



NORWICH LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

NORTHERN CITY CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN

ISSUES AND OPTIONS REPORT FOR CONSULTATION JUNE 2006

Norwich belongs to all of us



NORWICH
City Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to stimulate ideas and responses from everyone with an interest in the Northern City Centre. The results of this consultation will be used to develop suggested measures in this report into a draft Area Action Plan.

The Northern City Centre is the Council's top priority for regeneration. Despite its location and the wealth of historic buildings, the area has been in physical and economic decline for many years. Over the coming years, the expected scale of change in the area is huge. The main reason for developing this plan is the scale of change and the need to coordinate those changes with provision of services and improved infrastructure for the local community and businesses.

Context for the Area Action Plan

This document is an Issues and Options report, which means that it does not contain any decisions or policies. It offers suggested measures and solutions for the issues that are relevant to the Northern City Centre. Some of the suggested measures and solutions interlink and reinforce each other, while others might not work together.

The Northern City Centre Area Action Plan will be a Statutory Planning Document. It will contain policies and actions relating to the regeneration of the area and developments within it. The final document will therefore be considered by an independent Planning Inspector and is expected to be submitted in early 2007. Adoption is programmed for December 2007. This is the first stage on the route to that adopted plan.

The Area Action Plan must be in conformity with local, regional and national guidelines. In this Area Action Plan, the measures we propose here must be in line with the strategic policies of the Replacement Local Plan (adopted November 2004).

The issues and suggested measures and solutions in this report are based on a combination of factual data and the results from two previous consultation exercises.

Vision and Objectives

From these consultations we identified a number of key points for the vision of the area, which is put forward as follows:

"The future of the area will be based on developing a distinctive identity, including a strong cultural and arts focus in an enhanced and safe environment, attracting investment to sustain a vibrant local economy providing services for a wider area and good accessibility for all."

From this Vision, seven objectives have been developed for the Area Action Plan. These will be addressed through the measures and policies proposed in the AAP. They are:

- (i) to regenerate the area's physical environment, including open spaces, streets, buildings and public areas.
- (ii) to achieve sustainability and high quality in new development, whilst respecting the area's historic character, in order to attract people living in, working in and visiting the area
- (iii) to reinvigorate the economy of the area, providing for new employment and maintaining the sustainable mix of houses, services and jobs in the area.
- (iv) to revitalise the retail and service provision in Anglia Square, Magdalen Street and St Augustines Street as a major district centre for the north of the City.

- (v) to improve traffic circulation in the area and to reduce congestion and air pollution
- (vi) to enhance opportunities for pedestrian and cycle movement through the area
- (vii) to encourage the development of a balanced community with a strong identity and changed perceptions of the area regarding crime and disorder.

Proposed Measures and Options

The document contains a number of suggested measures in each of 7 topic subjects. It is structured to look at the information available on each topic and the issues identified, then guiding principles that will be essential for the Area Action Plan, and the measures which are put forward for consideration.

In some cases where there is a choice of alternatives, options are considered in relation to a particular measure. The implications of the actions or options proposed are identified, where these are considered significant.

In the Transport Chapter, there are suggested approaches to deal with the need for enhanced pedestrian routes, car parking and traffic movement. The traffic measures include four options for diverting traffic from St Augustines Street, in whole or in part, in order to resolve problems of air pollution there. These options also take account of other traffic issues in the area.

The overall guiding principle in this chapter is that the need to travel by car should be reduced, and housing, jobs and services should be highly accessible by other modes than the car.

For Shopping the guiding principle is the designation of Anglia Square as a Major District Centre in the Replacement Local Plan. The measures put forward would revive the centre as a shopping destination serving a wider area of North Norwich and to give it a new focus by providing a foodstore.

For employment the main issue is the best way to ensure that office jobs are provided for. Two options are suggested relating to alternative policy responses. Apart from new employment development it may be important to keep existing jobs in the area to support other shops and

services. This should also include provision of cheap premises for small businesses in case of relocation.

The Northern City Centre has an exceptional heritage and is one of the oldest parts of the city. As such, the conservation of the historic environment and buildings is very important. On a smaller scale, there are too many examples of listed and heritage buildings which are insensitively affected by newer neighbours. Possible measures focus on the process of redevelopment and ways of giving priority to the heritage of the area in the design of replacement buildings.

The Housing Chapter considers problems due to the predominance of smaller dwelling units and the lack of affordable housing on a City-wide scale. There is a distinct difference between the northern and southern part of the area with more recent developments, mainly close to the river, in the southern part. The housing measures put forward are about addressing these generic problems.

The Community and Social Chapter explores the perceived lack of safety and security for both local residents and businesses. Possible suggested measures include improved design and visibility of public spaces and measures to enhance community facilities.

The area does not have enough useable green space. In addition to this, the quality of much of the existing open space is poor. A proposed solution involves the creation of green links along which new open spaces (and existing green spaces) would be located. Measures are also needed to promote the repair and improvement of the environment of the area generally.

Involving People

The process of producing the Area Action Plan allows three consultation periods for public comment on our proposals. This is the first such period and it is important that people with an interest in the area or the proposed measures should let us have their views at this formative stage.

The comments you will make now will help to inform the production of the draft Area Action Plan at the next stage.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This report has been prepared by Norwich City Council in order to stimulate ideas and responses from those living and working in or passing through the area. From the options identified in this report and the responses received, the Council will develop a draft Area Action Plan for further consultation.

We have already held a series of consultation workshops in the area in order to understand what people think are the main issues. We have also used the results from the earlier Regeneration Strategy consultation, which considered the same area in 2002 as part of the background for this document.

1.2 The Area

The Northern City Centre is the City Council's priority area for regeneration. The area is defined on Map 1 on the next page. The boundary may need to be amended in detail, depending upon what options are preferred, since some of them have implications outside the currently defined boundary. We will therefore be consulting people living in a wider area than just the area shown on the plan.

Despite its location and the wealth of historic buildings and structures, this area has been in economic and physical decline for many years. The Area Action Plan provides the opportunity to enable 'sustainable' regeneration of the area. The scale of change expected in the future is large and this investment can be used to support the area's accessibility, to stimulate its economic vitality and to improve its environment.

The report sets out a summary of the background information for the Northern City Centre. From this it then identifies the problems and issues that need to be addressed or taken into account in the Area Action Plan. It then suggests approaches (options) to tackle these issues in each section of the report. The diagram below sets these stages in the context of the overall plan.

The comments you will make now, will help to inform the production of the draft Area Action Plan at the next stage.

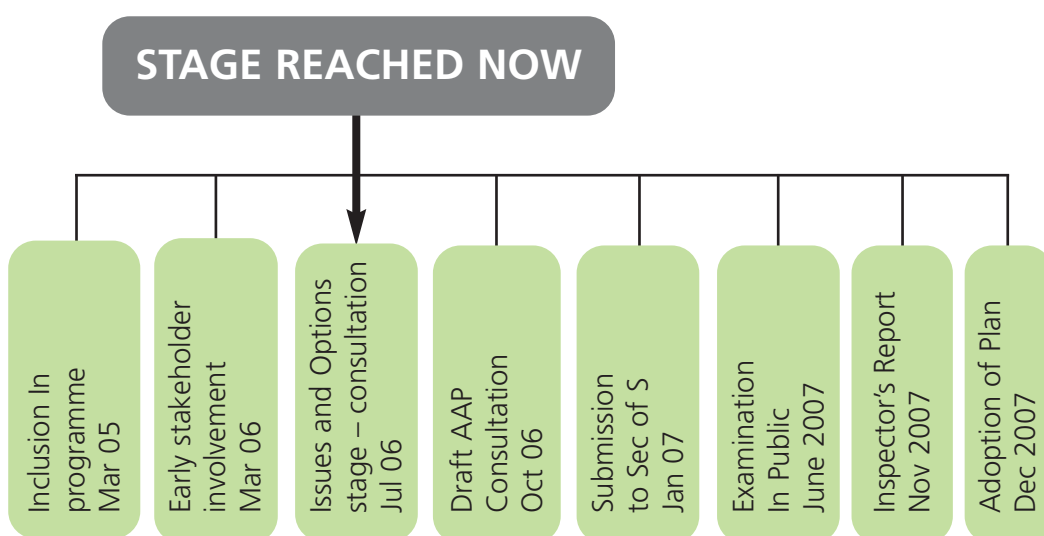
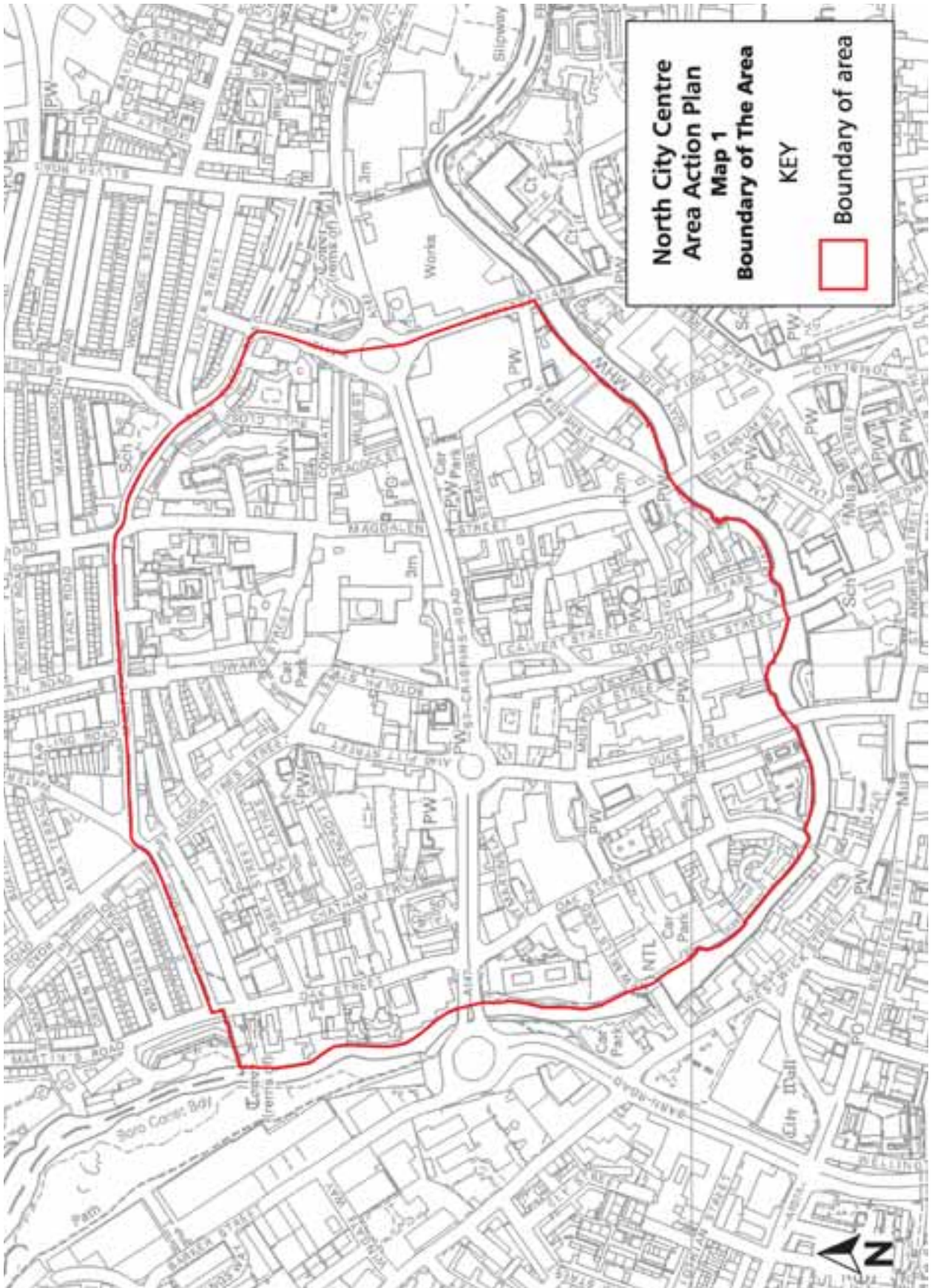


Fig 1 – Diagram of Stages to the Preparation of the Area Action Plan

MAP 1 - BOUNDARY OF AREA



1.3 Consultation

This is a consultation document. It is intended to stimulate a response at this early stage in the preparation of the Area Action Plan. It therefore does not seek to provide answers or solutions as being the only possible responses. The options identified are just that – options, or possible solutions. The Council has certainly NOT decided that particular policies or actions will be pursued – this document has been approved only as the initial basis for consultation. Where only one option is presented, this does not mean that the Council could not consider alternatives. We may not have thought of them, or perhaps may not have considered they were significantly different enough to offer a real choice.

We therefore want to receive your comments, not only on the options presented, but on any others you think should be considered (and why), and any issues/ problems that you feel

have not been addressed here. There will be events and exhibitions during the consultation period at which comments can be registered.

Comments should be made in writing. If you have comments, please send them to:

Paul Rao
Planning Policy and Projects Manager
Norwich City Council
City Hall
Norwich NR2 1NH
Or by email to LDF@norwich.gov.uk

Further information, including a Response form which you can complete on line, is available on our website: www.norwich.gov.uk then follow the links to 'Northern City Centre Area Action Plan' and then to 'Issues and Options Consultation.'

2. CONTEXT FOR AREA ACTION PLAN

2.1 What is an Area Action Plan?

An Area Action Plan (AAP) is a statutory planning document, which deals in detail with proposals for an area where major change is anticipated. It will include policies and proposals for the future development of the area. It will also propose detailed actions for a variety of agencies, whose involvement needs to be coordinated in order to implement the full solutions necessary for the regeneration of the area. In that respect the AAP is not limited solely to land use and development in quite the same way as previous land use plans, although physical change and development will still be the main focus of the plan. Thus actions may involve health agencies or the Police, in order to enhance services in this area of the City.

As a statutory 'Development Plan Document', an AAP has to be considered by an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State through a Public Examination. His (or her) recommendations will be binding on the Council for the final adoption of the AAP. We expect the AAP for the northern city centre to be submitted formally early in 2007 and the Examination to take place around June/July 2007. (This timetable was submitted to the government in the Council's 'Local Development Scheme' and is the basis for our 'project plan' for the AAP).

As an 'Action Plan' it is expected to involve a range of other agencies who have a role to play in the area and to be able to commit them to future action, where necessary.

2.2 What an Area Action Plan can (and can't) do.

An AAP will put forward policies and proposals for development and change of use on sites within the AAP area. This may include any of the following:

- Allocating sites for development
- Specifying the mix of uses in new development

- Coordinating requirements for infrastructure and services to serve the area and new development within it
- Addressing specific barriers to change, including traffic and transport problems
- Specifying conservation criteria to ensure that development and change fits in with the historic character of the area and conserves and enhances the most important sites and buildings
- Proposing bids for funding for issues that are unlikely to be addressed otherwise and coordinating delivery of such area-wide initiatives
- Considering compulsory purchase of land or buildings, if this proves to be necessary to achieve the plan's aims.

An overarching aim of the whole planning system is to provide for sustainable development. The Northern City Centre Area has many characteristics of a sustainable location – high accessibility to a large population in the north of the City, strong community linkages with good local employment and service provision, the most accessible location outside the core City Centre for bus travel. The AAP will be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (as required by European and UK law) with the Scoping Report being published alongside this report.

The Northern City Centre also has strong linkages with the proposal for a focus of growth on the north-east side of the City. This has been referred to as an urban extension in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England. The growth of new housing will be located on the edge of the urban area, but it will have implications for the Area Action Plan, because jobs, shopping and transport routes all affect the Northern City Centre. The City Council with other authorities in the Norwich area has submitted a bid to be recognised as a 'New Growth Point', in order to support such changes and this is one of the four focal areas for that bid.

2.3 The Current Policy Framework

The AAP has to be consistent with the strategic policies for the whole City. This includes policies in the Norfolk Structure Plan and the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan. In addition AAP's must conform to national planning policies and regional strategies and, in this case, the Local Transport Plan and Norwich Area Transportation Strategy.

In terms of City Council and local policies, the AAP will, therefore, be developed under the framework of a range of other strategies. It will not be able to change the broad approach to, for instance, transport strategy or affordable housing policies, which are defined for the City or wider sub-region in strategic documents. Nor will it be able to propose unsustainable options, which would contradict national policies or regional policies. This means that it will not be able to change those aspects of the broad strategic context just for this area of the City. Nevertheless it can add/ amend details relevant to this area.

The AAP will have to conform to national planning policies and the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy (expected to be adopted in full by June 2007). Until that regional strategy is adopted, the Norfolk Structure Plan also remains relevant as a strategic plan. In practice these do not impose onerous targets or policies for this area of the City, except in the need to enhance the historic character of the area and to protect its environmental assets. In addition there are transport policies that have to be taken into account – the Local Transport Plan and the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy. Annex A lists the relevant strategic policies that will need to be taken into account. The key aim of national policies to promote sustainable forms of development will be a priority in developing this Area Action Plan.

Annex A includes a number of key policies, but perhaps particular attention will need to be given to:

- the retail policies which define the Anglia Square/ Magdalen Street area as a major District Centre;
- the inclusion of the area in the City Centre Conservation Area and relevant policies relating to the historic environment and design issues;
- the policies relating to office employment and the use of employment as a key regeneration tool; and
- the policies promoting arts and cultural development related to existing centres of such facilities.

In addition the City Council has produced various Supplementary Planning Documents which will be relevant to the area. This may include provision for flood risk assessments (Flood Risk and Development SPD). It should certainly include the need to incorporate energy efficiency considerations (Energy Efficiency SPD) and to meet the open space and play standards (Open Space and Play Provision SPD).

2.4 Results of Previous Consultations

We referred (at 1.1) to the previous public consultation exercises that have taken place. We have included the results of those in our analysis for this report. Annex B contains a summary of the results of each of those. It shows there was broad consensus on most issues that the plan should address. In addition there were more specific issues that affect particular locations, or particular groups of people and these must also be taken into account, when the plan gets into that level of detail.

The Regeneration Strategy that was prepared in 2004 also went on to identify a vision for the area and objectives. This has been further refined in section 3 of this report.

2.5 Summary of Baseline Information

We have also been gathering information – from the 2001 Census, from specific surveys and from other sources. This summary gives only certain key facts about the area. More detail is included in Annex C.

The population of the area in 2001 was 2363, an increase of over 500 (29%) on the 1991 population.

The age structure of this population shows that the 25-44 age group forms an above average proportion of the population in the area (figure A1, page 68).

One person households are a very high proportion of those in the area – 54%.

We found that there are significant differences between the part of the northern city centre area that lies to the north of the Inner Ring Road and that to the south of the Inner Ring Road. Deprivation is particularly high in the northern part of the area and so are the numbers of people reliant on benefits. The southern part of the area has a higher proportion of owner occupiers (43%) than the northern part.

In the year April 2004- March 2005 30 new dwellings were completed in the area. In the subsequent year (to March 2006) that number rose to 63. A further 129 dwellings have planning permission and are likely to be built in the next three years.

St Augustines Street has been designated an 'Air Quality Management Area', because of the high concentrations of NO² pollution found in

the atmosphere. This street has a daily traffic flow of some 17,000 vehicles with major congestion issues at either end of the street.

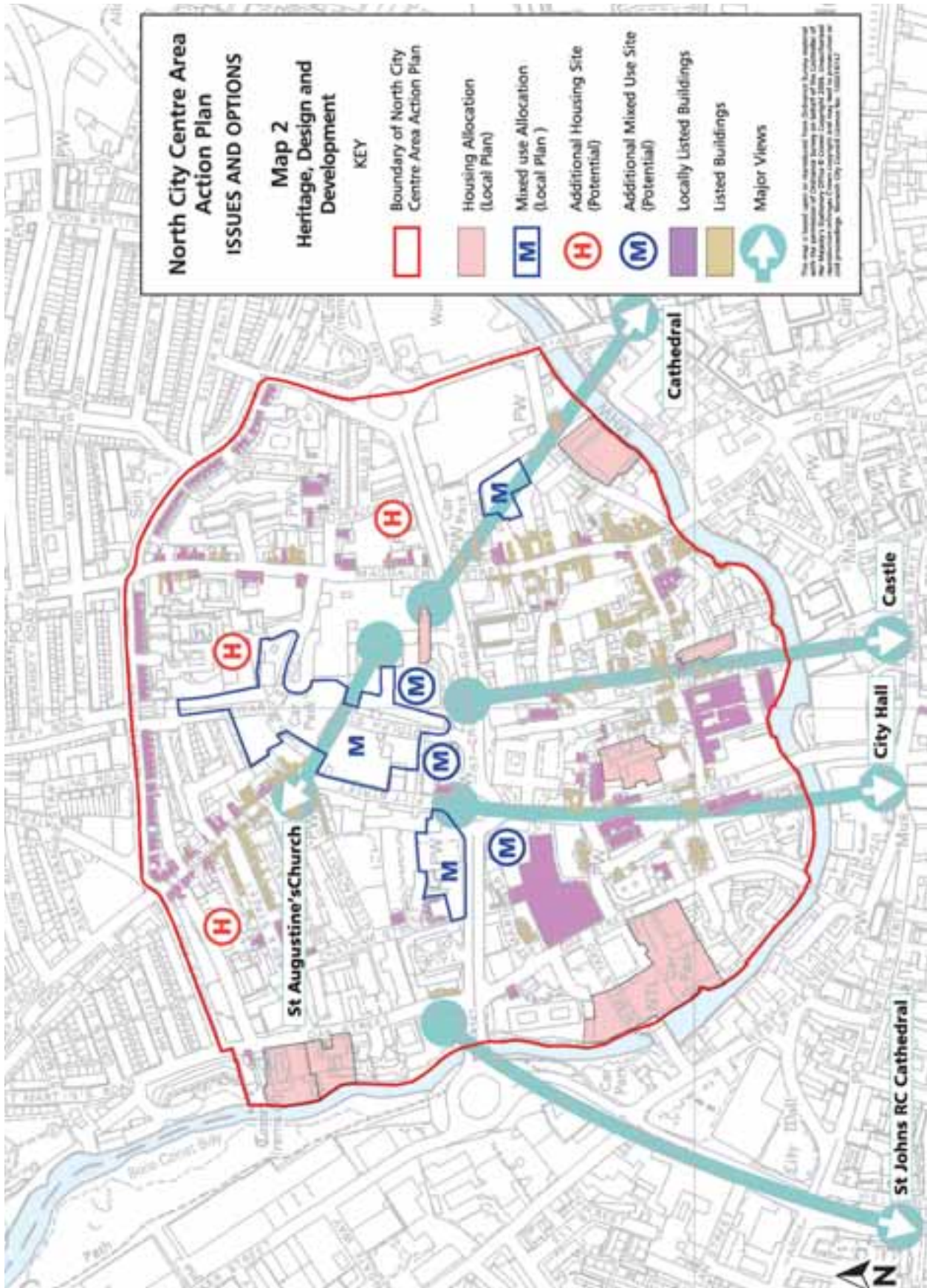
Magdalen Street is the major bus route from the north side of the City into the City Centre – there are around 40 buses an hour in each direction using Magdalen Street during the day.

Cycle and pedestrian counts in this area show a rise in the numbers of both between 2001 and 2004, although this fluctuates according to year and location.

There are 200 listed buildings in the area, including some very important historic buildings and sites, and a further 200 buildings (approx) identified on the local list (see Map 2 on the next page). The area is believed to contain the oldest settled area in Norwich with finds dating back to the 9th century.

The full baseline information will be added to and formally presented as part of the Sustainability Appraisal document. This appraisal is being prepared for presentation when the draft plan is formulated for consultation. Sustainability Appraisal will assess the proposals in the AAP against objectives for sustainable development. These objectives are presented in Annex D and comments would be welcome on which options best satisfy these criteria, as this has to be a key element in the Council's selection of preferred options. In addition comments can be made on the Sustainability Objectives, since they can be amended before the full appraisal is carried out.

MAP 2 - HERITAGE, DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



3. VISION & OBJECTIVES

3.1 Vision for Northern City Centre

Previous work on the Regeneration Strategy and the consultations during March 2006 provided a broad view of how people wanted to see the area develop in future. The following are the key points for a vision of the area:

- The area needs **to raise its profile** with a focus for promotion of its attractions. It should be visited for its own attractions, not just on the route to somewhere else (usually the City Centre). Its identity should be reinforced by future changes/ redevelopments and by significant improvements to the general environment, recognising the heritage and character of the area.
- a focus on the **arts and cultural facilities** of the area should be part of this promotion. To this end key benefits could be gained from a cultural and arts exhibition facility within the redevelopment, but existing facilities must be promoted as well.
- The area should provide **more extensive services for its own population and to a wide area**. A key aspect of reviving the area's vitality will be a new foodstore. Other services can relate to this – a Farmer's market, other specialist markets, support for other business start-ups. This is an important opportunity to reduce the down-market feel of the shopping area, in order to provide an appeal to a wider public.
- **Employment** in the form of new or refurbished offices is important for the area, in order to bring people into it during the day.
- **Improved movement for pedestrians and cyclists** and (separately) vehicles would be fundamental to enhancing the built and natural environment of the area.

To bring these different aspects together, the 'Vision' statement would be along the following lines:

"The future of the area will be based on developing a distinctive identity, including a strong cultural and arts focus in an enhanced

and safe environment, attracting investment to sustain a vibrant local economy providing services for a wider area and good accessibility for all."

Such a statement is clearly only a small element of the overall objectives of the Area Action Plan and the rest of this statement should be read in conjunction with that Vision.

Does this give a suitable broad view of the future? Please give us your views on whether you think this is appropriate.

3.2 AAP Objectives and Principles

Below this overarching 'vision' for the area, the following are suggested as objectives for this AAP. Again these are identified for consultation purposes and we invite comments on them.

- (i) to regenerate the area's physical environment, including open spaces, streets, buildings and public areas.
- (ii) to achieve sustainability and high quality in new development, whilst respecting the area's historic character, in order to attract people living in, working in and visiting the area
- (iii) to reinvigorate the economy of the area, providing for new employment and maintaining the sustainable mix of houses, services and jobs in the area.
- (iv) to revitalise the retail and service provision in Anglia Square, Magdalen Street and St Augustines Street as a major district centre for the north of the City.
- (v) to improve traffic circulation in the area and to reduce congestion and air pollution
- (vi) to enhance opportunities for pedestrian and cycle movement through the area
- (vii) to encourage the development of a balanced community with a strong identity and changed perceptions of the area regarding crime and disorder.

3.3 Structure of this Document

The rest of this document develops these objectives and identifies the issues that the plan needs to address. It looks at them in the following topic chapters :

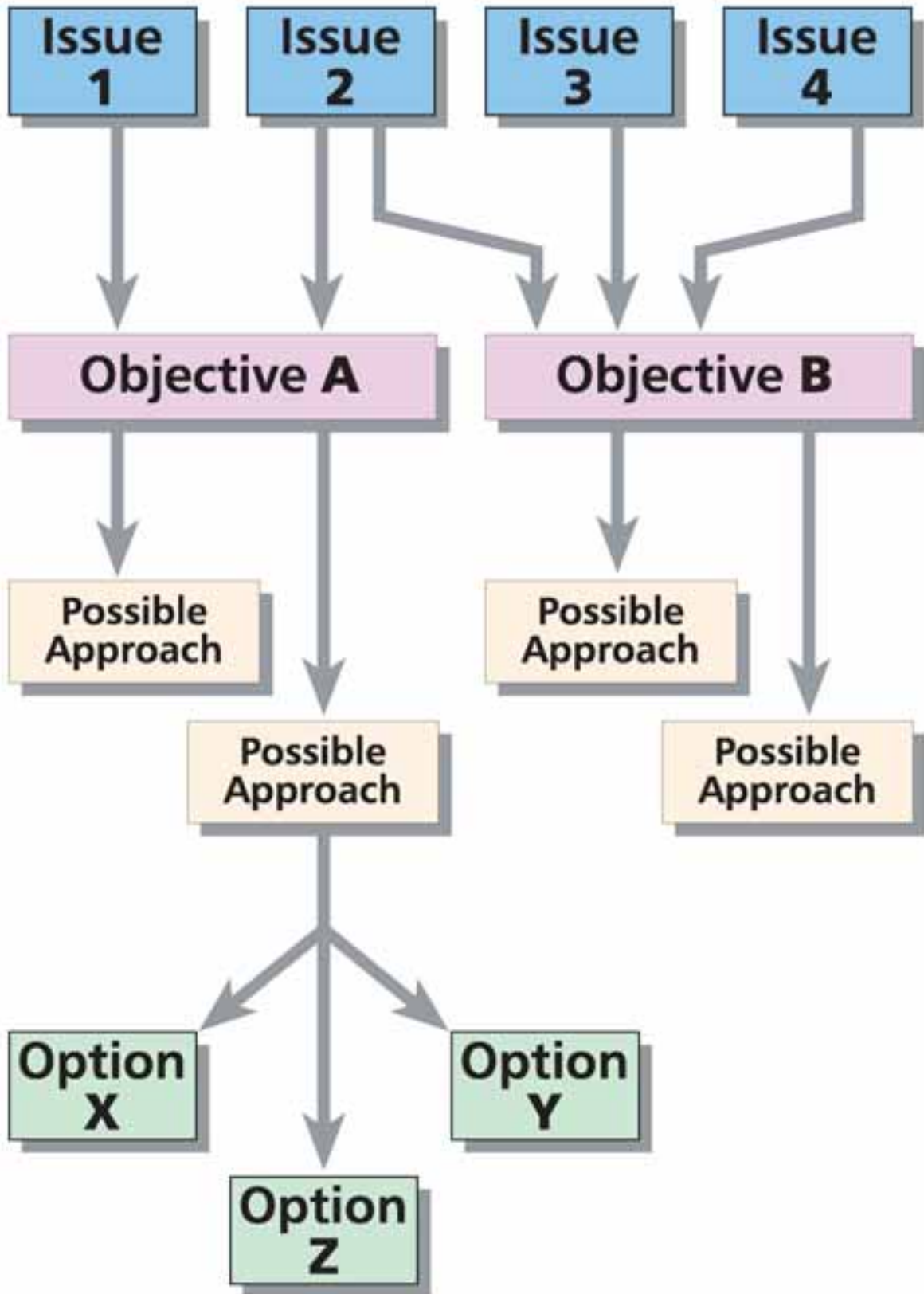
- transport
- shopping revitalisation
- employment
- heritage and design
- housing
- community and social
- open spaces and the environment

Each chapter considers first the context, including basic factual information from the Baseline study. It then looks at the 'Issues' and summarises these.

In developing possible measures to address these issues there are certain guiding principles and these are expressed next in each chapter. The possible measures to be developed are then discussed, together with any alternative options within them. For each possible measure suggested, we trace the relationship to the AAP objectives (at 3.2 above). The relationship between Issues, Objectives and Measures is set out below (Figure 2 is on the next page).

Finally the last chapter looks ahead to the next stages and what other decisions may influence the outcome of this plan.

FIG 2 - RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ISSUES, OBJECTIVES, MEASURES AND OPTIONS



4. ISSUES & OPTIONS - TRANSPORT

4.1 Context and Issues

The issue of movement within and through the North City Centre is perhaps the most fundamental issue that needs to be addressed by the AAP.

The area's location means that its two historic thoroughfares – Magdalen Street and St Augustine's Street - form the main transport arteries to and from the north of the city and beyond. The southern part of Magdalen Street in particular experiences very high levels of bus movements (40 movements each way per hour – source: Norfolk County Council), as most buses to the northern suburbs are routed along it and Edward Street. Both streets are relatively narrow, with narrow pavements, which compound the problems of pollution and pedestrian safety. Magdalen Street adjacent to Anglia Square is a local accident hotspot resulting mainly from pedestrian/ bus conflict. St. Augustine's Street has a statutory designation as an 'Air Quality Management Area'; its high levels of traffic-related pollution are caused by the 'canyon' effect of high buildings on either side of a narrow street and by high traffic volumes and slow moving vehicles (17,000 vehicle movements per day).

In addition, the construction of the Inner Ring Road, St Crispin's flyover and Anglia Square in the 1960s and early 1970s cut across the area's historic street pattern. The construction of the Inner Ring Road severed many links between the north and south of the area and it now forms a barrier to pedestrian and cycle movements between the area and the rest of the City Centre. Its main crossing point – the underpass at the top of St George's Street – is dark and uninviting.

The problems experienced by the North City Centre today are in no small part due to its transportation problems, plus the unsympathetic development of the Anglia Square complex. These have contributed significantly to a decline in the area's environment over the past few decades and to the lack of private sector investment. Nevertheless, the volume of people travelling

through the North City Centre every day, by bus or car, creates an enormous opportunity for regeneration of the economy of this area: for example, about 4000 vehicles pass along Magdalen Street between 7am and 7pm each day (2004 figures). Many commuters also use the plentiful cheap parking on vacant sites in the area, and walk to the City Centre for work. As well as being unsustainable in transportation terms, this in itself contributes little to the area's economy and many of the car parks have a poor environment.

The **issues identified** during consultation in March 2006 show that transportation and movement problems seriously compromise the area's regeneration potential. The main issues are summarised below (see Annex B for full results of the consultation exercises):

- (i) **Traffic-related pollution and congestion, particularly along St Augustine's Street and Magdalen Street.** Car and bus traffic dominates much of the area, resulting in a poor pedestrian environment and a poor environment for residents.
- (ii) **Footways are very narrow** in places particularly on Magdalen Street and St. Augustine's Street, with implications for pedestrian safety.
- (iii) **A need for accessible, well-signed, and high-quality parking** for residents, businesses and visitors. Existing car parks tend not to fulfil these criteria.
- (iv) **The inner ring-road is a major barrier to north-south movement in the area** for pedestrians and cyclists. As a result the area to the north of the ring road is relatively isolated from the City Centre.
- (v) **There is a need for better east-west pedestrian/cycle links**, particularly to the north of the inner ring road.
- (vi) **The impact of large numbers of bus routes concentrated in Magdalen Street** has implications for pedestrian safety and has not been appropriately provided for within the road system.

4.2 Guiding Principles and Objectives

The overall aim of Government planning guidance, and of the adopted City of Norwich Local Plan, is the promotion of sustainable development. This means that the need to travel by car should be reduced and housing, jobs and services should be highly accessible by modes other than the car.

Government guidance and local policies (Local Plan and NATS) emphasise the need to promote development that has minimal reliance on private motor transport and encourages walking, cycling and public transport. The area is excellently placed to do this, having a wide variety of jobs and services within or close to it.

The improvement of transport infrastructure should also focus on deprived areas as a means of assisting regeneration.

In relation to other aspects of this report, it will also be important to ensure that major new development in the area does not attract traffic beyond that which the road network can cope with.

In relation to objectives (para 3.2 above) the ones relating to improving traffic circulation (v) and enhancing opportunities for pedestrian and cycle movement in the area (vi) are the most important.

4.3 Suggested Approaches / Measures

The transport issues identified above could be dealt with in many ways. We have concentrated on tackling the main traffic impacts and considering whether such approaches have any damaging knock on effects.

Measure T1 – New strategic pedestrian and cycle links

(relates to AAP Objectives (i) and (vi) and Issues (ii), (iv) and (v) above)

Accessibility on foot or by bike, both within the area and to the City Centre, is a priority for action. We propose that new strategic east/west and north/south pedestrian and cycle links be provided. These routes will help to integrate the area with the rest of the City

Centre and to connect up currently separated parts of the area. The main routes are:

T1A – a new east-west pedestrian and cycle route from Oak Street/ Riverside Walk via Gildencroft, Anglia Square, St Saviour's Church to the river at Whitefriars Bridge (the cycle route may need to avoid the centre of Anglia Square, if that is revitalised as a District Shopping Centre).

T1B – a new north-south pedestrian and cycle link, from Magpie Road via Edward Street, West of Anglia Square, St Georges Street to St Andrews Hall and Plain.

Also the following measures would be necessary:

T1C – Enhanced signing for these routes with their intersection/focus located in the redeveloped Anglia Square area.

T1D – Provision of new pedestrian crossings to assist both these directions of movement. The priorities are a new surface-level crossing of the Inner Ring Road near the top of St George's Street linking into Anglia Square. Further crossings would be provided across Pitt Street (by Gildencroft Park), across Magdalen Street (near the flyover), across the Inner Ring Road/ Whitefriars junction and across St Augustine's Street and/or the St Augustines/ Magpie Road junction

We acknowledge that there may be improvements to pedestrian and cycle accessibility which can be made elsewhere as well. Comments or suggestions about the detail of the strategic routes and measures to be taken would be welcome.

Measure T2 – Provision of quality car parking in strategic locations

(relates to AAP Objectives (i) and (iii) and (iv) and Issue (iii) above)

The area lacks quality parking provision with most parking being on large vacant sites, which are an unsustainable and wasteful use of land. The Anglia Square multi-storey car park is poorly used and poorly maintained and does not feel safe.

It is proposed to rationalise parking provision in the area by:

- Removing the current multi-storey car park.
- Providing a new, high quality multi-storey car park to serve employment and shopping areas.
- Assessing further local parking needs in relation to the redevelopment proposals and the selected option for circulation of traffic
- Considering the strategic parking needs of the Magdalen Street/ Whitefriars/ Cathedral areas for visitors including the possible need for a further multi-storey car park.

Measure T3 – Traffic Diversion to reduce congestion and pollution

(relates to AAP Objectives (i) and (v) and Issues (i), (ii), and (vi) above)

The principal aim of this measure is to reduce traffic congestion and pollution in St Augustines Street/ Pitt Street. However, it also needs to consider the effects on congestion elsewhere and potential air quality if congestion results. In addition other traffic problems in Magdalen Street should be addressed. Several options are being developed by the County Council and comments are sought on which of these would best achieve the objectives.

Option T3A: One-Way Gyratory System on Oak Street/ St Augustines Street

We propose that in this case St Augustines Street/ Pitt Street would be one-way South-bound with North-bound traffic directed onto Oak Street. Oak Street would be one-way from the Inner Ring Road, but could still be open for local access to residential areas north of Sussex Street. Edward Street would remain bus only, except there may be a new access from the redeveloped Anglia Square car park.

The option is shown diagrammatically on Figure 3.

Implications include:

- A requirement to alter/ redesign a number of junctions including: Magpie Road/ Aylsham junction; St Crispin's roundabout; St Crispin's/Oak Street; Drayton Road/Oak Street; and Drayton Road/Aylsham Road.
- High costs, because of the extent of junction redesign.
- an enhanced environment on St Augustines Street, provided traffic calming measures are included;
- Increased traffic flows on Oak Street (Northbound) could require measures to control speed of traffic and provide for pedestrians crossing;
- No significant improvement to Magdalen Street, which might receive some diverted traffic as a result of the changes.

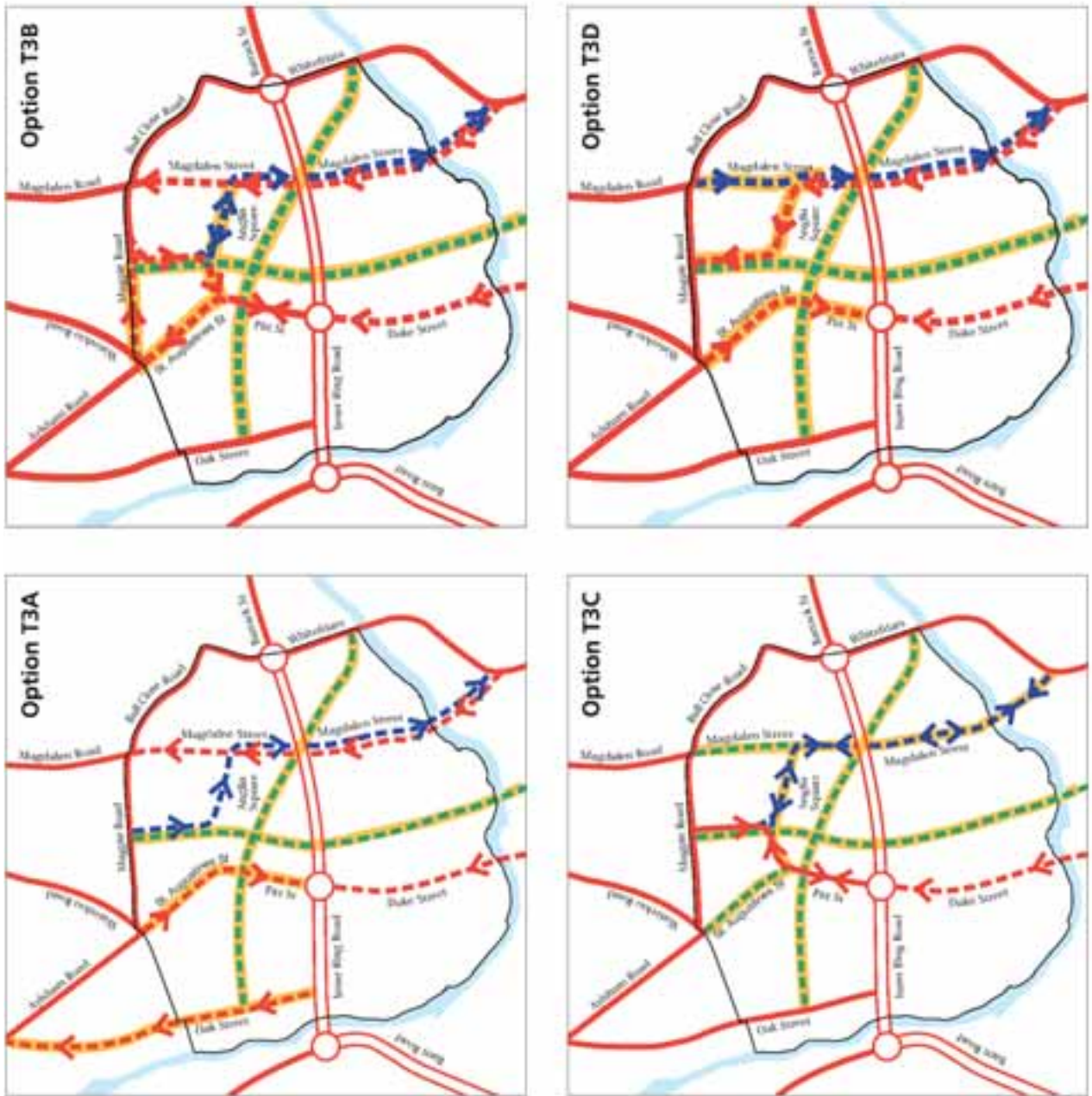
Option T3B – One-Way Gyratory System on Edward Street/ St Augustines Street/ Magpie Road

We propose that in this case an alternative one-way system is created. This would use a realigned Edward Street (south-bound), St Augustine's Street (north-bound) and Magpie Road (east-bound to Edward Street), and creation of a new link between Edward Street and St Augustine's Street to complete the circuit. The option is shown diagrammatically on figure 3. Figure 3 is on the next page.

Implications include:

- a requirement to alter/ redesign several junctions including Magpie Road / Edward Street and Aylsham Road/ Magpie Road. It also is likely to require improvements to Pitt Street.
- narrowing of the carriageway, traffic calming and an enhanced environment on St Augustines Street would be possible.

FIG 3 - TRAFFIC CIRCULATION OPTIONS [4]



<p>North City Centre Area Action Plan ISSUES AND OPTIONS</p>	<p>Fig 3 Traffic Circulation Options</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boundary of North City Centre Area Action Plan Dual Carriageway Two Way Route One Way Route Main Pedestrian/Cycle Route Bus Route Only Changes from present

This plan is based on the information available at the time of writing. It is not intended to be a final plan and is subject to change. It is not intended to be a final plan and is subject to change. It is not intended to be a final plan and is subject to change.

Option T3C – New Edward Street 2-way link and closure of St Augustines Street

This option is based on major redesign of Edward Street and the creation of a new link from Edward Street to Pitt Street. This would enable St Augustine's Street to be closed for through traffic.

We propose that traffic be diverted onto a new road built parallel to the present Edward Street. St Augustines Street could be closed, except for access only for residential areas and shops. This would create the opportunity for major improvements to the street environment.

This option also enables pedestrianisation of the northern end of Magdalen Street (with access only for residents and businesses) and creation of a new "plain" at the Magdalen Street / Magpie Road junction adjacent to the City Wall and historic gateway to the city. This could have real regeneration benefits to the most deprived sector of the area. The option is shown diagrammatically on figure 3.

Implications include the following :

- Improvements along Magpie Road to cater for increased traffic and redesign of its junctions with St Augustine's Street, Edward Street and Magdalen Road.
- New road surfacing to indicate pedestrian priority on St Augustine's Street and the upper part of Magdalen Street with new surfacing for the area adjoining Magdalen Gates.
- Relatively costly option, given the need to acquire land for the new link road.

Option T3D – Edward Street North bound one-way

This option separates northbound from southbound traffic right into the City Centre – requiring northbound traffic to divert onto Tombland and Bull Close Road or Magdalen Street.

It is based on a one-way system with St Augustine's Street being one way south-bound from the Magpie Road junction, and Magdalen Street and a realigned Edward Street providing the one-way northbound route (with no link to Pitt Street). This could provide an opportunity to give pedestrian priority on the northern section of Magdalen Street or allow south-bound buses to use this road. The option is shown diagrammatically on figure 3.

Implications include

- a requirement to alter/ redesign a number of junctions including: Magpie Road/ Aylsham junction; Edward Street/ Magpie Road and Magdalen Street/ Magpie Road junctions.
- increased traffic congestion on alternative routes, especially Oak Street, Bull Close Road.
- enhancement of the environment with reduced traffic queueing on St Augustine's Street.
- potential for pedestrian priority on the northern section of Magdalen Street.

Measure T4 – Maintain accessibility for bus passengers, with a new location of the main interchange point.

(relates to AAP Objectives (ii), (iv) and (v) and Issues (i), (ii), and (vi) above)

Bus routes are not specifically addressed by the traffic options above, as they are outside the control of the City or County Councils. Some options would have an impact on bus routing. On the other hand it is important to maintain the accessibility of the District Centre shops for bus users, including any new foodstore. Under some traffic options, bus routes may need to use St Augustines Street/ Pitt Street or Edward Street/ Pitt Street (one-way).

Implications include the likelihood that there will continue to be a large number of routes coming through this area. The bus interchange location could reduce length of time for buses spent queueing or at stops elsewhere.

Measure T5 – Redesign of pedestrian routes

(relates to AAP Objectives (i) and (vi) and Issues (i) and (ii) above)

Footways and pedestrian routes across the area need to be redesigned. It is expected that redevelopment of major sites and revised traffic routing will achieve a considerable part of this, and such schemes should be expected to provide a much enhanced pedestrian environment. In other parts of the area, specific measures will need to be taken and they should be funded from the developer contributions, proportionate to the size of development.

Implications include the imposition of additional costs on the major developments in the area.

5. ISSUES & OPTIONS - SHOPPING REVITALISATION

5.1 Context and Issues

The background to this topic is the Local Plan's identification of the Anglia Square/ Magdalen Street/ St Augustines Street area as a 'Major District Centre'. That means that the area has a strategic role for shopping and other services to the northern suburbs of the City, which should be maintained.

The area has good accessibility for key local services and jobs. This is shown in the Index of Multiple Deprivation measure for 'Access to Services', on which the area has a relatively high ranking on accessibility to family doctor, supermarket, primary school and post office (measured in 2001 before Budgen's closure).

At January 2006 this Major District Centre had a vacancy rate of 28 units (15%), which is relatively high compared with the rest of the city centre. This follows a trend of reduced numbers of vacant shops, although some have been converted to other uses, rather than being reused as shops. The area has had a high turnover of businesses and its main foodstore closed in early 2005 (Budgen's in Anglia Square)

The **issues identified** during the consultation in March 2006 and during the previous consultation for the Regeneration Strategy are the following

- (i) **the need to retain the distinctive identity of the area with large numbers of smaller independent shops.** Many of these smaller shops are specialist shops providing distinctive services, many of which provide a different type of goods and services from the City Centre shops.
- (ii) **The run down 'feel' of the shopping area, with a domination by down-market shops.** Whilst such shops provide a valuable service, the reputation of the centre suffers from a high level of such provision. Also high vacancy rates and the poor condition of some shops, discourage people from shopping there.
- (iii) **The need to replace the main foodstore in order to provide necessary service for the area to the**

north of the City Centre. The area needs the service of a local convenience store. However, it can benefit from a foodstore acting as a key attractor for people from the wider northern part of the City.

- (iv) **A relatively high turnover of businesses.** In some respects this may not be a disadvantage – businesses move on in order to develop themselves and provide a better service. However, combined with (ii) above, it reduces the attractiveness of the area.
- (v) **A need for new attractions,** including on-street events, markets and activities for families, which will attract new people to the area.
- (vi) **Poor signing of the area** – a lack of information to encourage people to visit the area and show them where to park or how to move around the area.
- (vii) **The loss of shops to other uses** – a further illustration of the overall run-down state of the centre and the fact that residential use can attract higher values for many of the small shops.

5.2 Guiding Principles

A key principle for any future policy has to be the status of the centre as a Major District Centre, which will not change. This is defined in the Local Plan, which sets out policies about extensions of the centre, location of new retail development and accessibility of the centre.

A further principle is that the scale of new development has to relate to the need for shopping (or service) development and that that scale should relate to the existing centre's recognised position in the shopping hierarchy. [The City Council is undertaking a Retail Study of the Norwich area in order to assess what the need is for further retail development].

The potential for new attractions should be considered in the design of any redevelopment in the area, as most such attractions will require flexible spaces between the buildings, not dominated by traffic, but with an attractive layout.

5.3 Suggested Approaches / Measures

The revitalisation of the area can be achieved in a number of ways, but combined with the other objectives above, there are more limited prospects for the Anglia Square area, which dictate the main options that could be pursued.

Measure SH1 – provide a larger foodstore within the redevelopment of part of Anglia Square.

(relates to AAP Objectives (iii) and (iv) and Issues (ii) and (iii) above)

We envisage this would need to be a foodstore of above 3000 sq. metres to provide sufficient attraction to bring people into the area and to serve the numbers of people in its catchment effectively. The details of size will have to be confirmed once the Retail Study results are available. In built form such a large store would need to have other uses and perhaps parking on floor levels above the main ground level store – it may be that elements of the store itself could be on an upper floor level. The foodstore should be seen as a new ‘anchor store’ for Anglia Square and oriented accordingly.

Measure SH2 – Provide a focus on Arts and Culture and related independent shopping outlets.

(relates to AAP Objective (iv) and Issue (i) and (v) above)

We envisage this option would identify opportunities for arts and/or cultural venues in the area. This could include an arts centre, display space, a conference centre. The upper floors of Anglia Square should in particular be developed for such uses. Opportunities for suitable shops and services related to those uses should be identified and encouraged. The expansion of the School of Art and Design into the area should be provided for.

This option could be combined with Measure SH1.

The **main implication** of establishing this measure is the need to establish a ‘critical mass’ of attractions sufficient to get numbers of people into the area.

Measure SH3 – Revitalise the area by focusing on improving the ‘offer’ of small shops selling goods of a more specialist nature (including fashion shops).

(relates to AAP Objectives (i) and (iii) and Issue (i) above)

We envisage this option being similar to existing policies, perhaps with additional measures to support retailers. A foodstore would certainly be necessary (see measure SH1). It would also support new smaller units in any redevelopment of part of Anglia Square.

The **main implication** of such an approach would be the strong competition in the comparison and fashion goods sectors of the market from the rest of the City Centre. Local Plan policy limits the scale of such development, which could be supported, for this reason. Consequently it is unlikely that the area could generate a ‘critical mass’ of shopping floorspace to be a main attractor for such shopping.

Measure SH4 – Promote a New Identity for the Area with Signage from the rest of the City Centre

(relates to AAP Objectives (iii), (iv) and (vii) and Issues (i) and (vi) above)

We envisage this measure as being about creating the means to attract more people with good promotional materials and signage. Redevelopment in the area should reflect the need for attractive spaces and its design would need to reflect the identity of the area as promoted.

This measure could sit with almost any of the other measures and would be essential to some of them (e.g. Measure SH2). It is not directly under the control of the planning system and thus would rely on the coordination of outside agencies. If applied to the area as it now exists, the problem would be the lack of any significant attractors in the area.

Measure SH5 – Creation of a New Focus for the Area with a Flexible Space available for a range of events and functions.

(relates to AAP Objectives (iv) and (vii) and Issue (v) above)

We envisage that this would involve a redesign of the centre of Anglia Square to be more open and visible to the community. Access and parking would need to be designed to cater for the key events as well as ordinary activities. The use of the flexible space may need to be controlled, to ensure that events are appropriate and do not create problems for shoppers and residents and other users of the area.

This measure could be consistent with several of the other measures. There may also be other ways of designing the 'flexible space' for events without it being in the centre of the shopping area. It would be essential that effective promotion and signing (Measure SH4) is included with this measure.

Other measures in separate Chapters will also need to be considered for consistency with the selected retail option. In particular parking provision (measure T2) will have a significant impact on the shopping vitality of the area. If St Augustines Street is to provide an element of shopping activity, then it is essential that the traffic levels there are reduced and the pavements widened (see Chapter 4 above). The state of the local environment will also need to be addressed effectively for any revitalisation of retail activity.

Measure SH6 – Relax guidance regarding the proportion of shops to be retained in main shopping frontages.

(relates to AAP Objectives (iii) and (iv) and Issue (vii) above)

This additional measure might be to revise the planning guidelines about the mix of uses for particular streets or areas. There would need to be continued controls, in order to maintain the vitality of the main shopping frontages, which themselves may change as a result of redevelopment.

The **implications** include the possibility that shops will be left vacant because there is no viable use for them, which would detract from the environment of the area.

6. ISSUES & OPTIONS - EMPLOYMENT

6.1 Context and Issues

The area has a number of major employers who are very important to the area. These include Smurfit (NCB, Whitefriars), and the Stationery Office (St Crispins House). There are also large office blocks at St Mary's House, Gildengate House, Sackville Place and Stannard Place, which are each occupied by several firms. In addition there is a wide range of smaller workshops and employment premises, including a range of retail and service employment.

Nevertheless, employment in the area has declined significantly over the last 10 years. The legacy of this is the number of vacant employment premises in the area – Sovereign House, Gildengate House and Hi-Tech House.

The unemployment rate for those living in the area is 5.4% and this is almost twice that of the whole of Norwich. Since 1991 that rate has come down from 14.2%, but it remains relatively high for the City and Norfolk as a whole.

The primary City-wide consideration is the shortage of high quality office space. There is ample office floorspace available at present, but little of it fulfils the needs of firms seeking suitable modern premises with technological infrastructure and a good environment.

The context for employment is provided by the Norwich Area Employment Growth Study, which was produced by consultants, Roger Tym and Partners in July 2005. It showed that there was a need for significant expansion, primarily of office space in the Norwich sub-region over the period 2001-2021. It suggested a jobs target (for inclusion in the Regional Spatial Strategy – RSS) of 35,000 across the whole Sub-Region to 2021. This is likely to be included following debate at the Examination in Public into the RSS. It highlighted the Anglia Square area as a 'strategic employment location' to meet this need. It recommends that *"detailed feasibility studies are undertaken of the key constrained sites identified, particularly those in Norwich City Centre, which must be brought forward at the earliest opportunity."*

However, the problem over a number of years has been the lack of high quality modern office accommodation in the City Centre. The only recent development to have delivered such modern floorspace has been just outside the North City Centre area at Whitefriars (the former Jarrold Printers site). This is likely to form a centre for office accommodation in attractive surroundings and it will be important to consolidate that with further quality developments in that vicinity and enhanced links between it and Magdalen Street/ Anglia Square area.

The issues identified during the consultation in March 2006 and during the previous consultation for the Regeneration Strategy are the following:

- (i) **the need to regenerate the vacant and poor quality office buildings in the area.** This includes some such as Sovereign House, which are unlikely to be capable of being refurbished to modern standards and will need to be redeveloped.
- (ii) **The lack of demand for new offices (built for the speculative market).** In general the returns for office building will only justify development if specific end-users are known.
- (iii) **Need to keep employment in the area to support the vitality of shopping and services in the District Centre** and to provide for the growth of jobs in an accessible location.
- (iv) **The issue of access for employees including policies about parking provision.** The adopted Local Plan maintains policies which will restrict non-operational parking for new employment provision in the area. However, this is consistent with government advice – it is the out-of-town decentralised offices, which are unsustainable and contrary to current government advice.

- (v) **The need for expansion of specific cultural and media sectors** – in this area the specific needs of the School of Art and Design are relevant.
- (vi) **Small business needs for cheap premises and the need for provision of alternatives if they are relocated.** Some small businesses will need to be relocated, if developments proposed in the Local Plan are to be achieved.

6.2 Guiding Principles

The key principle from Regional Spatial Strategy and the adopted Local Plan is that provision should be made for growth in office employment in the city centre area, in order to ensure that future job growth is accessible to all. In national and regional guidance such locations have priority over peripheral, or out-of-town locations and Norwich should ensure that it has such central sites available to meet demand in future. This may need to be tested to see what scale of development could be necessary and supported by the market. However, it is not in doubt that this area provides a key source of potential land for future office provision within the City Centre.

In terms of employment losses in the area, it is important to recognise the particular sectors that are likely to be growth sectors for the Norwich economy – and may thus be eligible for grant support in some cases. The ‘Shaping the Future’ Economic Strategy of Norfolk and Waveney and the Norwich Economic Strategy are relevant in this context.

6.3 Suggested Approaches / Measures

The employment options available are not generally capable of achievement without other interventions. It must be recognised therefore that the main approach will be as part of the mix of uses proposed within the regeneration of the area.

Measure E1 – Promote redevelopment in which sites for large modern office blocks are reserved

(relates to AAP objectives (iii) and (iv) and to issues (i), (ii) and (iii) above)

There are two possible options for the means to address this issue :

Option E1A - Define Specific sites for redevelopment of large modern office blocks and reserve them for a certain period.

This option would mean the reservation of suitable sites for specific types and levels of office development. It would have to reserve the sites for a specific period or until other tests were satisfied to show that either development could take place elsewhere in the City Centre or that there was no possibility of demand being realised.

Sites should be selected to be attractive and to provide good linkages to services and shopping for employees. The best sites may be close to the shopping centre at Anglia Square and in close proximity to the river at Whitefriars. It could include reservation of specific space for the College of Art and Design to expand.

Implications include

- The possibility that this will hold back regeneration in the area
- The need for careful consideration of the effect on redevelopment of different sites (both those selected and those not covered by this policy)
- The need for provision of parking to serve visitors and operational needs of office users.

Option E1B – Require a Proportion of floorspace in each major mixed development to be reserved for Office Use.

This option would mean defining the mix of uses to include office development for most of the major sites in the area. As such it would develop existing Local Plan policies. It would be ‘fairer’ in the sense that it would share out the requirement for employment provision between major sites. This element could be detailed in more detailed guidance (planning briefs or Masterplans) for the largest sites. This would include design advice on the form of such office blocks in relation to the rest of the development and adjoining areas.

Implications include

- the possibility that this will hold back regeneration of some sites
- the need to ensure that the mix of development is achievable and makes sense in terms of physical relationship.

Measure E2 – Provide specific protection for Small Businesses requiring relocation, if necessary.

(relates to AAP objective (iii) and issue (vi) above)

We envisage that this option would provide some protection for businesses affected by other proposals. It may thus encourage them to cooperate with the wider changes needed to regenerate the area. It would need to distinguish between small employment premises and shops, as these are continually changing hands and cannot expect to be protected in this way.

Implications include

- the possibility that this will hold back regeneration of some sites where businesses cannot be relocated
- the need to identify alternative sites in the City to accommodate the business uses;
- the issue that a business may be relocated but would then not be capable of surviving the impact of that;
- this option may be seen as conflicting with the Local Plan allocations (on some sites).

Measure E3 – Provide specifically for development of creative and media industry workshops

(relates to AAP objectives (ii) and (iii) and issues (i) and (v) above)

This would link to the options in the Community and Social Chapter relating to the arts and cultural venues. It would have to consider what kind of employment units should be developed to encourage the development of such industries, but to some extent this is already anticipated in the King Street area of the City.

Implications may include

- the need to hold back regeneration of some sites until such creative/ media industries are sufficiently established in the area.
- The scale of employment provided by this option may be quite small – at least initially.
- There is an advantage in that such studios etc. could be provided as part of the mix in larger redevelopment schemes and are generally fairly flexible in their use.

Measure E4 – to define specific services and office uses to be included in the mix of uses in the District Centre.

(relates to AAP objective (iv) and issue (iii) above)

This would include provision associated with the refurbishment of existing buildings, which could be generally supported (except where allocations for other development included the site). The aim would be to ensure that a wider range of activities is associated with the District Centre.

In relation to the parking issues raised under issue (iv) above, these are dealt with in Chapter 4.

7. ISSUES & OPTIONS - HERITAGE & DESIGN

7.1 Context and Issues

The area has an exceptional heritage and is one of the oldest parts of the City. It is believed that one of the earliest Saxon settlements in Norwich was on the north bank of the River Wensum, giving its name ('Northwick') to the City. Evidence for this has been found in the Fishergate area. There is also evidence for an Anglo-Scandinavian settlement in the early 10th century with a defensive wall/ ditch in this area and extending northwards up Magdalen Street.

The importance of conservation of this heritage is demonstrated in the number of listed buildings in the area – some 200. There are also a large number of buildings which are recognised on the 'local list'. The City Wall is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The whole area is part of the City Centre Conservation Area.

The HERS (Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme) program has been in place since 2001. This scheme aims to encourage economic regeneration through works to historic buildings and areas. It assists the re-occupation of disused or under-used buildings, whilst retaining and repairing the historic fabric of the buildings. The final round of HERS funding has been allocated in March 2006. The HERS scheme has led to the renovation of many historic buildings, but other listed buildings are still 'at risk' – notably the City Wall at Magpie Road.

The heritage of the area was severely damaged by the 1970s insertion of the Inner Ring Road flyover and Anglia Square. These developments cut a swathe through the original mediaeval street pattern, thus reducing considerably the opportunities for north-south routes through the area.

Design of development has, in a number of other cases, not enhanced the heritage of the area. Historic forms of development gave a sense of enclosure, which has frequently been lost. There are also too many examples of listed and heritage buildings being ignored by newer neighbours, giving poor views of the historic buildings and sometimes very strange juxtaposition of old and new.

The issues identified during the consultation in March 2006 and during the previous consultation for the Regeneration Strategy are the following:

- (i) **the loss of historic buildings and street pattern in the area** (especially in the Anglia Square and flyover areas)
- (ii) **Lack of visibility and blocking of views of key historic buildings.** This includes local views but also some long distance views – e.g. of the Cathedral, Castle, City Hall and other primary landmarks.
- (iii) **Unsympathetic modern development.** This includes the issues of the scale and massing of Anglia Square and the NCB factory. It also includes more small scale clashes of design between modern buildings and their neighbours, leading to loss of local character.
- (iv) **Inadequate heritage signing for visitors and the dispersed locations of such attractions.** This is a concern that extends to adjacent parts of the City Centre, as it is important visitors are drawn into the area. The location of attractions means that a system of trails would be particularly important to link them and encourage visitors to take in the more out-of-the-way sites.
- (v) **The danger of buildings and structures at risk being demolished or falling down, if they are not adequately maintained.** This includes the City Walls, where there are particular sections causing concern.
- (vi) **The need to excavate and preserve the more important archaeological sites.** As a result of the long history of the occupation of the area, it is very important to ensure that ample opportunity is given for archaeological investigation before development commences on sites. The Whitefriars/ Fishergate area is probably the most important part of the NCC area for archaeological investigation.

- (vii) **The poor quality of most public streets, spaces and pedestrian areas.** In some respects this is an expression of the run-down nature of the area. However, it also reflects a lack of attention to detail in the design of development and the public domain.
- (viii) **The need for energy efficiency and quality in design of buildings.** This relates to City-wide concerns about sustainable development and reducing the City's emissions of CO₂.

7.2 Guiding Principles

The Local Plan provides the key principles of ensuring that development respects and contributes to the character and heritage of the area, including the importance of particular buildings and their settings. This is reinforced by its status as a Conservation Area. It also sets out the broad principles of high quality of design, which will be required. These are not, therefore, optional for development in this key heritage area of the City. In particular development should

- make the best use of views of key buildings in the City Centre such as the Castle and Cathedral
- be of a scale and design that fits in well with its surroundings and especially the setting of any historic buildings
- provide for attractive pedestrian and cycle routes through the area.

With regard to the overall strategy of the AAP, this should adopt a heritage led approach, giving strong priority to ensuring that the historic form of the area is restored where possible.

7.3 Suggested Approaches / Measures

Measure HD1 – Full redevelopment of the whole Anglia Square complex
(related to AAP objectives (i), (iii), (iv) and (vi) and to issues (i), (ii), (iii) above)

We regard this as a possible option over a longer period, though it would require careful phasing. The measure would only be effectively achieved if the whole redevelopment were the subject of a detailed Masterplan. It would enable a restoration of something akin to the original street pattern and more pedestrian and cycle links across the area.

Implications would include

- the effect on the economy of Anglia Square, which may be difficult to sustain through a lengthy period of redevelopment.
- A further loss of jobs from the area, before any additional employment can be provided.

Measure HD2 – Partial redevelopment of Anglia Square
(related to AAP objectives (i), (iii), (iv) and (vi) and issues (i), (ii) and (iii) above)

We regard this as essential to open up the views of the central square and the shopping centre and to give opportunities for revitalising the centre. The opportunity should be taken to remove some of the worst design elements of the square and its surroundings. Redevelopment should create public entrances to east and west and integrate the replacement much better into the surrounding street pattern. The question arises of which parts of the complex should be removed. This must in part depend upon the owners' assessment of viability of refurbishment, but we suggest at least the west side (Sovereign House) and the multi-storey car park should be removed. A Masterplan would assist this process.

Implications would include:

- Need for a phasing plan to show how partial redevelopment fits in at different stages with the remaining elements
- Consideration of what happens at each level and how movement and parking of vehicles can be provided for (e.g. while the multi-storey car park is removed)

Measure HD3 – Orient replacement buildings to create longer views of the key City Centre buildings (e.g Cathedral or Castle)

(related to AAP objective (ii) and issue (ii) above)

This option relies on the longer views being available as a result of redevelopment. In some cases the possibility of this should be reserved, in anticipation of longer term removal of obstacles.

Measure HD4 – Promote and encourage preservation of significant archaeological finds in situ.

(related to AAP Objective (i), (ii) and (vii) and issue (vi) above.)

There are policies in place to require appropriate excavation. However, in this area the significant evidence of the earliest form of settlement in Norwich should be preserved, if it can be found and is appropriate. This will have to the subject of further investigation as more sites/ evidence come forward.

Implications would include:

- Determination of which sites need special treatment in order to preserve such remains;
- Consideration of how best to allow and provide information for public access to what may be a private development site.

Measure HD5 – Require significant improvements in the design and management of streets, squares, public spaces and routes of all kinds.

(relates to AAP Objectives (vii) and (i) and issue (vii) above)

This option would particularly relate to the various Transport Options and the details of their implementation. The need to enhance the details of the area's public infrastructure is pressing and requires a much stronger emphasis on quality of materials by both public and private sectors.

A Conservation Area Appraisal is to be carried out. It will commence with the North City Centre area as part of the City Centre Conservation Area. It will provide detailed guidance on the detailed design and management of the heritage of the area.

Measure HD6 – provide additional signage to historic buildings in the area and to a range of other attractions and require appropriate interpretation and signage for specific developments.

(relates to AAP objective (ii) and issues (iv) and (vii) above)

This should be part of the City Centre Signage Strategy and should be integrated with the rest of the city centre.

A policy in the Local Plan seeks contributions to interpretation of the heritage of the area, where a development site contains historic remains or buildings. It will be important to provide this kind of material to enable visitors to understand the area's heritage, but in a form which gives specific linkage to other attractions in this area.

8. ISSUES AND OPTIONS - HOUSING

8.1 Context and Issues

This North City Centre area has a population of 2,500 (2001 Census) and it is growing due to new housing developments in the area. There is a relatively high proportion of people aged 20-29 in the population – 23% in 2001 – and low proportions of children and those over 75.

The average household size is much smaller than the City-wide average (1.63 persons per household), which reflects the significant proportion of flats and small houses in the area.

In terms of tenure there are fewer owner occupied dwellings and more social rented (Council and Housing Association) properties. Owner occupation is higher in the southern part of the area (south of the Inner Ring Road), reflecting recent building of houses in this part of the area.

The broader context is that Norwich is the centre of a sub-region proposed to receive significant growth in housing development over the next 15 years (through the Regional Spatial Strategy). The City as a whole is expected to find sites for 14,000 dwellings over the period 2001-2021. In practice development rates have increased greatly in the City – mainly on brownfield sites. In the last three years 2284 dwellings have been built across the City and the whole of the requirement from RSS can be achieved by 2011 at present rates of development. Given the densities of housing development being achieved now in this area as well as other parts of the City, the allocations in the plan will provide far more dwellings than originally proposed.

The Local Plan allocates a significant number of sites in this area for redevelopment for housing. In general this AAP will need to follow such policies, unless there are very good reasons why these allocations will not happen, but looking at the detail of how they relate to changes that have occurred since the Local Plan. The sites allocated (and not yet developed) include :

- Muspole Street (Hadley and Ottaway)
- Sites at Anglia Square/ Pitt Street/ Edward Street (mix of uses)

- St Crispins Road/ Chatham Street (mixed use)
- Hi Tech House, Blackfriars Street (mixed use)
- Gildengate House (for conversion of building)
- Friars Quay /Colegate (former Wilsons Glaziers)
- Land adj Great Hall, Oak Street
- 145-161, Oak Street

In addition Local Plan policies on the inclusion of housing in mixed development and on the provision of affordable housing within schemes over 25 dwellings will be applicable.

The issues identified during the consultation in March 2006 and during the previous consultation for the Regeneration Strategy are the following:

- (i) **the low proportion of family housing in the area** which has implications for the social make-up of the population. It also leads to certain problems about the services and facilities which are supported – to the detriment of families living in the area.
- (ii) **A lack of affordable housing and problems of access to suitable housing for people living in the area.** This is part of the general affordability problem throughout the City and indeed the Region. A new Housing Needs Survey has just been undertaken and the results should inform this plan, when they are available.
- (iii) **The low quality of some flats** due to low investment in maintenance and poor conversions in some cases. This is not applicable to all flats, but does create issues for refurbishment of the housing stock.
- (iv) **A marked difference between the north and south of the area,** with little housing investment having occurred recently in the northern part.
- (v) **A need for some accommodation in the area for students at the School of Art and Design.**

8.2 Guiding Principles

Again a key principle in this topic area, is to ensure that development is sustainable. This has implications for

- Accessibility by alternative modes of transport;
- Use of brownfield sites for housing, if they have no high priority for another use;
- Implementation of the priority for sites which have been previously developed and have good accessibility;
- Ensuring that employment is also provided within the area, alongside new dwellings;
- Providing for social mix in planned developments, including the need for affordable housing.

8.3 Suggested Approaches / Measures

The housing measures put forward are not in the main about allocating specific sites (though the plan may need to do that) – with the exception of H5. They are rather about addressing some of the generic problems of the area and avoiding the social consequences being exacerbated.

Measure H1 – Encourage development of more home ownership North of the Inner Ring Road within this area

(related to AAP objectives (ii) and (vii) and to issues (i) and (iv) on the previous page)

This measure is put forward to address the issue about concentration of deprivation in the northern part of the area. It would not preclude RSL provision as part of larger schemes within private developments in that area, but it would avoid provision where only RSL development is included in that northern area.

Measure H2 – Encourage a greater proportion of family housing on appropriate sites

(relates to AAP objectives (ii) and (vii) and issues (i) and (ii) on the previous page)

This would mean that some sites would have a limit set for the proportion of flats within the development, the remainder of the provision on such sites to be larger houses suitable for families. In fact the approach could apply to most sites in the area, perhaps with differential limits according to size/ location of site (comments on this would be welcome). This measure would tackle the question of size of units, rather than their tenure make-up. It could therefore be combined in some way with Measure H1.

Measure H3 – Provide for higher density of housing development within the Anglia Square area

(relates to AAP objectives (ii) and (iv) and issue (ii) on the previous page)

This option suggests that the density proposed in the Local Plan (80 dwellings) on this site is too low. It also suggests that the site would be generally suitable for flats to be built (perhaps as an exception to the option at H2 above?). This would to some degree depend on where housing is proposed on the site and how that housing would relate to other uses, which may be proposed in close proximity to the housing.

Measure H4 – Identify appropriate accommodation for students to meet the needs of the School of Art and Design (possibly a specific site or sites).

(relates to AAP objective (vii) and issue (v) on the previous page)

One site has been investigated for this purpose and it would fit with its allocation in the Local Plan – that is the site at St Crispins Road/ Chatham Street. However, other possible sites might be suggested.

Measure H5 – Include the allocation of the site of Sussex House (Sussex Street) for housing development/ conversion.

(relates to AAP objective (ii) and issue (ii) on page 40)

This building is occupied by Norwich Union as offices. It is not allocated in the Local Plan, but could provide a suitable site, if the present use ceases, which would help to regenerate the St Augustines area. It is in an area of family housing and would be suitable for such a use. Further investigation would be necessary to assess the form of any such development/ conversion.

Measure H6 – Require principles of good design to be used in redevelopment, including high energy efficiency standards.

(relates to AAP objective (ii) on page 40)

It will be important for the AAP to develop the principles of good design relevant to this area. For housing this should cover the importance of energy efficiency and for a high quality of environment with consideration to the heritage of the area being designed into new schemes.

Action H7 – to encourage the improvement of run-down or vacant dwellings.

(relates to AAP Objectives (i) and (vii) and issues (iii) and (iv) on page 40)

These actions could include grant availability being extended from the terms and duration of the present HER Scheme.

9. ISSUES & OPTIONS - COMMUNITY & SOCIAL

9.1 Context and Issues

The North City Centre is an inner city area with some of the problems associated with such locations. However it also has a great variety of social and community services and organisations and a variety of different communities within the area. This is reflected in the number of community groups and residents' associations, which have different viewpoints but also some common interests.

Crime and disorder are serious issues in the Northern City Centre, particularly in the area north of the Inner Ring Road. The IMD indicator 'Crime and Disorder' shows that the northern part of the area is the worst part of Norwich for certain crimes (burglary, theft, criminal damage and violence) and falls in the worst 5% of such areas nationally. The southern part is only slightly better. This area is ninth worst in Norwich and falls in the worst 10% nationally.

Anti-social behaviour affects the social and built environment of the area, creating an atmosphere which discourages people from living in the area and which deters investors. Residents identified crime and anti-social behaviour as a serious issue during both the 2002 consultation for the Regeneration Strategy and the Stage 1 consultation workshop. There is a perceived lack of safety and security for both local residents and businesses in the area.

However, a good deal of this anti-social behaviour occurs late at night and is the result of excessive alcohol consumption. In this respect the core late night activities have largely moved from the area to the adjoining areas of Tombland, Prince of Wales Road and Riverside. The Northern City Centre area has a significant number of pubs and one remaining night club, but the main impact is from the use of the main radial routes as routes leading away from the city centre late at night. This may be exacerbated to some extent by the presence of late night take-away food establishments, which encourage clubbers to linger in the streets of this area, especially Magdalen Street.

Norfolk Constabulary confirmed that there is evidence of high crime rates in the area, especially in car parks and open spaces. The Crime and Drugs Audit 2004 (Norwich Community Safety Partnership, 2004) demonstrates that both Anglia Square and Oak Street had high rates of 'Theft from Motor Vehicles' during 2003/04. This type of criminal behaviour occurs most often either in the early morning or in the afternoon in Anglia Square.

The Area Action Plan will not be able to have a direct impact on these problems. It will need to consider measures involving other agencies, whose policies can be effective in tackling the future incidence of these problems (e.g. licensing) and can relate to the Area Action Plan's proposed actions. The AAP will have a more indirect impact in terms of defining where clubs, bars and restaurants may be appropriately located in future and how the design of new development should deter crime and vandalism. This will particularly relate to the openness and viability of activities in public places in the redeveloped area.

The **issues identified** during the consultation in March 2006 and during the previous consultation for the Regeneration Strategy are the following:

- (i) **a lack of (natural) surveillance and poor lighting in many public areas.** This is partly due to poor design of a number of existing buildings and the empty sites throughout the area. An example of a poorly lit space is the multi-storey car park in Anglia Square.
- (ii) **Imbalanced age structure due to a large proportion of young single households in the Northern City Centre.** (see Housing issues and options above)

- (iii) **The existence of alcohol and drugs related problems and its visibility on the streets.** There are a number of support services for people with drugs and alcohol related problems in the Northern City Centre. In addition there are a large number of vacant and derelict properties and land, which are not overlooked. This leads to a high perceived lack of safety for many residents. In addition, residents have found needles and related materials in public spaces.
- (iv) **Violent crime and anti-social behaviour late at night.** This issue is clearly related to the issue above, but the late night problem is somewhat different and fuelled by excessive drinking. The Crime, Disorder and Drugs Audit 2004 states that Magdalen Street and Anglia Square, next to Riverside, Prince of Wales Road and Tombland, are the locations where violent crime most often occurred in 2003/04.
- (v) **The lack of a community meeting place** where groups can meet and which can be flexible for a variety of purposes.

9.2 Guiding Principles

The issues related to this topic can roughly be divided into three distinct areas. This means that there are also three sets of key principles that need to be taken into account.

Planning in itself cannot stop crime happening. It can try to make the physical environment less prone to crime through good design. The ODPM publication 'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention' sets out how good design can improve the built environment and deter crime. Therefore, a key principle should be that all new development will have a high standard of design and seek to create a safe environment.

The Area Action Plan will attempt to provide measures to make the area more attractive to families with the long term goal of achieving a better balance of age groups and family structure in the area compared to the rest of

Norwich. This is a key element throughout the Area Action Plan.

A further principle will be that the late night activity zone as indicated in the Norwich Replacement Local Plan will not be extended into the Northern City Centre and policies for the location of late night activities will need to reflect that.

9.3 Suggested Approaches / Measures

Measure CS1: Incorporate good design in new developments with special attention to lighting and security.
(relates to AAP Objectives (ii) and (vii) and issue (i) above)

It is important to continue emphasising the need for high quality design of new buildings and public open spaces. The criteria as set out by ODPM in 'Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention' (2004) will be a useful guide to evaluate designs. This should include attention to issues such as natural surveillance, good lighting and movement patterns.

Measure CS2: Make provision of facilities for children and families locally a priority (in order to support measure H2 above)
(relates to AAP Objectives (iii) and (vii) and issues (ii) and (iii) above)

Measures to reduce the proportion of small flats and increase the proportion of family housing in new residential development can affect the social structure of the area. The workshops and discussions brought out that the high proportion of young one-person households might be related to the high crime figures (being more susceptible to burglary and other crime). However the social and community infrastructure needs to be present to encourage families to live in the area and new development can support this.

Measure CS3: Prevent extension of additional late night activities into the Northern City Centre.

(relates to AAP Objective (vii) and issue (iv) above)

The North City Centre area is not an appropriate area for new development of late night activities (e.g. nightclubs). We would, under this option, develop policies to ensure that there will be no future new development of nightclubs or late night entertainment venues in the area.

Measure CS4 : Seek the provision of a suitable meeting place within one of the core developments

(relates to AAP Objective (vii) and issue (v) above)

This is needed to enable community groups to develop and represent the views of people and businesses in the area during this period of rapid change.

9.4 Other measures or proposed solutions

These four measures should not be seen as individual, alternative options. They are all interconnected. They also relate to other issues in this document. Some elements, such as good design for all new developments, could be taken as given. However, this Area Action Plan is a strategic planning document. This means that policies need to be based on what planning and related actions can do for the environment. For example we cannot expect to influence the numbers of police in the area, but we could agree actions relating to the safety and security of new development and their impact on the pockets of poor environment in the area.

10. ISSUES & OPTIONS - OPEN SPACES & THE ENVIRONMENT

10.1 Context and Issues

The environment of the area was a key area of general dissatisfaction at the First Stage of consultation (March 2006) and on the Regeneration Strategy (in 2002). We have already referred to the issue of air pollution, which arises particularly from the traffic congestion in the area. Many comments also referred to the run-down feel of the area, especially the streets and public spaces.

Access to open space and equipped play space is fundamental in offering a healthy life style. It is essential to provide safe places where children can play outside and learn new experiences. Public spaces can give an area an added feel of identity and character. It is essential to have sufficient high quality open spaces and play spaces.

The most significant open space within the Northern City Centre is the Gildencroft. On the edge of the area is Wensum Park and Mousehold Heath is also within walking distance for most residents. There are a few more playgrounds for toddlers spread through the area. There are some completed stretches of Riverside Walk, especially along the southern edge of the area. This needs to be further developed in several sections along the river in the Oak Street area – and the Local Plan policies provide for this.

Ideally all publicly accessible open spaces throughout Norwich should be connected through green and safe pedestrian/ cycle links. This concept is recognised in the Replacement Local Plan as a proposed network of 'green links'. Policy SR12 is aimed at providing and enhancing this network throughout the city. These green links have a second function, that of improving biodiversity, through encouraging and allowing migration of wildlife through the urban area.

The area includes many spaces, which at present are waste land or surface car parks. Most of them had previously been occupied by buildings, now demolished, and some have important heritage significance (see Chapter 10). These vacant sites have huge potential for enhancing the environment of the area,

alongside suitable development. They are in a good, sustainable location, with good public transport links to the northern parts of Norwich and are within walking distance of the city centre. Once developed, they can be part of the heart of the Northern City Centre, but it will be important to ensure that they provide an attractive and sustainable environment for the residents and visitors to enjoy.

The context for the AAP in its treatment of the environment of the area is provided by the Local Plan. Policies in that document relating to green links and open space will be important inputs to the AAP. The AAP should aim to provide additional spaces, especially for children living in the area.

The **issues identified** during the consultation in March 2006 and during the previous consultation for the Regeneration Strategy are the following:

- (i) **The area does not have enough useable green space.** The City Council aims to ensure that every resident has sufficient access to open space and equipped children's play space. It also seeks to ensure that these areas are accessible throughout the city. The area itself does not have large amounts of open space. Map 3, on page 50, shows the location and type of all open spaces in the Northern City Centre. Several of the open spaces within the area are not useable for residents.
- (ii) **The existing open space and play areas are of poor quality and there is a lack of facilities for older children.** This issue was brought up by residents during the 2002 consultation for the Regeneration Strategy, and again emphasised during the Stage 1 consultation workshops in March 2006. The Gildencroft open space has been misused by drink and drug users, leading to concerns for children using the park. There are improvements planned to the Gildencroft, including a new entrance onto Pitt Street and construction of a new equipped playground for children up to 12 years. For children older than this, there is little provision in the area and developments need to consider contributing to these needs.

- (iii) **Lack of attractive green links through the area.** This issue is clearly linked with poor pedestrian/ cycle links through the Northern City Centre as discussed in the 'Transport' topic. Another dimension to the importance of green links is their crucial role in maintaining and improving biodiversity within Norwich. Green links should offer migration routes for wildlife throughout the City. There are opportunities for the Riverside Walk to be extended, especially to the west of Oak Street.
- (iv) **Lack of/ poor quality of public spaces where events and activities could be held.** At present the public spaces that exist in the area are inappropriate and of poor quality. They do not attract people to use them for outdoor events and activities (except undesirable ones!). The need for a more attractive central square to allow such events to be held was identified in the Workshops.
- (v) **Many buildings on St. Augustine's Street and Magdalen Street are in a poor state of repair and are badly maintained.** Many run-down and/or derelict buildings, poorly maintained shopfronts, and narrow pavements are found in these two main shopping streets. This results in a very unattractive and uninviting environment, which contributes to the poor perception of the area and discourages private sector investment.

10.2 Guiding Principles

The guiding principles for any future policy will be the policies in the Replacement Local Plan related to the provision of open space and play space (SR1, SR2 and SR3). These policies will form the framework for the measures related to this topic. Policy SR1 sets out that the minimum standard for publicly accessible open space is 0.8 hectare per 1000 people and 0.5 hectare of informal children's play space per 1000 people.

A further principle is that open space does not necessarily have to be green space. This means that potential developer contributions can also be used for the creation of a 'hard surface' open space.

Thirdly, all developments need to take account of the need to strengthen green links and pedestrian and cycle routes through the area.

10.3 Suggested Approaches / Measures

Measure ENV1: Creation of a new plain or square (or more than one) in the Northern City Centre.

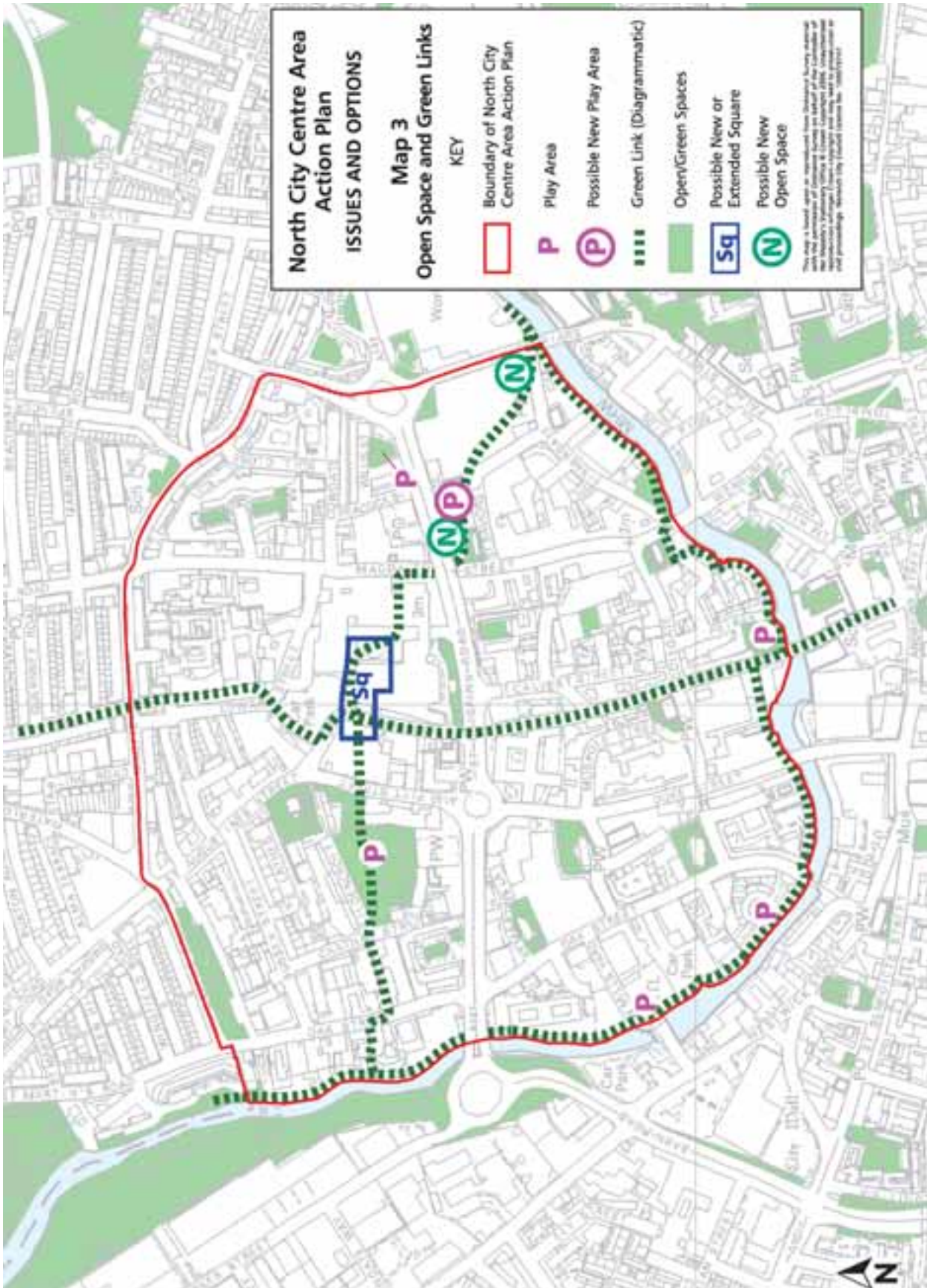
(relates to AAP Objectives (i) and (ii) and to issues (i) and (iv) above)

This option relates both to the redevelopment of the Anglia Square complex but also to incorporating other potential spaces within other sites. We envisage a new central public space forming the heart of the redevelopment of the Anglia Square complex. This plain or square would encourage community functions and events. The detailed locations for others depends on other options and developments.

Implications would include

- The advantage of opening Anglia Square towards Magdalen Street, to enable improved integration between this street and the shopping centre.
- The square would need to be carefully managed to ensure that activities were appropriate and safely conducted
- Provision of a visual link between the shops of St. Augustine's Street and the core shopping area of Anglia Square/ Magdalen Street

MAP 3 - OPEN SPACES AND GREEN LINKS



Measure ENV2: Create a new green link with new open spaces (and existing green spaces) of various sizes and types along it.
(relates to AAP Objectives (i), (ii) and (vi) and to issues (i), (ii) and (iii) above)

It will be important to ensure that any new open space, either green or hard surfaced, will have good pedestrian and cycle links with other areas in the Northern City Centre and further afield. This option envisages a specific design to link them up to one another along the main pedestrian /cycling axes (E-W and N-S). A major aim of this plan is to improve pedestrian and cycle routes through the area, and to make best use of existing green links and spaces to make them as attractive as possible. This Option thus relates closely to Option T1 (see Chapter 4)

Measure ENV3: Improve the quality of play areas and provide for older children.
(relates to AAP Objectives (I), (ii) and (vii) and to issues (ii) and (iv) above)

This option envisages that the quality of existing play areas within the Northern City Centre needs to be enhanced. The Council is currently working on an 'Open Space Needs Assessment', which will look at the quality and quantity of all open spaces throughout the City. When this study is completed, we will have a good basis to make decisions on which play areas are in most need of improvements and in what form and where provision should be made for different age groups.

Measure ENV4: Encourage further repairs and improvements to derelict buildings
(relates to AAP Objective (i) and to issue (v) above)

The City Council has encouraged improvements to a number of historic buildings through the HERS scheme. It is unlikely that a similar heritage scheme will be set up in the foreseeable future but there are other options to assist repairs and improvements to derelict buildings that the Council can pursue. These options should be seen as part of a larger

package – either investment and grant support in order to persuade owners to bring forward their own investments or the purchase of derelict buildings through a Compulsory Purchase Order.

Implications would include :

- The potential to transform the area in a positive manner and thus encourage other owners to invest in the area;
- Use of legal notices to require repair and improvements of worst buildings (s215 of Planning Act)
- Use of CPO as a last resort where other measures have not persuaded the owner to cooperate and there is serious blight resulting.

Measure ENV5 : Seek to provide for renewal and better maintenance of street furniture
(relates to AAP Objective (i) and to Issue (v) above)

An important contribution to improving the general environment of the area will be in the design policies, in order to ensure that public street furniture and materials used in private developments are attractive and can be maintained effectively. Public comments during the consultation showed that significant improvements could be made just by updating and maintaining the existing public infrastructure. Design issues are dealt with in the Heritage and Design Chapter (Chapter 7 above).

Whilst maintenance regimes are not normally the concern of planning documents, the encouragement for proactive maintenance and removal of damaged street furniture etc. can be an important contribution to an enhanced environment.

11. CONCLUSIONS

11.1 Relationship to Other Strategies and Decisions

The issues and options developed in this report have important linkages to other strategies being developed. These include

- The Community Strategy for Norwich
- The Local Transport Plan and Norwich Area Transportation Strategy
- The Norwich Community Safety Strategy

It will be important that decisions on this AAP take account of the development and decisions on these strategies – and where possible, vice versa.

There may be decisions taken during the process, on individual planning applications, that have implications for the whole document and these will be fed in before the final document is produced (if possible).

11.2 Implementation Process

We envisage that the final Area Action Plan will be accompanied by a list of actions and identifying the agency that will take the lead on each action. To this end it will be important to maintain contact and appropriate decision mechanisms for involving those agencies who have a role to play in the options being considered. This will also enable monitoring of the Plan and should provide a key indicator of the achievement of the Plan (or not).

12. INVOLVING PEOPLE

12.1 Role of stakeholders

This consultation is divided into two parts, of which this is the second part. Before we prepared this Issues and Options document, we had a number of meetings and workshops with a wide range of stakeholders with an interest in the area. Amongst others, we involved community groups, landowners, educational establishments and health practices. We have used the information we received from these meetings and workshops to inform this document and to test whether the issues that had come forward during the 2002 consultation for the Regeneration Strategy are still relevant.

This process is called the 'frontloading' of planning consultation. We hope that through early involvement of stakeholders and residents (that is before the first draft plan is written), the document is based on sound information and that we have a good understanding of local issues and knowledge. It is also intended that this early involvement should lead to a greater consensus of views about the issues for this plan.

We intend to set up a 'Stakeholder Forum' to carry forward the consultation on the issues raised in this consultation and to enable those most involved to have a say in how the plan develops from this point. If you are interested in being a member of that forum, please let us know.

12.2 What are we asking the public to do?

Throughout the production process of this Area Action Plan you will get three opportunities to let us know what you think of the work we have done so far (see Figure 1 – page 8).

The first general consultation opportunity is now, before we have made a draft of the actual Area Action Plan. During this stage you can tell us what you think the issues are that the area faces. We also want to know whether the options we propose for the area are the right ones. If you think we have completely missed out on an important issue, please let us know. Also, please tell us if you think of another realistic way of solving a particular issue. There are some limitations though, which are discussed in section 2.2 and Annex 2.

As the time line shows, you will receive another chance to get involved once we have completed

our first draft of the document, the Preferred Option document. The third and final opportunity is when we have prepared our submission version of the Area Action Plan (Figure 1).

12.3 The Next Steps

As the timeline shows, the process of producing an Area Action Plan is divided into eight stages. We are now at the beginning of stage 3 (Figure 1).

We have used three different types of data to inform this report:

1. The results from a series of meetings and workshops with stakeholders.
2. The results from the 2002 consultation for the Regeneration Strategy.
3. The factual data we have collected for the evidence base.

The comments you will make on this document will inform the production of the 'Preferred Option' document (start of Stage 4). This document will be the first draft version of the actual Area Action Plan. When we have completed this document, we will hold another public consultation. You can then tell us what you think of the draft Plan.

During Stage 5 we will take account of all your comments while we are preparing the submission document. This is the final draft Area Action Plan, which will be submitted to the Government. When we do this, you will receive a final chance to make any comments or representations to the Area Action Plan. An independent Planning Inspector will hear all these representations during an Examination in Public. Our Statement of Community Involvement explains in more detail what happens during an Examination in Public.

The Planning Inspector will write a report after the Examination in Public, in which he tells us what changes to make to the final document. After these changes are made, the Area Action Plan will be adopted.

ANNEX A

POLICY BACKGROUND TO AREA ACTION PLAN FOR NORTHERN CITY CENTRE

Relevant Policies from Norfolk Structure Plan (1999)

- EC1 – overall strategy for economic growth and local employment opportunities
- EC2 – major economic development locations
- ENV13 – quality and distinctiveness of the historic environment
- T2 – development and traffic generation impact
- TCR2 – location for development attracting large numbers of people within centres
- H3 – major housing provision in Norwich area
- N3 – main strategic locations for employment development (City Centre)
- N7 – transport strategy for Norwich area.
- N13 – priorities for new housing development in Norwich Policy Area

NB these will be replaced by the policies in RSS, when this is approved (expected to be Spring 2007)

Relevant Policies from draft East of England Plan (RSS) (December 2004)

- SS1 – achieving sustainable development
- SS2 – Overall approach to spatial strategy – urban centres
- SS5 – town centres
- SS11 – priority areas for regeneration
- SS16 – quality in the built environment
- NSR1 – promoting clusters and strategic sites in Norwich Sub-Region
- NSR3 – regional role of Norwich for retail, leisure, cultural and educational activities.
- NSR4 – housing provision
- E2 – job growth targets
- E3 – approach to employment land allocation
- E10 – retail development strategy
- H1 – dwelling provision
- H2 – affordable housing and mix
- ENV5 – the historic environment
- C1 – cultural assets and development

Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (approved October 2004)

- As this document is a transport strategy for the Norwich Area, most of the policies are directly relevant to this strategically important location. The strategy seeks to ensure that Norwich grows as a sustainable urban community; accommodating increases in travel by means other than the private car.

Relevant Strategic Policies from City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (November 2004)

- HBE8 – development in Conservation Areas
- HBE9 – Listed Buildings and development affecting them
- HBE12 – High quality of design with special attention to height, scale, massing and form of development
- EMP1 – small scale business development
- EMP2 – Expansion of existing businesses
- EMP16 – Office development criteria and sequential test
- TVA1 – Proposals for new visitor attractions
- TVA6 – Proposals for hotels and visitor accommodation
- SHO1 – Limits on major non-food retail development
- SHO2 – Convenience retail development
- SHO3 – Location and criteria for new retail development – sequential test
- HOU1 – Provision to meet housing needs for the City

- HOU2 – housing in the City Centre – mixed use
- HOU4 – Affordable Housing provision
- AEC1 – Major arts and entertainment facilities – location and sequential test
- SR1 – Standards for open space
- TRA3 – Modal shift measures in development in support of NATS
- TRA5 – Approach to design for accessibility
- TRA10 – Contributions by developers to works for access to a site
- TRA11 – Contributions by developers for transport improvements in the wider area
- CC7 – Anglia Square sites- mix of uses and conditions

Other policies may apply to specific circumstances – the ones listed are the strategic policies of relevance to this area.

ANNEX B

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CONSULTATION RESULTS

JULY 2002 CONSULTATION

General background

- 2 consultation events were held, on 2nd July (11am-4pm) at Anglia Square and on 3rd July (2-7pm) at St. Augustine's Church Hall.
- Held on different days and at different times to maximise attendance.
- Aimed at the general public and local businesses..

Method of consultation

- Planning for Real type exercise: sticking colour-coded flags in large scale plan of area to indicate range of site-specific issues; also, opportunity to identify area-wide issues and more general comments (on flipcharts).

Publicity

- Leaflet to all households/businesses in strategy area.
- Posters put up in local shops and community venues (church halls, doctor's surgeries, etc.
- Press release
- Article on Norwich City Council's website.

Response

- Press attendance at opening of Anglia Square consultation – good coverage in press.
- Very good attendance: over 100 people attended each event.
- Site-specific issues: approximately 340 flags were stuck in the plan
- Area-wide issues: approximately 80 comments made.
- General comments: 66 made.
- 18 letters received,

Summary of Responses

- **Local Environment issues:** approximately 110 flags covering issues such as the need to clean up certain buildings, improve shop fronts and improve street scene.
- **Traffic and Transport:** approx. 75 flags covering issues such as traffic circulation concerns, need for traffic management, too much traffic, and accidents black-spots.
- **Crime and safety:** 70 flags covering issues such as concern at drug-taking and dealing, perception that people are not safe in parts of the area, night noise and rowdiness, and the need for increased police presence.
- **Community Facilities / Leisure:** approx. 55 flags. Issues include the need for improved play provision in the area for children and teenagers, need for after-school clubs, and for community gardens.
- **Housing:** only 12 flags, the main issues being the need for starter homes, family housing, and the need to modernise housing.
- **Work, Training and the Local Economy:** 12 flags, the issues including the need for youth support and counselling, and the need for a volunteer centre.
- **Health:** just 3 flags (need for a chemist and NHS dentist, and identifying a health and safety issue).

MARCH 2006 CONSULTATION

The City Council held meetings with a number of stakeholders during March 2006 and invited representatives of local community and stakeholder groups to either of two workshops (on 21st and 23rd March)

This note provides a summary of those initial responses

Broad Vision for the Area

The Workshops discussed the future for the area in broad terms. Both reached positive conclusions along similar lines and can be summarised as follows.

- The area needs to **raise its profile** and to have a focus for promoting its attractions. It should be visited for its own attractions, not just on the route to somewhere else (usually the City Centre). Its identity should be reinforced by future changes/ redevelopments, recognising the heritage of the area and its character with a predominance of independent and specialist retail opportunities.
- Within this approach, the focus should be on **promoting the arts and cultural facilities** of the area, including its multi-ethnic and wide-ranging variety. To this end key benefits could be gained from an arts centre/ concert hall/ conference centre type facility. Also the interest of the Art College in expanding into the area would be a key benefit
- The accessibility of the area means that it can provide **more extensive services** to a wide area. There was broad agreement that a new foodstore would be a key aspect of reviving the area's retail vitality. Other aspects could be related to this – a Farmer's market, other specialist markets, support for other business start-ups. It would be important that the down-market emphasis on cheap shops be reduced by redevelopment.
- **Employment** in the form of new or refurbished offices was generally agreed to be important for the area.
- Improved movement for **pedestrians and cyclists** and (separately) vehicles would be fundamental to enhancing the built and natural environment of the area.

Issues

The following issues were identified. This provides a long list of the matters to be taken forward and addressed in the Plan.

RETAIL/ DISTRICT CENTRE ISSUES

- Retention of distinctive shopping identity of area – independent/ small scale;
- Anglia Square is run-down/ not fulfilling potential/ dominated by down-market shops;
- Need for replacement of the main foodstore serving the area;
- Relatively high turnover of businesses (not always a disadvantage);
- Need for more lively attractions (such as markets/ events);
- Poor signage – failure to direct people to the area and advertise it;
- Loss of small shops (especially North Magdalen Street and St Augustines Street);

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

- Pollution and its effect on health of people – especially in St Augustines Street and Duke Street
- Lack of investment – particularly in the run-down, poorly maintained buildings with unattractive shop frontages;
- Dirty streets and poor quality of the 'public realm' including surface car parks – litter, need to ensure that street furniture is good quality and is effectively maintained; need for landscaping;
- Noise impact of large vehicles on residents.

SOCIAL ISSUES/ CRIME

- Concentration of drug and alcohol related problems in the area – and its visibility on the streets;
- Lack of surveillance and poor lighting in public areas;
- Evidence of high crime rate (certain categories) – especially in car parks and open areas;
- Imbalance in age structure and family structure (dominance of young single households);
- Problems caused by late night activities in the area;
- Relative deprivation of the area north of the Inner Ring Road.

TRAFFIC

- Congestion – volume of slow moving vehicles and pollution caused (St Augustines, Pitt Street, Magdalen St North, Magpie Road)
- Dominating effect of traffic for pedestrians with safety implications (esp buses on Magdalen Street)
- Need for parking for residents/ businesses / visitors
- No effective signing to car parks
- Poor quality and appearance of surface car parks OR preference for and visibility of surface parking
- Generally good public transport access BUT too many buses using Magdalen Street;
- The routes of buses could provide better accessibility;
- Volume of traffic using Inner Ring Road – potential increase due to new development;
- On street car parking causes problems for all other road users;
- Need for secure cycle parking storage close to shops;

PEDESTRIAN / CYCLE ACCESS

- Barrier of Inner Ring Road to pedestrian / cycle routes (N-S)
- Narrowness of footways on streets
- Need for more E-W cycle/ pedestrian routes (In North of area)

HERITAGE

- Loss of historic buildings and street pattern in past (Ang Sq)
- Concern that local character of Magdalen Street is being lost gradually
- Fear of future loss of terraced housing in area
- Lack of heritage signing and trails
- Buildings and structures at risk of damage/ destruction (incl City Wall)
- Archaeological significance of most of the area (esp Whitefriars)

DESIGN/ VISUAL ISSUES

- Poor design of entrances to Anglia Square – dark and dingy – leading to lack of integration with adjoining areas;
- Lack of visibility of key heritage buildings (views blocked off);
- Need to open up area – lack of/ poor quality spaces between buildings;
- Oppressive scale and mass of modern buildings.

COMMUNITY / LEISURE FACILITIES

- No decent public toilets in area
- Lack of concert hall/ conference facility (in City generally)
- Inadequate leisure facilities for visitors once in the area
- Lack of a community meeting room (Magdalen Street)
- Need for an adequate gallery space (especially for the Art College)
- No recycling bank facilities in area

GREEN SPACE

- Deficiency in amount of useable green space
- Existing open space of poor quality
- Lack of attractive green links through the area
- Misuse of open space at Gildencroft – drugs and drink related
- Lack of/ poor quality of play areas

HOUSING

- Low proportion of family housing in area
- Lack of affordable housing
- Low quality of (some) flats above shops (poor conversions)

EMPLOYMENT / OFFICES

- Need to regenerate vacant office buildings (refurbish or redevelop)
- Lack of demand for new offices (spec. built)
- Need to keep employment in the area to support vitality of shopping and services;
- Office employees need to have access by car (off Inner Ring Road)
- Need for expansion of cultural/ media industries (graduate retention from Art College)
- Small businesses should not be removed from area

OTHER

- Extend boundary of area – to include bottom of Aylsham Road/ St Martins Road/Jarrolds Printing Works/ Magdalen Gates School
- OR reduce boundary of area – keep it to Magdalen Street/ Anglia Square
- Distinctiveness of area – feeling of separation from City Centre
- Negative treatment of the area in the local media
- Need a more joined-up approach to services
- Need for specific facilities for expansion of the Art College

SITE SPECIFIC

- Sovereign House/ Gildengate House – doubt re soundness of buildings and cost of refurbishment and conversion
- Colegate Car Park – suffers from anti-social behaviour
- Botolph Street Car Park – lack of CCTV surveillance – car crime
- Hi-Tech House – eyesore needing to be redeveloped
- Former Magpie Printers – very poor condition + potential for access to City Wall
- St Augustines St/ Magpie Road - Lack of pedestrian crossing facility

ANNEX C

SUMMARY OF BASELINE INFORMATION

1. Introduction

This annex summarises a range of baseline information for the North City Centre Area to define its characteristics and problems, and forms the context for the production of the Area Action Plan. It will be published in full in the Sustainability Appraisal, at Draft Plan stage.

It sets out factual evidence, in the form of an audit of the area’s physical characteristics, constraints and socio-economic trends. This information is then analysed to assess whether the identified issues, vision and objectives are still relevant to the Northern City Centre.

2. Socio-Economic Characteristics

The Northern City Centre falls within the Mancroft ward, which extends over the whole of the city centre and some adjoining areas. This affects some of the data, as this area is not typical of the whole city centre.

Population

The Northern City Centre’s population has increased significantly over recent years. It increased from 1826 in the 1991 Census of Population to 2363 in the 2001 Census, an increase of 29.4%. This compares to an increase in the population of Mancroft ward of 4.5% over the same period and a decrease in the total number of residents in Norwich as a whole of 2.1%. This population growth is largely due to a number of residential developments, many on brownfield sites, including a large number of high quality, high density developments along the river.

Age Structure

The Northern City Centre’s age structure is fairly similar to that of Mancroft ward as a whole, but varies from that for Norwich and Norfolk in 3 main respects (see figure A1 and table A1 below):

- The North City Centre has a smaller than average proportion of children (0-19 year olds) at 14.9% compared with 22.9% for Norwich and 22.7% for Norfolk;
- The proportion of young adults (aged 20-29) is higher in Northern City Centre at 25.3% compared with 18.4% for Norwich and 10.8% for Norfolk.
- The proportion of people older than 74 is larger – at 12.1% in the Northern City Centre – than for Norwich as a whole (8.7%).

This data suggests that there are relatively few families in the area. The larger proportion of young people may be explained by the availability of relatively low cost accommodation and proximity to the city centre. Figure A1 and table A1 show that there is a clear distinction in the age profile of the North and the South of the area. Even though the Northern City Centre overall has a lower percentage of children than Norwich, this is not the case for the Northern part of the area.

On the other hand, the percentage of elderly people (60+) is higher in the southern part of the area. This figure (26.2%) is higher than that for Norwich as a whole (21%) and higher than the northern part of the area (17.7%).

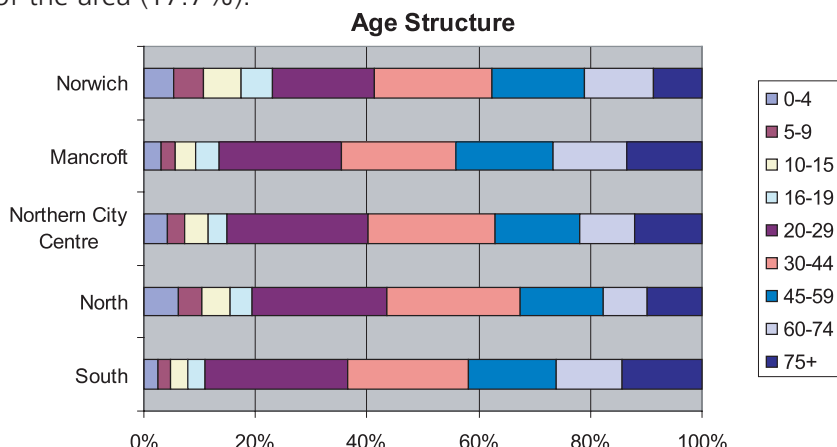


Figure A1: Age Structure (Source: Census 2001)

	Norwich	Mancroft	Northern City Centre	North	South
0-4	5.2	3.2	4.3	6.3	2.6
5-9	5.4	2.5	3.0	4.1	2.1
10-15	6.7	3.7	4.1	5.0	3.2
16-19	5.6	4.1	3.5	3.9	3.0
20-29	18.4	22.0	25.3	24.3	25.6
30-44	21.0	20.5	22.6	23.9	21.6
45-59	16.6	17.4	15.2	14.9	15.7
60-74	12.3	13.1	9.8	7.9	11.9
75+	8.7	13.6	12.1	9.8	14.3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table A1: Age structure (Source: Census 2001)

Household size

According to the Census 2001, the average household size in the Northern City Centre is 1.63, which is similar to Mancroft ward, but lower than the average household size in Norwich (2.15).

This can be explained in part by the relatively high percentage of one-person households in the Northern City Centre at 54%, (again similar to the figure for Mancroft ward) compared with the Norwich figures (37%).

The percentage of one-person pensioner households in Northern City Centre (19.5%) is higher than the average for Norwich (15.9%) although lower than for Mancroft ward as a whole (22.6%).

	Norwich	Northern City Centre
White British	93.5%	91.2%
White Irish	0.7%	1.2%
Other White	2.7%	4.2%
Mixed Groups	1.1%	1.4%
Asian or Asian British	0.9%	1.1%
Black or Black British	0.4%	0.0%
Chinese or Other	0.9%	1.0%

Table A2 – Ethnic group as percentage of population (Census 2001)

Ethnicity

Table A2 shows that there are no large differences between Norwich and Northern City Centre in the ethnic build-up of the population.

General Health

The percentage of people in this area stating in the 2001 Census that their health was not good was 13.2%, which is higher than the overall percentage for Norwich (9.8%) although lower than for Mancroft ward (15.4%).

In the 2001 census over a quarter (25.4%) of Northern City Centre residents indicate that they have a limiting long-term illness, which is higher than the average for Norwich at 19.4%, although lower than for Mancroft ward, at 28.6%.

This could be related to the larger percentage of elderly people living in the area. As is stated above, more people aged 60+ live in the Southern part of the area.

Economic Activity

The Northern City Centre had a high percentage of unemployment in 2001, 7.4%, compared to other areas in the city. Mancroft ward had the highest percentage of unemployment of all wards (6.7%), while Norwich's unemployment rate was 4.1%. (Census, 2001). While unemployment has changed over time, the relative levels of unemployment in different areas has broadly remained similar.

A distinction can be made between the northern and southern part of the NCC area, (the inner ring road serving as the boundary). The percentage of working age residents claiming benefits in the southern part is significantly lower at 3.9% than in the northern part (7.8%). This serves as an indication that, in general, the area north of the Inner Ring Road is more deprived than the southern half.

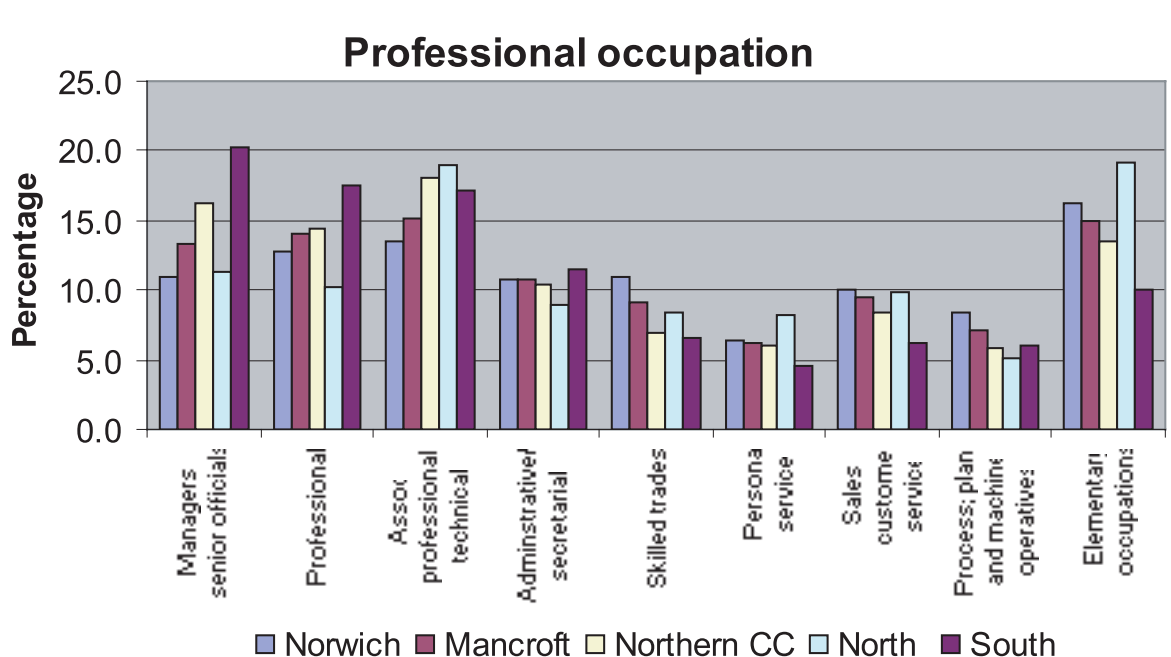


Figure A2 : Professional occupation in % (Source: Census 2001)

This distinction can be further developed when looking at professional occupations. Figure A2 shows that a larger proportion of the working population in the southern part of the area work in managerial and professional-related occupations, while the northern part of the area is characterised by higher proportions working in ‘Personal services’, ‘Sales/ Customer services’ and ‘Elementary occupations’.

Qualifications

As is shown in table A3 the average education level of residents of the Northern City Centre is higher than that for Mancroft ward and for the whole of Norwich. A smaller proportion of Northern City Centre residents have no qualifications compared to Mancroft or Norwich as a whole.

These figures seem to contradict the general pattern for deprivation in the area and may be explained by a higher than average number of students living in this area.

	No qualification	Highest level 1*	Highest level 2**	Highest level 3***	Highest level 4/5****	Other	Total
Northern City Centre	22.5	14.6	20.6	11.8	25.8	4.8	100
Mancroft	28.7	14.0	17.4	11.6	22.9	5.6	100
Norwich	29.9	15.4	16.8	11.6	20.6	5.7	100

Table A3 : The average qualification levels of people aged 16-74 (in percentages). *1-4 GCSEs (grades A-C), 1-4 O-levels, NVQ level 1; **5+ O levels, 5+GCSEs (grades A-C), NVQ level 2; ***2+ A levels, 4+AS levels, NVQ level 3; **** First degree, Higher degree, NVQ levels 4-5 (Census 2001)

Housing Tenure

The pattern of housing tenure in the Northern City Centre is distinctly different from that of Norwich as a whole. The proportion of social rented dwellings is 47% which is significantly higher than the Norwich average (36%), but lower than the Mancroft figure (53%). The opposite is true for the owner occupied sector. The Northern City Centre has with 31% a lower percentage than Norwich (49%), but again, a higher proportion than Mancroft ward (28%).

	North	South	Northern City Centre	Mancroft	Norwich
Owner occupied	22	43	31	28	49
Social rented	58	34	47	53	36
Other	19	23	22	19	15
Total	100	100	100	100	100

Table A4 : Housing tenure in percentages (Census 2001)

There is a marked difference between the northern and the southern parts of the area in terms of housing tenure:

- The southern part of the area has a significantly higher percentage of owner occupiers (43%), than the northern part (22%). The figure for the southern part is only slightly lower than that for the Norwich average (49%) and reflects the inclusion of fairly recent residential developments along the riverside.
- The proportion of households in the social rented sector is much higher in the northern part, with 58%, which is higher than the Mancroft average (53%). This percentage is 34 in the southern part of the area, which, again, is more in line with the Norwich average (36%).

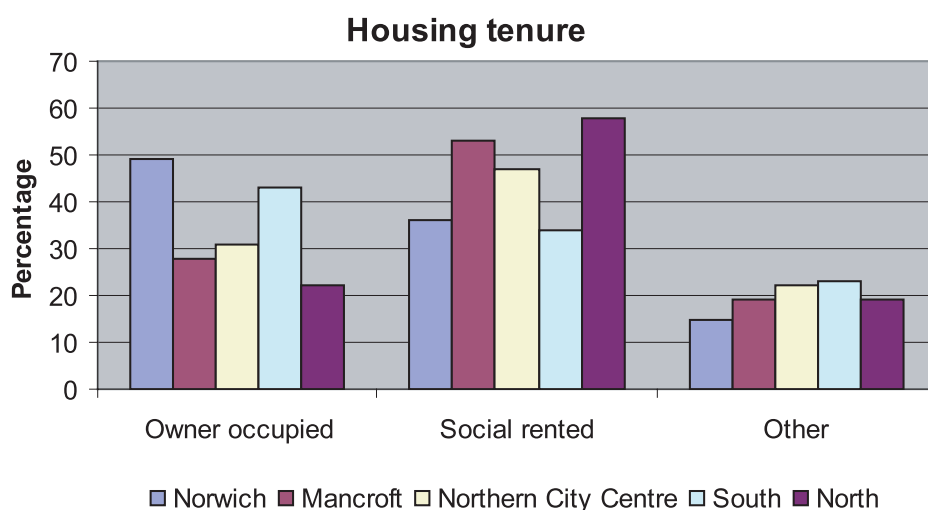


Figure A3 : Housing tenure in percentages (Census 2001)

Housing Type

Figure A4 shows that the majority of housing in the Northern City Centre is made up of flats (60.3%). Although this percentage is not as high as for Mancroft ward (68%), it is significantly higher than for Norwich (31.4%). Both the Northern City Centre and Mancroft ward have lower percentages of detached (1.9 and 2.0) and semi-detached (4.3 and 5.9) housing than the whole of Norwich (10.4 and 21.8 respectively).

These characteristics reflect the higher densities that are used for building in the city centre and is characteristic of a city centre location, as is the area's age structure. Mancroft ward as a whole has the lowest average household size and lowest average number of rooms per household of all the wards in Norwich.

	Detached	Semi-detached	Terraced	Flats	Other
Norwich	10.4	21.8	36.1	31.4	0.2
Mancroft	2.0	5.9	24.0	68.0	0.09
Northern City Centre	1.9	4.3	33.1	60.3	0.4

Table A5 : Housing type in percentages (Census 2001)

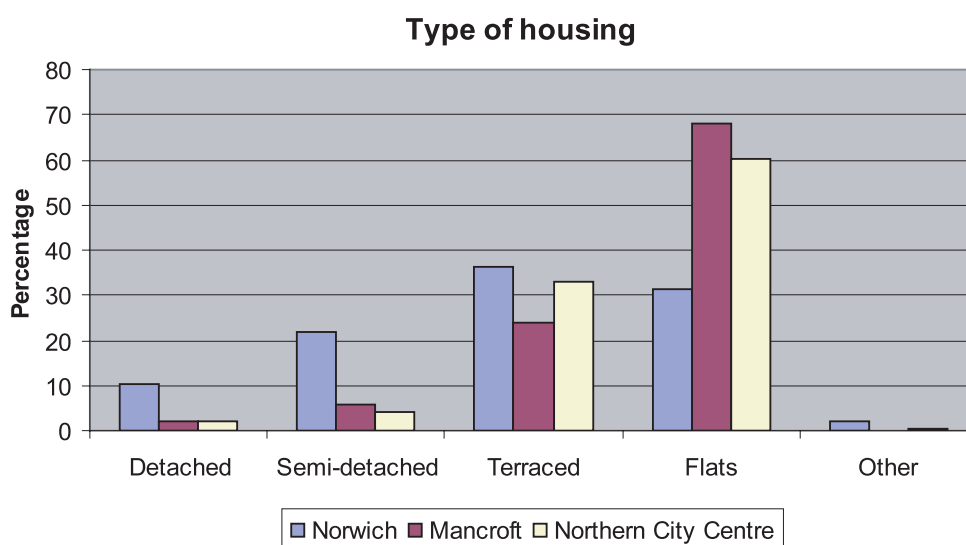


Figure A4 : Housing type in percentages (Census 2001)

Transport/ Car ownership

According to the 2001 Census levels of car ownership are significantly lower in the Northern City Centre than for Norwich as a whole. 53.9% of households in Northern City Centre do not own a car (similar to Mancroft ward at 54.5%), compared to 35.5% for Norwich. This reflects the central location of the area and the short distance to most facilities, which reduces the need for a car.

There is again a clear difference between the Northern and the Southern part of the area. The Southern part has a higher level of car ownership, with 46.7% of households not having access to a car, compared to 58.2% of households without cars in the northern part. This last figure is also higher than the percentage for Mancroft ward as a whole.

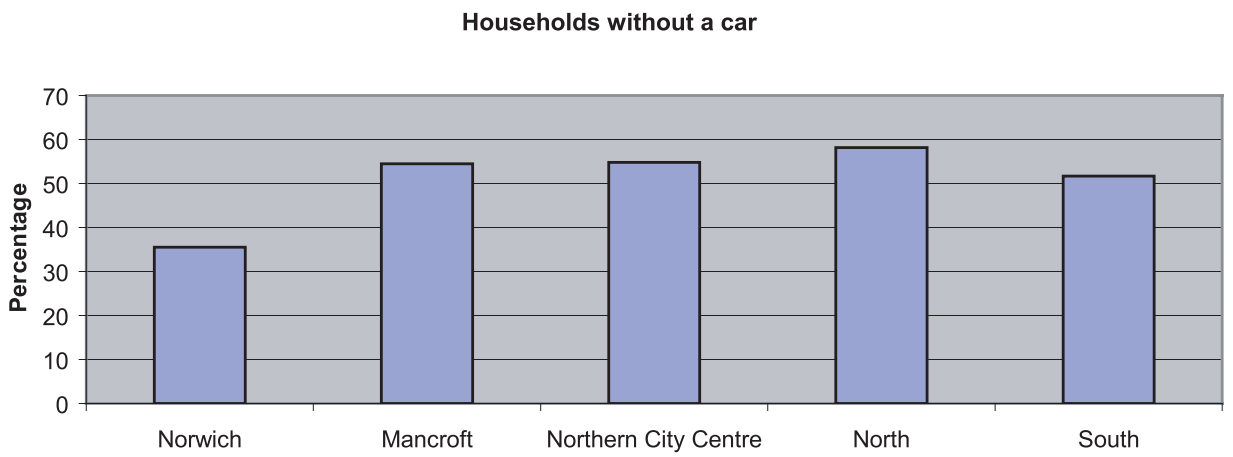


Figure A5 – Household’s without a car or van

This low percentage of car ownership is reflected in the methods most people use to travel to work. The following table shows that the percentage of people who travel to work by car is far lower in the Northern City Centre (35.1%) than in Norwich as a whole (50%).

The percentage of people who walk to work is significantly higher in the Northern City Centre (40.5%) than for Norwich (22.7%).

	Car	Bus	Bike	Walk	Home	Other
Norwich	50	8.4	8.8	22.7	6.7	3.3
Northern City Centre	35.1	6.2	7.3	40.5	7.4	2.8

Table A6 : Travel to work

Index of Multiple Deprivation

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a measure used by DCLG to express a range of 7 broad categories of data – on income, employment, health, education and training, housing, crime and disorder, and the living environment – to show social deprivation of an area.

Mancroft is the second most deprived ward in Norwich after Mile Cross and the ninth in Norfolk, according to the 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation. On a national level it belongs to the worst 40% of most deprived wards.

The smallest geographical area of measurement under the IMD is the Super Output Area (SOA). The north and south parts of the Northern City Centre, divided by the Inner Ring Road, broadly relate to two SOA's.

IMD analysis of these two parts of the Northern City Centre reveals significant differences between the two areas. The northern area has a lower score than the southern in all but one of the 7 categories of data measured by the IMD which means that this northern area is the more deprived. On a national level, the northern part of the area falls in the most deprived 20% of SOAs while the southern part falls in the worst 40% of SOAs.

3. Key sites analysis

Map A1, on the next page, shows the location of key sites within the Northern City Centre. Each of these sites will be discussed in more detail below. Most of these sites do not stand on their own and are therefore discussed in clusters.

Anglia Square/ Pitt Street/ Edward Street

The largest cluster of key sites in the area is Anglia Square and surrounding sites on Pitt Street and Edward Street, currently in the ownership of Lagmar Developments. Some of these sites have been empty since the construction of Anglia Square in the 1970s and currently serve as car parks. The main office blocks in Anglia Square have been vacant for several years.

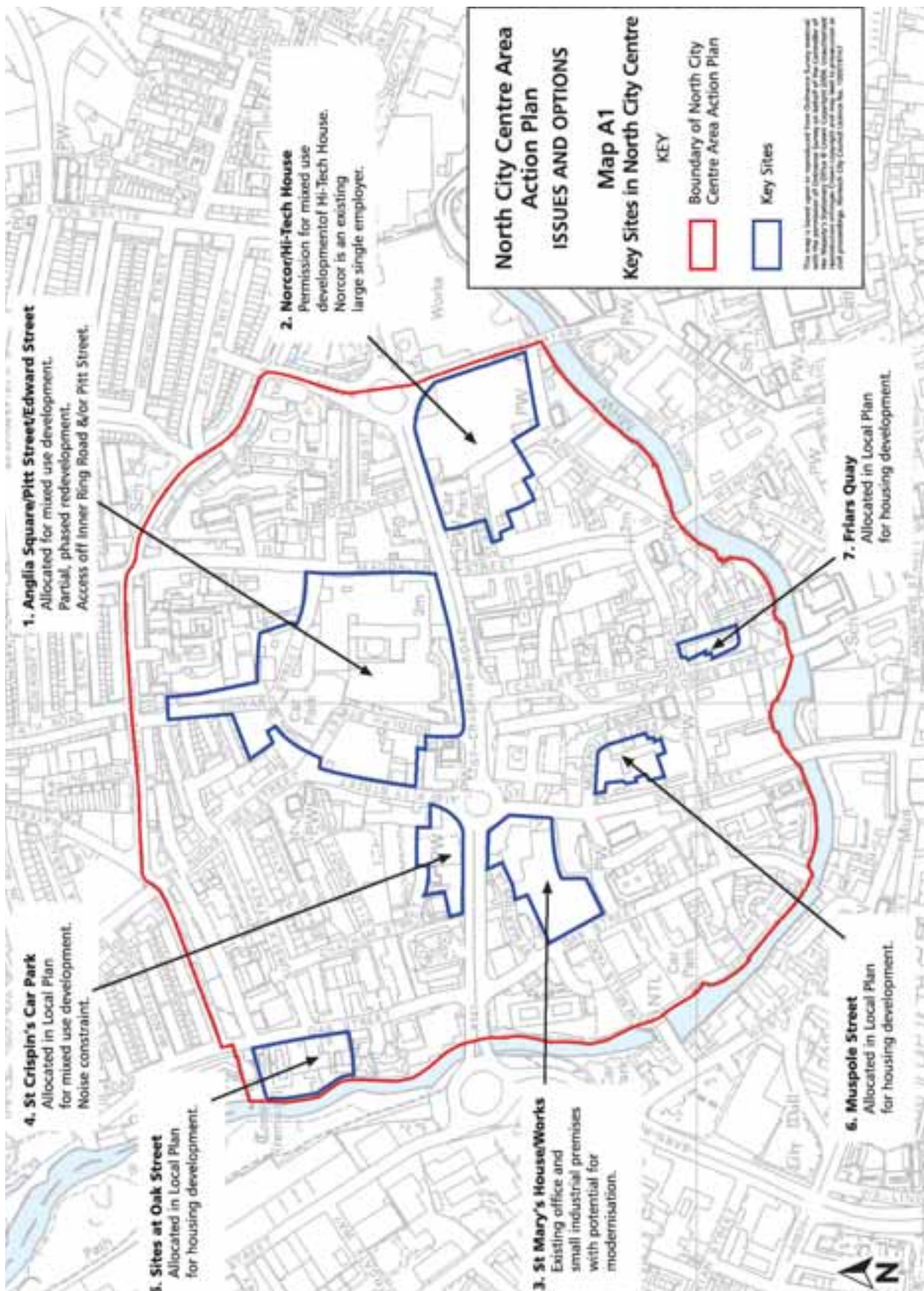
With a total size of over 2ha, the site offers huge development opportunities. This is recognised in the Replacement Local Plan, which allocates a diversity of possible uses, including an expansion of the shopping centre (up to a max. of 4900m²), office development, housing (min. 80 dwellings) and a hotel.

In 2004 the City Council, EEDA and English Partnerships appointed a firm of consultants, GVA Grimley, to undertake a study of key brownfield sites in Norwich including the Anglia Square and adjacent sites. The objective of the study was to investigate the development potential of the sites and to advise on the steps that the Council and its partners should take to facilitate development on these sites. The study was completed in Spring 2005.

The consultant's report makes the following main points in relation to this key site:

- a comprehensive retail, economic and residential led scheme for the site could achieve positive development values.
- Anglia Square shopping centre is in need of substantial investment to meet the demand of modern occupiers. The other commercial elements of the overall site – offices and leisure – are functionally obsolete and contribute little to their surroundings.
- the Anglia Square area is suited to modern, quality office accommodation as part of the overall development mix and that should be encouraged. The mix needs to be carefully considered, because too high a level of office development may reduce development value.

MAP A1 - KEY SITES IN NORTH CITY CENTRE



- A strong case can be made in regeneration terms for the comprehensive redevelopment of the entire area surrounding Anglia Square, including land outside the ownership of Lagmar, to deliver the type of modern, high density mixed use development needed in this part of the city.

Anglia Square shopping centre and the shops on Magdalen Street are currently designated in the Local Plan as a Large District Centre. During the last retail survey in November 2005, the percentage of vacant shopping units in the whole district centre (including the shops on Magdalen Street) was 11%. The percentage of units that did not have a shopping function was 22%. This is less than 30%, and therefore within the requirement in the Local Plan that the centre should have at least 70% retail frontage.

Norcor/ Hi-Tech House

This is another strategically located cluster of sites. However, unlike the sites surrounding Anglia Square, these sites have a variety of owners. Also, their development potential is highly dependent on the decision by the owners of Norcor on whether or not they are staying in their current factory at Whitefriars. The Replacement Local Plan acknowledges the possibility of large employers moving out of their current location, and has allocated the site, just in case, for a mix of employment uses.

Unlike Norcor, Hi-Tech House is vacant at the moment. Development proposals for ten dwellings and 5,000m² office development have been considered and accepted in principle, but are now unlikely to proceed.

St. Mary's House and Works

This site has not been allocated in the Local Plan for development. St. Mary's Works are currently in use as small-scale industrial units. This use is relatively successful and might be further developed. The Works itself is a locally listed building. Any re-developments should therefore retain the existing frontages. St Mary's House is used for office accommodation and could at some stage be redeveloped, to provide more modern premises.

St. Crispins Car Park

This site is allocated in the Local Plan for 20 dwellings in a mix of uses with small scale office or service uses to St. Crispins Road frontage.

Sites along Oak Street

There are two sites along the northern part of Oak Street that are allocated for housing, for respectively 25 and 30 dwellings. Neither of these sites have planning permission for such redevelopment.

Sites in the southern part of the area

There are several allocated sites in the southern part of the area. Sites at New Mills Car Park (off Oak Street) and at Fishergate are now being developed for new housing. Other sites are:

- HOU8C9 – Muspole Street – Allocated for 40 dwellings
- HOU12A19 – Friars Quay/ Colegate – Allocated for 15 dwellings

4. Property analysis (Baseline Study, AMR)

The Annual Monitoring Report shows that the office sector in the city centre urgently needs enhancement or redevelopment. This is because a large proportion of current office buildings are badly outdated. High quality office buildings are however, in demand – as demonstrated by the rapid take up of the new offices at Whitefriars (former Jarrolds Printers site).

Other uses that are currently not catered for, but might offer possibilities are the workshops and offices for Creative Industries. This sector is potentially a growth sector in the city. Due to its

nature, most of these businesses are small to medium scale. This sector needs a special kind of development: small scale and high quality.

Development of a hotel in the area can also be a feasible option. This is already anticipated in the Replacement Local Plan with an allocation at Anglia Square.

The Replacement Local Plan has stressed a number of key themes that are relevant to housing development in Norwich. Most of these are very fitting to development in the Northern City Centre. These key themes are:

- Giving priority to the centre for the location of new housing;
- Promoting housing in sustainable locations, accessible by various modes of transport;
- Prioritising previously developed land and strategic housing sites;
- Encouraging mixed use development within existing centres;
- Promoting urban regeneration initiatives;
- Promoting a range of housing of a variety of size, type and tenure.

5. Transport Characteristics

Inner Ring Road

The major transport route through the area is the East-West Inner Ring Road. Historically this road has a major influence in both the built environment and transport infrastructure of the area. The construction of the Inner Ring Road and the Magdalen Street flyover has altered the historic street patterns in the area. However, our view is that to consider replacing the flyover would involve such a scale of further disruption to the area that would not be warranted. It carries the major flow of traffic around the City Centre and is required in order to enable the centre itself to be relatively traffic-free.

Magdalen Street

In addition, the major North-South routes are St Augustines Street and Magdalen Street. Magdalen Street is limited to one-way traffic, except for a contra-flow bus lane. The buses have a major impact in this area. All routes towards the North of the City go via this street and past Anglia Square. This means that in peak times a bus passes Anglia Square every two minutes.

Apart from problems caused by noise and traffic fumes, this large number of buses can make pedestrians feel unsafe due to the width of pavements. Local data shows that the area around Magdalen Street/ Anglia Square is a local accident hotspot. This is mainly due to conflicts between buses and people on foot. Overall, the perception is that this is not a safe area.

St Augustine's Street

St Augustine's Street has been designated as an Air Quality Management Area. This means that the levels of air pollution (especially NO²) exceed levels set by national government and that local government has to show initiatives that bring the levels of air pollution back to levels under this point. Traffic is largely responsible for the high levels of NO₂ in St Augustines Street. The street has a daily traffic flow of around 17,000 vehicles with major issues of congestion at each end. Together Norwich City Council and Norfolk County Council have drawn up a number of plans to tackle this issue and these are reflected in the consultation on Issues and Options.

Cyclists and pedestrians

There are a number of barriers to the movement of cyclists and pedestrians. There are not enough links in both North-South and East-West direction to make the area easy to travel through on foot or by bike. Nevertheless, the movement of both cyclists and pedestrians are significant, as many people pass through the area on their routes into the city centre from the north.

Tables A7 and A8 show a rising trend in the number of cyclists and pedestrians passing through the area between 2001 and 2004.

Count site	2001	2002	2003	2004
St. Crispins Road	370	456	502	413
Oak Street	203	247	288	295
Duke Street	201	202	265	265
Winterton Lane	193	198	191	186
Calvert Street	99	148	142	148
Magdalen Street	558	727	655	638

Table A7: Cycle counts

Count site	2001	2002	2003	2004
St. Crispins Crossing	733	683	807	775
Duke Street	1596	1589	1719	1822
Winterton Lane	1021	891	1213	1356
Calvert Street	1783	1318	1665	1815
Magdalen Street	6882	8153	7727	7295

Table A8: Pedestrian counts

Accidents

Cyclists in Norwich are nearly three times more likely to be involved in a fatal or serious accident as national levels. This figure might be so high, because a proportionally large number of people use a bicycle frequently compared to other parts of the County. (Road Safety Plan 2005-2006; Norfolk County Council).

There is no specific data for the Northern City Centre on the number of accidents that occur in the area.

6. Open Space Characteristics

The Local Plan divides the City into 19 open space sectors. The City Council has decided to do this for a number of reasons, primarily because children in each part of the City should have local access to open space and play opportunities without crossing a major road.

The Northern City Centre is split between two of these sectors. The first one takes in the whole of the city centre with a boundary along the Inner Ring Road. The second includes the dense terraced housing north of the area, but also including Wensum Park and Waterloo Park. The Local Plan sets targets and minimum requirements for the amount of open space and equipped play space for each sector.

Both sectors that together cover the Northern City Centre have above the minimum requirement for open space and play space. This is mainly due to large parks in other parts of the sector, e.g. Wensum Park in the northern sector and Chapelfield Gardens in the City Centre sector.

Map 3 (page 50) shows that within the area itself there is a limited amount of open space. A large number of the areas indicated on the map are closed off to the public, like a number of churchyards, or not suitable for outdoor open space, like the verges along St Crispins Road. Gildencroft Park is the main useable open space.

Apart from Gildencroft Park, there is an equipped play space for children aged up to 7 at the St Pauls playground. The St George's pocket park provides important open space and play facilities for the southern part of the area. There is also a play area within the recent Dyers Yard development. The play space on Heath Road is just outside the area, but still within walking distance for a number of properties. This playground is also in need of some attention, and needs to be improved for all age groups.

This short summary shows that there is some equipped play space for young children and toddlers (up to 7), but a distinct lack of proper play space for older children. This will make it important that new residential developments will contribute to an improvement and expansion of the quality and amount of open space and equipped play space in the area.

7. Heritage of the Area

The whole of the Northern City Centre is designated as a Conservation Area in the Replacement Local Plan, as part of the wider City Centre Conservation Area. This means that development in the area has to give consideration to the way it enhances or preserves the heritage and character of the area.

The whole City Centre is also designated as an Area of Main Archaeological Interest. This means that all planning applications need to be accompanied by an assessment of the archaeological significance of the site, and planning permission will include any measures necessary to preserve archaeological remains, if found.

Map 2 (page 15) shows that the majority of both listed buildings and buildings recognised on the Council's 'local list' are south of the Inner Ring Road. There are large clusters of listed buildings along Magdalen Street/ Fye Bridge and the area including and around Colegate. North of the Inner Ring Road there are smaller clusters of listed buildings at the top of Magdalen Street and on St Augustines Street/ Sussex Street. The terraced houses along the City Walls are also listed. This is mainly to preserve the setting of the City Walls.

Magdalen Street and St. Augustine's Street are recognized for their historic character. The HERS scheme was set up to give priority to the historic regeneration of these two streets. The programme is funded by English Heritage and Norwich City Council. Grants were offered up until March 2006, with a further year for implementation of individual projects.

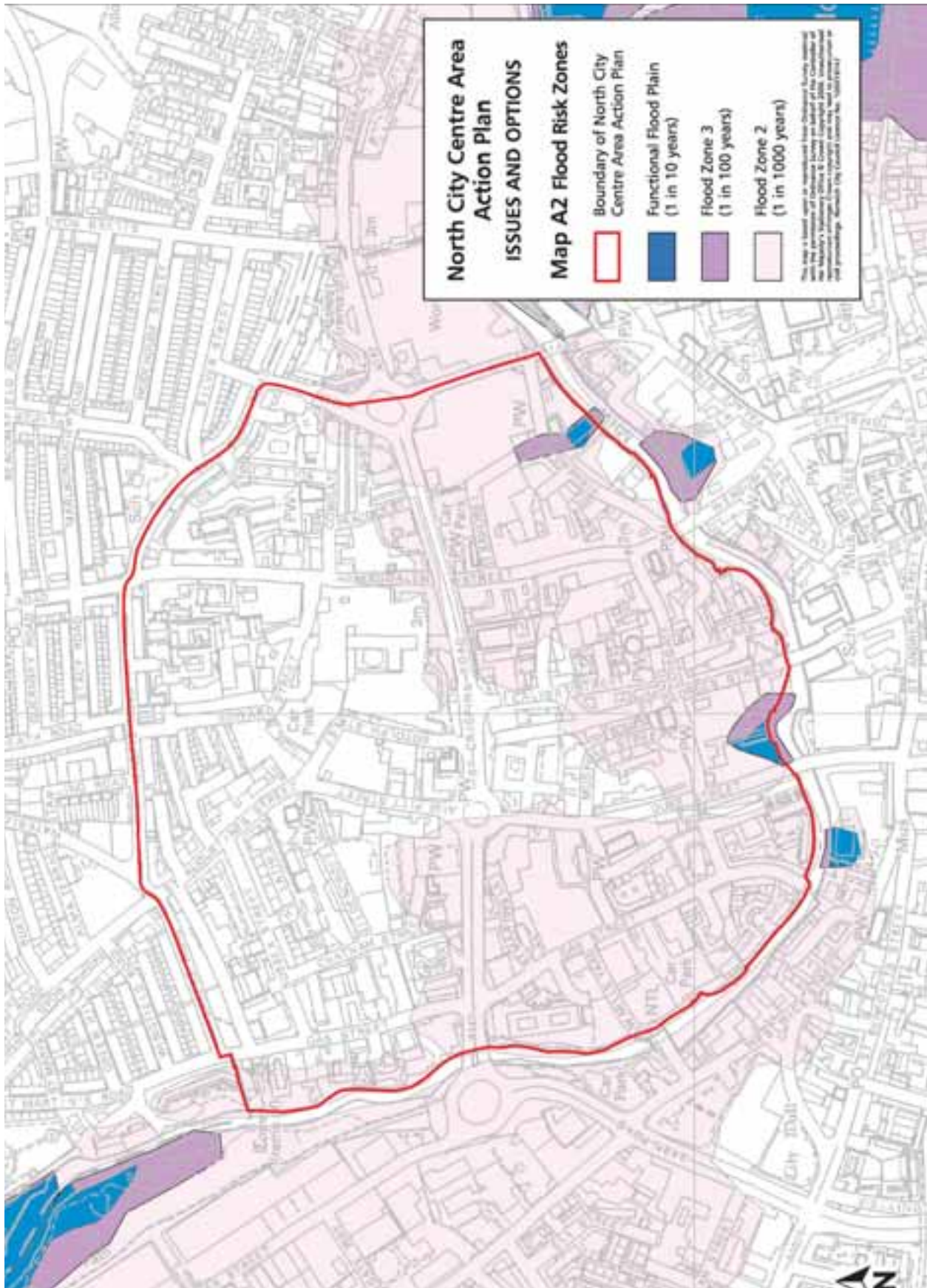
The scheme is a follow-up to earlier programmes that were designed to improve the historic environment of the area. HERS grants can be used to assist in the restoration of individual properties and is also used for some environmental improvements, e.g. the re-modelling of the entrance to Gildencroft Park.

The Anglia Square buildings themselves are out of scale with the rest of the Northern City Centre and this development together with the Inner Ring Road obliterated the pre-existing mediaeval street pattern. Historic photographs and records show that the area had a strong local character within the city.

8. Flood Risk

Parts of the area near the river fall within the 1 in 100 year flood risk area. Development proposals in those areas need to ensure that all residential or publicly accessible floor areas are raised above the flood protection level and that all proposals are accompanied by a flood risk assessment. Map A2, on the next page, shows the areas involved. Elsewhere development could have an effect on flood risk along the river valley and flood risk assessments will be required as part of development proposals.

MAP A2 - FLOOD RISK ZONES



ANNEX D

DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OBJECTIVES FOR THE AREA ACTION PLAN

The Baseline Report on Sustainability Appraisal is published alongside this Issues and Options Report. Sustainability Appraisal is a means by which the sustainability of a Development Plan Document is tested and options compared. At this stage the Baseline Report provides the background information and the basis for the future assessment of the AAP.

The key element of the Baseline Report is the Appraisal Objectives, which form the key criteria for appraising the AAP. They are listed here.

The Baseline Report is open to comment as well as the Issues and Options report. It is published alongside this report and is also available on the City Council's website.

Objectives

SOCIAL

1. To provide everyone with the opportunity to live in a decent home
2. to create a balanced, mixed community
3. to reduce poverty and social exclusion
4. to improve the health of the population overall
5. to improve the education and skills of the population overall
6. to ensure that key services and facilities are safely accessible locally
7. to reduce anti-social activity
8. to create greater community cohesion and promote the local area through community based projects
9. to offer everybody the opportunity for rewarding and satisfying employment
10. to improve accessibility, particularly for those most in need
11. to improve access to cultural activities

ENVIRONMENTAL

12. to reduce the effect of transport on the environment and to promote modal shift
13. to maintain and enhance biodiversity
14. to enhance the appearance and quality of the townscape
15. to conserve and enhance the historic environment
16. to reduce contributions to climate change
17. to avoid, reduce and manage flood risk
18. to provide for sustainable sources of water supply and improve water quality
19. to minimise production of waste

ECONOMIC

20. to enhance the image of the area as a business location and encourage investment and economic growth
21. to reduce economic disparities within the area
22. to improve the social and environmental performance of the economy



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City Council



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