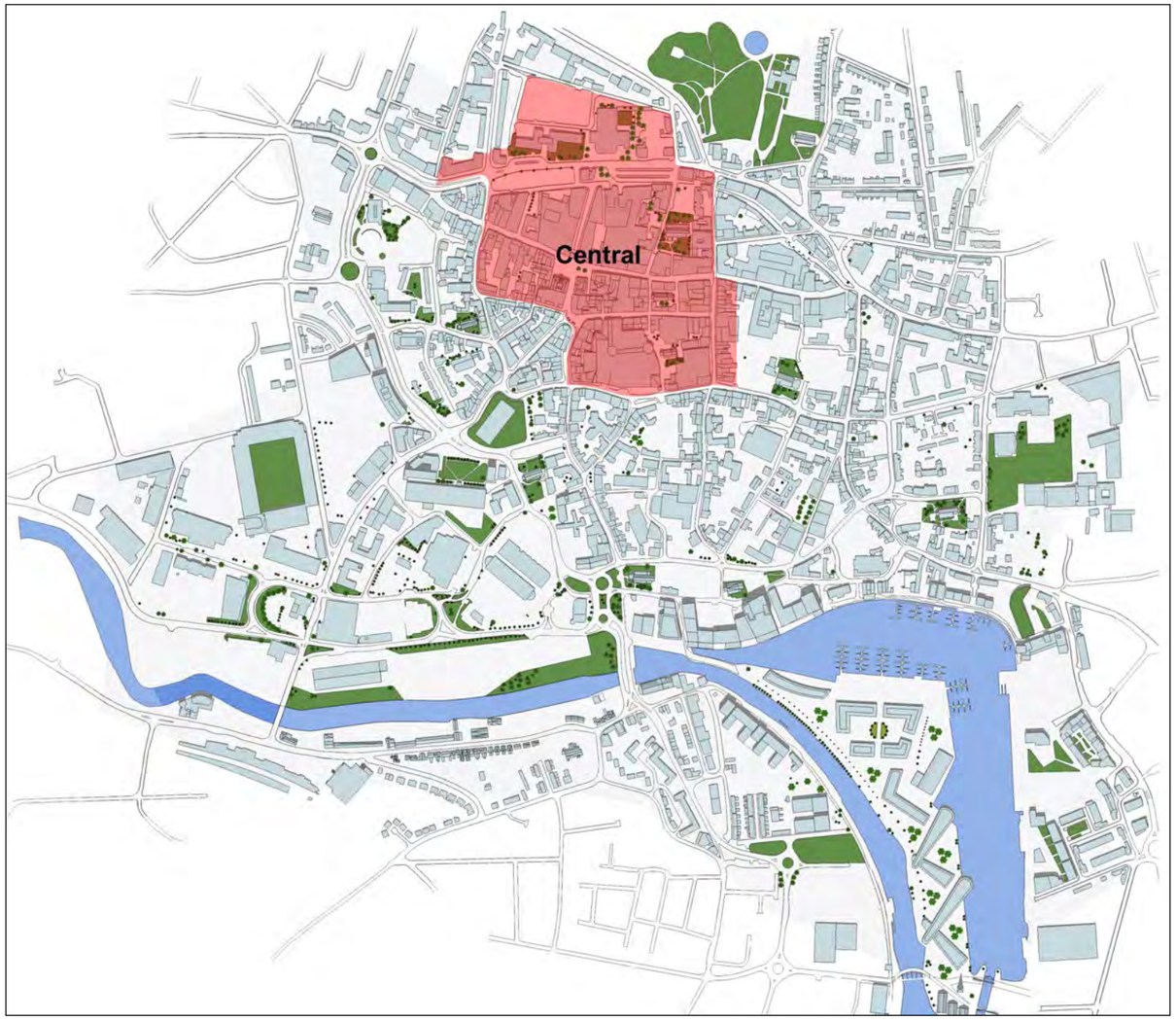
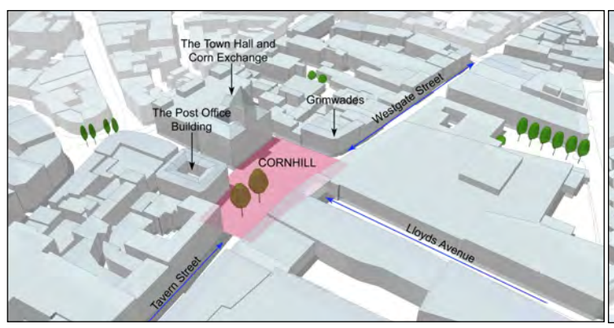
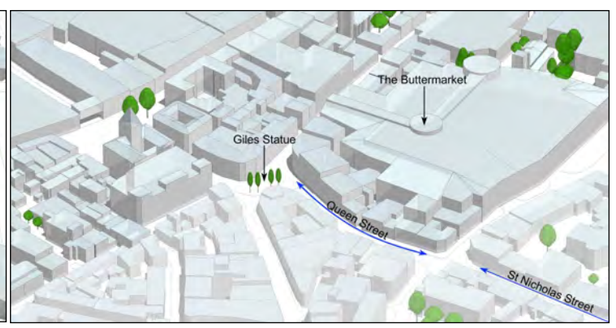
The Central Quarter







Above: For illustrative purposes only

A distinctive retail and leisure offer, with some associated employment uses, all within a predominantly pedestrianised environment. The Cornhill Square is the busiest and most important pedestrian area in Ipswich. It is a publicly-owned space and a priority investment need. It must be transformed into a focal point for the new Central Quarter and create an impression of a town that means business. Buildings around it must be improved.

The Town Hall and Corn Exchange complex will be reinvigorated to meet their civic and public use potential; the former Grimwades unit requires major remodelling and rebuilding to suit modern retail demand; and restaurant use should be considered alongside retail for the former Post Office building (currently Lloyds TSB). These changes, together with the proposed public space improvements, would transform first impressions of the town centre and create the Cornhill as a destination all of its own. The Cornhill redevelopment has been designed to allow outside performing arts – both small scale and large, and a programme should be considered as soon as possible to fill this space.

New retail development must be encouraged within The Central Quarter, even if this means dramatic changes to existing buildings and facades to create the types of units today's retailers demand. However, consideration must be given to the modern-day customer who views shopping, eating and drinking as a single, joined-up experience. The new Sailmakers Centre should be predominantly retail-led, with the Buttermarket converting to a more leisure-led use and extending its opening hours.

There is a need to agree upon the location of future retail development within The Central Quarter. One idea is to demolish the line of existing shops on the eastern side of Upper Brook Street and construct replacement, modern two-storey (5,000-10,000 sq ft) units, served with car parking from behind within The Eastgate Quarter. This could simulate 'out of town' style shops in a central location and would suit demand from missing retailers. Alternatively, the area to the north of Sailmakers (currently the Tower Ramparts bus station) may be suitable for retail extension should a single bus station be located elsewhere. However, these may not be the only solutions and a viability study needs to be conducted.

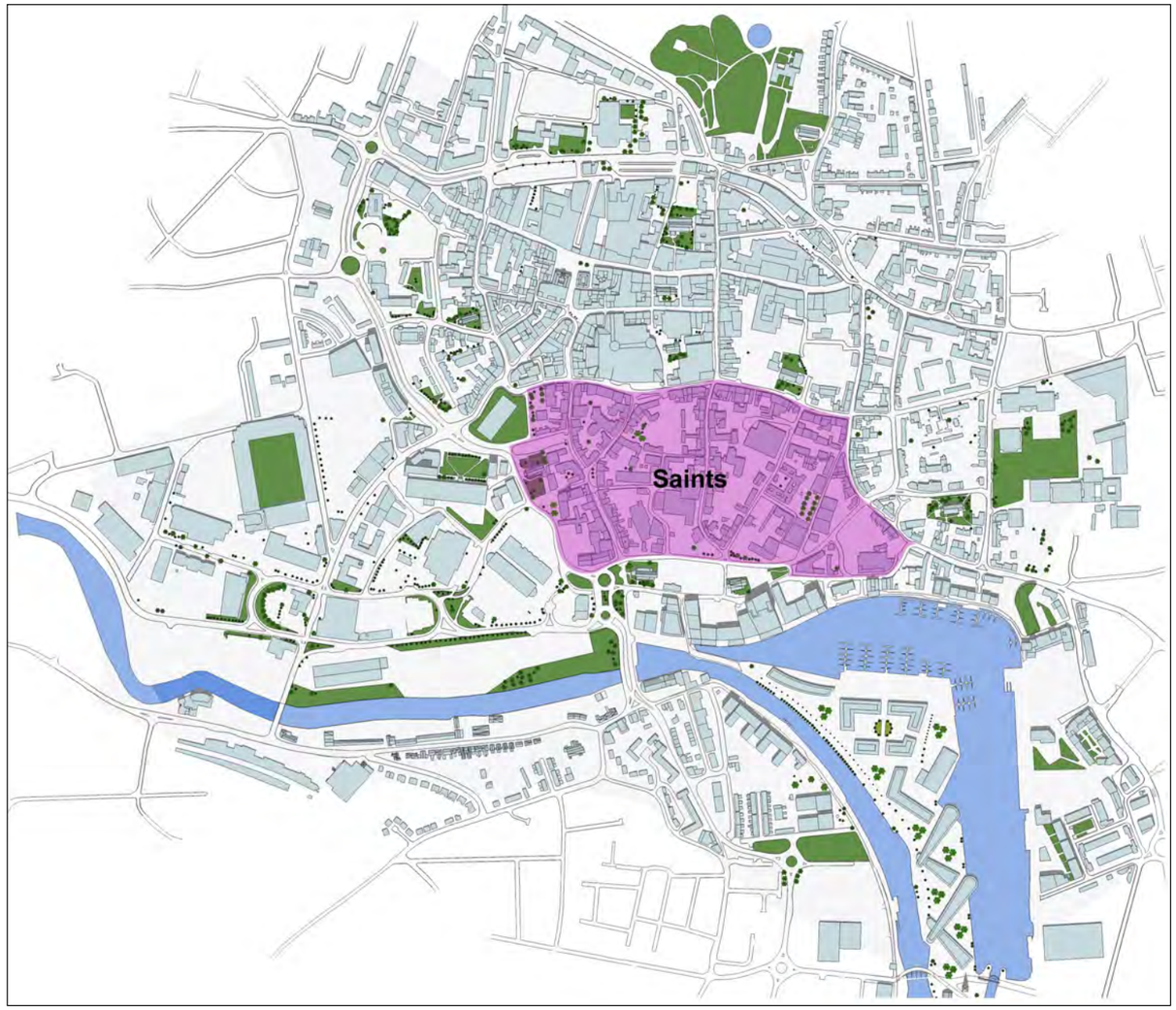
In the longer-term, Lloyds Avenue could be a dramatic, tree-lined boulevard leading to the Cornhill Square. Consideration should be given to roofing this over and pedestrianising potentially by relocating the taxi rank, thereby allowing the introduction of new retail and leisure units and opening up new entrances into the Debenhams department store. A more imposing entry point to the street could be afforded by improvements, and possible alternative uses, around the bingo hall to the north. All of this would allow Lloyds Avenue to become a dramatic entranceway into the Cornhill at the heart of The Central Quarter.

Building on this, the town needs to create a 'sense of arrival' both to the north and to the south including clear links between car parking, bus station, retail stores and public spaces. The disjointed impression that is currently presented needs to be improved.

A targeted, inward investment approach must be adopted for The Central Quarter. This must be accompanied by a plan to bring prominent vacant buildings, together with underused units, back into useful life. Other uses (restaurants, bars, cafes, banks, building societies etc.) should be positively encouraged. The concentration of the retail area will improve demand and the more certain direction of the town centre will bring forward new retail targets that have previously ignored or dismissed Ipswich.

Markets can bring dynamism and variety to town centres. As part of the Cornhill project and the pedestrianisation of Queen Street, a plan will be produced to ensure the various markets that exist are managed and planned effectively. This will consider alternative market locations and different types of markets adding to the town's existing programme.

The Saints Quarter

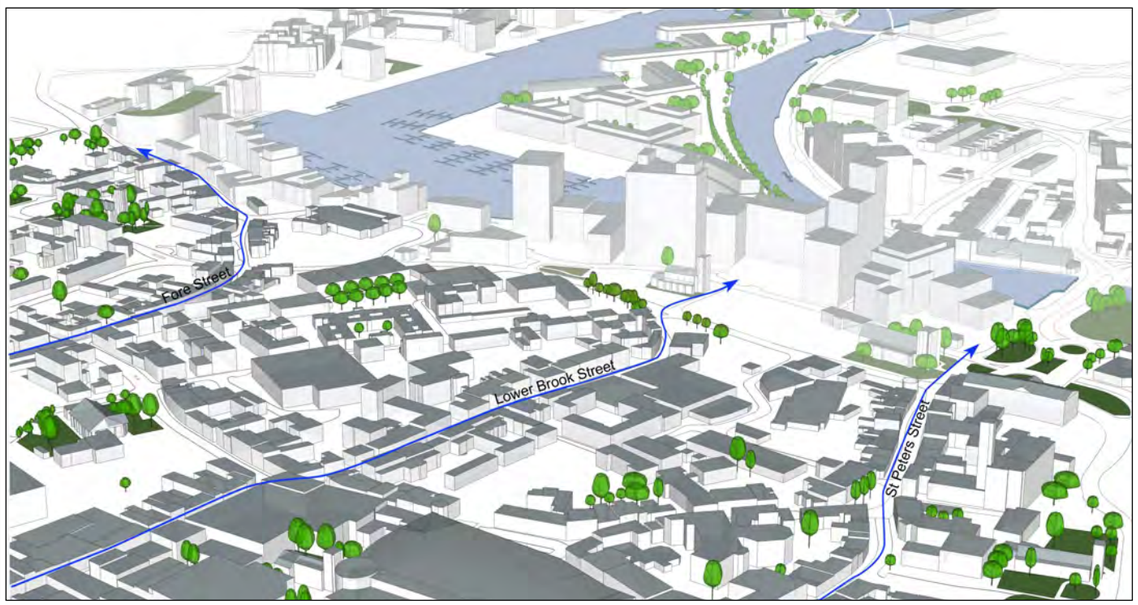


A mixed area structured around north-south routes bringing together new residential developments, including town houses, around lively and interesting streetscapes, with supporting and experimental independent retail and leisure uses.

Clear lines of sight across to the waterfront will be created from the southern end of the main access routes through The Saints Quarter. Clearing and landscaping of sites within the central area of the gyratory system will assist. Sympathetic architecture of new buildings in the central area within the gyratory system will enable lines of site to be maintained and new vistas to be opened up. Pedestrian crossing points must be maintained and adequately prioritised. A proposed Wet Dock Crossing will allow further re-modelling of the gyratory so as to link the Waterfront and Saints Quarters better by foot.

New, independent retailers and businesses must be sought out and positively encouraged to locations within The Saints Quarter. Thereby, it can act as a natural feed to The Central Quarter as vacancies arise there. The Saints Quarter can become a fascinating, dynamic retail and leisure 'incubation' environment, better than any that exists in surrounding towns and cities.

New development on the existing Archant site should be residential-led and include complementary uses such as bars, cafes and small shops.



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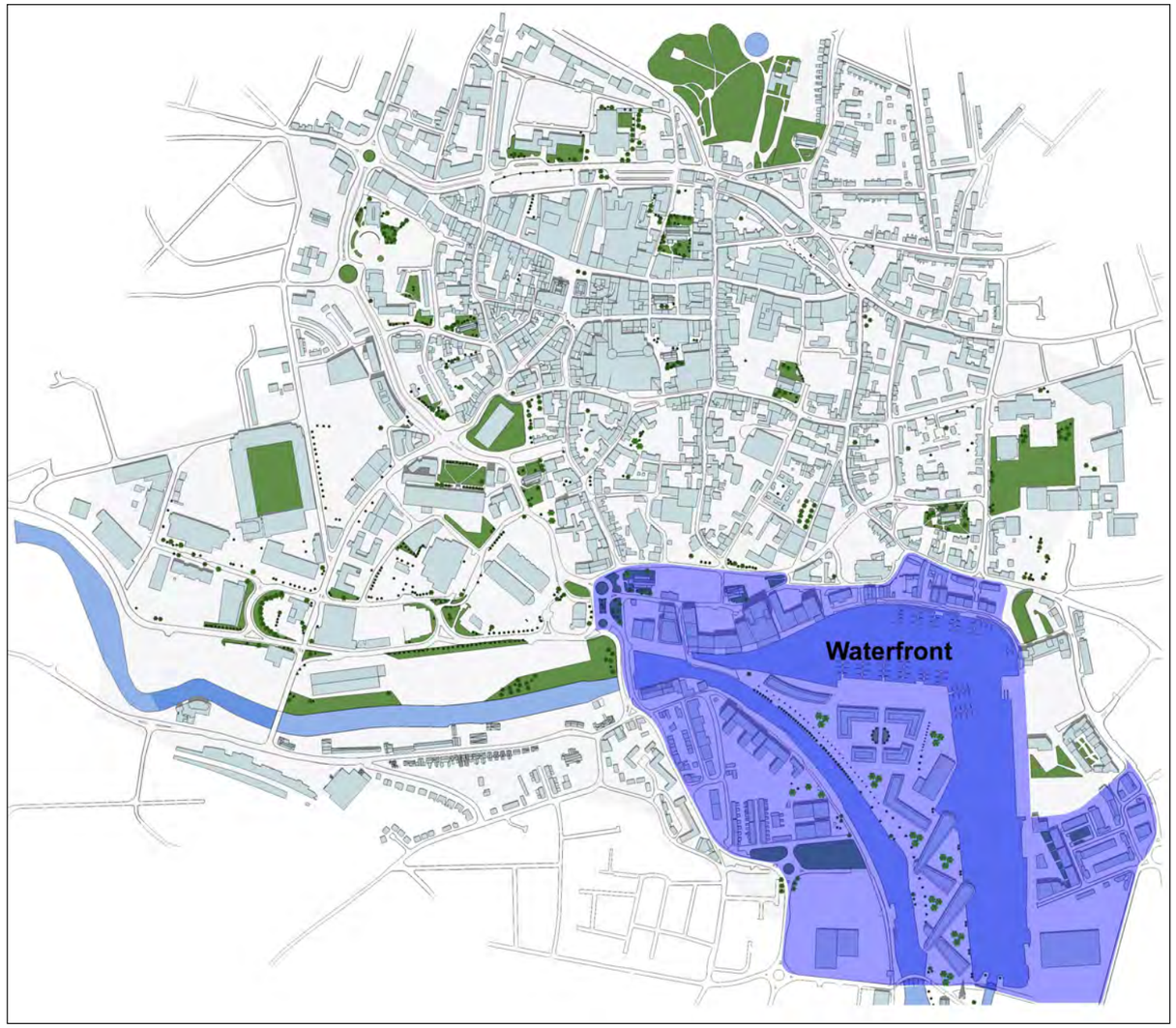
The Waterfront Quarter



The amphitheatre surrounding the main Waterfront will continue to develop as a vibrant mix of residential, educational, business and leisure uses.

Some prominent, vacant or underused sites require remedial action to improve their appearance. Completion of residential developments in the area is a priority.

The western end of the Waterfront Quarter, around Stoke Bridge and leading to DanceEast, is the priority redevelopment and improvement area. This will dramatically improve first impressions of the overall waterfront area and of the town centre more generally. Mixed use development, comprising residential, office, retail and leisure will be encouraged.

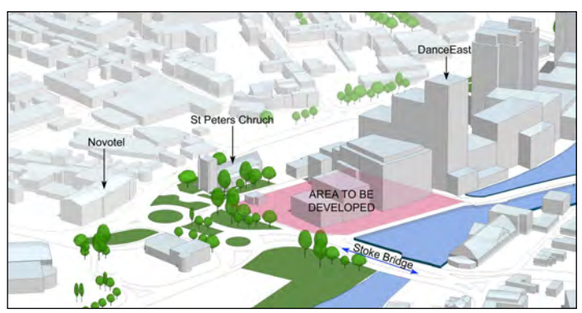
The Waterfront Quarter would benefit from the proposed Enterprise Island development on the former 'island site'. It would provide space for further high-quality development as the Waterfront Quarter is fast becoming a centre for excellence in high-tech goods and services, as well as cutting-edge creative arts. The Island will not only build upon the waterfront's existing strengths, but will attract new businesses, jobs and investment that will help this area to flourish and reach its full potential.

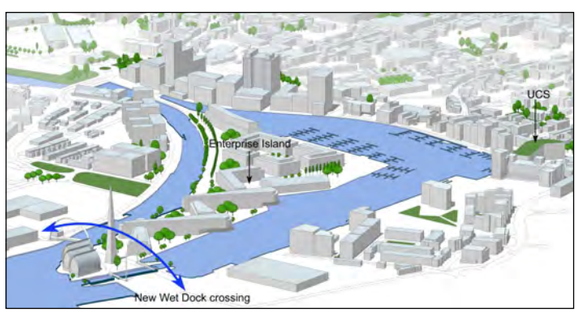
The vision for a crossing over the mouth of the Wet Dock and New Cut, connecting the east bank of the upper Orwell with the west, has been around for many years. Yet the time has never seemed right nor the economic case persuasive. That situation has now changed. The Wet Dock Crossing achieves three separate but complimentary things. First, it releases land on the Island Site for development, providing space for innovative and dynamic businesses that are now clustering around the Waterfront and are already struggling to find room to locate and expand. Second, it provides an alternative route across the town for local traffic, which in turn has a third benefit – giving the capacity to remodel the Star Lane Gyratory so that the Waterfront can be reconnected with the town centre.

The new campaign for a Wet Dock Crossing was launched in 2014 with support from the landowner – Associated British Ports, from existing tenants on the Island Site, and from University Campus Suffolk, Ipswich Central, Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Council and New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. The government has provided funding for the feasibility and design stages of the project and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has stated that he expects a proposal for final funding to be presented to the government in anticipation of the 2016 Budget.

There is an opportunity for a signature visitors' attraction themed around Ipswich's maritime history. Somewhere, a public viewing tower or platform should be identified as a new-build feature or within an existing tall building. Generally, the location must strengthen further as an entertainment and cultural area.

The area to the rear of St Peter's Church currently used as car parking and the sites around the Novotel roundabout need to be improved. High quality landscaping must be positively and urgently encouraged.





Above: For illustrative purposes only

The Christchurch Quarter

An area of high quality housing clustered around Christchurch Park and the Ipswich Museum.

Christchurch Park and Mansion must remain as jewels in Ipswich's crown. The Green Flag Park is rated Excellent by Trip Advisor and provides variety for all the family and is home to events throughout the year – including Ipswich Music Day in early July. The Grade 1 Christchurch Mansion is home to a variety of exhibits including the largest collection of Constable and Gainsborough paintings outside central London. Housing in close proximity to the park continues to be highly sought after.

The northern cultural arc – Regent Theatre, Christchurch Mansion, Ipswich Museum and New Wolsey Theatre – will continue to thrive and attract people from far and wide to the town. The £20m+ I-AM project will enhance this ability and benefit the town more widely. Links will continue to be enhanced from all these attractions to The Central Quarter and beyond.

Although the Regent is recently refurbished, we should continue to have a long-term ambition for Ipswich to have the capability to host all West End touring productions.

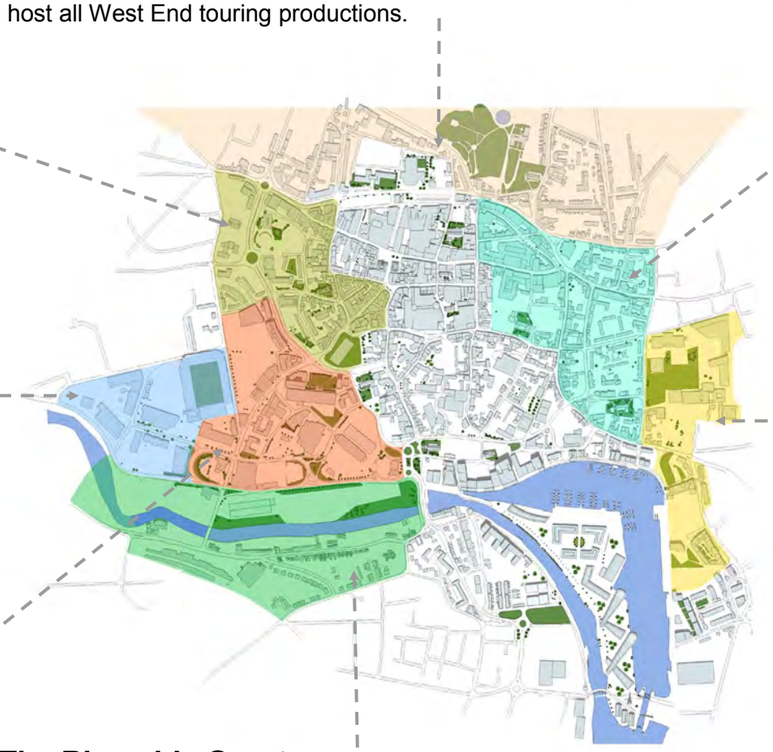
The Westgate Quarter

Westgate Street (beyond its junction with Museum Street) should adapt to a more mixed-use, less retail-focused area. Within the new Westgate Quarter – with the New Wolsey Theatre at its heart - the focus should be upon interests serving the needs of the new residential occupiers and existing cultural experiences. This may include new service provision (doctors, dentists, etc.) alongside small-scale complementary retail. Opportunity for open-air theatre and entertainment experiences exist.
The future of the car parks, the former civic centre site and the buildings that surround it must be clarified.

The Eastgate Quarter

A mixed area with expanded sites of urban living supplemented by retail, leisure and entertainment uses alongside car parking.

The Eastgate Quarter including Carr Street (in its entirety) should be re-energised by bringing together 'city-style' living and entertainment, leisure and food and drink. This will all lead to a concentration of the retail offer within The Central Quarter.



The Portman Quarter

An area of commerce, public authorities and complementary uses.
The natural pull of the football club in this area needs to be drawn upon. It has also become a public sector hub.

The Innovation Quarter

An exciting learning and creative area surrounding University Campus Suffolk and Suffolk New College.

The Innovation Quarter will be seen as the hub for learning and creativity in the town and become an area where the unexpected is possible and ideas are generated. It will provide a dynamic environment where new business ideas are incubated before they move on to bigger sites in the town.

The area will include a new Innovation Centre, linked to UCS.

The Franciscan Quarter

An employment and leisure district focused around the Princes Street office district where new high-quality office accommodation will be developed alongside the Cardinal Park leisure complex and car park.

The Riverside Quarter

An area to the west of the waterfront incorporating new waterside residential developments, car parks and river walkways, leading to and from the station. The station and its forecourt will be substantially up-graded.

This important routeway can provide new residential accommodation in a waterside setting. New walkways along the river can be developed here.

The site on Grafton Way originally planned as a Tesco store should be prioritised for residential and leisure development.

Delivery Plan

We have now agreed what the Vision for Suffolk's county town should be – a place where people want to be and where businesses want to invest.

There are questions that everyone should want to know the answers to in order that we can reassure them that we are serious about delivery:

What is the programme?

Priorities have been identified and ambitious dates set for completion. Already £18.55million has been committed with a further £85million in the pipeline subject to final agreements within the next 12 months.

Whilst a lead partner will be identified by the Board for each of the priorities they will be delivered collaboratively.

Above: For illustrative purposes only

Action	Date
To undertake work to scope and test demand for new retail development	2015
To develop a funding package to support the delivery of this Vision / Plan	2015
Start construction of a new Crown Street Car Park	2016
To agree a residential development plan creating a minimum of 2,000 new homes (prioritising town houses).	2016
To agree a Car Park Strategy (including Park and Ride, signage and information and new town centre car parks)	2016
To develop a strategy for markets	2016
To complete the Innovation Centre in the UCS West Building	2016
To transform the station forecourt redevelopment	2016
To agree a site development strategy for all major vacant/undeveloped/underused or redundant sites	2016
To deliver a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the area around Novotel roundabout and from Stoke Bridge to DanceEast.	2016
To identify the site for a single bus station and to produce a strategy for bus movement in the town centre	2016
To develop a comprehensive public realm strategy	2016
To present a funding proposal for a Wet Dock Crossing to government	2016
To develop a strategy (transport, signage and public realm) for the improvement of the all the main arterial routes and gateways into the town centre	2016
To develop plans for visitor attraction(s) on the waterfront	2017
To plan future uses of the buildings around the Cornhill	2017
To bring forward plans for improvement to the Star Lane gyratory system	2017
To complete plans for the redevelopment around the Museum and to start the works	2017
To get work underway on a redevelopment of the Cornhill	2017
To develop a new Heritage Centre on the Waterfront	2018
To complete the Princes Street office corridor redevelopment	2020

Governance

Who will be responsible for making it happen?

A new 'Ipswich Vision Board' will be formed. This will be independently led and will have representation from Ipswich Central, New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, Suffolk County Council, Ipswich Borough Council, Ipswich Chamber of Commerce, University Campus Suffolk and the Member of Parliament.

The legal structure of this body needs to be determined but it must enable joint working and pooled funding, with a focus on tangible delivery. It will receive advice on the delivery of individual projects and on design. In addition, it will stimulate discussions with land and property owners, together with their advisors, to ensure that things get done.

How will I know whether it is working?

The Board of Ipswich Vision will release a detailed annual report, together with six-monthly independent updates on progress.

The Vision document will be updated bi-annually, starting in 2017, to ensure that there is a rolling programme of improvement.

What work will be commissioned immediately?

Expert advice will be sought at this stage on public transport (including on the bus station(s) and the bus gyratory system), retail development and changes to the Star Lane gyratory system.

Streetscape and public realm improvements will be considered alongside the Cornhill project.

A brief for such studies will be commissioned by the Vison Board.

When will I see changes happening?

We are all agreed on what change needs to happen. This is the first major step.

The creation of the Ipswich Vision Board will commit all partners to delivery and frequent reports on progress holding them collectively to account.

In addition, the partners will ask the Editor of the East Anglian Daily Times and the Ipswich Star to join their meetings as an independent observer and to publish, completely independently, an assessment every six months of progress that has been made in delivering the Vision.

What difference will the Vision make?
In developing this Vision advice was sought by Aecom, global provider of architecture, design, engineering, and construction services, as to the potential economic benefit of delivering the Vision and some of their findings were as follows:

UCS University Campus Suffolk · NEWANGLIA Local Enterprise Partnership for Norfolk and Suffolk · Suffolk County Council · IPSWICH CENTRAL · IPSWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL · Ben GUMMER Working hard for Ipswich · Ipswich Chamber of Commerce Part of the Suffolk Chamber of Commerce