

# Minster Quarter Masterplan

## Supplementary Planning Document

March 2017





# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>	4.3	Objectives	31	5.17	Area P – Gillbridge House	46
1.1	Study Area	3	4.4	Principles & Parameters	32	<b>6</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>47</b>
1.2	Policy Background	4	4.5	Inclusive Design	32	6.1	Delivery vehicle	47
1.3	The Purpose	9	4.6	Built Form	33	6.2	Infrastructure Delivery	47
1.4	A Collaborative Process	9	4.7	Public Realm	33			
<b>2</b>	<b>The Story of the Minster Quarter</b>	<b>11</b>	4.8	Materials and Detailing	33			
2.1	Introduction	11	4.9	Movement	34			
2.2	Early settlement	11	4.10	Mix of Uses	34			
2.3	Planned expansion	12	4.11	Sustainability	34			
2.4	Redevelopment	13	<b>5</b>	<b>Minster Quarter Masterplan</b>	<b>37</b>			
2.5	The Historic Legacy	14	5.1	Introduction	37			
2.6	Unlisted buildings	16	5.2	Area A – Hotel with Ground floor Retail	37			
2.7	Summary	16	5.3	Area B – High Street West, Keel Square Corner Plot	38			
<b>3</b>	<b>The Minster Quarter Today</b>	<b>17</b>	5.4	Area C – The Londonderry Public House	38			
3.1	Introduction	17	5.5	Area D – Town Centre House	39			
3.2	Economy	17	5.6	Area E – Crowtree Phase 1	39			
3.3	Recent and Current Development Proposals	18	5.7	Area F – Crowtree Public Realm	40			
3.4	Urban Design	21	5.8	Area G – Crowtree Phase 2	40			
3.5	Summary	28	5.9	Area H – Town Park	41			
3.6	SWOT	29	5.10	Area I – St Michaels Way – Gateways	41			
<b>4</b>	<b>The Vision and Objectives for Minster Quarter</b>	<b>31</b>	5.11	Area J – High Street West Improvements	42			
4.1	Introduction	31	5.12	Area K – Former Fire Station	44			
4.2	Vision	31	5.13	Area L – Auditorium	45			
			5.14	Area M – Outdoor Performance Space	45			
			5.15	Area N – Gillbridge Police Station	45			
			5.16	Area O – Magistrates Court	46			



# 1 Introduction

The Minster Quarter Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) outlines the development strategy for the Minster Quarter area of Sunderland City Centre. It identifies a series of ambitious but deliverable projects that will support the future economic growth of the city centre.

## 1.1 Study Area

The Minster Quarter lies to the north-west of the city centre (see Figure 1: Minster Quarter Study Area). It is bounded by the inner ring road (St. Michael's Way) and Town Park to the west, Keel Square, the magistrate's court and police station to the north.

The eastern limit is West Street, the former Crowtree Leisure Centre and the Bridges Shopping Centre, with the southern limit set at Chester Road. The majority of the Quarter falls within the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area and houses a number of listed buildings of architectural and historic interest including the Sunderland Minster and the Empire Theatre.

Later development associated with the city's ring road, the Crowtree Leisure Centre, the Bridges Shopping Centre and the areas of surface car parking around the Empire Theatre and the former fire station have eroded some of the area's character and disrupted pedestrian movement.

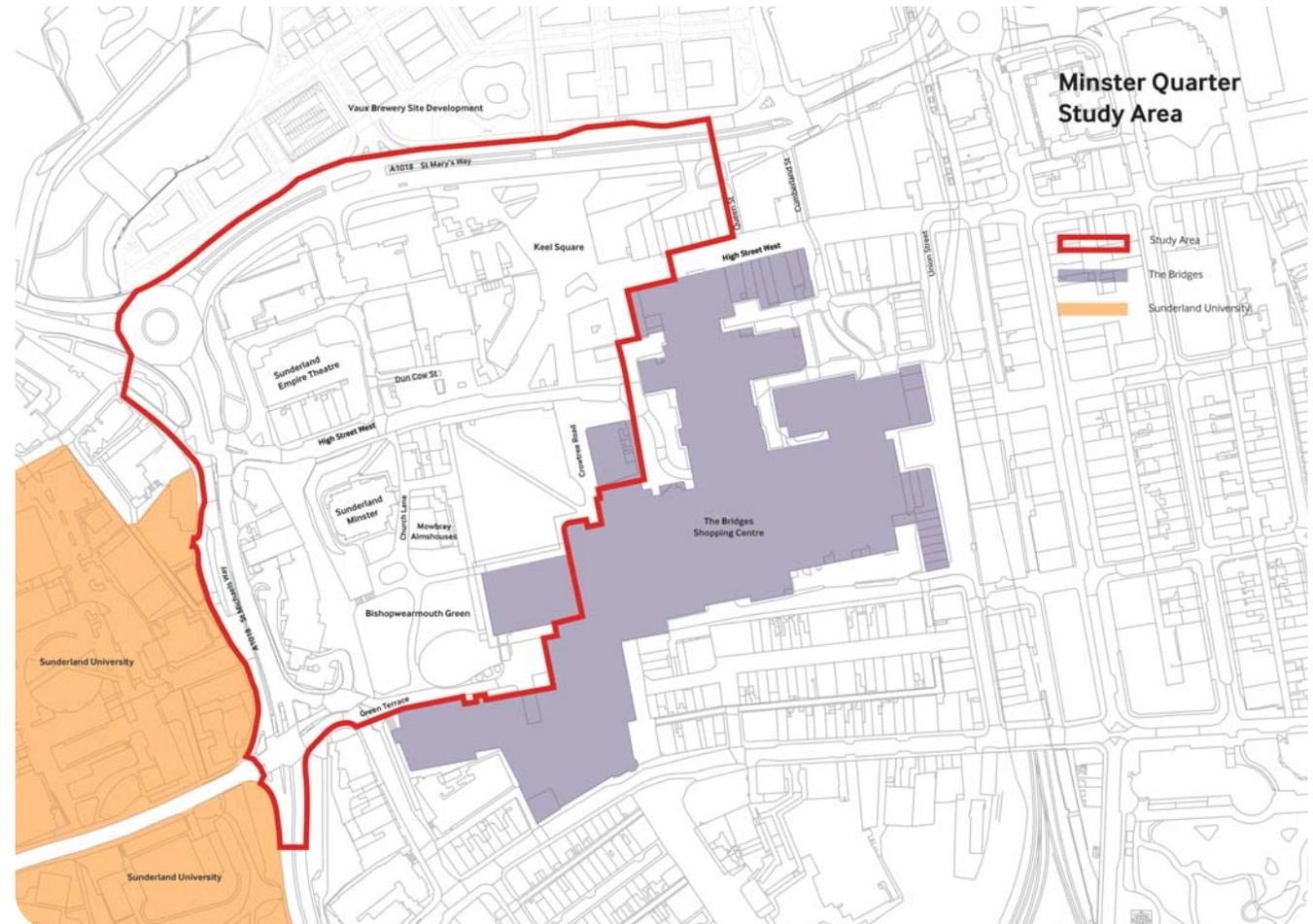


Figure 1: Minster Quarter Study Area

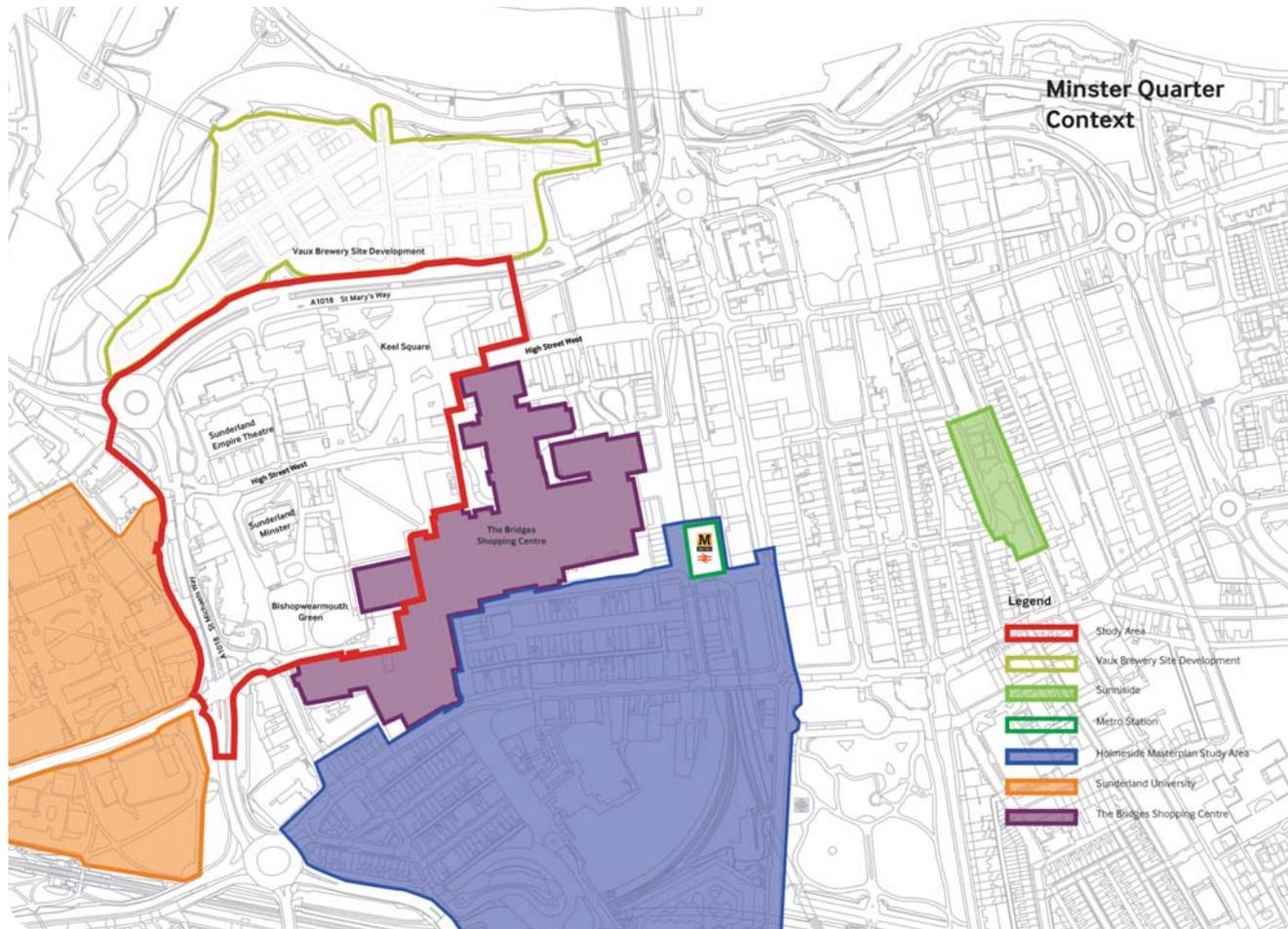
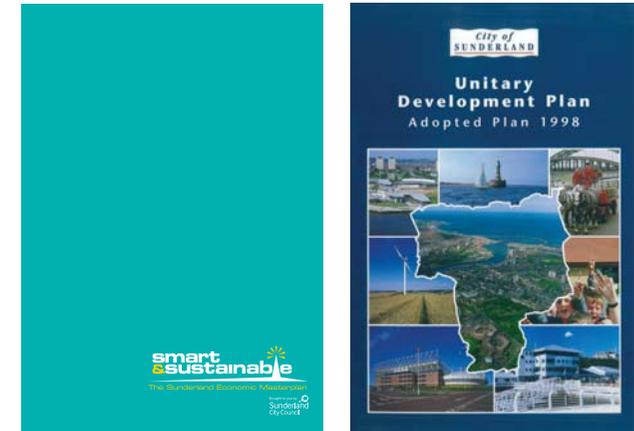


Figure 2: Minster Quarter Context Plan

## 1.2 Policy Background

The strategic policy context for the Masterplan is contained within several adopted policy documents:



### Sunderland Economic Masterplan

The Sunderland Economic Masterplan (2010) is a statement of intent articulating the city's aspirations and potential for economic development. The purpose of the Economic Masterplan is:

- To help set the direction for the city's economy over the next 15 years.
- To establish how Sunderland will earn its living over that period and what that will look like on the ground.
- To set out the actions private, public and voluntary sector partners across the city need to take to ensure Sunderland has a prosperous and sustainable future.

Two of the key challenges Sunderland faces relate to the growth of employment in the city centre and the better integration of the University of Sunderland with the city centre, with the document stating:

“The growth of employment in out-of-town locations has left the city centre underpowered as an economic driver. The scarcity of office jobs has hindered the development of better shopping and leisure facilities, leaving the centre insufficiently attractive to residents and businesses alike. This has made it difficult to improve the quality of the city centre. As a consequence, the city centre does not serve its purpose economically or socially.”

“Sunderland is a city with a university but does not yet possess the characteristics and qualities of a ‘university city’. Its two campuses lay adjacent to the city centre but have not been properly integrated with it. The University of Sunderland has the potential to become an economic and culture-changing asset, with a strong civic role aligned to supporting the economic transformation of the city centre and of the city as a whole.”

The Economic Masterplan identifies number of property related market objectives to address these issues, as summarised below:

- To establish a viable office market in the city centre and to diversify the market into a wide range of sectors to ensure its resilience.
- To secure additional and higher quality retailers to attract more consumers to the city centre and to clawback the leakage of consumer spend from within the catchment area.
- Retail vacancy rates are high in secondary and tertiary locations. The number of vacant shops has increased in the prevailing economic climate (in line with the national retail market) and there is an intention to arrest the decline of secondary/tertiary locations and reduce the number of vacant shops.

- To improve public areas and upgrade those areas currently at risk of decline to so that they remain attractive to walk through.
- To improve the evening economy and increase the number of restaurants and cafes.
- To provide better residential units to enhance the centre and attract inward investment.
- To improve the railway station and its surrounds alongside accessibility and movement within the city centre itself.

The Economic Masterplan establishes five strategic aims, two of which directly influence how development should be brought forward in the Minster Quarter.

**Aim 1 ‘A new kind of university city’** – We want Sunderland to be a vibrant, creative and attractive city, with a strong learning ethic and a focus on developing and supporting enterprise with the University of Sunderland at its heart

**Aim 3 ‘A prosperous and well-connected waterfront city centre’** – The city centre is important to Sunderland and the wider region. It will fulfil its purpose only when more people work in it and more people spend time and money there. The city’s position on the waterfront is an important part of its sense of place and enhances Sunderland city centre’s distinctive role in the region. Connectivity is both external to improve the city centre’s credentials as a business location and internal to make it better and easier to enjoy.

The ‘new kind of university city’ envisaged by the Economic Masterplan seeks to better use the university to change Sunderland’s economy and culture. It is anticipated that this will require the university to adopt a stronger civic role than a traditional university.

The ‘prosperous’ and well-connected waterfront city centre’ envisages a city centre which will accommodate new companies and jobs thereafter supporting other parts of the city centre by providing demand for retail, leisure and other aspects. The development of the following strategic sites is identified in the Economic Masterplan:

- Former Vaux site and Farringdon Row – to create a new central business district and to increase the number of people living in the city centre.
- Crowtree Leisure Centre/Town Park (Minster Quarter) – to create a new mixed-use civic space that connects a number of key places in the city, including the Empire Theatre and the university city campus and provides the potential for further development of the Bridges Shopping Centre.
- University of Sunderland City Campus – to provide learning, research, health, sports and leisure, arts and cultural facilities for use by the wider community.

In summary the Economic Masterplan outlines that the city centre lacks the scale, quality, vibrancy and variety of uses that would normally be found in a regional city centre and that despite the prevalence of new assets and the implementation of regeneration initiatives, the city does not appear to be integrated at this time.

## Planning Framework

### Unitary Development Plan

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) adopted in 1998 is currently the local plan for the city. The UDP includes land use policies for the whole of the city and allocates land for particular uses.

An area, identified as 'Paley Street/ Eden Street' (0.9Ha) is within in the Minster Quarter Study Area and is allocated for offices and leisure uses (Policy SA54.6). The UDP recognises the area as an appropriate location for leisure/arts related uses and states that leisure is an important element in the life of the City Centre.

### Evening Economy Supplementary Planning Document

The Evening Economy SPD (2008) was produced to guide planning applications for leisure uses. The document recognises that the growth of the evening economy has been affected by the lack of employment and residential development in the city and identifies areas appropriate for the growth of this sector. The document strives, amongst other aspects, to:

- Improve the quality, choice and diversity of licensed premises within the city centre, particularly in the early evening (between the hours of 4-7pm).
- Enable visitors to differentiate between different parts of the city centre.
- Improve the image of Sunderland city centre as a place to visit at night.
- Maintain a balance between the evening economy and the prime day-time use of the city centre as a retail destination.

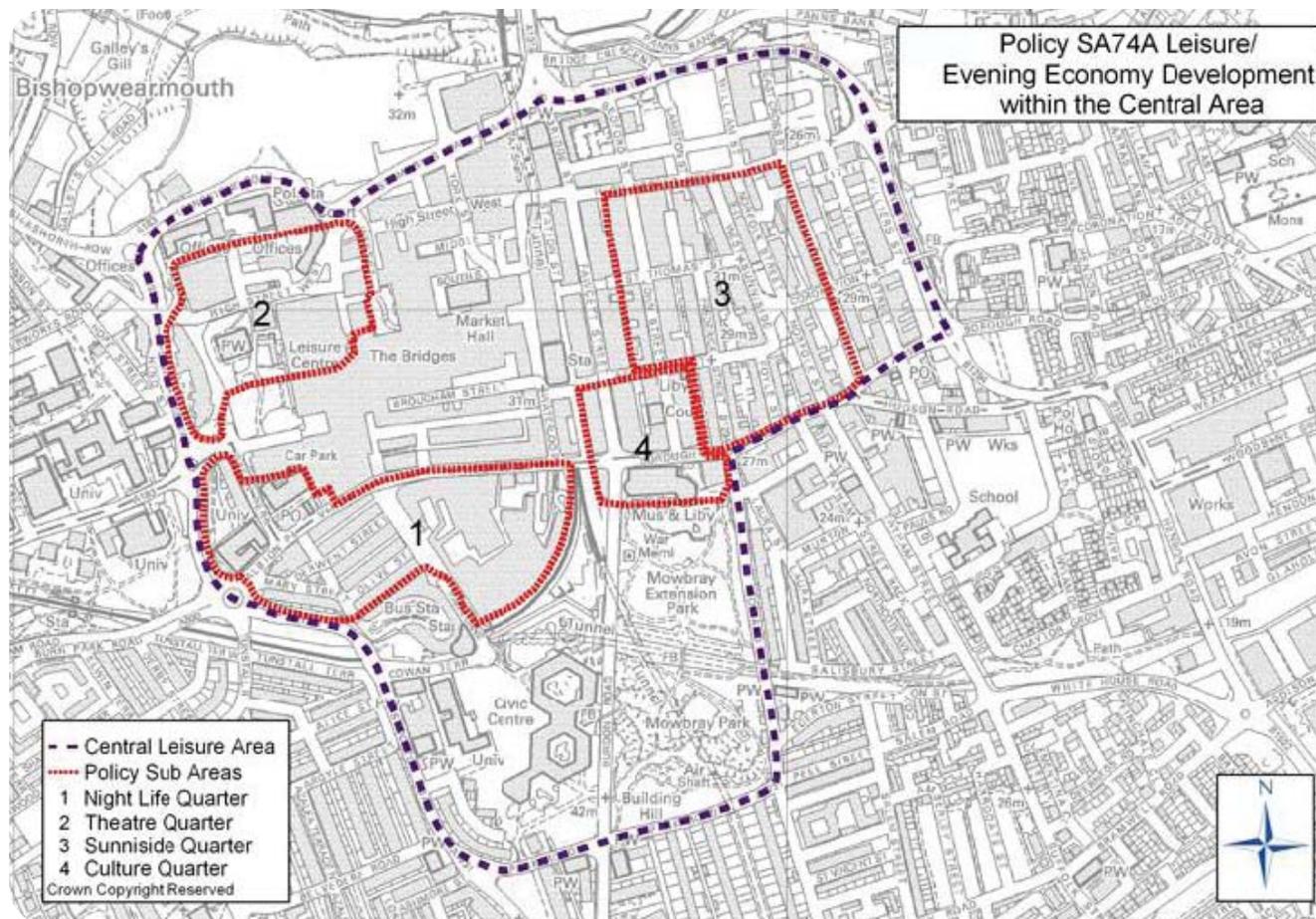


Figure 3: Evening Economy SPD

The Evening Economy SPD is referred to in the Economic Masterplan and the need for additional restaurants and cafes to make the city centre a more attractive place to live is identified, albeit it is acknowledged that demand for a better evening experience will be driven by more city centre jobs i.e. the development of the former Vaux Brewery/Farrington Row sites for employment use.

The Theatre Quarter is one area allocated for the growth of the evening economy and is positioned within the Minster Quarter Study Area (see Figure 3: Evening Economy SPD). The Evening Economy SPD promotes this area as appropriate for leisure uses which complement theatre activities and recognises that whilst the Sunderland Empire attracts high numbers of people into the city centre, there is a shortage of complementary facilities to attract patrons

to the area before performances and encourage them to stay afterwards.

There is also recognition that the environment surrounding the Empire Theatre should better complement its setting in close proximity the Town Park and the Minster.

The Evening Economy SPD articulates that the Sunderland Empire should be the focal point within the Theatre Quarter, and that development in this area should build on its role and importance, by providing high quality venues and a wider range of restaurants, wine bars and cafes offering lunch-time trade, pre-and after theatre dinner and drinks to appeal not only to theatre patrons but also shoppers and other city centre customers.

### Unitary Development Plan Alteration No. 2

In 2010 the council adopted UDP Alteration No. 2: Central Sunderland. Alteration No.2, which it is commonly referred to as, sought to provide a clear strategy for Central Sunderland, to shape change positively and to realise the Council’s aspirations for the City as a whole. The objective for Central Sunderland is to create an area that is the economic heart of the City of Sunderland, bringing regeneration to, and enhancing the quality of life of, existing communities.

Central Sunderland is to be the focal point for new investment and employment, education, leisure and tourism development. There are a number of relevant policies within Alternation No.2 which include:

- EC10A.1- The City Council will support the regeneration of Central Sunderland. Within the area the City Council will seek to maximise investment in employment, housing, leisure, tourism and education.
- SA55B.2 The City Council will support the diversification of food and drink and cultural opportunities within the

City Centre west area. Proposals for conversion, redevelopment and infill to provide the following uses:

- A1 Shops
- A3 Restaurants and Cafes
- B1 Business
- A2 Financial and Professional Services
- D1 Non-Residential Institutions
- D2 Assembly and Leisure.

- SA74A The City Council will support the diversification of licensed premises within the City Centre in order to create an evening economy for all groups.

It is also stated that proposals for land uses not referred to above will be considered on their individual merits, having regard to other policies of the UDP, and that new development should be of a scale and design which complements the character of the Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area.

### Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

The Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area, Character Appraisal and Management Strategy Planning Guidance (March 2007) has been formally adopted by the Council in support of the UDP and emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) and will form a material consideration in determining planning applications in this area.

The Council is required to give “special’ attention to preserving or enhancing the conservation area in exercising its planning functions. A large proportion of the Minster Quarter is within the conservation area boundary

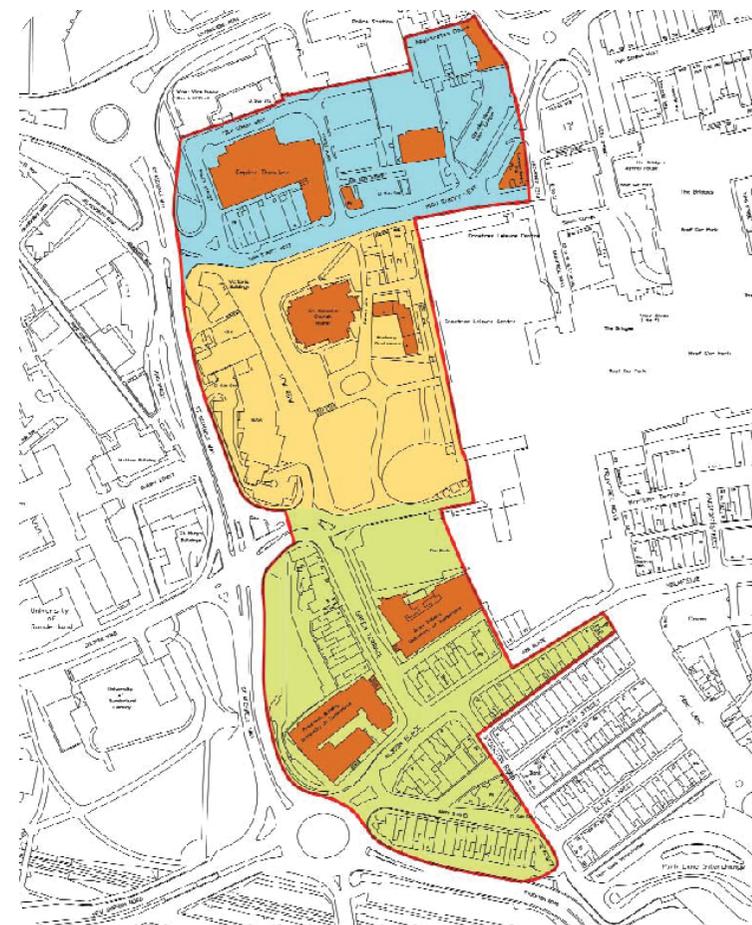


Figure 4: Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy

(see Figure 4: Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Strategy). The Crowtree Leisure Centre, High Street West and the area of land to the north of the Sunderland Empire falls outside the conservation area boundary. That said, Policy B4 of the UDP states that “all development within and adjacent to Conservation Areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character or appearance”.

## Sunderland Central Area Urban Design Strategy

The Sunderland Central Area Urban Design Strategy was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document in 2008 with the aim of:

- Establishing a strong urban form that delivers quality and reflects the needs of the central area.
- Defining clearly the role of the central area and to describe a range of opportunities that will contribute clearly to that role.
- Delivering positive change that revitalises the central area and accelerates image change.

The strategy sets out a vision for the central area supported by a contextual analysis. It introduces a clear structure for the central area and provides strategic design guidance for built form and the public realm to underpin the vision. It is intended that the document will:

- Inform development control decisions, guiding opportunities as they come forward in the central area.
- Reinforce emerging planning policy for the central area.
- Establish design principles and guidance for built form and the public realm against which all proposals for the central area will be assessed.

The document splits the central area into three districts with the majority of the Minster Quarter falling within the Bishopwearmouth district. Within this area the Crowtree Leisure Centre is identified as being a large scale redevelopment, which has diminished pedestrian permeability by creating a large block with a managed route that is no longer part of the public realm. The document also identifies the area to the north of the Londonderry Public House and western extreme of the retail units on High Street West as an important gateway

space poorly defined by built form and frontage development and which offers a negative first impression of the city centre.

A number of potential links to the City Campus of the University of Sunderland on the inner ring road are also identified as gateway locations where improvements need to be made to address the physical barrier created by this road and the associated severance between the City Campus and city centre. It is intended that the gateway sites should provide a clear point of transition and arrival into the central area. These barriers and the opportunity to address them will form important consideration in the preparation of the Minster Quarter Masterplan.

The document identifies Empire Square (to the front of the former fire station) as being an area that should be created taking its character from the quality of surrounding buildings including the former fire station itself, Sunderland Minster, the Dun Cow public house, and the Empire Theatre.

It states that the square should use high quality materials appropriate for its conservation area designation and be a focus for the evening economy with upmarket restaurants, cafes and bars fronting onto the space. Town Park is also identified as a potential area for improvement with the reconfiguration of the Crowtree Leisure highlighted as an opportunity to create new pedestrian linkages and active frontages to Town Park alongside soft landscaping to further enhance the setting of the Minster.

Overall the Sunderland Central Area Urban Design Strategy July 2008 is a key document, which influences the form of development and the public realm layout and has been given due regard in the preparation of the Minster Quarter Masterplan.

## Local Development Framework

In line with government policy, the UDP is to be replaced in due course by a new up to date Local Development Framework (LDF). Sunderland City Council is in the process of preparing the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies, which form part of the emerging new Local Plan. It is anticipated that the new Local Plan document will be adopted in 2017.

The emerging Core Strategy contains the City's spatial visions and objectives up to 2032, along with city-wide strategic policies that will guide future development and change in the City. In support of the proposed Core Strategy, further documents including an Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) and a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) will be prepared to support the implementation of specific policies and provide additional information or convey further guidance.

### 1.3 The Purpose

It is envisaged that between now and the adoption of the proposed Core Strategy and forthcoming Allocations DPD there will be development pressure on individual sites within the Minster Quarter. In advance of the adoption of the Core Strategy, each development proposal will need to be considered against the provisions of the UDP and all other material considerations.

In this regard it has been considered necessary to prepare a SPD in parallel with the emerging Core Strategy to provide further guidance and key evidence base material to support the emerging Core Strategy. The document is designed to help inform the formulation and assessment of individual proposals for development within the Minster Quarter.

In particular, it is important that the SPD seeks to coordinate potential development proposals to ensure the creation of mixed-use development which enhances the offer of cultural, leisure, retail and residential, whilst creating a pleasant, attractive and safe area through high quality architecture and public realm improvements.

The masterplan is adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) by Sunderland City Council and the principles outlined herein will be used to inform future decisions by the council and other stakeholders undertaking development in the Minister Quarter. An amount of design work has been carried out to date in order to engage with key stakeholders and test the overall viability of the masterplan proposals. It is expected that more detailed planning and feasibility studies will follow as individual projects are implemented.

### 1.4 A Collaborative Process

The masterplan has been developed through a collaborative process and in accordance with consultation requirements. Consultation with statutory consultees, stakeholders, and local residents has been undertaken. Following this consultation, the comments made by individuals and organisations have been considered and where appropriate incorporated into the document.



## 2 The Story of the Minster Quarter

### 2.1 Introduction

The Minster Quarter has constantly adapted to address the needs, aspirations and economic opportunities of the day. The urban form of present day Minster Quarter is composed of distinct layers that bear witness to these periods of the city's past. Understanding some of the events that have influenced the development of the city centre and identifying the characteristics of the Minster Quarter will help inform the masterplan's proposals.

### 2.2 Early settlement

Sunderland Minster, formerly the Church of St Michael and All Angels lies at the heart of historic Bishopwearmouth and has links to the locality's earliest roots. Although its exact origins are uncertain, it is believed the earliest church at Bishopwearmouth was built around 930AD. In view of the large size and monastic connections of the South Wearmouth estate at the centre of which this church lay, it is probable Bishopwearmouth village and its church, have roots in the 7th or early 8th century.

Whilst much of the area's archaeology has been obliterated by phases of re-development over the years, investigation of Bishopwearmouth to date has revealed historic records and numerous finds dating from the medieval period and throughout subsequent centuries. These include fragments of a late Anglo Saxon grave-marker incorporated into the masonry of Sunderland Minster, the only possible evidence of a pre-Norman Conquest Church at Bishopwearmouth.

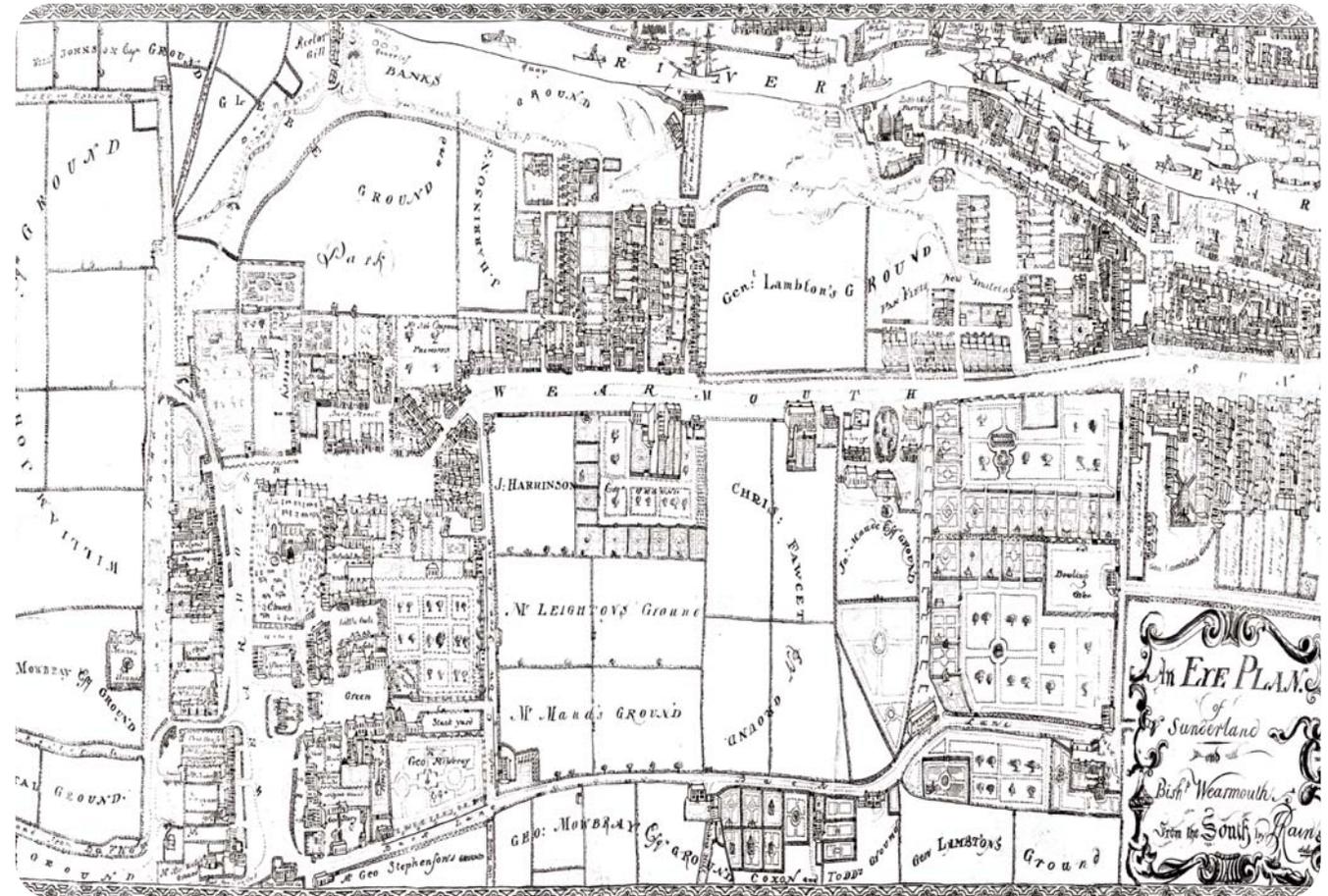


Figure 5: Historic Map - John Rain's Eye Plan 1785-1790

The Minster also includes fragments of medieval stonework of possible 13th century date. There are records of early wells (referred to as Monk's well and the Castle-well) and an ancient cobbled roadway was observed

during the re-building of the Hat and Feature Inn (now Green's Public House) on Low Row. In 1902 during the construction of the Fire Station a skeleton and 16th -17th century coin hoard was discovered.

The core of the Minster Quarter is centred around the original medieval village of Bishopwearmouth where Sunderland Minster and Town Park now exist. The village had Anglo Saxon origins dating from the 10th century when the first stone church was believed to have been built on the site of the current Minster.

During the middle ages Bishopwearmouth grew into an important and thriving farming community and religious centre, dominated by the medieval Church of St Michael and with the Bishopwearmouth Green lying at the heart of the village. Over the years a multitude of small houses terraces, workshops, corn mills, slaughter houses and tanneries were constructed around the Green.



Figure 6: Historic Map - Bishopwearmouth 1737



Figure 7: Illustration - Bishopwearmouth 1800

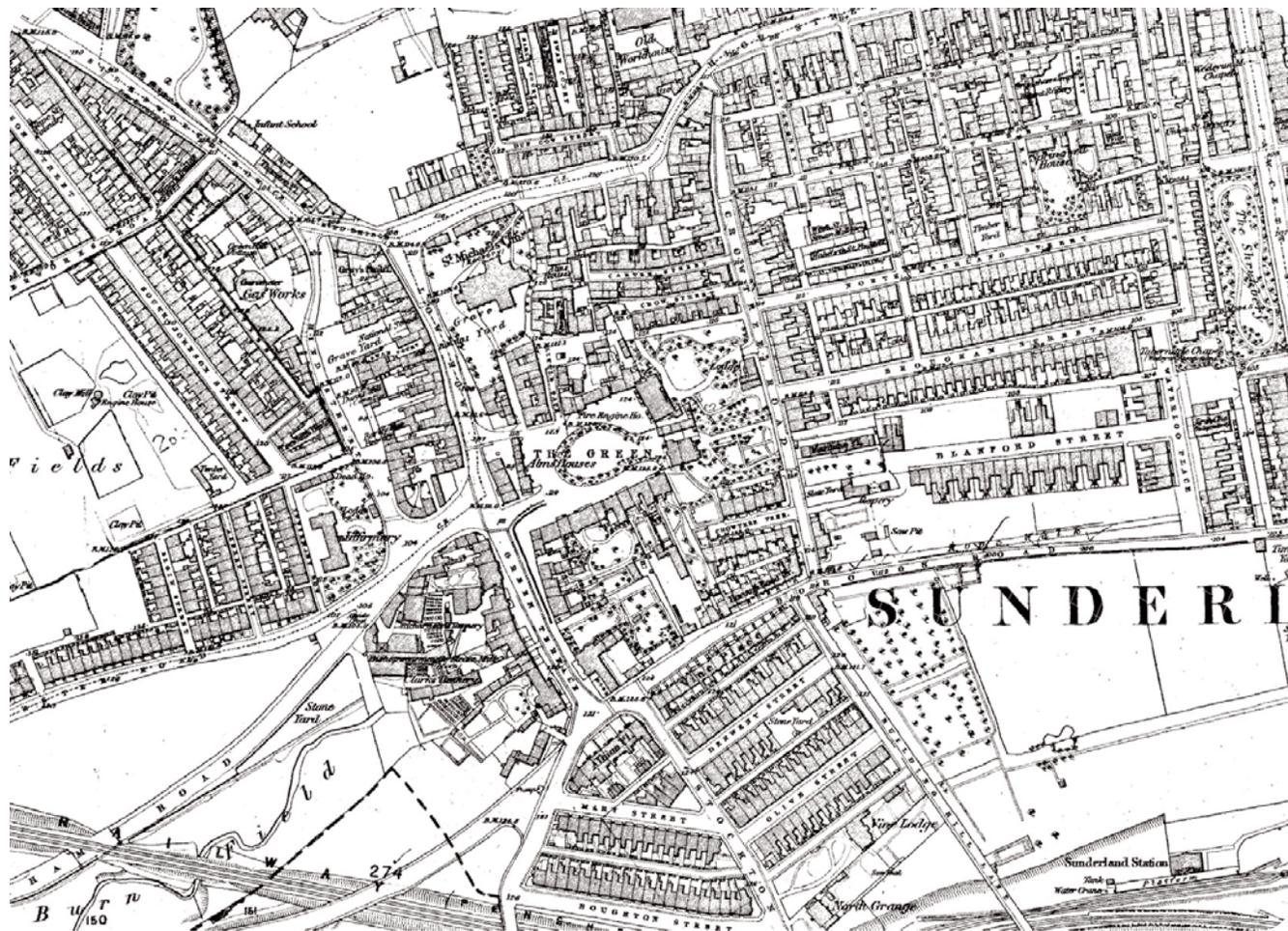


Figure 8: Historic Map - Bishopwearmouth 1856

### 2.3 Planned expansion

The expansion of Bishopwearmouth during the 18th and 19th centuries eventually led to it merging with the Old Town of Sunderland to the east to create the City Centre as we know it today. All development plots within the Minster Quarter were at one time or another over this period occupied by streets with high density building plots

of terraces, cottages, inns, smithies, and a multitude of factories, shops, offices and other commercial and industrial enterprises.

Early to mid-19th century several terraces were built to the south of The Green. In the early years of the 20th century, several key Edwardian developments took place, especially along High Street West with the construction of some very

impressive buildings such as the Empire Theatre and the Dun Cow and Londonderry Public Houses. The image below from around 1930 shows how the tower of the Empire Theatre dominates the north side of High Street West. Several of the buildings were designed by Sunderland's most renowned architects, the Milburn brothers, who were particularly active in the early 20th century and especially notable for their impressive Edwardian Baroque style of architecture.



Figure 9: Photograph – High Street West 1930

Key landmark buildings such as the Empire and St Michael's Church came close to being destroyed during the war. Mowbray Almshouses and their garden railings were actually damaged by bombings in 1943 but have since been restored. Until the 1960's the area still retained many of its industrial enterprises that were part of a mixed use village; for instance a flour mill was located to the rear of Green Terrace and Low Row was the home of a toffee factory and a laundry.

## 2.4 Redevelopment



Figure 10: Photograph – Market Square Shopping Centre 1969

During the 1960's and 1970's the west side of the City Centre was radically transformed. Decayed parts of the old village had been demolished and their sites left vacant. The demolition of the Bowes Almshouses had once again opened up The Green and 'Market Square' Shopping Centre with its three residential tower blocks was completed in 1969.

By the end of 1973, all of the buildings in Little Gate, South Gate, Fenwick Street, Crow Street and the buildings to the north and east of The Green had been removed to make way for car parking. The area to the south of St. Michael's has since been landscaped to form, in conjunction with the remnants of The Green, the Town Park.



Figure 11: Photograph – Crowtree Leisure Centre 1978

The Crowtree Leisure Centre was opened in 1978, comprising a leisure pool, ice rink, sports hall, squash courts and associated facilities, as well as a small parade of retail units fronting Crowtree Road. The Market Square Shopping Centre was enclosed in the late 1980s and rebranded as The Bridges.

The Bridges extension, opened in 2000 and physically integrated part of the Leisure Centre structure into the main shopping centre, requiring the diversion of the pedestrian link between Town Park and Crowtree Road. The Bridges development also included the department store (Debenhams) and multi-storey car park adjoining the Leisure Centre.

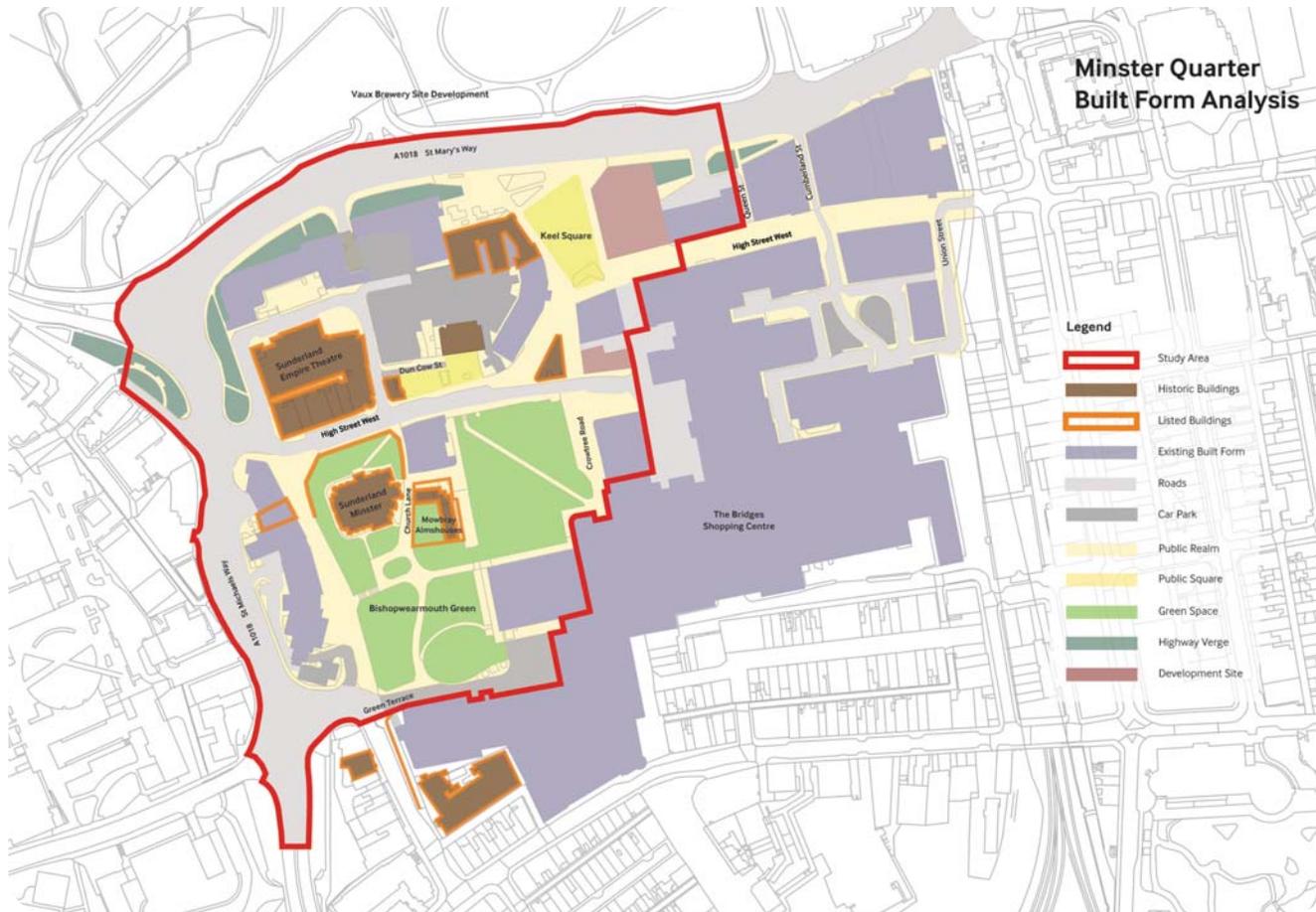


Figure 12: Minster Quarter Built Form Analysis Plan

### Sunderland Minster, Grade II\*

The most prominent and historically significant building in area, Sunderland Minster (or St Michael's Church) stands elevated on Town Park at the heart of the former village of Bishopwearmouth on the site of the original early medieval church.

It is a key landmark in the Minster Quarter and City Centre as a whole. It is a quite remarkable building of a free neo-perpendicular style with a variation of roof heights and shapes. Although largely rebuilt in the 19th century and again in the 1930s it retains the character, features and some fabric from its medieval origins.



Figure 13: Photograph -Sunderland Minster, Grade II\* Listed Building

## 2.5 The Historic Legacy

As highlighted earlier a large proportion of the Minster Quarter is now designated as Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area and is arguably the most architecturally and historically significant part of Sunderland City Centre.

The area contains an abundance of listed buildings and other historic buildings set within the medieval street

pattern, including landmark buildings such as the grade II\* listed Sunderland Minster and Empire Theatre and several prominent grade II listed buildings such as the Londonderry and Dun Cow Public Houses and the Magistrates Courts. These historic buildings are discussed in further detail below:

## Empire Theatre, Grade II\*

Highly impressive Edwardian Theatre built 1906/07 in a free baroque style. The most notable of the buildings in the area designed by W.M. and T.R. Milburn, its huge ashlar drum tower and copper cupola, surmounted by an effigy of Terpsichore, the Greek Muse of Dance, makes an imposing architectural statement and is the most prominent feature on High Street West.



Figure 14: Photograph - Empire Theatre, Grade II\* Listed Building

## Dun Cow Public House, Grade II:

Prominent corner building built in 1901 in an extravagant Baroque style. Designed by Benjamin Simpson who was a prolific and well renowned architect in Newcastle. Its interior features one of the most stunning back bars in Britain with richly decorated Art Nouveau style woodcarving recently delicately refurbished and restored.



Figure 15: Photograph – Dun Cow Public House, Grade II Listed Building

## Londonderry Public House, Grade II

Designed by the Milburns in a simple baroque style, yet very prominent and distinctive due its unusual triangular plan with bell-shaped lead turrets surmounting each corner of the building. Built 1901/02.



Figure 16: Photograph – Londonderry Public House, Grade II Listed Building

## Magistrates Courts, Grade II

Designed by the Milburns and built in 1907. Edwardian Baroque in style and described by Pesvner as “large, ashlar, very eclectic”. Features a square clock tower with a vaulted open stage and ball finial, a very prominent and attractive structure especially when viewed from the recently re-aligned St Mary’s Way and the across the newly formed Keel Square.



Figure 17: Photograph – Magistrates Courts, Grade II, Listed Building

## Mowbray Almshouses, Grade II

Rebuilt in 1863 on the L-shaped footprint of the original almshouses of 1727. Gothic in style and arranged around a rectangular communal lawned garden that adds to the tranquil village feel of this part of the area.



Figure 18: Photograph – Mowbray Almshouses, Grade II, Listed Building

## Greens Public House, Low Row, Grade II

Historically called the “Hat and Feathers”, Greens PH is the only listed building on Low Row. Dating from around 1901 it is yet another Edwardian Baroque building with interesting roof features, including two green tarnished copper domes and a pediment lantern.



Figure 19: Photograph – Greens Public House, Low Row, Grade II, Listed Building

## 2.6 Unlisted buildings

The former Fire Station on Dun Cow Street is the most notable unlisted building in the area, designed by the Milburns and built in 1907 it is an important part of their Edwardian legacy. It is notable for its elegant façade with rusticated arched entrances for the fire engines, its former use symbolised by flaming torches between the windows of the first floor.

There are several other unlisted buildings within Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area that are of heritage value, including Vesta Tilley's Public House, 309 High Street West, the Victorian Buildings (Revolution Bar), Low Row and Establishment Public House, Low Row.



Figure 20: Photograph – Fire Station on Dun Cow Street

## 2.7 Summary

Overall the Minster Quarter’s heart is steeped in history and a townscape of exceptional quality, giving it a strong identity that should be utilised as a catalyst for regeneration activity and provide an urban grain and form that can act as a contextual template for future development planning.

## 3 The Minster Quarter Today

### 3.1 Introduction

As part of the analysis to the study, a review of the Minister Quarter today provides a basis for a comprehensive understanding of the study area. This informs the subsequent vision and proposals for new development, improved functionality and connectivity and the identification of potential and necessary areas of change and investment. Included within the scope of this section are the economic picture and an urban design audit. The analysis pinpoints the main characteristics which the masterplan should build on or resolve.

### 3.2 Economy

Sunderland city centre has suffered both from the new employment developing almost exclusively on out-of-town sites and from depressed economic activity in the city following the rundown of the city's traditional industries. Only 16.6% of the district's employment is located in the city centre compared with 33% in Newcastle, which means less spending power 'on the doorstep'.

Vibrant city centres largely depend upon office workers using shops, restaurants and other facilities. Sunderland has not achieved the critical mass of facilities needed to attract significant numbers of shoppers from outside. Consequently, the centre lacks the scale, quality, vibrancy and variety of uses that would normally be found in a regional city centre. Crucially, it lacks that city 'feel'.

#### Retail Market

A number of national, multiple retailers are represented in the city centre, albeit the offer is dominated by value and mid-market orientated operators.

The Bridges Shopping Centre comprises of over 100 units of retail accommodation and proximately 900 multi storey car parking spaces. A wide variety of comparison goods retailers are represented including Debenhams, Boots, Bank, River Island, HMV, Next and Topshop. High Street West, part of which is located within the Quarter, is positioned immediately to the north of The Bridges Shopping Centre and also provides comparison goods with Marks & Spencer, Primemark, Mothercare and Argos represented on the street.

A significant number of retail units in the both the Bridges and High Street West have constrained floorplates which do not align with modern retailers requirements. There is a clear opportunity to deliver accommodation which aligns with modern retailers requirements.

#### Leisure Market

Sunderland has a limited evening economy and has historically endured a poor retention rate from within its catchment area to neighbouring Newcastle. An element of that retention rate has increased in the last decade due to an increase in vertical drinking establishments (non food bars), the night club offer, and the influx of students to the city.

The restaurant offer is poor for a city of its size and whilst attempts have been made have been made to address that gap, vacant units around the Quarter suggest that demand is limited.

Without the benefit of a leisure anchor additional to the Empire Theatre and delivery of new employment accommodation at the former Vaux Brewery/Farringdon Row sites to generate footfall at lunchtime and in the early evening, it will be difficult to generate demand from complementary leisure operators (A3 restaurants and cafes) at the Minster Quarter.

#### Residential Market

The scarcity of cafés and restaurants further restricts the development of the city centre as an evening venue, and makes it a less attractive place to live. Better housing also will help to enhance the centre as a whole and bring in new spending power. Sunderland is fairly well served by areas such as Ashbrooke, Hendon, Milfield for larger type family housing which is within walking distance to the city centre meaning there is sufficient supply to meet the demand.

Generally demand for city centre accommodation is driven by young professionals working in the city centre who typically look for 'starter accommodation' 1-2 bed apartment/flats. Demand for this type of property is limited due to the current lack of employment within the city centre which is evident from several of the recent schemes including Echo 24 and River Quarter where apartments are predominantly held for investment and let as student accommodation.

Demand is likely to increase as city centre employment space is occupied, however in the short term (5 years) demand is likely to be satisfied from either existing stock or new proposed development in the pipeline such as residential on Vaux which offers waterfront views.

In the medium to longer term (10-15 years) with the cyclical nature of residential property and revival of the city centre and the establishment of new CBD, demand for city centre residential accommodation is likely to increase making new residential development schemes viable.

### 3.3 Recent and Current Development Proposals

The plan opposite sets out the major planning approvals and development opportunities within and adjacent to the Minster Quarter.

#### Sunderland Strategic transport Corridor

The Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor (SSTC) will link the International Advanced Manufacturing Park on the A19 with the city centre and Port of Sunderland. The SSTC will be developed in five phases. Phase one of the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor saw the realignment of St Mary's Way and Livingstone Road, a core component of Sunderland's Urban Design Strategy.

The new, tree-lined boulevard provides a key route for traffic coming in and out of the city centre, releasing land to its southern side, creating retail and leisure development opportunities that will add to the current retail offer and further enhance the newly formed Keel Square.

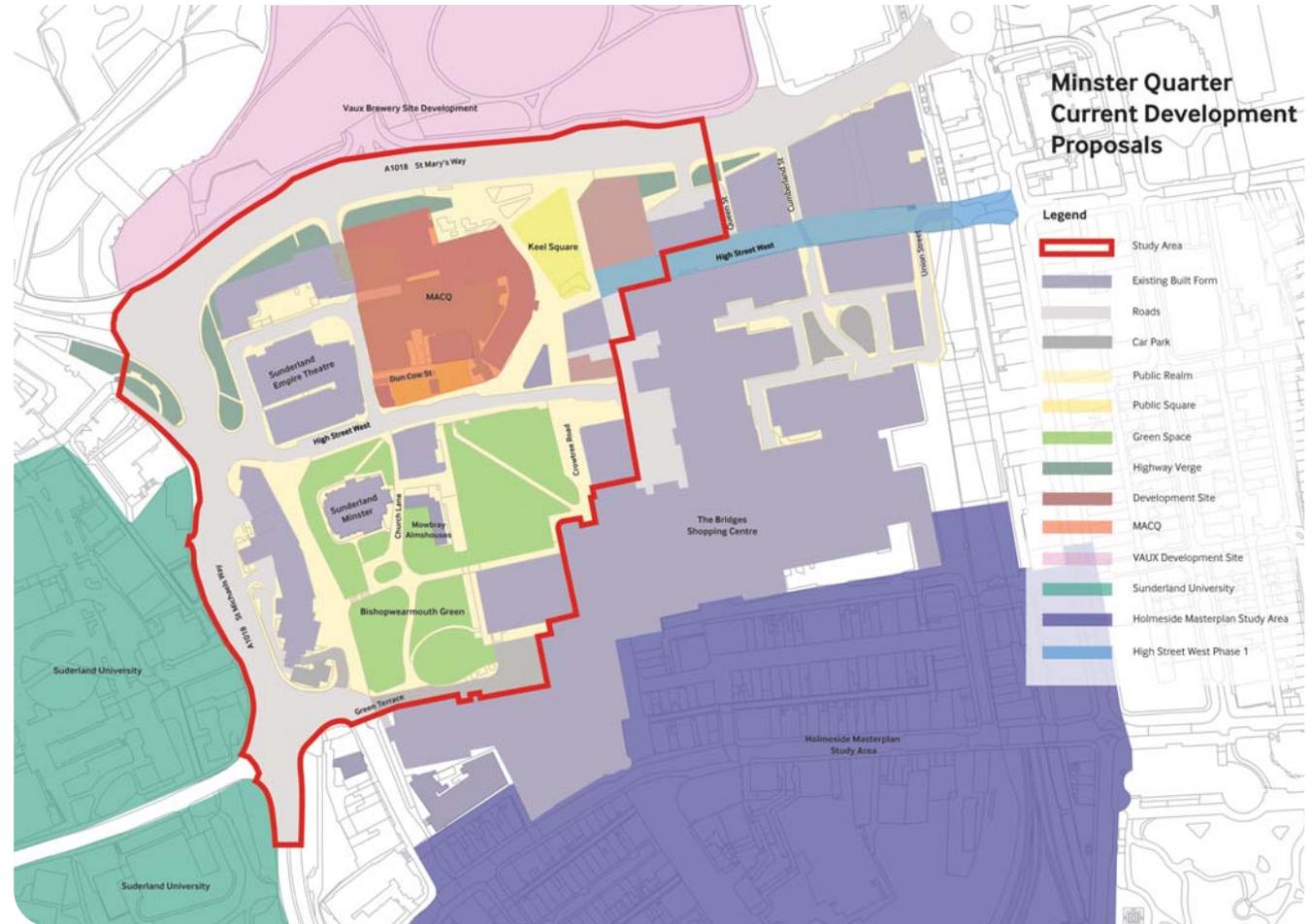


Figure 21: Minster Quarter Recent and Current Development Proposals Plan



Figure 22: Photograph –Public Art, Propellers of the City, Keel Square

## Keel Square

Keel Square is a key gateway into the Minster Quarter and forms a new major public space of the highest quality, joining together the existing city centre retail core and the Vaux site.

The square has been designed around the concept of the “Keel Line”; a physical and metaphorical link for growth and cultural opportunities in Sunderland. The scheme changes how this part of the Quarter looks and feels, providing an improved gateway and a new public square in the heart of the city centre.



Figure 23: Visualisation - Former Fire Station

## Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter

The Music, Arts and Cultural Quarter (MACQ) project aims to restore an important section of the city at the heart of the Minster Quarter. The project will bring the former Fire Station back into use, transforming the redundant building into an active and commercially viable heritage asset, including theatre and studio spaces, a bar/restaurant and café area.

Over time it is hoped additional leisure, entertainment, arts and cultural uses will be brought to Gilbridge House and the Magistrates Court (should it become vacant) as well as the development of a new auditorium building and performance space.



Figure 24: Illustration – Vaux Masterplan

## Vaux

The prime development site adjacent to the Minster Quarter is earmarked for the creation of a new central business district in the heart of Sunderland. A mixed use site on five and a half hectares with outline planning approval for a 60,000 sq ft anchor office building, residential, car parking, a hotel, leisure and retail elements.

The site will also see the creation of high quality public open spaces with path and cycle routes along the river bank and throughout the site. The site also includes the continuation of the Keel Line - linking the river bank to the Quarter via Keel Square.



Figure 25: Visualisation – High Street West Public Realm Improvements

## High Street West

Running through the Quarter, the current investment in High Street West is part of the Councils Investment Corridor Programme and is aimed at supporting existing businesses, as well as new investment to transform the streetscape of this important shopping thoroughfare with new paving, seating and lighting, creating a quality pedestrian environment, linking the Quarter with other parts of the city to the East and West.



Figure 26: Photograph – University of Sunderland

## University of Sunderland’s City Campus

The University of Sunderland’s City Campus is located adjacent to the Minster Quarter. Over £50m of public and private sector investment has been spent in creating a high quality campus environment to accommodate the academic areas of Science, Education and the Arts. Construction work is in progress for the new £10m Centre for Enterprise and Innovation.

Scheduled to open in early 2017 the centre will provide accommodation and support for businesses, acting as the gateway for engagement with the University. The centre will support the creation of 120 innovative growth businesses and over 400 jobs.

The centre will also be the home of the Sunderland FabLab, the first in the North East of England aimed at supporting enterprise and innovation activity and engaging young people in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) based subjects.



Figure 27: Visualisation - Sunderland College

## Holmeside and Parklane

To the south of the Minster Quarter lies the Holmeside and Parklane area, which is home to the new Sunderland College City Centre Campus, Park Lane Transport Interchange and Sunderland Central Railway Station, both of which provide a key gateway into the city centre. Holmeside remains a regeneration priority for the city with a masterplan currently in preparation and proposals for a new modern day Central Railway Station being developed.

### 3.4 Urban Design

#### Introduction

The historic appraisal in the Section 2 shows a multi-layered and complex urban domain that has evolved from key historic interventions. The urban design analysis builds upon this understanding and provides a further layer to the way urban spaces and the activities that take place in them define the Minster Quarter. The analysis is structured around three key topics:

- Arriving in the Minster Quarter- exploring the experience of approaching and arriving in the area by foot, cycle, public transport and car.
- Moving around the Minster Quarter - considering the experience of moving around the different streets and spaces.
- Being in the Minster Quarter - the quality of the areas attractions, mix of uses and places and spaces.

Together, each of these elements contributes towards generating the Minster Quarters sense of place.

#### Arriving in the Minster Quarter

In the Minster Quarter there have been significant changes to the road network over the past 25 years. The creation of St Michael’s Way inner ring road in the 1990s allowed the removal of through traffic from High Street West and Low Row and means the Quarter is well served by key routes from the north, east, west and south.

Car parking in the area is provided at the Bridges (Debenhams) multi-storey car park, the Bridges Roof Top and St Mary’s multi-storey car park. There are also private surface car parks to the rear of the Empire Theatre and former fire station.

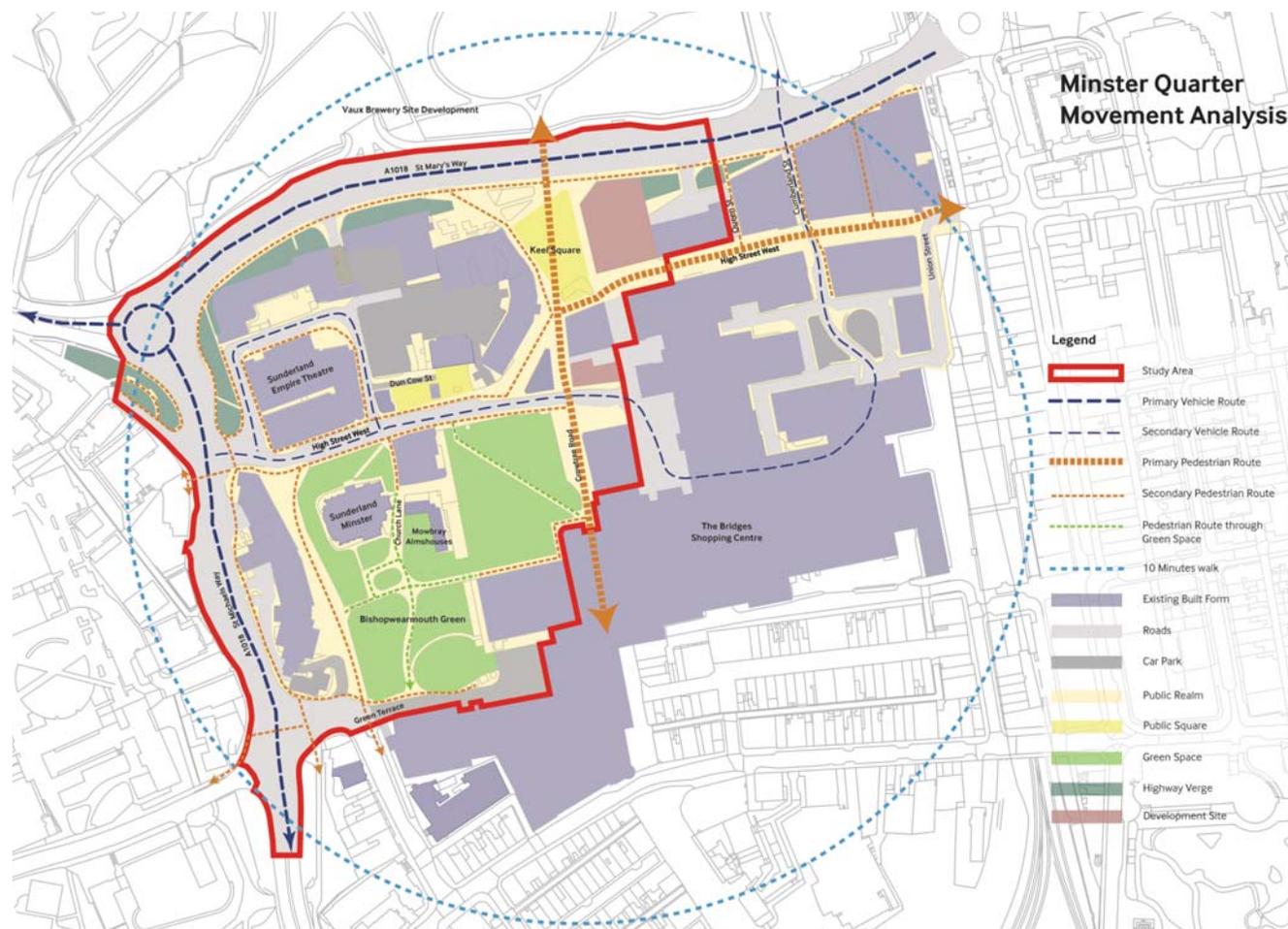


Figure 28: Minster Quarter Movement Analysis Plan

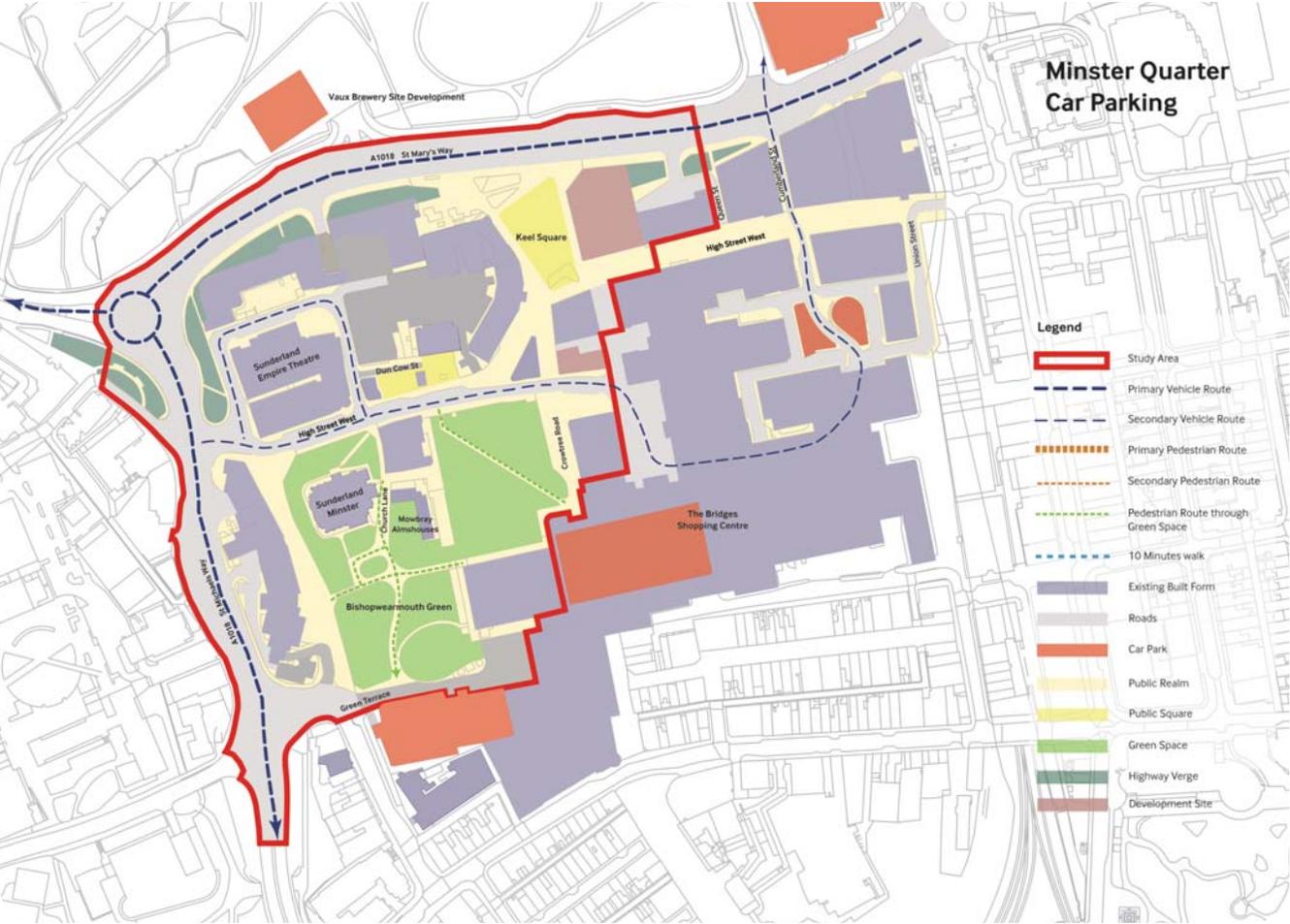


Figure 29: Minster Quarter Car Park Analysis Plan



Figure 30: Photograph –Bridges Car Parking



Figure 31: Photograph – Car Parking Issues at Former Fire Station Public Square

Many routes to the west of the Quarter do little to communicate anything positive about the study area as a place, with few buildings of quality fronting and overlooking the routes, heavily engineered junctions with poor pedestrian provision, and areas of left-over space with no positive function. This is particularly true of St Michael's Way at the junctions of High Street West and Chester Road. In these locations St Michael's Way is a major barrier to pedestrian movement between the Sunderland University campus and the Quarter to the east. To the north of the study area, the Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor which has seen the realignment of St Mary's Way and the creation of Keel Square have vastly improved arriving into the study area both by foot and car.



Figure 34: Photograph – Keel Square a new major public space



Figure 36: Photograph – Public Art, the 'Keel Line' at Keel Square



Figure 32: Photograph – Heavily Engineered junctions of St Michael's Way and High Street West Junction



Figure 35: Photograph – High quality street furniture at Keel Square



Figure 37: Photograph – Keel Square has become a key gateway into the Minster Quarter



Figure 33: Photograph – Poor Pedestrian provision at St Michael's Way and Chester Road Junction

In terms of cycling, the National Cycle Network route 7 runs through the study area from the St Michael's Way/Green Terrace junction in the southwest, along Low Row and High Street West towards the Wearmouth Bridge to the northeast. At present cycling facilities are limited, however options are being developed via the Council's City Centre Cycle Permeability Scheme.

In terms of public transport access the picture is poor. The St Mary's Boulevard scheme has resulted in the relocation of bus routes and infrastructure with new stops created adjacent to the Magistrates Court and Keel Square. However, some services were re-routed away from the area during construction works and have not been reinstated meaning that the area is relatively poorly served by bus services.

Park Lane transport interchange provides safe, attractive modern facilities but remains isolated due to the severance created by the Bridges Shopping Centre. Furthermore as mentioned above Sunderland Central Railway Station which remains a regeneration priority as the current station is dated, dark and cramped offering poor passenger facilities.



Figure 39: Photograph –Park Lane Interchange

On the basis of this analysis it will be critical for the Minster Quarter Masterplan to address the following issues:

- Improves pedestrian and vehicle accessibility to the Quarter.
- Positive discrimination in favour of walking and cycling, reducing the conflict between pedestrian and vehicles.
- Ensure that approach routes leading into the Quarter are of a consistent quality in terms of public realm and adjoining built development.
- Provide accessible, convenient parking facilities.
- Encourage bus operators to serve the area again and improve public transport accessibility.



Figure 38: Photograph – Central Station

## Moving around the Minster Quarter

The diagram opposite highlights how the compactness and scale of the Quarter make it very well suited to encourage its use by pedestrians. The length of Minster Quarter can be easily covered within 10 minutes, in a walk animated by the many outstanding individual buildings, a changing townscape and urban vistas.

The diagram also illustrates the Quarter’s level of connectivity, highlighting where blockages at key gateways and nodes are isolating destinations. A lack of legible routes detaches the Quarter from the riverside to the North and the Sunderland University to the West.

Whilst Keel Square is a huge step in the right direction, areas of visual clutter of uncoordinated street furniture, paving, signposts, lighting columns, bus shelters, seating planters and litter bins still exists elsewhere in the Quarter, detracting from the overall environmental quality.



Figure 40: Photograph – Visual Clutter at St Michaels Way and High Street West Junction

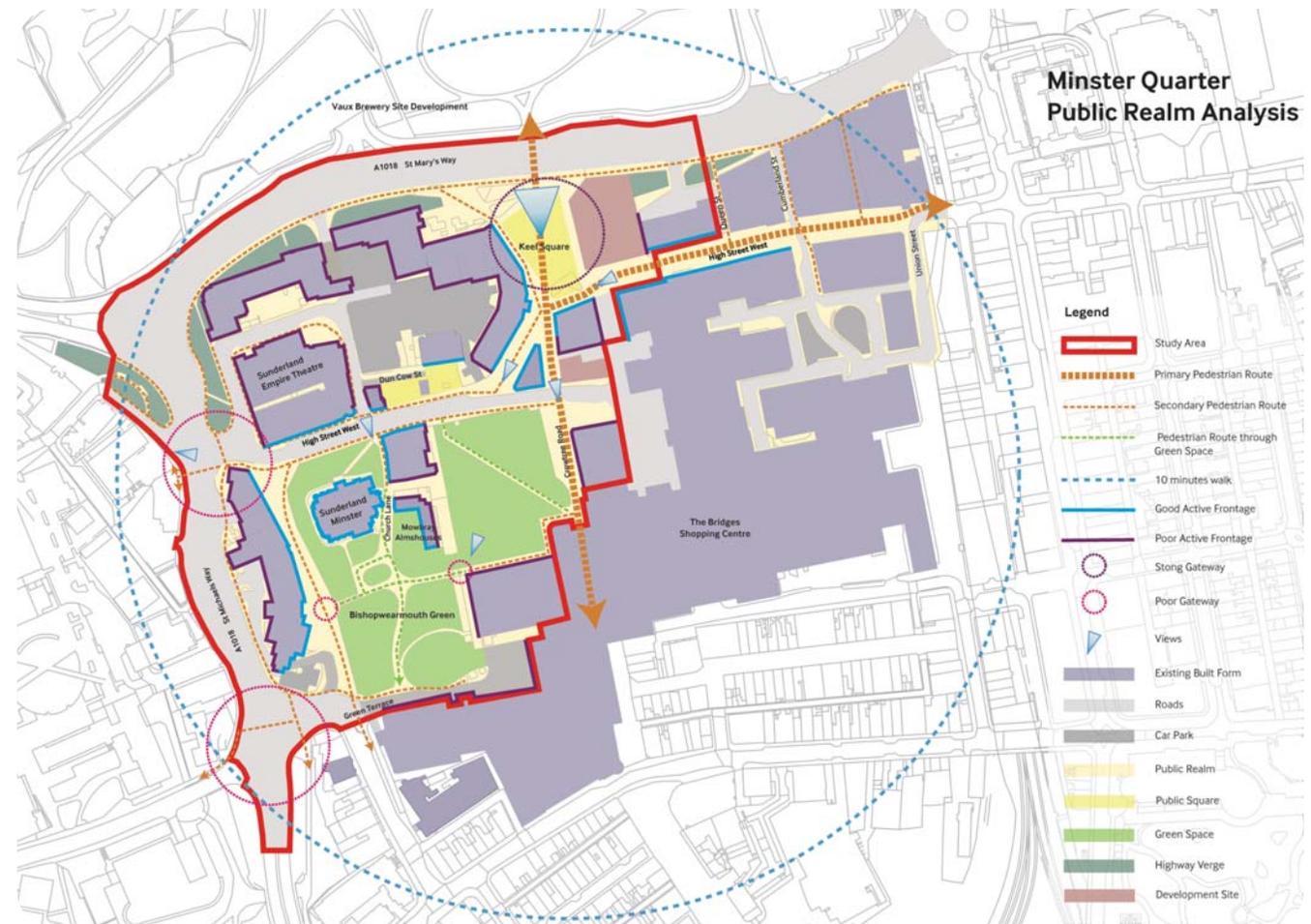


Figure 41: Minster Quarter Public Realm Analysis Plan



Figure 42: Photograph –Link of Town Park via Church Lane



Figure 44: Photograph –Lack of natural surveillance at entrance steps into Town Park



Figure 46: Photograph – Crowtree Leisure Centre presents inactive frontage onto Town Park

Town Park at the heart of the Quarter provides a setting for Sunderland Minster. Paths provide a route between the University and the Quarter, however the remainder of the Crowtree Leisure Centre and the Bridges multi-storey car park present unattractive and inactive frontages which result in a lack of natural surveillance, raising public safety and security issues.



Figure 45: Photograph – Bridges multi-storey car park present unattractive edge to Town Park



Figure 43: Photograph – Town Park provides a natural setting for the Minster

In relation to vehicle movements with the Quarter, accessibility to the rear of the Empire Theatre is currently an issue with narrow carriageways and poor junction visibility hindering larger vehicles navigating this area. Attracting 'West End' productions to the Empire brings with it the need to accommodate lorries bringing equipment and coach drop off points.

Similarly, the proposed MACQ development will require appropriate provision for delivery of equipment and customer drop off points. On the basis of this analysis it will be critical for the Minster Quarter Masterplan to:

- Improve the Quarter's permeability and legibility, making it easy for people to find their way around, creating additional north/south and east/west routes, adding to the hierarchy of routes and spaces.
- Allow for street frontage and activation onto pedestrian routes which will improve safety and allow for positive social interaction.
- Improve signposting and waymarking within the Quarter making it easier for people to find their way

around and to make connections.

- Improve traffic movement in and around the Empire Theatre, including Paley Street, Eden Street West and Garden Place.

## Being in the Minster Quarter

The experience of being in the Quarter is made up of interrelated elements, including the mix of uses and the quality of the buildings and the public realm that provide the physical setting and backdrop to activities. Town Park, the Empire Theatre and Sunderland Minster are important historic and cultural attractions that form an important focus for the Quarter. The Empire is the largest theatre between Manchester and Edinburgh and as such has both city and regional appeal. The Sunderland Minster provides a number of roles within the Quarter including spiritual, cultural and community uses.

As highlighted in Section 2 parts of the Quarter have retained the historic pattern of streets and alleyways of the early settlement and key historic buildings contribute to the townscape quality of the area. However, later development associated with the city's ring road, the Crowtree Leisure Centre, the Bridges Shopping Centre and areas of surface car parking around the theatre and the old fire station have eroded the character of the area.



Figure 47: Photograph – Areas of surface car parking around the Theatre



Figure 48: Photograph – Historic pattern of streets and key historic buildings



Figure 49: Photograph – Former Fire Station

The location of the Empire Theatre gives the quarter a predominant leisure use. However, as highlighted in the Policy Background, whilst the theatre attracts high numbers of people into the city centre there is an issue that there is a shortage of complementary facilities to attract patrons into the area both before and after performances.

Most of the major retailers are located in the Bridges Shopping Centre and as a consequence, shopping is now mostly concentrated within this internal private domain, which has had a negative impact on traditional open air streets, most notably High Street West. Employment wise, like the rest of the city centre, the area has suffered both from new employment developing almost exclusively on out-of-town sites and from depressed economic activity in the city following the rundown of the city's traditional industries.

Residential wise, it is limited to the properties at the Almshouses within Town Park. In summary many of the buildings and spaces are under-utilised and the area as a whole lacks vitality and footfall.

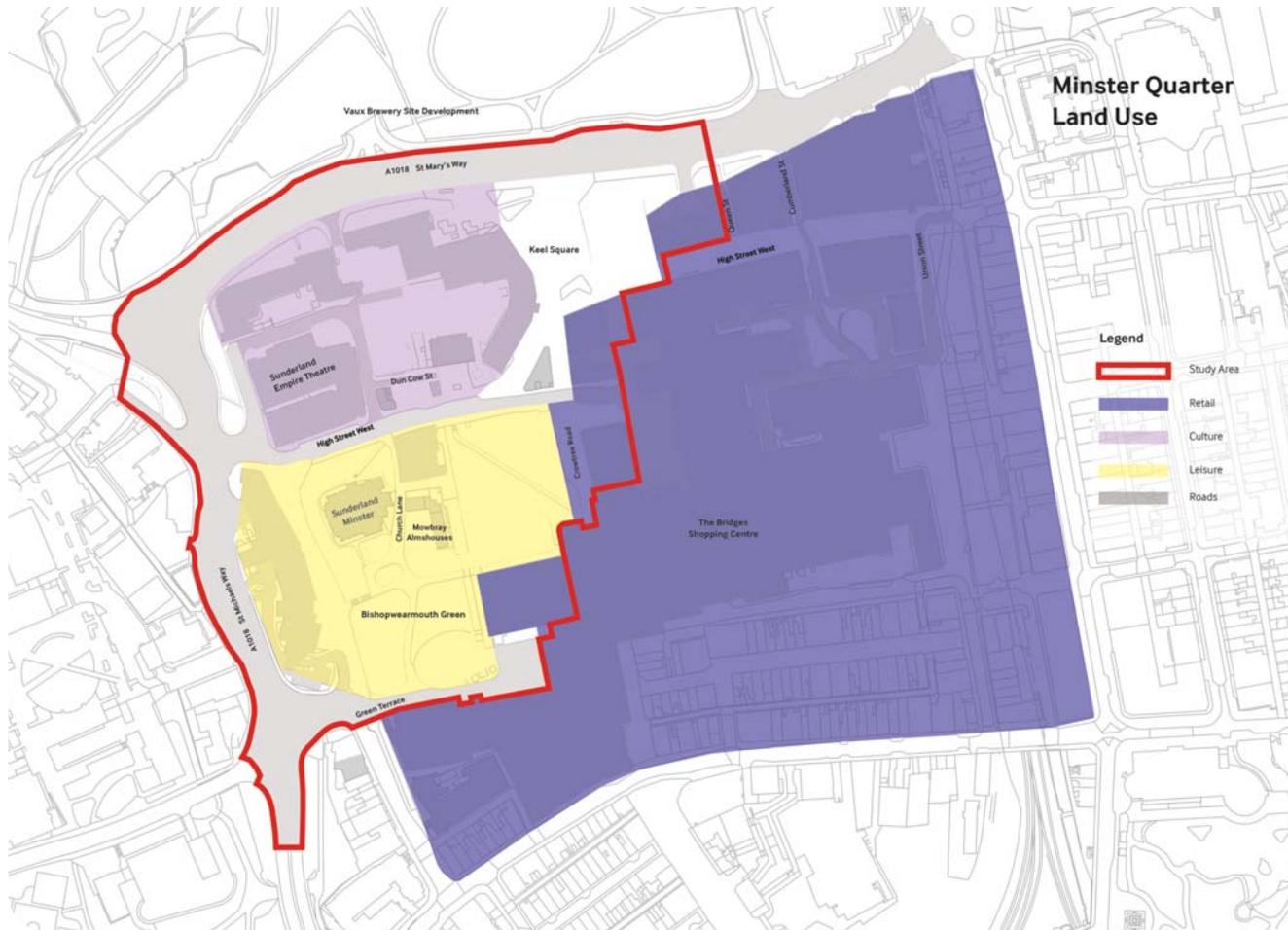


Figure 50: Minster Quarter Car Land Use Plan

### 3.5 Summary

The area's historic buildings, streets, spaces and landscape all present, along with vacant sites and plots, a number of opportunities to make key and essential contributions to the regeneration of the Minster Quarter.

The area's 19th and early 20th century architecture is among the best in the City Centre and, when taken together in such a relatively small area along recent improvements to Keel Square and High Street West, presents an urban form and townscape quality and character. This quality and history provides the area with a strong sense of place and identity and can make it an attractive place to do business and to stay and visit.

It will be important for the masterplan to deal with the following issues:

- Structure the Quarter around identifiable places each offering a complementary but distinct mix of uses catering for a wide range of age groups and interests.
- Introduce new opportunities for central area living.
- Make sure that all new development is of a high architectural standard and contributes to the character and identity of the Quarter.
- Ensure routes are framed with the views and vistas of key buildings (Minster, Empire and the Dun Cow) creating a favourable image of the city.

### 3.6 SWOT

#### Strengths

- Quarter is well served by key road routes from the north, east, west and south.
- Sunderland Strategic Transport Corridor which has seen the realignment of St Mary's Way and the creation of Keel Square have vastly improved arriving into the study area both by foot and car.
- Town Park, the Empire Theatre and Sunderland Minster are important historic and cultural attractions that form an important focus for the Quarter.

#### Weaknesses

- Routes to the west of the Quarter do little to communicate anything positive about the study area as a place, with few buildings of quality fronting and overlooking the routes.
- Heavily engineered junctions with poor pedestrian provision, and areas of left-over space with no positive function.
- Michael's Way is a major barrier to pedestrian movement between the Sunderland University campus and the Quarter to the east.
- Poorly served by bus services, isolated from Park Lane interchange and the Central Rail Station is dated with poor facilities.
- Later development associated with the city's ring road, the Crowtree Leisure Centre, the Bridges Shopping Centre and areas of surface car parking around the theatre and the old fire station have eroded the character of the area.

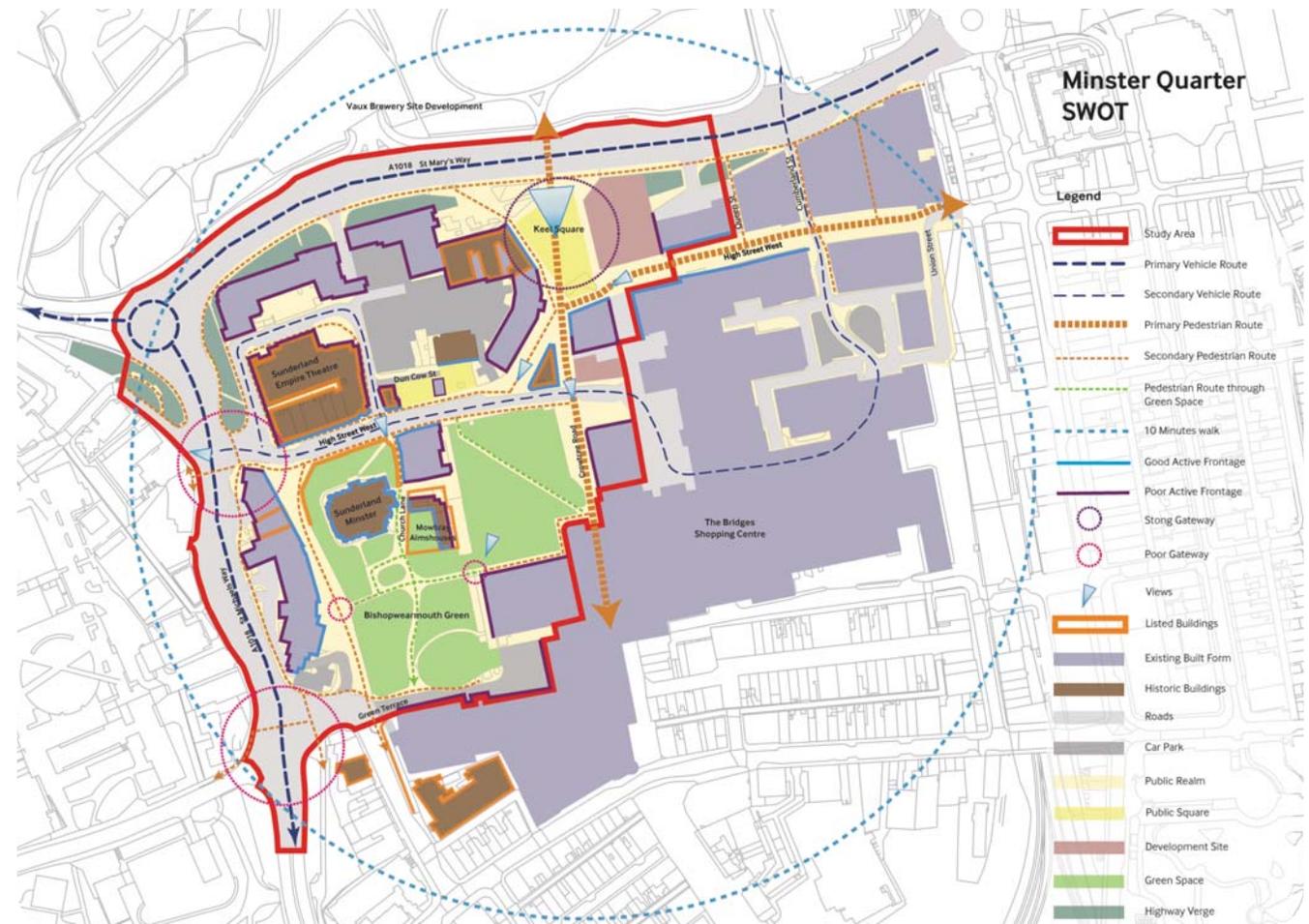


Figure 51: Minster Quarter SWOT Analysis Plan

- A lack of legible routes detaches the Quarter from the riverside to the North and the Sunderland University to the West.
- Areas of visual clutter of uncoordinated street furniture, paving, signposts, lighting columns, bus shelters, seating, planters and litter bins.
- Shortage of complementary leisure facilities.
- Buildings and spaces are under-utilised and the area as a whole lacks vitality and footfall.
- Lack of a coherent townscape, for example to the north end of Crowtree Rd and the blank gables on High Street West.

- Cycling facilities are limited.

## Opportunities

- Ensure that approach routes leading into the Quarter are of a consistent quality in terms of public realm and adjoining built development.
- Provide accessible, convenient parking facilities.
- Improves pedestrian and vehicle accessibility to the Quarter.
- Encourage bus operators to serve the area again and improve public transport accessibility.
- Improve the Quarter's permeability and legibility.
- Allow for street frontage and activation onto pedestrian routes.
- Improve traffic movement in and around the Empire Theatre.
- Structure the Quarter around identifiable places each offering a complementary but distinct mix of uses catering for a wide range of age groups and interests.
- Introduce new opportunities for central area living.
- Ensure routes are framed with the views and vistas of key buildings (Minster, Empire and the Dun Cow) creating a favourable image of the city.
- Several development plots.

## Threats

- Crowtree Leisure Centre and the Bridges multi-storey car park present unattractive and inactive frontages which result in a lack of natural surveillance, raising public safety and security issues.
- Accessibility to the rear of the Empire Theatre is currently an issue with narrow carriageways and poor junction visibility hindering larger vehicles navigating this area

# 4 The Vision and Objectives for Minster Quarter

## 4.1 Introduction

The redevelopment of the Minster Quarter is a crucial part of the City Council's vision for a 'step change' in the quality of the urban environment of Sunderland city centre. In order for Sunderland to fulfill this 'step change' the following vision and objectives have been established for the Minster Quarter.

## 4.2 Vision

The vision is to create a Cultural Quarter and a key gateway into the city centre of Sunderland that restores the area's historic importance and to create a place that is valued by the whole community. Architectural and urban design excellence will underpin a first class environment with a distinctive character and identity that draws on its rich heritage. Great streets, beautiful squares and parks will provide the setting for a lively and dynamic mix of uses which are safe and accessible to all.



Figure 52: Illustration - Crowtree Public Realm



Figure 53: Illustration - Former Fire Station Public Square



Figure 54: Illustration - Keel Square Gateway Improvements

## 4.3 Objectives

The six masterplan objectives provide a framework for addressing the individual challenges facing the Quarter and delivering the vision. The objectives are the reference points for benchmarking the success of the Minster Quarter masterplan as implementation proceeds. The projects and proposals that form the masterplan should meet and fulfil these cross-cutting objectives:

- Recognise the historic and cultural role of the area by introducing opportunities for a mix of new uses and ensuring that new development respects the townscape qualities of the area.
- Create a critical mass of leisure uses and reinforcing retail development.
- Introduce new opportunities for central area living.
- Deliver a development that is highly accessible by sustainable modes of transport including walking, cycling and public transport to reduce dependency on the private car.
- Consider opportunities to improving north-south and east-west movement and creating an outward looking and sympathetic contextual built form.
- Redevelop areas of surface car parking to stitch back together the built form and character of the area.

## 4.4 Principles & Parameters

To ensure that the Minster Quarter meets its potential and realises the Council’s aspirations it is necessary to establish a set of principles and parameters to deliver the visions and objectives for the Quarter. The principles and parameters should be considered and fully reflected through the formulation of detailed proposals for the development of the area. The principles and parameters are structured around the following:

- Inclusive Design
- Built Form
- Public Realm
- Materials and Detailing
- Movement
- Mix of Uses
- Sustainability

They set out key design consideration that developers must address. The guidance will be used to assess proposals identified and described in section 5.

## 4.5 Inclusive Design

A truly inclusive society demands an environment in which a diverse population can exist harmoniously and where everyone, regardless of disability, age or gender can participate equally and independently, with dignity and choice. All new development in the Quarter must meet the highest standards of accessibility and inclusion. The key principles of inclusive design, based on the recommendations set out by CABE (the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment) in its report Inclusion by Design: Equality, Diversity and the Built Environment, are:

- Incorporating inclusive design principles from the outset. They are not an optional extra to be applied at the end of the design process if the budget allows. The latter approach can be guaranteed to result in ad hoc, often ineffectual and unsightly adaptations to overcome obstacles that should have been foreseen and designed out.
- Ensuring that inclusive design is applied consistently, and with continuity, throughout the design process from inception through to completion and management.
- Establishing and maintaining a constructive dialogue with community groups from the earliest stages of the project.
- Ensuring that designers of the built environment – including architects, town planners, landscape architects, highways engineers, and maintenance teams – understand and apply the principles of inclusive design.
- Thinking about everyone who will use the space or building that is being designed, and not just the immediate obligations placed on a professional designer by his/her client.

### Age Friendly City

Reinforcing the need for inclusive design is the fact that Sunderland became a World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly City in October 2015. This provides the Council with the opportunity to explore a range of ways of managing the demands presented by the city’s ageing population. Like many cities Sunderland is expecting its population to become increasingly aged, with residents aged over 60 projected to increase from 24% in 2012 to 31.2% in 2037.

The focus of age friendly is on the 50+ population, though it’s clear that some activity that the Council and partners undertake for this group will also benefit a broader age group, making this activity All Age Friendly. Being an Age Friendly City commits the Council and partners to progressing a range of WHO themes that will improve the City’s physical and social environments which are key determinants of whether people can remain healthy, independent and autonomous long into their old age.

The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to “age in place”. If older people live in an environment that makes it easy and enjoyable for them to go outdoors, they are more likely to be physically active and satisfied with life and twice as likely to achieve the recommended levels of healthy walking.

Lesser-quality environments are often considered by older people to pose an increased risk of falls, especially by those with vision, mobility or other impairments. They can heighten fears about crime, nuisance and traffic and make going outdoors less enticing; reinforcing feelings of loneliness or entrenching the challenges of socio-economic deprivation.

Measures to make streets less car-centric improve older people’s perception of supportiveness and safety but, neighbourhood-wide, it is good paths, accessible open space, safe crossings and plentiful seats, toilets and greenery that really make the difference. Design and materials need careful specification, with consideration given to UK weather patterns.

## 4.6 Built Form

As highlighted in earlier sections, over time the Minster Quarter has undergone significant change. There is now considerable scope for new buildings to provide high quality additions to the existing built form, adding greatly to its attractiveness, character and distinctiveness. This will help to stitch together areas where the urban form has become fragmented and strengthen the qualities of more distinctive historic built form.

It will be vital for new development proposals to be considered within the context of the city's historic environment, distinctive townscape and streetscape, including buildings, structures and landscape features, ensuring that it is preserved or enhanced.

New development should reinforce the distinctive scale, form, plot size, block structure and urban grain of the surrounding part of the Quarter ensuring that the integrity and setting of key historic buildings and areas of townscape value are respected.

Built form within the Quarter is generally within a range of 3 and 5 storeys in height, new development proposals must reinforce this pattern, adding to the character, identity and legibility of the Quarter as a whole. The height of development proposals within the Quarter will be assessed having regard to the following criteria which are identified, where appropriate, on the plan:

- Buildings within the Quarter will be acceptable within the range of 3 to 5 storeys in height having regard to the context of the area.
- Landmark buildings up to 6 storeys in height will be considered on key approaches, at city gateway sites to signal points of arrival and adjoining public squares and spaces.

The landmark buildings will help signal important locations in the Quarter, such as the corners of junctions between main streets, or at key public spaces or gateways, and will emphasise the role or status that a particular building has within the Quarter. A landmark building is not necessarily a taller buildings and can include those of special architectural quality and character with distinctive and memorable features or house a special or unique use.

The pattern of different building heights and the location of landmarks will play a significant role in helping people to understand the Quarter, making it easier to locate important places, making the study area legible. The ground floor of the buildings will have an important role to play in ensuring the area becomes active and vibrant. Active ground floor uses such as restaurants, cafés, bars and small retail units will be focused around the Quarter's key areas of public realm.

## 4.7 Public Realm

The public realm comprises of the streets, parks and squares of the Minster Quarter. These in turn are defined and contained by buildings and other elements and structures. The relationship between buildings and the public realm should ensure that streets and spaces are busy, overlooked by the public fronts of buildings, and perceived to be safe throughout the day and into the evening. The design, quality and appearance of the public realm in the Minster Quarter will play a large part in the perception of the place.

The Quarter must have a distinctive, people centred environment focused on high quality streets and public spaces. This will create a permeable and well-connected movement structure using existing routes and additional linkages across and through the proposed development areas.

The public realm is one the principal means of providing a cohesive identity across the Quarter and will play a key role in:

- Improving the green infrastructure of the city, providing space green space and links whilst solving urban and climatic challenges by building with nature.
- Linking the various development sites both visually and physically.
- Unifying the Quarter through a coordinated design approach that utilises high quality materials and street furniture.
- Creating an environment that is busy, overlooked and safe through the relationship with adjoining buildings.
- Improving opportunities for sustainable forms of transport particularly walking and cycling through enhancements to the connectivity and legibility of the area and identifying new and enhanced linkages across and around key development opportunity sites.

The character and identity of Quarter is strongly rooted in its history. This legacy must be celebrated through the design of the public realm, both the renewal and continued use of existing streets and spaces and in the creation of new squares and public places.

## 4.8 Materials and Detailing

A palette of high quality materials will help to firmly establish the character and identity of Quarter, both the public realm and the built form. High quality materials that emphasise this particular location should be used.

This not only helps build upon the existing character of Bishopwearmouth, but also introduces colour and texture enriching the perception and appreciation of its sense of place.

Built form details, construction materials, decorative detailing such as towers and rotundas at prominent corners, balconies and railings, public art, and even basic features such as windows and shop fronts, entrances and doorways all help re-enforce the image of place.

They assist in making a place legible, familiar and distinctive. As a result particular attention must be paid to the design and detailing of these important aspects of the building. The public realm must be of robust and timeless with a co-ordinated but limited palette of durable surface materials will provide a strong setting for development.

Select, high quality materials will help to give image and identity to the Quarter, unifying overall appearance and character and distinguishing the Quarter from other locations. Although the initial outlay for higher quality street furniture and materials can be relatively high the longer term on-going maintenance savings can be even greater thereby minimising lifetime costs.

## 4.9 Movement

Movement through and around the Quarter must ensure that the relationship between vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and cyclists maximises accessibility for all users. As highlighted in the public realm section above, streets and walks must be designed to ensure that people can easily and conveniently get to where they need to be, so increasing the 'walkability' and maximising sustainable forms of transport, without being obliged to detour in order to cross busy, traffic dominated roads.

A basic principle in the design and layout of all routes, crossings and public spaces should be following the lines that pedestrians want to take, not forcing alternatives. This will help to join together different parts of the Quarter, increasing permeability, and overcoming the barriers created by busy roads, such as St Michaels Way. Enhanced

connectivity, particularly for pedestrians and cyclists, is a key design and development principle. Development layouts should establish a formal, permeable and legible pattern of movement that connects effectively with the existing street network and provides new linkages to them.

The location, design and layout of car parking must ensure that it is both safe and useable, yet does not become a dominant or intrusive element within the Quarter . Generally new parking should be provided in high quality parking away from the immediate street scene, achieved using undercroft parking areas or intergrated into the public realm or built form.

The location of new parking facilities must be carefully considered and distributed to give easy and convenient access to car borne visitors but also ensuring that pedestrian linkages into the city centre are of the highest quality. Car parks must be modern, well lit and safe – first impressions are very important and many visitors will be strongly influenced by the quality of parking facilities and the connections into the city centre.

Servicing yards and access points must be unobtrusively accommodated. This will be achieved through carefully designing servicing yards within blocks in order that they are hidden from view. Access points to servicing yards must be discretely located in places where there is minimum conflict with key pedestrian routes.

Cycle parking must also be a key component. Adequate facilities must be incorporated into new development schemes as part of the built structure ensuring that facilities are safe, secure and the entrance point is well overlooked. Public cycle parking stands will be required in the design of the public realm in key locations across the Quarter, particularly adjoining major retail and leisure areas as well as new squares.

## 4.10 Mix of Uses

Successful urban areas contain a mix of uses that animate the area at different times of the day. A mix of uses must be promoted across the Minster Quarter including leisure, cultural facilities, cafes, bars, restaurants and other uses to promote the evening economy as well as retail and residential.

The Quarter must offer a broad range of facilities to all potential users including families, children, young people and the elderly. Everyone should feel safe and welcome at all times of the day and evening. Within a busy, mixed use environment a degree of disturbance from streets, squares and walks is to be expected, but care should be taken in the design and layout of new development to place livelier uses, such as cafes, bars and restaurants, sensitively relative to the places where greater numbers of people will live, thereby reducing the likelihood of excessive disturbance and future problems.

## 4.11 Sustainability

Sunderland is committed to playing its part in tackling climate change in helping to achieve the national target to cut carbon dioxide emissions by 80% by 2050. The Minster Quarter has a role to play too, sustainable design and construction will assist in reducing the impacts of climate change and ensuring the area is resilient to the potential effects. Key design principles to be used to enhance the environmental performance of new development are summarised below:

- **Flood Risk** - All development proposals will be required to consider the effect of the proposed development on flood risk, both on-site and offsite, commensurate with the scale and impact of the development, through the completion of a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA).

- **Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs)** - Development in the Quarter will have to ensure integration of Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) to manage surface water drainage. Where SuDS are provided arrangements must be put in place for their whole life management and maintenance.
- **Utilities** - Adequate utility infrastructure must be provided to serve each phase of development.
- **Storage and Waste** - The storage and collection of refuse and recycling must be carefully considered so as not to visually detract from the overall appearance of development. The layout of development must be designed to ensure that the collection can be easy and efficient. The layout should allow for flexibility to adapt to new waste requirements.



# 5 Minster Quarter Masterplan

## 5.1 Introduction

As a physical reflection of the vision, there is an emphasis on defining the uses, activities, buildings and spaces that will enhance the prosperity of the Quarter and improve the quality of life of those that work, live and visit the city centre. The masterplan strategy is focused on reviving the historic core and incorporating areas of key change.

## 5.2 Area A - Hotel with Ground floor Retail

### Site Description

Sitting immediately to the east of Keel Square, Area A is bounded to the north by St. Mary's Way, to the east by the service area of a number of retail units, while High Street West defines the southern boundary.

### Development Aspirations

The site will provide the initial focus for new commercial development through the development of a hotel (Use class C1) that will help meet a recognised shortage in hotel accommodation in the city whilst providing ground floor units (Use classes A1, A3, A4) fronting on to Keel Square and High Street West. The development should be a landmark building of high quality that complements Keel Square, providing a coherent gateway statement for the Minster Quarter.

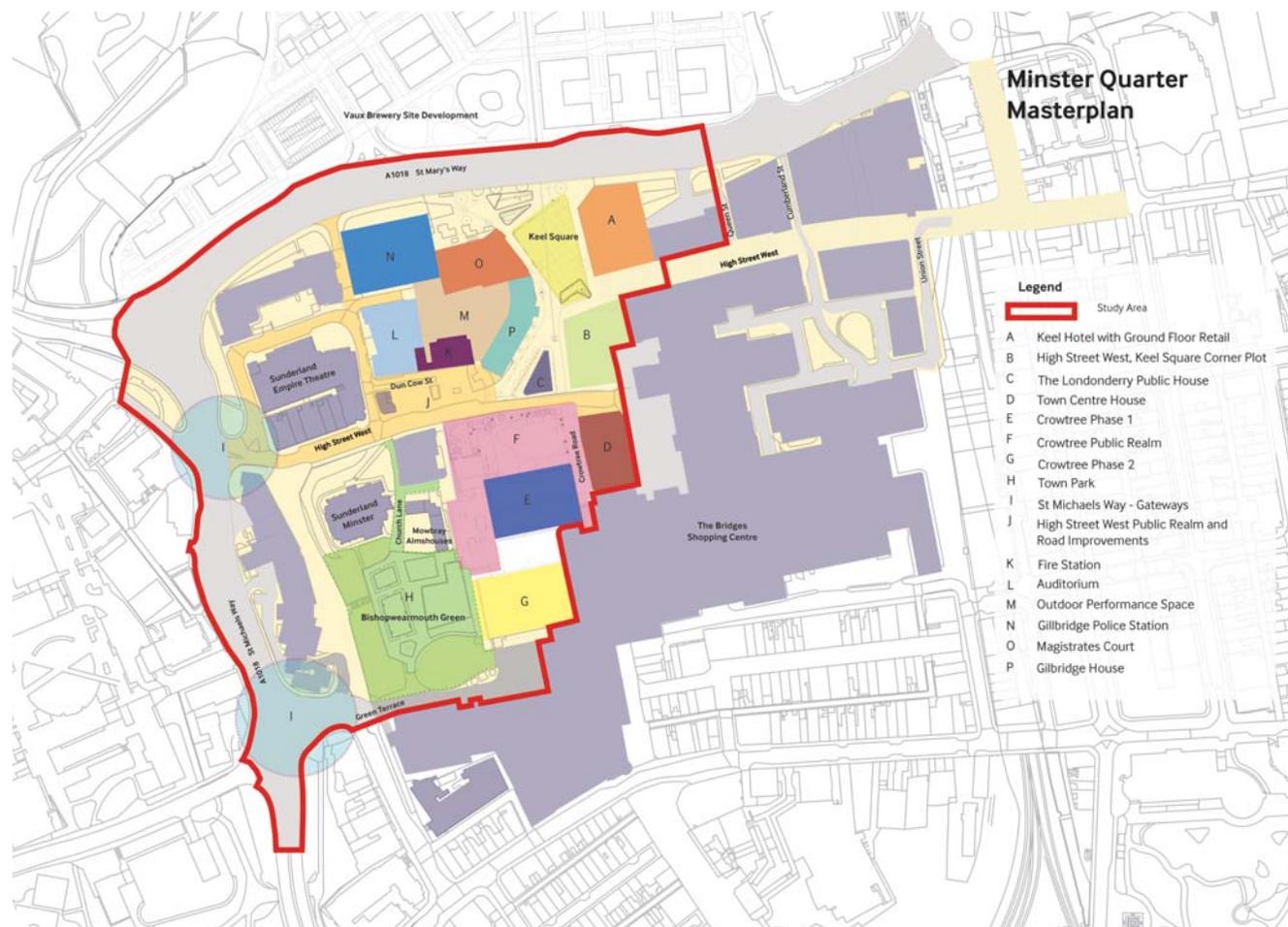


Figure 55: Minster Quarter Masterplan



Figure 56: Illustration –Gateway into Minster Quarter via Keel Square

### Key Considerations

- The scale and massing of the building must respond to the scale of adjacent buildings in particular the Magistrate building and the proposed Vaux development.
- The building frontage will need to provide the main interface and activation onto Keel Square, therefore the elevation should allow transparency and explore ground floor opportunities for bar/café overspill to create activity.
- High Street West is a main retail street within the city centre and therefore the buildings elevations fronting onto High Street West should be designed to provide interest and again maximise activity (particularly at ground floor level). Consideration should be given to how the building turns the corner to encourage pedestrians from and into the square and the proposed Vaux developments.
- A large expanse of the building will front onto St Marys Way, again it is recommended that this element of the development should include additional fenestration to create additional overlooking and surveillance onto St Marys Way and the proposed Vaux site developments.

## 5.3 Area B - High Street West, Keel Square Corner Plot

### Site Description:

Area B is bounded by Keel Square to the north, Primark to the east, Middle Street to the south and Crowtree Road to the west. The site incorporates a 2 storey property currently split into three units. Part of the first floor is occupied by Luciano’s Restaurant, whilst at ground floor level below that is the former Indigo Rooms. The remainder of the property, the former Corner Flag bar which comprises of a ground floor bar with stores and first floor bar. To the south of the property is a cleared developed site and to the east of West Street is a 2 storey vacant office development.



Figure 57: Illustration - Landmark buildings fronting onto Keel Square

### Development Aspirations:

Area B provides a key landmark development opportunity suitable for a mix of uses that complement the wider retail and leisure offer. The site is a key gateway, linking the Bridges, Keel Square, High Street West and the Vaux site. Uses considered appropriate include large floor plate retail (Use class A1), food and drink, including cafes, bars and restaurants (Use class A3 and A4), leisure (D2) and non-residential institutions including galleries and museums (Use class D1).

### Key Considerations

- The scale and massing of the building must respond to the scale of adjacent buildings in particular the listed buildings of the Londonderry public house and Magistrate building.
- The building frontage will need to provide the main interface and activation onto Keel Square, therefore the elevation should allow transparency and be designed to provide interest and again maximise activity (particularly at ground floor level).
- Consideration should be given to how the building turns the corner to encourage pedestrians from the square to other parts of the Quarter.

## 5.4 Area C - The Londonderry Public House

### Site Description

Area C, the Londonderry Public House is one of the two prominent Edwardian pubs in the area (the Dun Cow PH being the other). The Londonderry is another of several buildings in the vicinity designed by the Milburns. Built in 1901/02, the building is a major city centre landmark prominently sited on a triangular site, creating three presented elevations. It fronts the newly created Keel Square and the proposed Crowtree Phase 1 site.



Figure 58: Photograph – Londonderry Public House, Grade II Listed Building

## Development Aspirations

The Londonderry has recently closed and it is in need of significant repair, reinstatement and refurbishment inside and out. The building has the potential to become a strong anchor of the evening economy bringing a bar and restaurants (Use classes A3 and A4) to both the ground and first floor to complement the wider leisure offer.

## Key Considerations:

- Development proposals must have regard to the detailed Bishopwearmouth Conservation Area in particular to the retention of surviving historic pub interiors in the interests of preserving the areas distinctive pub heritage.
- The three presented elevations should be designed to maximise activity (particularly at ground floor level).

## 5.5 Area D - Town Centre House

### Site Description

Town Centre House is a 2 storey 1960s development currently occupied by New Look on the ground floor and a gym facility on the first floor. The area provides direct frontage onto the proposed Crowtree Public Realm works to the west, High Street West Public Realm and Road Improvements to the north, a service area to the east and the Bridges Shopping centre to the south.



Figure 59: Photograph – Town Centre House

### Development Aspirations

The area provides an opportunity to reinforce retail offer in this location through redevelopment of Town Centre House, taking advantage of the footfall into the Bridges Shopping Centre and the proposed adjacent retail extension of Crowtree Phase 1. Uses considered appropriate and to be encouraged in this area include a mix of A1 Retail, D2 assembly and leisure, A3 cafes and restaurants.

### Key Considerations

- The scale and massing of the building must respond to the scale of adjacent buildings in particular the listed building of the Londonderry public house and the proposed Crowtree Phase 1 development.
- The building frontage will need to provide the main interface and activation onto Crowtree Public Realm, therefore the elevation should allow transparency and be designed to provide interest and again maximise activity (particularly at ground floor level).

## 5.6 Area E - Crowtree Phase 1

### Site Description

The area is part of the former Crowtree Leisure Centre which was demolished in early 2014. The area directly abuts the remainder of the Crowtree Leisure Centre building and the Bridges Shopping Centre. Whilst the site is relatively flat, it does sit much lower than the adjacent pedestrian ramp link, which runs along the southern boundary; the adjacent road, High Street West, and the land to the west which includes Almhouses and links to Town Park.

### Development Aspirations

The area presents an excellent opportunity for a retail extension to the Bridges Shopping Centre. As highlighted in Section 3, the current retail provision is dominated by small retail units with constrained floor plates; therefore there is the opportunity to provide a larger footprint to align with modern retailers requirement.

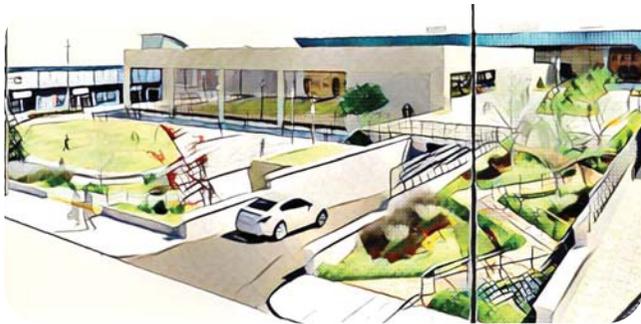


Figure 60: Illustration –Crowtree Retail Expansions



Figure 61: Illustration –Crowtree integrated car parking

### Key Considerations

- There is a considerable difference in levels between Area E and the Conservation Area. In particular Town Park is elevated above the site and emphasises the dominance of the Minster, its attractive landscaped setting and the roofscape of Bishopwearmouth. Therefore the size of the proposed retail store needs respect the height and massing of its surroundings and allow this group of distinctive buildings to breathe.
- The introduction of an active frontage to the north east and west elevations of the Bridges Shopping Centre.

- The design of the proposed building will need to sit well in close proximity to the sandstone historic buildings in the vicinity of the site.
- Car parking should be intergrated into the built form or public realm.

## 5.7 Area F - Crowtree Public Realm

### Site Description

The remaining area of the now demolished Crowtree Leisure Centre building on the land to the east, north and west of the Crowtree Phase 1. The site is currently an area of temporary green open space.

### Development Aspirations

Between the proposed Crowtree Phase 1 retail extension to the Bridges Shopping Centre and High Street West will be an area of high quality public realm, incorporating a public square and pedestrian routes that will link Town Park through to the High Street West public realm improvements and Keel Square. Should market conditions become favourable then consideration will be given to retail expansion fronting onto High Street West with the development of Areas E and F as one.



Figure 62: Illustration – Crowtree Public Realm Improvements



Figure 63: Illustration –Crowtree improved linkage from Town Park

### Key Considerations

- East-west movement between the University, Town Park and the Quarter.
- The detailed design of the public realm areas will need to ensure that appropriate high quality surface materials relate well to both the modern retail store and the adjacent Conservation Area.

## 5.8 Area G - Crowtree Phase 2

### Site Description

The remainder of the Crowtree Leisure Centre sits between Town Park to the west and is structurally integrated in to the Bridges Shopping Centre to the east. Crowtree Leisure Centre, in terms of scale, massing and general form does not respond well to the historic context of the Quarter with the remaining structure forming a very unattractive inactive hard edge elevation to High Street West and along the eastern boundary of the conservation area adjacent Town Park.

## Development Aspirations

There is a clear opportunity to utilise this area and its proximity and structural integration with the Bridges Shopping Centre lends itself towards a retail/leisure development. A mix of A1 Retail, D2 assembly and leisure, A3 cafes and restaurants located along the key pedestrian routes and on key frontages facing onto public spaces and adjoining streets would be appropriate.



Figure 64: Illustration – Improved activation of Crowtree building onto Town Park

### Key Considerations:

- Development proposals must preserve or enhance the setting of the listed Minster and adjoining Alms Houses particularly maintaining a positive built form edge to Town Park.
- Introducing a link through the site to create a new pedestrian route to the Bridges Shopping Centre.



Figure 65: Photograph – Town Park an important gateway into the Quarter

## 5.9 Area H - Town Park

### Site Description

Town Park is formed from various pockets of land all owned by the city council, including the former Bishopwearmouth village green. Today, Town Park has a tired, under-used feel and is more of an expedient route into the city centre than a well-used destination of choice. The Crowtree Leisure Centre (east) and multi-storey car-park (south) intrude on its setting, and clearance has left it exposed to the west. Only to the north does it have a strong authentic relationship with its surroundings, overlooked by the Minster and Mowbray Almshouses.

### Development Aspirations

The Town Park provides an important gateway into the Quarter, including the Bridges Shopping Centre, as well as being a historic part of the city centre and the setting to the Sunderland Minster. Improvements will seek to make it easier to access the park and city centre beyond.

## Key Considerations

- Provide an opportunity for future redevelopment of Crowtree Phase 2 where blank elevations could be replaced with active frontages onto Town Park for cafés to spill out into the park.
- As with the improvements to the St Michael's Way crossing facility, to improve connections between the University Chester Road campus and the Quarter.
- Installation of a new focal point installed in the 'lost' square around the green, such as interpretation or artwork.
- Traditional materials to be reintroduced including natural granite and sandstone, taking historic images as a cue. This would include Church Lane.
- Ways of highlighting the footprint of the lost building groups should be explored, such as pleached tree borders or raised grassed platforms with stone edges.
- Elements of the parks tranquil nature will need to be retained.
- Opportunities for a community garden or orchard should be explored.

## 5.10 Area I - St Michaels Way – Gateways

### Site Description

On the western approach into the Quarter adjoining the University of Sunderland city campus on St Michael's Way at the junctions of High Street West and Chester Road.

## Development Aspirations:

Pedestrian severance is caused by the width of the road and high traffic volumes on A1231 St Michael’s Way and the convoluted crossing points over these roads via signalised crossings located near the vehicular access points.

It would therefore also be desirable to provide a safer and more pleasant environment to integrate the university campus with the Quarter through new measures for pedestrians and cyclists by proposing improved pedestrian crossings to St Michaels Way.



Figure 66: Photograph –Pedestrian movement hindered by St Michaels Way



Figure 67: Photograph –Keel Square Super Crossing has improved pedestrian movement to the North of the Quarter

## Key Considerations:

- Reconfiguring these key junctions into gateways with enhancements to the pedestrian environment.
- Provide pedestrian routes and crossing points which reflect desire lines.
- Simplify layout and eliminate street clutter.

## 5.11 Area J - High Street West Improvements

### Site Description

High Street West Improvements are part of the Councils Investment Corridor programme for environmental improvements to Sunderland city centre. The programme has been developed to align with existing and proposed investment (both private and public) in the city centre, including the realignment of St Mary’s Way and the newly formed Keel Square.

Phase One of the High Street West Improvements focused on Bridge Street and High Street West up to Keel Square. Phase Two will continue the works from the square to the junction with St Michael’s Way. This is the main route into the Minster Quarter from the west, encompassing the Theatre, the fire station, the Minster and Crowtree.

### Development Aspirations

Phase Two of the will aim to deliver further environmental upgrades to improve the public realm and improve movement and connectivity for all users. Key elements of Phase 2 include:

- Empire Theatre Access Road - A new shared surface route linking High Street West with St Mary Boulevard via Garden Place will be considered. Garden Place could

become pedestrian priority, whilst servicing, coach and car drop off is accessed via Eden St and egressed via newly left out only route onto St Mary’s Boulevard.

- The Fire Station Square – will form a new space within the Quarter and will take its character from the quality of the surrounding buildings including the former fire station, Sunderland Minster, the Dun Cow public house and the Empire Theatre itself. The square provides a key public space for the fire station with the restaurant and bar providing overspill and activation.
- High Street West - will see improvements including new paving and traffic management.



Figure 68: Illustration –Fire Station Square complements the surrounding historic buildings



Figure 69: Illustration –Cars are no longer able to access the Fire Station Square



Figure 70: Illustration – Café overflow enliven the space



Figure 71: Illustration –existing trees are retained



Figure 72: Illustration –direct frontage allows for positive social interaction

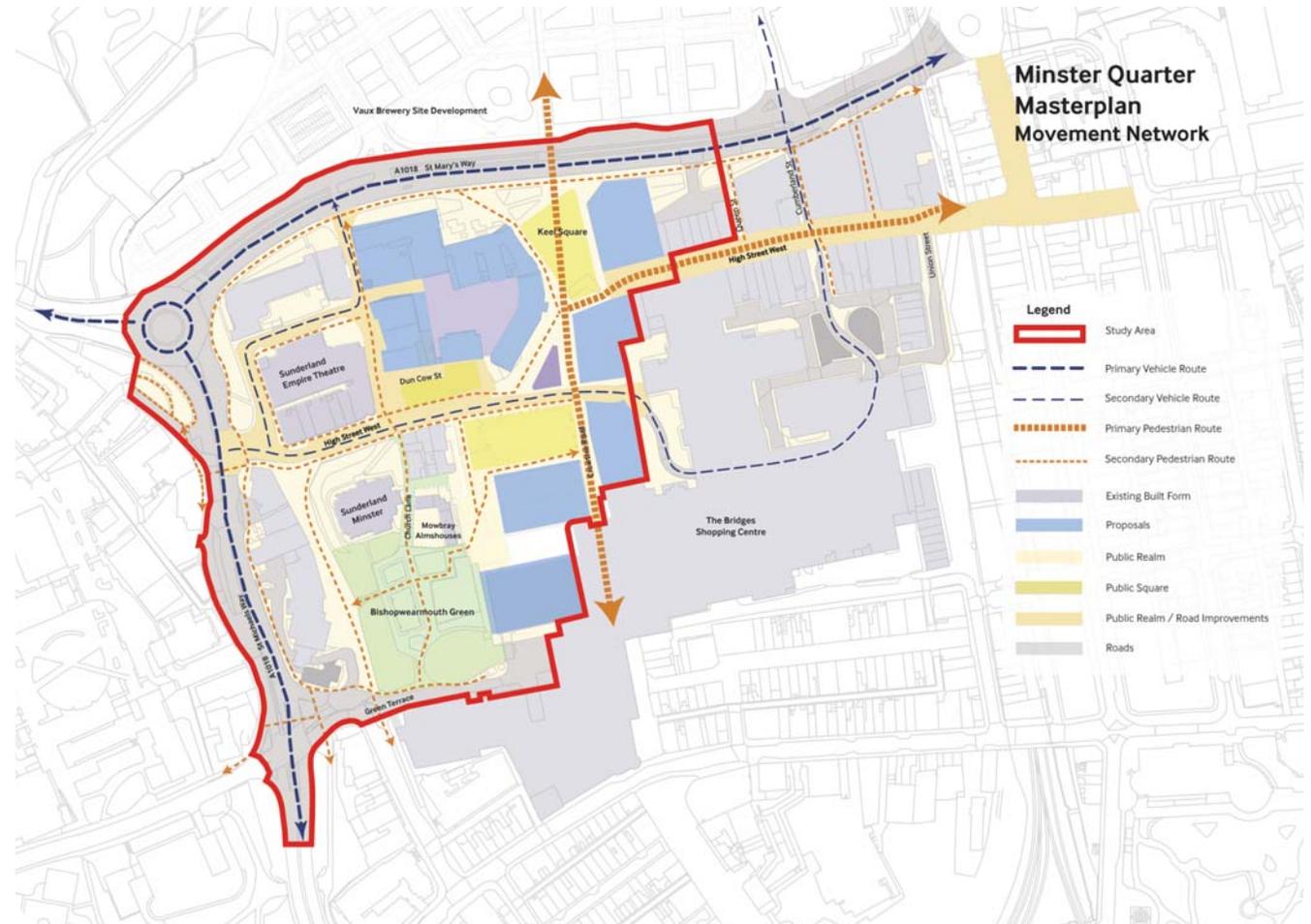


Figure 73: Minster Quarter Masterplan Movement Network Plan

### Key Considerations

- Integrate the quarter with its surroundings, creating a direct and attractive pedestrian connection between the key facilities (Vaux, Riverside, Crowtree, Town Park, and Car Parking), avoiding a dead end via the creation of a convenient and comfortable place.
- Reorientation of entrances onto the route will enable further activation which will improve safety and allow for positive social interaction.
- A palette of high quality public realm materials will be required to respect the historic environment.

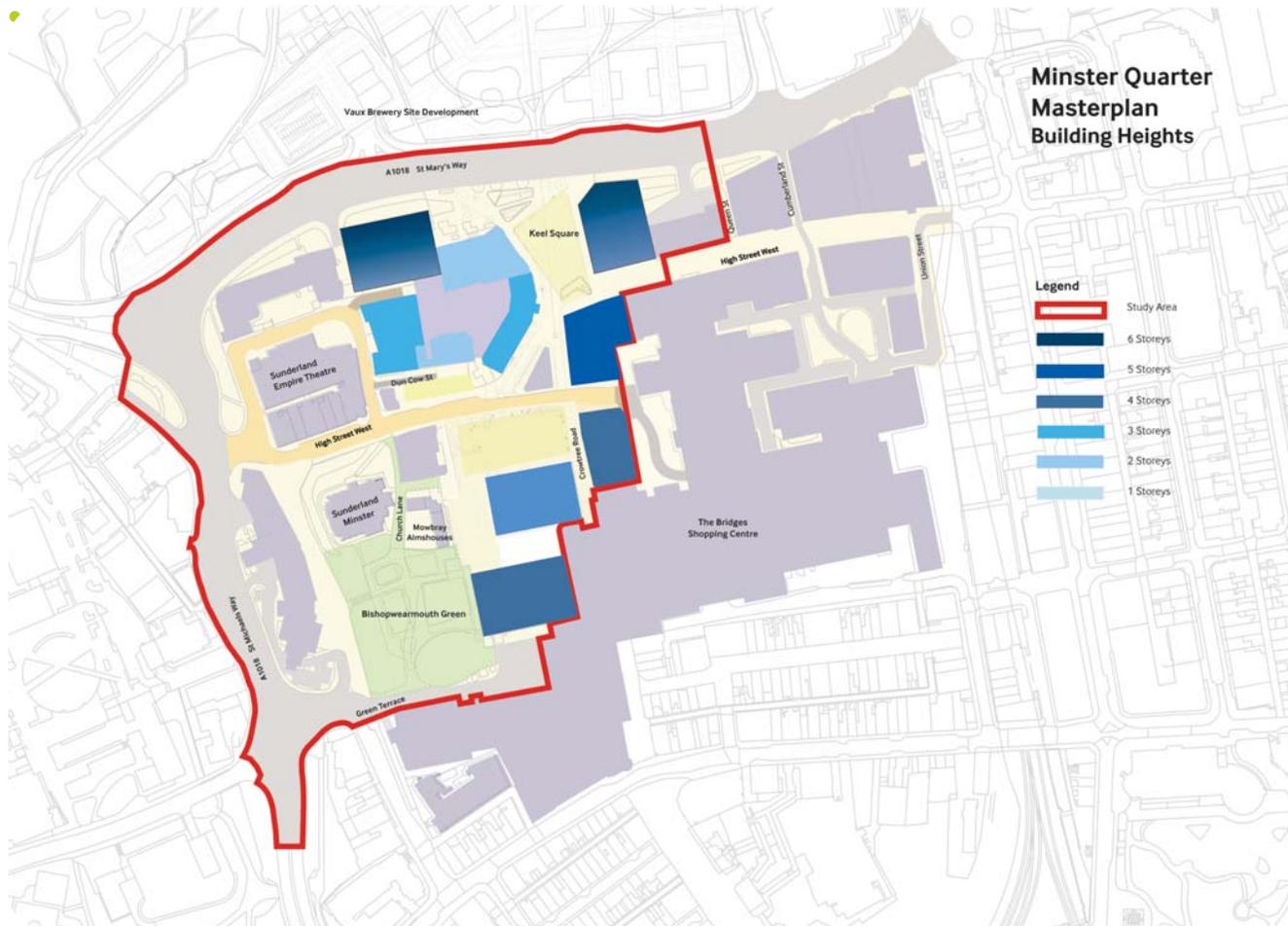


Figure 74: Minster Quarter Masterplan Building Heights Plan

Improves the cities permeability and legibility, making it easy for people to find their way around the city, creating a secondary north/south route, adding to the hierarchy of routes and spaces and enabling the city to be easily read.

- Ensuring routes are framed and aligned with the views and vistas of several of the city's key buildings (Minster, Empire and the Dun Cow) creating a favourable image of the Quarter.
- Improving traffic management and signage, accommodating the needs of cars, service vehicles and coaches.

## 5.12 Area K - Former Fire Station

### Site Description

The former fire station, despite not being listed, is a building of immense local character. It is set back from the High Street West, on Dun Cow Street in the heart of the Minster Quarter.

Directly to the north of the site is the former Police Station and the Magistrates Court with the intervening land occupied by a car parking area.

To the south lies Dun Cow Street and the fires station forecourt. To the west lies the Empire theatre and the Dun Cow Public House. To the east lies the vacant the Gilbridge House and the Londondery Public House.

### Development Aspirations

It is proposed to bring the building back into use, transforming the historic building through conversion into an arts and culture venue, accommodating uses such as a restaurant, theatre, studio space, and an exhibition space that complement and reinforce the Quarters cultural heritage and evening economy.

### Key Considerations

- Ground floor uses with outdoor seating such as cafes and restaurants will be particularly encouraged to support the proposed public realm improvements to the square to the front of the station and the Outdoor Performance Space to the rear.
- Prospective developers will adopt a sympathetic approach to repairing and adapting the building for conversion to ensure that its architectural and historic integrity is not compromised.

## 5.13 Area L - Auditorium

### Site Description

The land to western side of the former fire station currently used as a car park.

### Development Aspirations

This site presents an opportunity for major new development at the heart of the Minster Quarter. The surface parking represents an inefficient use of valuable land in the Quarter and does nothing to provide a setting for the significant buildings which surround it.

### Key Considerations

- It is important that the heritage assets remain the dominant features in the development and retain their roles as the key townscape features of the area. Any new buildings should be sensitive insertions into the spaces between the heritage assets, rather than the heritage assets being engulfed into the overall development.
- Ground floor activation onto the proposed fire station square, the Empire Theatre Access Road and the Outdoor Performance Space.
- The detailed design of the elevations will be crucial to the quality of the design. Design intricacies such as the type and finishing of the window frames and doors, the depth of window reveals, choice of materials and its coursing, delicate design elements of the roof finish will make or break the design quality.

## 5.14 Area M - Outdoor Performance Space

### Site Description

The area between the fire station, Gillbridge House tax office and the Magistrates' Court is currently used as a car park.

### Development Aspirations

The site has the potential to be a semi-public outdoor performance space at the heart of the Quarter.



Figure 75: Illustrative Precedent of Outdoor Performance Space

### Key Considerations

- Allow for ground floor activation for the surrounding buildings onto the space to help promote positive social interaction.

## 5.15 Area N - Gillbridge Police Station

### Site Description

Located on the northern boundary of the Quarter with Keel Square to the east, the four storey former police station building is of brutal concrete design and dates from 1972.

### Development Aspirations

The former police station building provides an opportunity for conversion and/or redevelopment at a key gateway site into the Quarter and the adjacent Vaux development to the north. Potential uses for the area include residential (C3), office development (A1/A3) and uses associated with creative industries (B1).

### Key Considerations

- The building frontage will need to provide activation onto Keel Square, therefore this elevation should allow greater transparency through fenestration and explore ground floor activity.
- A large expanse of the building fronts onto St Marys Way, again it is recommended that this element of the development should retain fenestration to create overlooking and surveillance onto St Marys Way and the proposed Vaux site developments.



Figure 76: Gillbridge Police Station

## 5.16 Area O - Magistrates Court

### Site Description

Sunderland Magistrates Court at western terminus of High Street West overlooking Keel Square. This large civic building still operates as law courts and like the Empire Theatre was designed by the Milburn brothers. Constructed in 1907 of sandstone ashlar and featuring a square clock tower, it is one of the highest profile historic buildings in the city centre.

### Development Aspirations

Should the current use cease in the future the building lends itself to conversation for a range of uses including heritage centre, galleries and museum (D1 Non-residential institutions) and/or restaurants and cafés (A3 uses).

### Key Considerations

- The building has not been surveyed, but the building is thought to be in good condition. Likely works need to concentrate on reinstatement.



Figure 77: Illustration - Gillbridge House with key frontage onto Keel Square

## 5.17 Area P - Gillbridge House

### Site Description

Built in 1992, Gilbridge House is currently an HMRC Tax Office that is about to be vacated. Built on the site of the public the baths, the building has now gone but its portico entrance and clock were carefully dismantled from the historic baths and incorporated into the modern offices of Gilbridge House.

### Development Aspiration

The building lends itself to a number of uses that would complement the wider area including, offices, workshops and studios. The ground floor could be converted into restaurants and retail units (A1/A2).

### Key Considerations

- The building frontage will need to provide the main interface and activation onto Keel Square, therefore the elevation should allow transparency and explore ground floor opportunities for bar/café overspill to create activity.

# 6 Delivery

## 6.1 Delivery vehicle

The success of the SPD and fundamentally of the Minster Quarter will ultimately be judged by what is delivered and will depend to a large extent on the continued partnership working of the landowners, the Council, and other key stakeholders to secure delivery of a high quality and sustainable place.

It is essential that development is brought forward in a coordinated and cohesive manner with the bigger picture clearly in mind, in this way the overall vision and objectives for the area can be achieved.

The Masterplan gives specific development guidance in relation to the form, use, nature and quality of development as well as outlining a realistic approach to phasing. This will ensure that a high quality development is delivered, capable of raising the profile of Central Sunderland and assisting in realising the economic renaissance of the city as a whole.

## 6.2 Infrastructure Delivery

Developers will be encouraged to engage with Sunderland City Council at an early stage to negotiate the need for planning obligations. Where appropriate the Council will seek contributions from developers to fund infrastructure works required as a consequence of development.

Planning Application Requirements

### Pre-Applications

The council encourages applicants to seek early engagement with officers from Development Management to discuss proposals for development at Minster Quarter prior to the submission of a planning application, at the pre-application stage. This service helps to speed up the development process and to avoid the submission of unacceptable proposals.

It is recommended that the applicant considers the viability of a site at the pre-application stage, to allow any issues to be resolved before the submission of a formal planning application. Heads of Terms of Section 106s should also be discussed at this stage.

### Planning Performance Agreement

A Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) is a framework agreed between the City Council and an applicant for the management of complex development proposals within the planning process. A PPA allows both the developer and the council to agree a project plan and programme which will include the appropriate resources necessary to determine the planning application to a firm timetable.

It may be to the advantage of the developer and the City Council that applicants within Minster Quarter enter into a Planning Performance Agreement, due to the scale, nature and complexity of the planning applications likely to be submitted. Further details on the City Council's PPAs can be found on the council's website.

### Planning Application Requirements

A list of information to be submitted as part of an outline application for development proposals at Minster Quarter are provided below. It should be noted that this list is not exhaustive and further requirements may be identified as a result of pre-application discussions.

Some elements may also be more appropriately submitted at reserved matters stage dependent upon the scope of the application made at outline application stage.

The Tyne & Wear Validation Checklist will outline the requirements that must be met before a planning application can be validated.

- Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Affordable Housing Statement
- Environmental Statement
- Transport Assessment/Transport Statement/Travel
- Plan/Parking Assessment
- Flood Risk & Drainage Assessment
- Ecological Survey Assessment and Mitigation Report & Protected Species Survey
- Sustainability Statement
- Infrastructure Strategy
- Statement of Community Involvement

- Open Space, Landscape and Recreation Strategy
- Habitat Regulations Assessment/Screening Report
- Environmental Impact Assessment
- Planning Obligations – Draft Head of Terms

There may be a need for additional assessments/statements depending on the site specifics, these may include:

- Heritage Statement
- Land Contamination Assessment
- Noise Assessment
- Air Assessment
- Highways and Public Rights of Way
- New Highways
- Tree Survey and/or Statement of Arboriculture
- Implications of Development



