UpperCalderValleyRenaissance
weaving it all together

UpperCalderValleyRenaissance

UpperCalderValley
Renaissance

The Valley Vision

To create a connected, creative, and sustainable Valley by redefining the role of its Market Towns through a people based process of physical, symbolic and virtual change, building upon the talents of the people and the quality of the built and natural environment.

I am delighted to be able to introduce the Renaissance Vision for the Upper Calder Valley. Its people have always been fiercely independent, enterprising and imaginative and it was in these hills and valleys that the Industrial Revolution started, with the first moves from an agrarian to an industrial society.

Yorkshire Forward's Renaissance Agenda has created a unique opportunity for all the communities and interest groups to come together to shape a new future for the Valley, which suffered so severely from job losses throughout the last century.

When I was asked to be the first Chair of the Steering Group, I was mindful of the importance of the initiative being driven, not by the Council, but by local people.

The Council is pleased to be able to work alongside the Upper Calder Valley community and to fulfil its role in providing local services and linking government strategies to promote and deliver the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area.

The Council look forward to continuing to work in partnership with all the townships of the Valley and in this spirit we will ensure that the Vision of local people and businesses will be realised - to provide a vibrant economy, sustainable development and an area in which we can all be proud to live and work.

I hope that as many people as possible will now sign up to the Valley Charter and continue to work together to deliver the Renaissance Vision.

Councillor John Hardy
Chair, Upper Calder Valley Steering Group
Regeneration Portfolio Holder
Calderdale Borough Council

A full list of Charter signatories will be recorded on
the Upper Calder Valley website: www.ucvr.com

The Charter is a statement which sets out agreed common aims and promises. For the Charter to be successful it needs to be 'owned' and 'signed up to' by all sections of the community. In signing the Charter, the community agrees to work together towards a common objective and the new Vision for the future. The Charter sets out the rights and privileges which the community claim in looking for a rebirth or renaissance of the Valley. Expressing the intentions of the community in the form of a Charter helps everyone measure future proposals against its principles.

The Renaissance Charter The Community's Commitment to Change

1. Process

We, the people of the Upper Calder Valley, civic leaders and representatives of businesses, voluntary and community sectors, are jointly committed to the new Renaissance Vision for the Upper Calder Valley. We will establish a connected, creative and sustainable Valley by redefining the role of its Market Towns through a people-based process of physical, symbolic and virtual change that builds upon the talents of the people and the quality of the built and natural environment.

2. Built Environment

We will work together to value, protect and enhance our unique cultural and physical heritage. We will give top priority to the quality of the built environment, to conservation of historic buildings, setting quality and sustainability thresholds for new build and refurbishment.

3. Valley Setting

We will conserve and enhance the Valley's environmental assets. We will ensure that the wooded landscape is extended and managed, and that the river and canal corridor is accessible but protected from inappropriate development. We will encourage and support a wide range of sustainable rural activity, including bio-diversity and the development of traditional skills.

We will improve valley links by enhancing the footpath and bridleway network, recognising and protecting the variety of wildlife and scenery in the area.

4. Image and Marketing

We will take pride in all aspects of the Valley and be constantly striving for improvement. We will develop a Valley identity that is capable of flexibility. We will make it a place where visitors will be welcomed but which will not be over-exploited for tourists. Natural and heritage riches will be promoted and communicated effectively to the wider world. We will dare to be different.

5. Business and Recreation

We will support the development of a thriving business base as well as a wide range of good quality leisure and arts facilities. We will celebrate individuality and encourage a wide range of activities for those of all ages and abilities, especially young people, who we want to stay to be a part of the Valley's future. We will encourage initiative and enterprise in the rural economy including manufacturing, service delivery, cultural activity and countryside management. We will support local talent and promote the development and consumption of local produce and products.

6. Farming and the Rural Economy

We are proud that our farmers have woven together our natural and industrial landscapes through their skills, efforts and innovation over centuries. We recognise their present economic plight and social isolation and commit ourselves to help them to fully participate in the rebuilding of our local food, cultural and tourism economies.

7. Communication

We will encourage social wellbeing and community cohesion by developing and delivering an efficient communications network that will connect people of the Valley to each other and to the many facilities, services and products that exist already, and which will be extended further.

8. Housing

We will work to maintain the unique diversity of population mix within the Valley and encourage the promotion of town centre living, live-work accommodation and the potential for sustainable and low-impact housing.

9. Getting About

We will pursue all the means at our disposal to reduce traffic levels in the Valley and to develop integrated transport arrangements that make travel a pleasure. Walking, cycling, horse-riding, and water-borne travel will be promoted as a utility as well as a leisure activity.

10. Sustainability

We will use sustainable principles (economic, social and environmental) as a basis for all future developments, respecting the best of the old but incorporating the best of modern technology and creativity for the benefit of future generations.

11. Change

We agree to work together to achieve the Renaissance Vision, in partnership, not in conflict or competition. We will be tolerant, inclusive and respect diversity. We will address the root causes of intolerance and alienation. We will be open minded to all ideas and educate each other about decisions made.

12. Community Involvement

Above all, we will involve all sections of the community irrespective of class, gender, race, religious belief, disability, age or sexuality in the process. We will continue to listen to the people of the Valley, as we work towards the delivery of the Renaissance in the years to come.

Contents

This document is a record of the first 12 months of the Renaissance process in the Upper Calder Valley. It includes the Vision, Charter and Masterplans for the Valley together with summaries of the Strategic Aims and Actions that have been developed by the Action Groups. Further details of work completed can be found on the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance Website (www.ucvr.com). A detailed feasibility study for the Transformational Projects in each of the five towns has been commissioned by Yorkshire Forward and the Valley Team is now finalising the Investment Plan for the Valley.

Left: Todmorden Town Hall

Introduction

Renaissance Market Towns

Yorkshire Forward is the Regional Development Agency for Yorkshire and the Humber.

Renaissance Market Towns is a new approach commissioned by Yorkshire Forward to ensure that market towns within the region have a clear, long term vision of their economic future.

In rural areas of Yorkshire, market towns have an important function as service centres and employment providers for rural hinterlands.

The Upper Calder Valley is the first of Yorkshire Forwards' Renaissance Market Towns projects and was launched in January 2003.

The Renaissance Market Towns programme will help to:

- Improve the attractiveness and quality of life of a market town through the provision of appropriate housing, transport services and a quality public environment, encouraging and retaining economic activity in rural areas.

- Create an economically and socially vibrant town that will retain the younger generation whose exodus to cities seriously threatens economic diversification, social balance and future sustainability.

- Establish effective Town Teams with the skills and knowledge to deliver an agreed Investment Plan.

- Boost the economic performance of towns and create the right conditions for local businesses to establish and grow.

- Enable small towns to act as more effective 'local capitals' for their rural catchments.

- Create ambitious but achievable Town Visions or Charters based on a shared understanding of needs and opportunities for residents, workers, businesses and visitors. These are then translated into Masterplans and Investment Plans for implementation.

Rural Renaissance Panel

Yorkshire Forward has appointed a multi-disciplinary panel of consultants - the Rural Renaissance Panel - that includes leading practitioners in the fields of masterplanning, urban design, traffic and transportation, economic development, marketing, information technology, landscape, housing, art and culture, tourism and rural affairs.

John Thompson & Partners were appointed in December 2002 as lead consultant for the Upper Calder Valley. Since then, they have been working closely with Yorkshire Forward, Calderdale Borough Council, the local communities and other Panel members to produce a long-term Vision and delivery strategy for the renaissance of the Valley.

Renaissance Market Towns

The Renaissance Market Towns approach has a series of key outputs.

Vision
The guiding statement of where a community wants to be.

Charter
The principles that the community agrees to be bound by, setting out common aims and commitments.

Masterplans
A series of two dimensional representations as to how the physical and environmental shape of towns and villages should be guided and directed over time.

Investment Plan
An investment plan of prioritised projects that over time will play a critical role in delivering the Vision.

Town Team
One of the key outcomes of the process is the creation of a Town Team.

The Town Team is a proactive partnership, representing the public, private and community sectors. It will play a pivotal role in delivering the Renaissance and is a team of people who are passionate in wanting to drive forward change.

"This is the most ambitious intervention planned so far in the Upper Calder Valley... its a real commitment to regeneration based on a long term Vision rather than the short term initiatives of the past"

Andy Tordoff, Head of Rural Renaissance and Tourism, Yorkshire Forward

"Our policies, programmes, and structures of governance are based on engaging local people in partnerships for change"

John Prescott, Deputy Prime Minister

Upper Calder Valley Renaissance

The Valley Forum
From its informal beginnings, the Renaissance process has now developed a formal structure. The Valley Forum moves monthly between the five towns and is open to anyone to attend who both signs the Charter and supports the principles of the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance. It is a 'can-do' forum for the exchange of ideas, providing a platform for the Valley Action Groups to report on progress and for the Valley Steering Group to provide guidance and direction.

The Valley Team
The Valley Team has been created from the existing Town Partnerships (Todmorden Pride, Hebden Royd Partnership, Royd Regeneration and the Sowerby Bridge Forum) and the valley wide Action Groups that have emerged through the process: The Valley Setting; Farming and the Rural Economy; Tourism, Culture and Heritage; Business, Marketing and IT; Housing; Youth and Social Wellbeing; Getting About and the Flying Shuttle. The Action Groups are responsible for developing and delivering their own Investment Plans.

The Valley Steering Group
In addition to one nomination from each of the existing Action Groups, the Steering Group includes one representative from each of the Town Partnerships and one representative from the business and environmental communities, the Local Strategic Partnership, Calderdale Borough Council and the Town and Parish Councils. A maximum of six additional members can be co-opted.

Upper Calder Valley Renaissance
At December 2003 it has been agreed to formally constitute the Valley Steering Group as a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee and answerable to its members (the Charter Signatories). The company will be called Upper Calder Valley Renaissance and will operate from offices in Hebden Bridge, provided by Calderdale Borough Council.
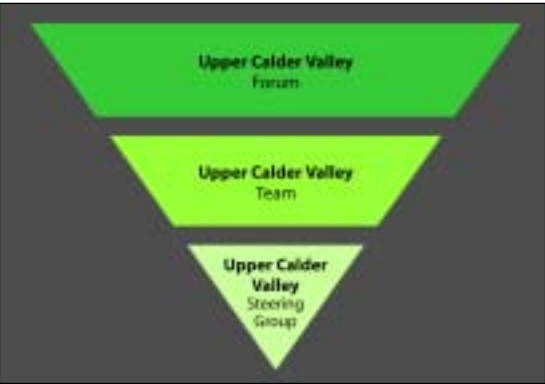
Since December 2002 the process has involved over 2000 people and generated over 10,000 hours of Community Planning

5 Action Planning Events; 4 Young People's Workshops; 5 Farmer's Meetings; Bringing It All Together Weekend; 4 Report Back Presentations; 6 Valley Forums; 5 Steering Group Meetings; 50 Action Group Meetings; 8 Property Owner's Workshops; Numerous meetings with organisations and individuals and daily e-mails and telephone calls

Process

Valley Participation

"We've never come together as a Valley before"

To date, the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance process has involved more than 2,000 people. The programme involved a wide range of Action Planning processes and was designed to ensure that the widest cross section of the valley population was involved.

Action Planning Events

These events, open to everyone, were held in the five major settlements within the Valley during the spring of 2003 in Walsden, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd and Sowerby Bridge.

What Happened?

The aim of these Town Workshops was to explore the towns and their surrounding countryside and to discover together the issues affecting each of the individual areas. During the day there were a series of walkabouts and bus trips in and around the towns and villages. These were followed by Hands-on Planning sessions where small groups worked together around maps to explore ideas in more detail. In the evening there was a Future Workshop that identified key strategic issues and actions.

Outreach Consultation

As well as the Action Planning Events, numerous other workshops and meetings were held in schools and with individuals, community groups, farmers, key organisations and property owners to ensure that as many people as possible in the Valley were involved in developing ideas for its future.

Report Backs

The results of the individual Town Workshops were then summarised in the form of long-term Visions and Masterplans for the towns and their surroundings. These were presented back to the public during April and May.
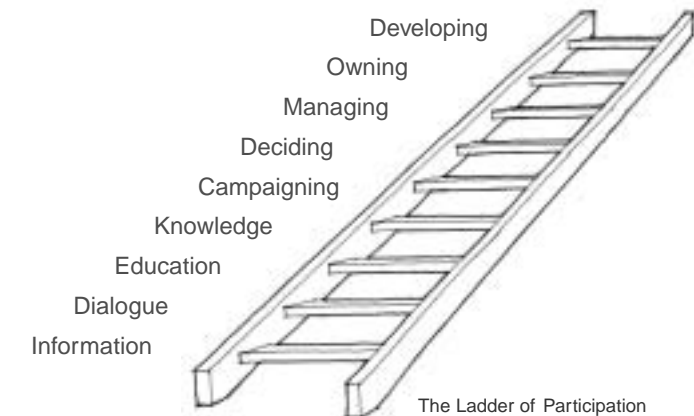
The Bringing it All Together Weekend

The Bringing it All Together Weekend was held in June. A wide cross section of the people of the Upper Calder Valley worked together with representatives from key organisations and additional Yorkshire Forward Rural Panel members to explore in more detail the key issues and actions that had emerged from the earlier events.

Weekend Report Back

The Weekend culminated in a Report Back on 8 July, held in the Sunday School in Mytholmroyd. The results of the Weekend, including the emerging Charter, Vision, and the Aims, Objectives and Actions for each of the Topic Groups, were presented.

The Valley Forum, Team and Steering Group

Since June, the Valley Forum has met monthly, open to anybody to attend. The Action Groups have come together as The Valley Team from which a Steering Group has now been formed, to be formally constituted as Upper Calder Valley Renaissance.

The Ladder of Participation

Developing
Owning
Managing
Deciding
Campaigning
Knowledge
Education
Dialogue
Information

Town Workshops and the Bringing it All Together Weekend

The Twelve Month Process

"We never knew the potential of all the other towns"

The twelve month Renaissance process started with informal contacts with known groups and organisations, and a valley wide communications programme. From locally orientated events in each of the five towns, the whole Valley was then brought together at a five day Community Planning Weekend, working in groups to explore topic-based issues in more detail, supported by specialist consultants from the Rural Renaissance Panel.

Held together by the collective consensus embedded in the Vision and the Charter, it was then possible to move towards more formal participatory structures, driven by the Action Groups and culminating in the formal constitution of the Valley Steering Group as Upper Calder Valley Renaissance (UCVR); a not-for-profit company, limited by guarantee and answerable to its member, the Charter signatories.

At the initiation of the Renaissance process, Action Planning Workshops were held in each of the five major settlements.

The Bringing it All Together Weekend focused on valley wide issues, simultaneously creating the Vision and Charter.

Regional Context
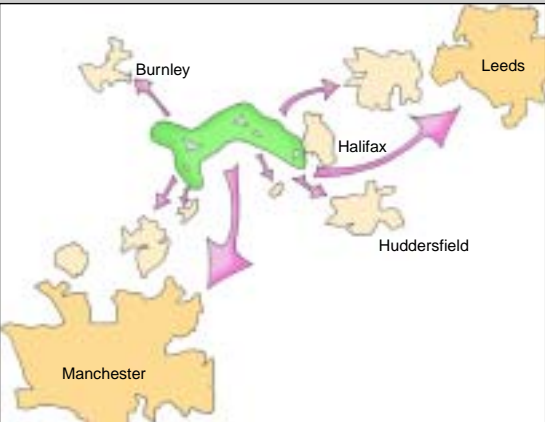
Sphere of influence
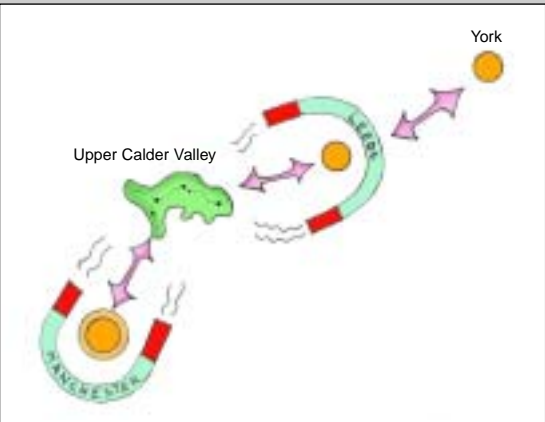
Poles of influence

Context and History

" Towns and Cities were built for exchange "

The Upper Calder Valley lies in the Pennine fringe of West Yorkshire, strategically situated between two National Parks - the Yorkshire Dales and Peak District to the north and south, and the two massive conurbations of Leeds and Manchester to the east and west.

The Valley has five principal settlements: Walsden the most westerly, Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd and Sowerby Bridge to the east. The Valley is well connected to Manchester and Leeds, two of the largest cities in the North, and is close to the smaller cities and towns of Halifax, Huddersfield, Burnley and Bradford.

The Upper Calder Valley has good train links with Leeds and Manchester and from there to the East and West Coast main lines. Journey times vary from 28 minutes to 1 hour depending which end of the Valley is the starting point. Road links are also good, particularly to the M62 which connects the east and west coasts; the nearest international airport is Manchester, only 45 minutes away.

Yorkshire is becoming one of the fastest growing economic areas of the United Kingdom. The Valley's position at its heart, plus its attractive countryside and dramatic setting, makes it an increasingly desirable place to live, work, invest and visit.
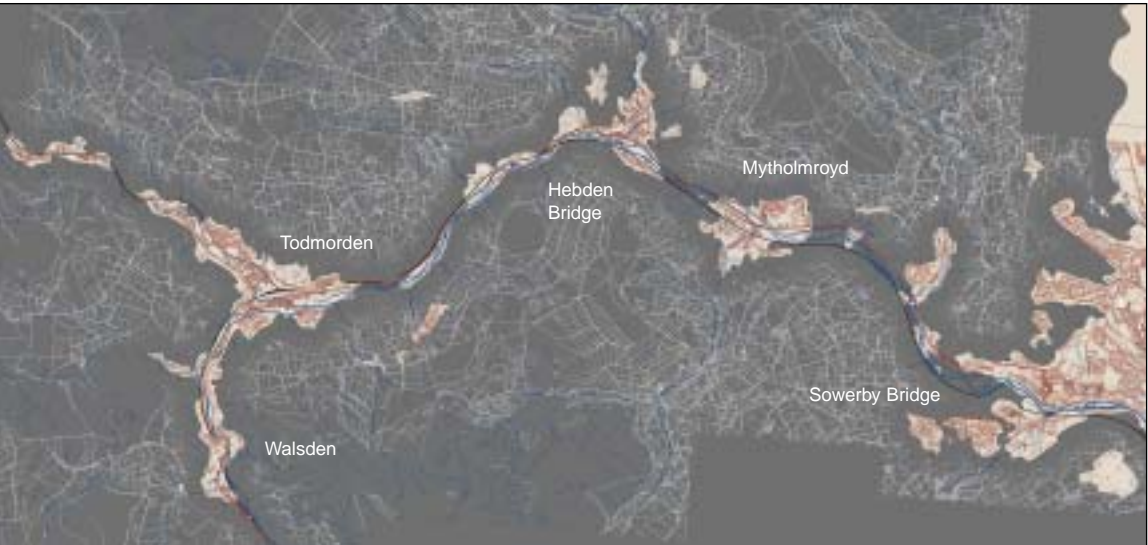
The Upper Calder Valley

Homesteads located on the valley sides

The industrial transformation of the valley floor

The growth of the towns

Decline and time of change

1. The Early Homesteads

From the Middle Ages small homesteads were mostly situated on shoulders of flatter land on the valley sides between the heavily forested and marshy valley bottom and the open moorland of the tops. It was a struggle for farmers to live off farming alone so handloom weaving was used to supplement their income.

The weaving industry developed and villages such as Heptonstall, Luddenden and Sowerby grew up around the homesteads on the valley sides. Weaving was a cottage industry with groups of people working from home yet sharing common amenities. Fulling mills were established on the fast flowing brooks and tributaries of the Calder; supplies and produce were carried between villages by packhorses along the tops, descending occasionally to cross the Valley. Smaller settlements grew up on the valley floor, where often an inn was built beside a crossing point on the River Calder. This was the case at Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Todmorden and Sowerby Bridge.

2. Industrialisation

The Merchant Clothiers in the late 16th and early 17th century organised the domestic industry and developed extensive overseas markets to initiate a period of great prosperity. Growing markets provided the spur for technological innovation and the wealth accumulated financed the new factory system of production. In 1733 John Kay invented the Flying Shuttle which revolutionised both the weaving process and the textile industry. It was the combination of the Flying Shuttle and the revolution in transportation at the end of the 18th century that led to the rapid industrial transformation of the Valley.

The turnpike road was the first proper route along the valley bottom and was built in 1761. However, it was the canal, which was opened in 1804, which could for the first time supply cheap coal to the steam-powered mills built on the valley floor. The railway, completed in 1841, enabled the finished textiles to be taken from the mills and quickly transported to their final destination.
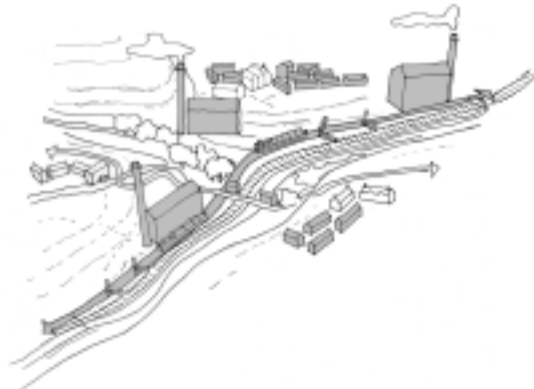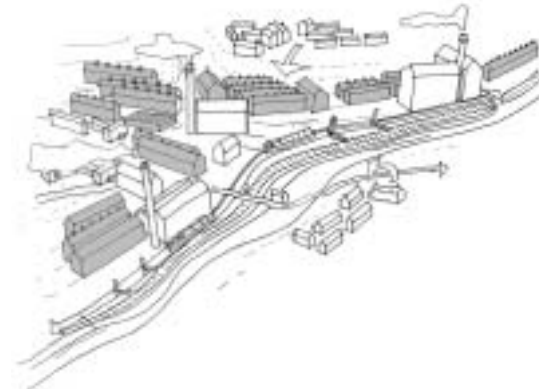
3. Prosperity

Towns rapidly grew up around the large new mills on the valley floor, especially at Todmorden, Hebden Bridge and Sowerby Bridge. At the same time, the smaller villages on the valley sides declined.

Homesteads whose income had been supported by hand weaving could not compete with industrialisation.

Whole populations moved down the Valley to the new settlements and the large mills on the valley floor. Industry grew along and across the Valley during the mid to late 19th century and the towns continued to expand. At its peak the Valley was exporting textiles to much of Europe and the British Empire. Rich mill owners not only built bigger and more impressive mills but were also responsible for the construction of imposing civic and religious buildings in the towns.

4. Decline

In the period between the wars, 345,000 workers in the UK left the cotton industry alone and 800 mills closed due to the rise in competition from abroad and declining foreign markets for locally produced textiles. During the 1960s and 70s the country was importing more textiles than it was exporting and mills were closing at the rate of one a week. The Valley suffered a rapid decline in population as workers left to find work elsewhere. In towns such as Todmorden, the population halved.

During the 1970s many incomers came to settle in areas of the Valley, taking advantage of cheap property prices. Some of these started new businesses in the Valley or commuted to the nearest cities. The economic growth of Leeds and Manchester in recent years has helped to increase the demand for new homes in the Valley. New housing is being built wherever possible and property prices have risen sharply in many, but not all, areas of the Valley.

Home working on the valley sides

Steam powered mills on the valley floor

Town Hall, Sowerby Bridge, a statement of civic and merchant power. One half now demolished.

Large footprint, single storey industrial sheds now occupy much of the valley floor.

The Valley of Ideas

The Upper Calder Valley is a cultural landscape of international significance. If necessity is the mother of invention, this Valley is the embodiment of the resulting infant. Impoverished medieval farmers struggling with sour Pennine soils and harsh weather developed a dual economy of domestic manufacturing and subsistence smallholding. They were among the first societies in the world to make the wholesale transition from an agrarian to an industrial way of life, inventing the factory system of production and kick starting a revolution which radically changed the entire world. Local skills, local raw materials of wool, water power and steam, coupled with the ingenuity and enterprise of local merchants created the products, the markets and the wealth which under-pinned investment in technology and fired this worldwide phenomenon.

Like the waters which powered its early steps this initiative has long since slipped from the hills to more accommodating sites elsewhere, first in this country and then overseas.This demands a re-evaluation of the resources needed to sustain this Valley and its people. And today's resources are not unconnected with those of the past. They are the very history and heritage of that first great upheaval, coupled again with the traditions, ingenuity and enterprise of those who live here, all set within this very dramatic landscape which shapes the character of the area. As before, the Upper Calder Valley is not for those who seek a soft life – but attracts those of vision, enterprise and creativity, as it ever did. The great man-made cultural landscape which is the Calder Valley in turn provokes and prompts a vast outpouring of cultural and creative activity, both traditional and contemporary, artistic and technological.

The Valley of Ideas, to those who choose to live here, to work here or to visit the area, is a magical place. Landscape and environment, cultural and leisure opportunities, image and quality of life are resources to be developed and exploited – exploited with care and forethought – just as much as wool and waterpower were in the past.

This is the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance theme song, to bring together the creative energies of the remarkable people who live here, to gather together the divergent, emerging activities, and to package them into a prosperous local economy, sustained by the quality of its setting.

David E. Fletcher
Deputy Chair, The Upper Calder Valley Steering Group

The Valley Strategy

The Valley of Ideas

"It's the first time we've been asked to think long-term"

The people and their Valley were once woven together in a seamless, sustainable relationship.

The Valley shaped the form of its settlements and moulded the cultural and economic life of its people to its contours. The people cared for the Valley and were dependent upon it. Through no fault of their own, this harmonious relationship was then eroded by external forces.

The results of this erosion are still there for all to see:

- The Valley's Town Halls (even where not already cut in half) no longer represent the unique combination of civic and merchant power that once created them

- The Valley's Markets, once inextricably entwined with the Valley's rural economy, now sell goods imported from China for less than a pound

- The Valley's Farmers can no longer farm, brought to their knees by globalisation and irrational decisions imposed from afar

- The Valley's Floor has been invaded by large footprint sheds occupying valuable land and choking the Valley's Arteries with their lorries

- The Valley's Road is a dangerous and polluting eyesore; the Valley's River threatens to flood and has long been neglected; the Valley's Railway provides the most basic of services and its Canal, although reopened, still awaits the realisation of its full potential.

Yet behind these lingering images of decline, the Renaissance of the Valley has already begun. For many years it has attracted people with entrepreneurial and alternative lifestyles. A recently published survey identified over 900 local businesses in the creative sector - more per capita than to be found in Leeds. It is already clear that the economic prosperity of the Valley will be built around the clustering of interdependent and creative industries.

Whilst this new economic sector grows, the Valley continues to lose traditional jobs as old mills and factories close, ripe for conversion to satisfy the needs of the incoming retired and professional commuters who may have little interest in the Valley beyond its convenient location. To combat this effect, the Valley Strategy must nurture the needs of its traditional workforce, through the provision of higher levels of education and technical and professional skills, matched by the creation of a wider range of housing opportunities.

Regeneration is driven by economic success, supported by a high quality of life in all its various forms: social, cultural and environmental. The Upper Calder Valley has these ingredients in abundance. Its Renaissance will be built on the heritage of its past and the talents of its people.

Where once its economic expression was built on the exchange of goods and produce, its future is now being built, and will continue to be built, on the exchange of intellectual property.

The Valley of Cloth is becoming the Valley of Ideas.

Walsden

Todmorden

Hebden Bridge

Mytholmroyd

Sowerby Bridge
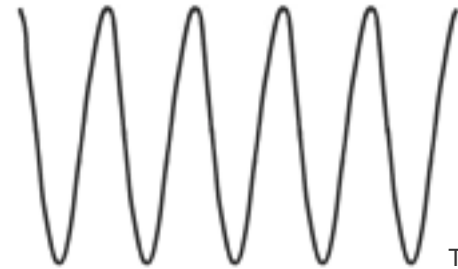
The Valley Weft

The Valley Warp

The Five Towns
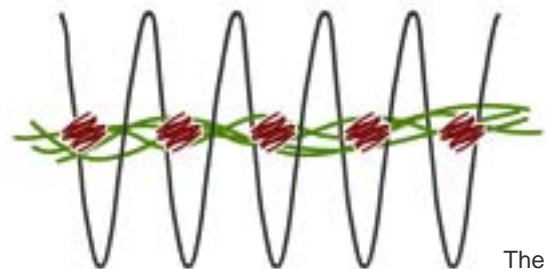
The Flying Shuttle

The Valley Weft

The Valley Weft represents everything that binds the Valley together, connecting people and landscape through common purpose and common function.

From along the tops and down to the valley floor, from east to west and from north to south, the Renaissance of the Valley will be created from the unique combination of its human and natural heritage.

Action Groups have already come together to deliver the Renaissance of the Valley in terms of its setting, rural economy, tourism, culture and heritage, creative and small businesses, marketing and information technologies (IT), housing, youth and social wellbeing.

The Valley Warp

The Valley Warp is made up from the horizontal threads that run along the valley floor: the river, the canal, the road and the railway. Due to the narrowness of the Valley, these four elements are already woven together. Some would say they are, as yet, merely knotted together by historical coincidence, rather than by any newfound sense of purpose that could beneficially weave the Valley together again.

Given that their control lies beyond the boundaries of the Valley, their Renaissance will need to be framed within a much wider context, and may therefore be more difficult to deliver.

The Five Towns

In each of the major settlements and for the hinterlands they serve, enterprise and ingenuity will be nurtured through the creation of a 21st Century Marketplace, a place for exchange, congregation, fertilisation and facilitation in every shape and form: physical, social, cultural, spiritual, economic and virtual.

In Todmorden, the existing Marketplace will be further enhanced, in Hebden and Sowerby Bridge they will be relocated and in Mytholmroyd a new Market Town will be created.

The Flying Shuttle

The Flying Shuttle is a conceptual project, symbolising the weaving together of the warp and the weft of the Upper Calder Valley in an interconnected series of physical, environmental, cultural, social, spiritual and virtual projects; some visible, some invisible.

Just as the Flying Shuttle revolutionised the weaving process in the late 18th century, moving faster than the eye could see to bring economic prosperity to the Valley, so will its 21st century equivalent give collective expression to the quality and creativity of the Valley and its communities.

Marking the Valley will give physical expression to the Flying Shuttle, a public art project that will create eleven Renaissance Way Stations on the tops of the Valley. Just as the Flying Shuttle carried yarn, so Marking the Valley will allow 'shuttles' to carry light, sound and messages from side to side across the Valley and down into the towns themselves. It has the potential to become the largest permanent public art project in the world

The Valley Weft

Weaving it all together

"There are so many cross cutting themes ... I want to be in every group!"

Introduction

The Valley Weft binds everything in the Valley together – creating social, economic, physical and environmental connectivity.

During the five Town Workshops issues emerged that were common to all the Valley. At the Bringing it All Together Weekend in June, groups of people with similar interests worked together to explore these topic-based issues in more detail, supported by additional consultants from Yorkshire Forward's Rural Renaissance Panel.

Action Groups were then formed to identify priority projects and the actions needed to deliver them. The main work of the Action Groups and the Steering Group through the Spring of 2004 will be to further develop and refine these actions and create an Investment Plan that will deliver the Renaissance of the Upper Calder Valley as a whole.

This section of the document has been written by the Action Groups in collaboration with John Thompson & Partners and contains a short summary of the groups' strategies and key projects. More detailed Action Plans have been (or are being) developed by each of the Action Groups who are now prioritising projects and identifying when and how they will be implemented and by whom. These Action Plans will then be brought together as part of the Upper Calder Valley Investment Plan.

Left: The Warp, the Weft and the Flying Shuttle

Legend:
- Improving the valley corridor
- Promote riparian woodland along the Calder and tributaries
- Encourage management of existing clough woodland

Map labels: Hebden Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Todmorden, Walsden, Sowerby Bridge

The Valley Setting

Sustainability

Sustainability is the thread which will run through all of the valley initiatives, weaving them together to deliver a true Renaissance. Sustainability will be delivered through the integration of social progress and economic development with the enhancement of the valley setting and the use of renewable energy. Social progress must promote better health, housing and access to work and recreation and address problems of poverty and social inclusion. Economic development must contribute to, and not destroy, quality of life whilst developing local skills and jobs. Enhancement of the valley setting will protect things that people value, such as wildlife, landscape and historic buildings. The use of renewable energy will help to ensure that there is a planet left for future generations to enjoy.

Strategy

To integrate the Renaissance Strategy to form one cohesive plan, simultaneously filling in gaps and overlooked areas of action. To create an overview of linkages and impacts and to work alongside the Valley Action Groups.

The Valley Setting

The beauty of the Calder Valley is a result of its geology and topography and more recently the interaction between its natural state and the way people have sought to utilise it. The Valley draws people from far and wide to enjoy the countryside and experience the beauty of both its natural and industrial heritage. The challenges that are inherent in living, working and playing in a 'tourist' valley are multitudinous. Whilst local people recognise the value of their environment and want to share it with others the pressures that are

created through changes in land use and the requirement to provide acceptable levels of growth can equally be the cause of its degradation.

The settlements that lie along the valley bottom are disconnected from each other and equally from the smaller hamlets that are clustered on the tops. Each have their own individual identity that must be supported yet it is essential that the Upper Calder Valley as a whole finds an identity that is all encompassing, inclusive and co-operative.

Strategy

To nurture a living, working landscape for people and nature, representing the Valley and the tops; to create an overview of the impacts of valley wide actions and provide an understanding of linkages and impacts the length of the Valley; to work alongside and integrate the ideas generated by the Valley Action Groups.

Aims

- Identify existing actions and gaps and create a Valley identity that can be recognised by all who live in it
- Develop a land management programme to conserve and enhance the Valley's best features
- Recognise the value of the water corridor and develop it sensitively for both today and the future
- Improve access to the valley bottom creating links between the individual settlements by foot, cycle and horseback
- Preserve and improve the biodiversity and ecology of the whole Valley
- Utilise and protect existing buildings of quality in an environmentally sustainable manner.

"To be truly sustainable we must maximise the exchange whilst minimising the distance"
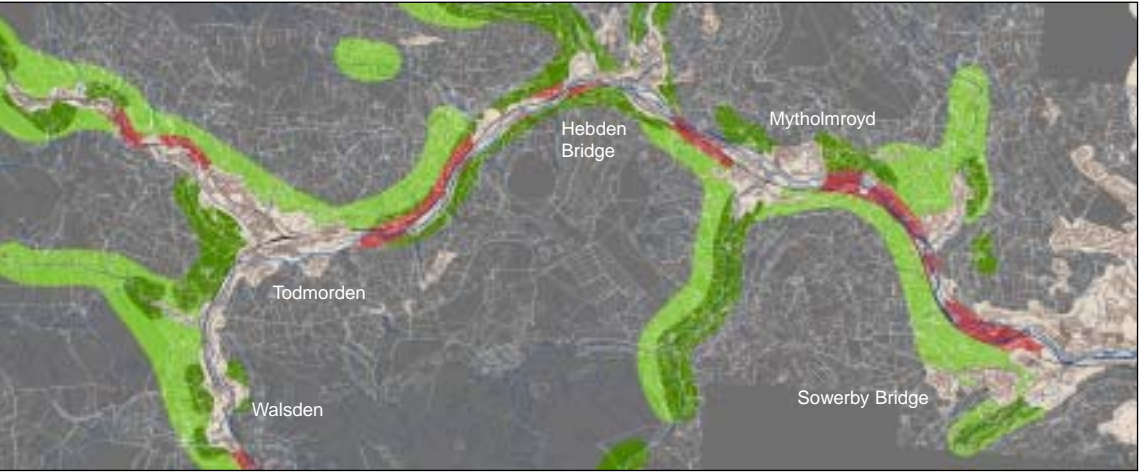
"If we learn to look after the Valley... the Valley will look after us"

Actions

- Gather data, conduct audits and character assessments, and map areas appropriate for work, e.g. degraded land, river regime, condition of open space, access issues, woodland suitable for biomass, etc.
- Prioritise actions that arise from audit and liaise with relevant parties.
- Develop a valley wide sustainable land management strategy, ensuring integration of key valley users.
- Facilitate network of concerned parties and implement strategies.

Renewable Energy

Strategy

To establish an Upper Calder Valley Renewable Energy Network.

Aims

- Encourage the take up of green energy technologies in the Upper Calder Valley
- Provide information, support and training
- Combat fuel poverty by enabling low income households to access renewable energies
- Establish best practice to act as a beacon for other users to follow
- Use renewables as the engine to drive the social, economic and environmental regeneration of communities across the Valley
- Enable group buying of equipment and services and maximise community benefits.

Actions

1. To carry out a valley wide energy audit
2. To develop a valley wide energy strategy
3. To work with existing planning policy and to implement regional strategies and targets for renewable energy
4. To create a one-stop shop for community groups, individuals and businesses
5. To create Neighbourhood Energy Plans.

Farming and the Rural Economy

Introduction
The strategy for Farming and the Rural Economy has evolved out of the series of Valley evening farming meetings organised by the local National Farmers Union and the Grass Roots Food Network.

Strategy
To support the sustainable Renaissance of the Upper Calder Valley's rural economy through local food and community based, collaborative action; practical demonstration, marketing and communication and the reconnection of local people in the urban valley floor to the rural tops and sides.

Linking Outcomes and Tasks to Strategic Objectives
In the process of planning a deliverable programme for the Farming and Rural Economy Group (FARE) it became apparent that the various outcomes must be delivered in an integrated way. Projects should not be seen in isolation. They must also make sense within, and contribute to, the overall Upper Calder Valley Renaissance programme. The linked objectives and outcomes are as described in the diagram and the tasks are detailed below.

Creating a Cost-Effective, Accountable Delivery Mechanism
A team of known, local, available, short term consultants with management and administrative skills should be brought together. They would then work in a team context on specific tasks, within a matrix management framework of defined tasks and responsibilities. Each person would have a sound track record in 'doing' rather than 'discussing', being already professionally engaged in this type of work in the local region.

Actions

Revitalising Local Producer/Consumer Food Chain through 'Action Pilots' and Marketing

1. Local and sub-regional food branding
Create a premium 'Valley Brand' accreditation scheme for local food and actively promote it both within and beyond Calderdale in liaison with relevant agencies and farmers, so that producers, consumers and retailers value the label and product association.

2. Direct local supplies of food
Establish dynamic and evolving local purchasing partnerships between producers and across public procurement and business sectors to benefit local producers and consumers and increase trade in quality, sustainable local produce to drive the market.

3. Modernise collaborative retail chain
Re-establish a fully functioning, 'short link' local food supply chain in the Valley, capable of handling produce of all types from 'farm gate' to the retailer and consumer, reducing 'food miles', bolstering retained local income and improving processing facilities.

Creating New/Added Value Local Food and Farming Enterprises

1. Farm, school and community fruit and vegetable pilot
Establish on-going, practical farming, educational and community action that creates wider involvement in the production of food in the Valley, introduces modern production innovation and demonstrates profitable new cropping and added-value processing.

" We want to buy local food... and to have it for school dinners!"

"We're proud that over the centuries we've made this beautiful landscape, grown local food for our children and kept them in the Valley with jobs... use us or loose us!"

2. Farm and community renewable energy schemes
Develop cost-effective water, wind, short coppice and solar renewable energy schemes capable of generating additional farm income, knitting the farming community into the valley wide conurbation, with shared benefits and full involvement of participating farmers.

3. Locally grown niche and alternative field crops
Link the growing demand for 'ethnic' foods with profitable production by demonstrating field scale operational success with local farmers, retailed locally and sold wholesale regionally to reduce dependence on variable livestock prices.

Renewing Traditional Landscape and Husbandry
1. Upper Calder catchment biodiversity and valley sides wildlife enhancement
Work directly with local farmers and relevant agencies to create wildlife 'farm clusters' and 'corridors', linking diversity-rich habitats and reserves and increasing appropriately-sited tree cover, with full participation of involved farmers, local people and schools.

2. Sustainable small scale local stone quarrying
Increase the profitable quarrying and marketing of local stone for local development construction and public realm projects.

3. Farm based walls, drainage and bridleways repair programmes
Revitalise and value the farming community's traditional skills of land management and husbandry, enhancing the visual amenity and quality of the valley shoulder and moor tops, the unique visitor experience and the heritage of the locality.

Remobilising and Reconnecting Local Communities
1. Creative links through the Flying Shuttle
Creating ongoing dialogue and practical collaborations with other Action Groups, communities and schools; reinforcing cross-cutting, 'Flying Shuttle' themes; creatively linking local food, farming and the rural economy to the wider Renaissance of the Valley.

2. Good practice dissemination
Produce digital and audio-visual material for publicity, training and broadcasting, highlighting successes, lessons learnt and methods proven, linked to secondary curriculum, employment creation and overall Renaissance marketing.

RENEWING TRADITIONAL LANDSCAPE/HUSBANDRY PRACTICES

CREATING NEW/ADDED VALUE LOCAL FOOD ENTERPRISES

UPPER CATCHMENT AND VALLEY SIDES BIODIVERSITY ENHANCED

SUSTAINABLE LOCAL STONE QUARRYING/ MARKETING REVITALISED

FARM / SCHOOL COMMUNITY PROTECTED FRUIT & VEG PILOTED

ON-FARM COMMUNITY RENEWABLE ENERGY SCHEMES INSTALLED

FARM WALLS DRAINAGE SYSTEMS FOOTPATHS REPAIRED

NICHE / ETHNIC 'ALTERNATIVE' FIELD CROPS INTRODUCED

SUSTAIN-ABILITY

JOB CREATION

INCLUSION

ONGOING CREATIVE LINKS TO OTHER GROUPS THRO' FLYING SHUTTLE.

SUB-REGIONAL LOCAL FOOD BRANDING ESTABLISHED

DIGITAL A/V DOCUMENTATION DISSEMINATION OF GOOD PRACTICE

WEBSITE / DIRECTORY NEWSLETTER, E-GROUPS ESTABLISHED

DIRECT LOCAL FOOD MARKETING TO RETAIL, SCHOOLS, HOTELS, TOURISM PILOTED

COLLABORATIVE PRODUCER/ SLAUGHTERER PROCESSOR RETAILER CHAIN MODERNISED

REMOBILISING & RECONNECTING LOCAL COMMUNITY NETWORKS

REVITALISING LOCAL PRODUCER/CONSUMER FOOD CHAIN THROUGH 'ACTION PILOTS' & MARKETING

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Tourism, Culture and Heritage

Introduction

The Tourism, Culture and Heritage Group is made up of a cross section of people representing many diverse elements of social activity. Joint working across localities creates many challenging opportunities. Our guiding principle is to facilitate integration within, across and between the Action Groups. There is a strong desire to see empathetic developmental change across and within the five towns, whilst valuing the unique significance creative and cultural activities bring to the Renaissance of the Upper Calder Valley.

Effective communication is essential. It is clear that time and enthusiasm, freely given, is best served by the open and transparent transmission of ideas into policy and practice at all levels.

Social ownership will best be achieved through feedback on the progress of the Action Groups and the sharing of lessons learned.

Strategy

To promote an integrated strategy for creative and cultural activities, tourism and heritage for the Upper Calder Valley.

To promote an identity for the Upper Calder Valley which will best express its unique qualities in the arts, physical landscape and cultural heritage, which grows out of the historic and contemporary life of the people living and working in the Valley.

To work towards celebrating 'The Cultural Valley' by including all the human and physical elements found there such as: people of varying cultural and ethnic backgrounds, professional and amateur artists from all fields; music, visual arts, performance arts, creative writing, sculpture, crafts including ceramics, glassmakers and many more.

To create a place of recreation where visitors and residents may choose from a range of outdoor activities to suit their needs and special interests including: sporting activities for individuals and groups across the full age range; boating and canal barges; horse-riding; mountain biking; walking; workshops in visual arts, stone carving and the industrial landscape.

Actions

1. Set up a Creative Industries Network to develop opportunities for collaboration within and between creative businesses in the Upper Calder Valley, to increase awareness, foster joint activities and offer support to local initiatives.

2. Create an exciting, unified identity for the five towns for marketing strategies in order to develop and encourage active participation.

3. Create the 'Five Town Festival of Ideas'
Promoting a cross-cultural identity for the Upper Calder Valley and facilitating funding opportunities.

4. Branding
Create and promote a brand name for the Upper Calder Valley.

"The Valley of Stories... the Valley of Culture... the Valley of Everything!"

5. Marketing Strategy
Develop a marketing strategy which covers all types of tourism, cultural and recreational opportunities and promote the Valley as:

- a place that is green, sustainable and self sufficient with clean air, clean water and safe food: 'The Valley of Wellbeing'
- a place of recreation where visitors can choose their own speed - slow walking, fast mountain biking: "The Fast and Slow Valley"
- a place for celebrating a wide range of foods, therapies, local history, arts and crafts and the celebrated literary connections with the Arvon Foundation, Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath: 'The Valley of Culture'.

6. Cultural and Tourism Audit
Carry out an audit of current cultural and tourism assets and planned activities; identify what cultural provision is available, where, when and how it is delivered; identify what forms of culture are available in terms of participation for artists, young people, craft makers, visitors and the community as a whole and create a database of accommodation, places to eat, farms, hotels and registered private providers.

7. Tourism Development Officer.
Encourage the local authority to recognise the importance of tourism and reinstate a Tourism Development Officer.

Business, Marketing and IT

Introduction

The Business, Marketing and IT Group recognises the mutual reliance of small, creative businesses in the Valley, their importance to the marketing of the Valley as a whole and the need to more effectively network their businesses and their marketing efforts through a solid and progressive communications structure.

Strategy

The Group deliberately, and rightly, views 'creative' as being more than simply the commonly identified creative industries (although the Upper Calder Valley has abundant talent in these areas). It takes the concept forward into creative ways of doing and evolving business and of managing the relationship between live/work goals and outcomes. The exploration of progressive and radical business models, lifestyle mixes and their relation to tangible, intangible and community benefits is a strong feature of valley life.

The Group recognises that whilst the Upper Calder Valley currently has limited large scale business, and that there is little scope for the development of major single employer businesses, it has a wealth of individuals and small teams, often homeworking or tucked away in non-mainstream premises, many of whom are able to command international recognition in their chosen fields.

The Group therefore seeks to provide opportunities for these elements to come together, both physically and virtually, in a way that will allow partnerships and alliances to form, grow and benefit from each other's strengths. It seeks to find ways of bringing together individual power sources, already shining brightly in their own specialist fields and allowing them to connect together to light up whole areas of activity and development, creating a 'Flying Shuttle of Enterprise' that constantly traverses the Valley from side to side, binding the warp and weft together.

Actions

1. Network Hubs

Create a networking infrastructure for the Valley which is both physical and virtual, through creating a series of multi-purpose, multimedia centres along the length of the Valley, the first four located in the main market towns: Todmorden, Hebden Bridge, Sowerby Bridge and Mytholmroyd. These centres will provide flexible space for workshop, small office and virtual office use, together with exhibition, performance and digital mini-theatre capability.

These hubs will support existing and emerging businesses offering a showcase, a focal point for networking and business advice and support services. They will be connected by high bandwidth communications, allowing multi-site events to take place. The hubs to be established within the sequence of 21st Century Marketplaces that will be created along the Valley.

2. Business 'Federation' Launch Event

This event to be held early in 2004 allowing business people to travel freely up and down the Valley on shuttle buses to meet their peers at a number of social locations, to be linked by webcam to allow inter-site interaction.

"We've got more creative businesses per capita than Leeds"

"In the Valley, small really is beautiful... and almost certainly creative too!"

3. Virtual Networking

To be carried out through the creation of common communications infrastructures and information systems. A high penetration local 'geographical' intranet should be established to provide a basis for future local autonomy in managing low cost data and other telecommunications.

4. Database Creation and Consolidation

A creative industries database, nearing release from Leeds University, should be integrated with skills and business databases planned by, or expected to emerge, and then widely distributed.

5. Calder Connect Co-operative (3-C)

3-C has already launched as the community owned, not-for-profit, broadband supplier for the Upper Calder Valley, with the future potential to supply a wide range of data and telecommunications services.

6. Expansion of a Green Real Estate Environment

The expansion of a green real estate environment for business and the creation of an international 'Distributed' Centre for Creative Working and Living are two longer term projects prioritised by the Group.

Housing

Introduction

The Calder Valley is a wonderful place to live and over the years has developed a strong and unique approach to life which is both pioneering and values diversity. In housing terms, it is an area of contrast between the apparent affluence of Hebden Bridge and the poor housing and such as at Harley Bank in Todmorden.

The widening gap between affluence and social deprivation must be narrowed so that all members of the community can today enjoy the opportunities offered by living in the Upper Calder Valley.

In recent timeS social diversity and tolerance in the Valley has been built on an abundance of cheap housing. House price inflation and an excess of demand over supply now threatens that diversity and cultural richness.

The Housing Action Group believes that good quality housing is a basic human right which should and can be met without destroying the natural environment or the overall quality of the Valley as a whole.

Strategy

To offer choice and to promote social inclusion through working with the local community to provide a wide range of housing opportunities that are low impact, sustainable, social and provide affordable housing opportunities.

Actions

1. To Create a Housing Development Trust
To work with Calderdale Borough Council and local communities to create a Housing Development Trust. This Trust could then work with public agencies and partner developers to promote and deliver innovative, sustainable housing development on new and underused sites in the Upper Calder Valley.

2. Exemplar Projects
To create a number of exemplar housing projects that demonstrate the aims and objectives of the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance and to raise the quality of house building throughout the Valley.

3. Housing Strategies
To develop a Housing Strategy that will promote sustainable, sociable and affordable housing opportunities for the Upper Calder Valley. This will require a housing needs and demand assessment, a housing capacity study and a housing market appraisal.

4. Affordable Housing
To help the Council increase the amount of sustainable and affordable housing in the Upper Calder Valley to combat housing demand causing rents and prices to rise and driving low income people away.

5. Adaptive Re-use
To develop former industrial land and buildings to create additional housing in mixed-use schemes, delivering an increased volume of affordable housing.

"We all need housing... but we can't all afford it!"

"A proper community needs a mix of people"

6. Todmorden and Harley Bank
To encourage and support Calderdale Borough Council in carrying out a Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment in Todmorden, to include Harley Bank, an area where a combination of difficult housing conditions, social, environmental and market factors necessitate a coordinated approach in order to focus support for the local community.

To enable the Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment to be carried out, Calderdale Borough Council to instigate a Renewal Area Declaration and, where issues are urgent, to consider other interim forms of intervention wherever practical.

7. Demonstration Projects
Calderdale Borough Council, working together with the Housing Development Trust and/or local Housing Associations (Registered Social Landlords), landowners and developers, to identify and bring forward a number of mixed-use projects, the residential elements of which could be designed and delivered to offer real choice for local people. Potential sites for further appraisal might include an area in Victoria Road in Hebden Bridge.

Youth and Social Wellbeing

Introduction

The Youth and Wellbeing Group's core philosophy concentrates on supporting and providing for future generations of young people: to nurture them, provide the right type of support and training and to encourage them to stay and live and work in the Valley rather than leaving at the earliest opportunity.

There are few provisions for young people and those that there are need more support.

Over the last 20 years there has been a trend for young people to leave the Valley after finishing school to find work or study elsewhere. For young people staying in the Valley there has been a continual problem of getting the right type of training that they need and finding work.

The rise in house prices in certain areas has made it difficult for those on low wages to continue to live in the Valley.

Valley communities need to be reinforced and facilities improved or provided for.

Strategy

To look and see what's there. To look and see what's not there. To look and see what needs improving. To create 'The Valley Voice', to strengthen community cohesion and create an economic boost – through the increased use of Valley facilities, services and products (including arts, crafts and farming products).

Actions

1. Community Cohesion

To encourage community cohesion in the market towns, and between all the Valley communities, by a programme of multicultural, intergenerational events. To improve community structures and forums and to foster capacity building in people through training and continued learning.

2. A Meeting Place in every Market Town

There are plans in each of the town centres to create a 21st Century Marketplace. As part of this Marketplace there should be a 'community hub'. A place where young people can meet and find the information and support that they need. This could be well connected to other network hubs, virtual and physical, provided within the new Marketplaces.

3. A Gateway or Signpost Person in each Market Town

There should be one 'gateway person' in each of the main towns in the Valley as a first point of call for any young person to go to and get help or advice. This could be part of the 21st Century Marketplace 'community hub'. This person would coordinate and campaign for facilities and activities for young people within each of the towns.

4. Play Facilities

To provide adequate new or renewed play facilities in every market town for various age groups of children so that they can play safely.

"Young people are the Valley's future... if they won't stay it will die"

"We've found out so much about each other... now lets connect up with everyone else!"

5. The Valley Voice

To create an open forum for the whole community to share skills and ideas in an accessible, safe and creative environment.
The Valley Voice team will:

- activate the collection, organisation and dissemination of the information people need and want

- use active networking to collect information and use a variety of methods including electronic, digital and print to disseminate information and share best practice

- ensure that the Valley Voice links up with other Action Groups who are looking at data collection and using digital media to connect people and organisations

- encourage the local media to become a partner in disseminating information through regular Valley Voice columns and small ads

- involve other 'Information partners' including: local NHS Primary Care Trust, voluntary, community and faith groups, youth organisations, small businesses, local agencies, Calderdale College, local media and Calderdale Borough Council

- encourage local business support through advertising in a Valley Voice free-sheet and to sponsor local people to undertake training in information and computer skills - a small part of making Corporate Social Responsibility a part of the Valley Renaissance.

The Valley Warp

The Valleys Regional Connections

"Our arteries once served the needs of our Valley"

Introduction

The Valley Warp: the road, river, railway and canal are strands that weave along the valley floor, connecting the settlements to each other and to the regional and national networks beyond.

The Valley sits in the heart of the country as part of an almost continuous conurbation along the M62 corridor from Liverpool and Manchester in the west and to Hull and the coastal ports in the east. By rail the Valley is only 45 minutes from Manchester and Leeds where there are links to the East and West Coast mainlines.

Recently the Rochdale Canal was restored and re-opened. It forms part of the Pennine Ring, linking up with the Leeds and Liverpool Canal and the Aire and Calder Navigation. The source of the River Calder is at Greens Clough in the Pennine Hills and it flows from the Valley across the country and finally into the Humber and North Sea.

The industrialisation of the Valley grew out of the transport revolution. Great feats of civil engineering during the late 18th and early 19th centuries brought the canal and railway to the Valley. The previously isolated Valley was opened up with a transport corridor linking east to west. Improved transportation enabled mills capable of large-scale textile production to be built on the valley floor. The canal brought coal and the river provided water power for the production process. The finished products were transported to the rest of the country, initially by canal, then railway and road.

With the decline of industry in the Valley in the twentieth century, the function of these arteries changed. The canal fell into disuse and was closed, the river became neglected and the railway carried less freight. During the twentieth century the importance of the road grew as car ownership increased and large distribution warehouses and light industry moved into the Valley.

Strategy

- To improve accessibility within the Valley and beyond by an enhancement of the road, river, canal and railway networks

- To improve the visual appearance of the movement corridors

- To utilise existing assets to promote regeneration opportunities.

The route of the River Calder

Areas of environmental improvement

New riverside walkway and connections to towns
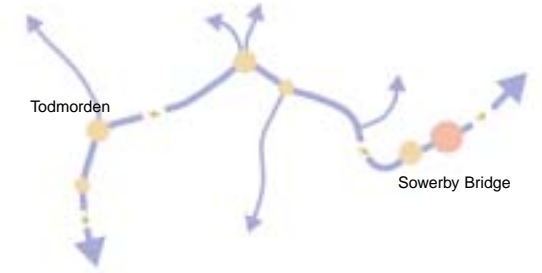
The River

Introduction
The River Calder runs from its source at Greens Clough in the Pennine Hills down the length of the Valley, to Kirklees and Wakefield. It crosses the county, flowing into the North Sea at the Humber Estuary after merging with the River Aire.

Whilst the river is one of the Valley's most important natural assets in many places it still lies hidden and neglected.

Background
With the industrialisation of the Valley in the 18th and 19th centuries, the river was an important part of the industrial process and mills were built along the river and its tributaries. River water fuelled the steam-driven engines. The river was often re-routed, culverted, buried and built over to suit the plans of industrialists.

Over the years, river flooding has wreaked havoc on many towns in the Valley on a regular basis. Interference with the river for industrialisation contributed to the flooding, as has deforestation. As a result, over the next ten years the Environment Agency is investing significant funding on flood alleviation schemes along the Upper Calder Valley.

Whilst improvements have been made to the river corridor it remains neglected following the decline of manufacturing in the Valley. Derelict buildings and empty sites line the riverbanks.

Strategy
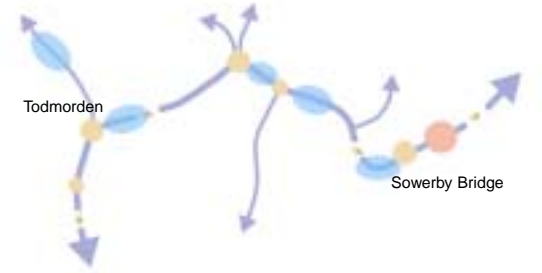To improve the appearance, accessibility and natural habitats of the River Calder and its tributaries.

"The River's our hidden asset"

Actions
A river strategy has been produced by Calder Future, the partnership formed to improve the river corridor. Many important actions have emerged from the Action Planning process and the Calder River Strategy produced by Calder Future. These are supported by the Renaissance process.

1. Identification of Opportunities for Regeneration
To ensure that waterside sites are regenerated and that any development makes a positive contribution to their riverside location and maintains public access along the riverbank. To reinforce the creation of sustainable communities, new developments should be mixed-use, mixed-tenure and fine grain.
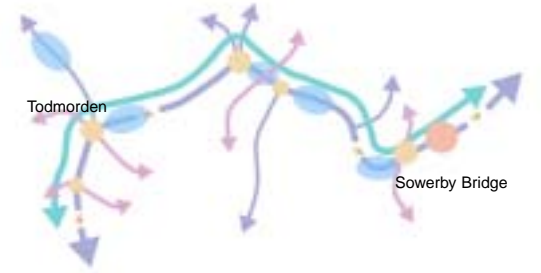
2. Improved Access to the River for Leisure
There should be better access to and along the river with good links to each town and village. Routes along the river should be respectful of the river's environment and biodiversity and could be part of a linear wildlife park where the landscape is improved, protected, well managed and maintained.

3. The Protection, Management and Maintenance of the River Environment
As part of improving the appearance of the Calder Valley the river and its banks need to be cleaned up with rubbish removed and tipping prevented. There is also a need to remove the pollution source present at the head water of the river.

The source of the River Calder, high in the pennines

Flooding in Todmorden

The Canal

The Pennine Ring

Introduction

The Rochdale Canal links the Upper Calder Valley to Manchester in the West and Leeds in the east.

It is part of the Pennine Ring that runs in a loop connecting the Rochdale Canal to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal, the Aire and Calder Navigation, and the Calder and Hebble Navigation. The canal is increasingly becoming a tourist attraction and is one of the most interesting ways to explore the region. However, it is still an underutilised asset for the Valley.

Background

The Rochdale Canal was one of the great feats of 18th century engineering. It is 32 miles long with 92 locks. Completed in 1804, it was the first canal in the country to be built through such rugged landscape.

It was the first major transport corridor that connected the remote and inaccessible Valley to an extensive transportation network stretching the length and breadth of the country. The canal went into steady decline when it became easier to transport cargo more rapidly by rail and road. Many stretches became silted up or were filled in. It was closed in 1952.

In 2002, after many millions of pounds of investment in restoration and rebuilding through a public and private sector partnership, and after the hard work of many individuals and organisations, the canal was officially reopened.

Camden Lock, London

"Wonderful to have it back- now let's exploit its full potential"

Strategy

To improve the use and appearance of the canal and canalside environment. To use the canal to stimulate tourism and to bring economic benefits to the canalside towns.

Actions

There is still a lot of work that needs to be carried out along the length of the canal to realise its potential as a quality tourist attraction. As with the river, the poor appearance of the canal surroundings is one of the biggest problems. Better maintenance and management are key to improving the canal's appearance.

1. Improve Access to the Canal for Leisure

To increase use of the canal towpath as a pedestrian and cycle route linking the towns, rubbish dumping and dog fouling need to be controlled and poor quality footpaths improved. The quality of the towpath varies greatly along the Valley. This major pedestrian and cycle route should be high quality, safe and clean. In built-up areas the canalside should be overlooked by built frontages in active use.

2. Promote use of the Canal as a Tourist Attraction

The newly opened canal should be better exploited for tourism. The canal could act as a catalyst for the regeneration of many areas of the Valley. The appearance of the canal as it winds its way through the countryside is very beautiful. Significant improvements are needed where it passes through the towns.

Facilities for canal users should continue to be improved, especially in towns. New moorings and marinas would become a focus for waterside activities.

In Mytholmroyd there is a proposal for a new canal basin close to the village centre. This would encourage tourists using the canal to stop and explore Mytholmroyd, which will be transformed into a 21st Century Market Town.

3. Exploit the Canal as a Sustainable Means of Transport

Goods could be transported up and down the Valley by canal. The movement of waste and recycling products could be taken from the Valley by canal rather than by lorry on the road.

The Road

Road connections to and from the Valley

The road as existing

Improvements to road corridor

Introduction

Travel along the A646 presents one of the most negative aspects of the Valley, yet this polluted and congested road is often the only experience of the area that visitors have.

Although tracks ran along the marshy, heavily wooded valley floor in ancient times, travelling along the valley bottom was long thought to be too difficult and dangerous. Early roads or 'cawseys' ran along the hill tops, connecting medieval villages and settlements. It was only in 1761 that the first proper turnpike road was built along the valley floor between Halifax and Todmorden, then extended with branches to Burnley and Rochdale.

The road was a slow means of transport during the height of the textile boom in the 19th century. So the canal and railway became the principal transport corridors. During the 20th century, lorries replaced trains for transporting freight.

The road which is now the A646 became the principal corridor for transporting goods. The large amount of vehicular traffic passing along the valley floor and through its towns is the single largest contributor to the pollution and poor image of the Valley.

Strategy

To pursue reductions in traffic levels in the Valley and to develop improved and integrated public transport arrangements.

"Where do they come from? Where do they go to?"

"Its our external image – a traffic clogged road"

Actions

1. Environmental Improvements

To create the right environment for pedestrians, cyclists, buses and vehicles, not only in the towns and villages but along the length of the whole valley floor, and to replace surface parking at the heart of the town centres with alternative, accessible car parks, close to railway stations and with good pedestrian links.

2. Modal Shift

To reduce current traffic levels, it is not enough to slow, stop or reduce traffic growth. Habits need to be changed. Provide people with information about the problems and explain the opportunities for change and how they can participate and contribute. Make travelling a pleasure and develop integrated travel arrangements.

3. Live/Work

To change living and working patterns, promotion of local living and working is at the core of the Renaissance Strategy. New developments that are sustainable and mixed-use will encourage living and working locally. Changing working patterns should be supported by promoting working from home and by providing resource centres for tele-working and flexi-working.

4. Community-based Initiatives

A programme of personalised travel plans and community-based travel initiatives should be prepared to encourage changes in behaviour. Due to the linear road network the potential exists for a local car-share scheme and rail-taxi, rail-bus coordinated ticketing. A local 'travel plan' network should be established that promotes travel plans in schools and workplaces in the Valley and at key popular work locations further afield.

5. Traffic Restrictions and Charging

Car-free areas should be implemented in Sowerby Bridge, possibly closing the A58 to through heavy goods traffic or a charging scheme for HGVs. There is a particular problem in Sowerby Bridge with HGVs passing through the town to avoid the weighbridge on the M62. If this scheme worked well it could be expanded and a congestion charge could be implemented for all HGVs travelling through the Valley. Within the towns, speed limits should be introduced and enforced. It should be clear that pedestrians have priority in the town centres, not cars.

6. Understanding Patterns of Movement

The quality of information about travel in the Upper Calder Valley should be improved. Local schemes cannot be designed effectively without a better knowledge of who is travelling for what purpose, details of local accident statistics and other socio-demographic information.

There are currently traffic studies underway for some areas of the Valley but there is no comprehensive information concerning movement patterns in the Valley as a whole.
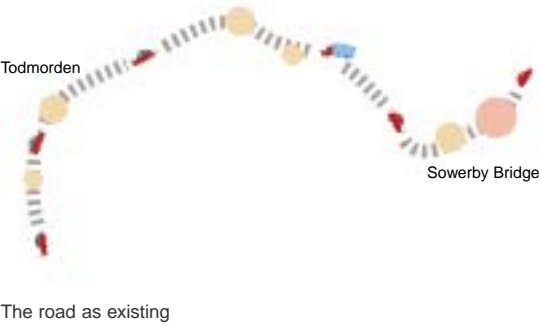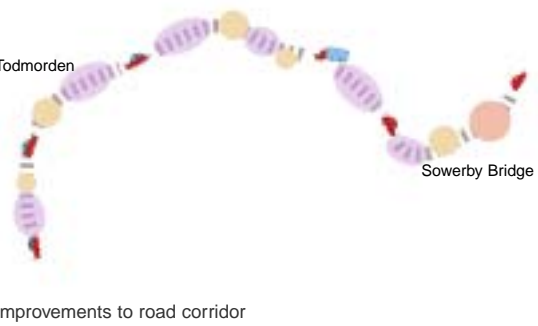
7. Improving Public Transport
Engage in bus and rail quality partnerships to continue to lobby for improved public transport links both inside and outside the Valley and to further explore how to improve the quality of the public transport experience within the Valley. Find ways to effect more choice in travel in the Valley with better coordination and more information. Public transport should be more frequent and run later in the evening so that there is less reliance on the car. The existing buses should be monitored better and reliable 'shuttle' local bus services like the Hebden Bridger should be provided in every area of the Valley.

8. Development of Innovative Schemes
There should be a demonstration project of 'carrier buses' for the Valley. These are demand-responsive bus services using small vehicles to carry people and goods locally. These could be used for home deliveries and local trips and to enable visitors to the Valley to move around easily. These 'carrier buses' could link into the local towns and their surrounding settlements.

9. Industrial Relocation
Identify and develop an appropriate site (or sites) to provide the opportunity for the relocation of industrial units currently occupying the valley floor, in more sustainable locations close to motorways and railway stations.

The Hebden Bridger

"When cars enter our towns they should behave like pedestrians"

Existing Valley stations

Proposed new stations

Reconnecting the Burnley Curve

The Railway

Introduction

The railway running along the Upper Calder Valley connects directly to Manchester and Blackpool in the west and to Leeds and Scarborough in the east. It runs along the valley floor interweaving with the canal, river and road. There are five stations within the Valley, at Sowerby Bridge, Mytholmroyd, Hebden Bridge, Todmorden and Walsden.

Background

Construction of the Manchester to Leeds Railway was completed in 1841 and was a huge engineering feat. The narrow valley floor already accommodated the road, canal and river. Tunnels and viaducts carried the railway line over and under obstacles that lay in its path. The Summit Tunnel, above Walsden, is 2,885 yards long and is an amazing example of how 19th century engineering overcame the difficult topography of the Valley.

The railway quickly replaced the canal as the main method of transporting goods through the Valley. The railway also brought tourists and one of the most popular excursions during Victorian times was to Hardcastle Crags. On one day in 1896 8,000 day trippers were recorded as having arrived at Hebden Bridge station. The new railway allowed people to travel out of the Valley as well as on excursions to the seaside and cities.
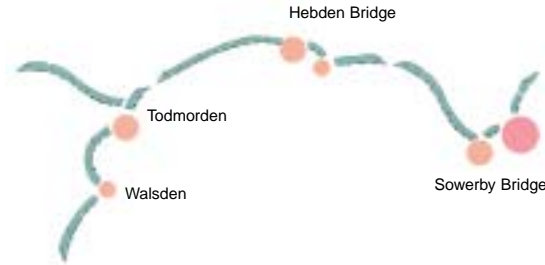
As industry declined, so too did the freight services along the Valley and large railway sidings and railway lands became disused and neglected or were developed as new industrial sites.
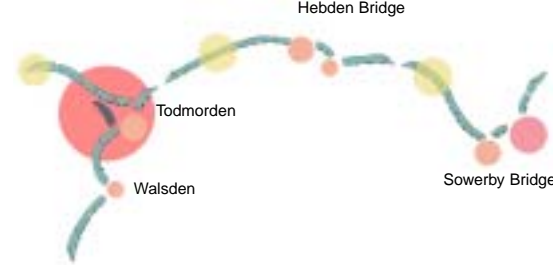

Rail connections from the Valley

Gateway to Sowerby Bridge

"Lets start cleaning the carriages as they come through the Valley... then build some nice stations to welcome them!"

Strategy

To create a rail service for the Valley that is fit for the 21st century - a rapid transit system that is efficient, fast and with more regular stops on its route through the Valley.

Actions

1. Regular Services
In the long term train services should be faster and more efficient. They could be as frequent as every 10-15 minutes between Leeds and Manchester and run over a longer period during the day. The railway line could become a high speed 'light rail' service.

2. Reopen or Create New Stations Along the Valley.
In the past there were more stations or halts along the length of the Valley. Many were closed when it became uneconomical to keep them running. In the long term these old railway stations should be reopened or rebuilt where they have been demolished. Possible locations could be at

Cornholme at the western end of the Valley and Luddenden Foot in the centre.

3. Good Accessibility to Stations and Services
All the stations in the Valley need to be easily accessible and well connected to the towns and villages that they serve. All facilities need to be easy to use and high quality. There should be 'real time' information about the trains, connections and other public transport services. The railway stations should be public transport interchanges, where easy connections to buses, taxis and park and ride can be made. Pedestrian links to the town centres must be direct, attractive and safe.

4. Encourage Transport of Goods by Rail
More freight should be transported by rail, whether it is going through the Valley or from one town to another within the Valley.

5. Reinstate the Burnley Curve in Todmorden
At the moment, whilst it is possible to travel from Leeds through the Valley to Burnley and Blackpool, the small curve of track in Todmorden that allowed travel from Manchester directly to Burnley has been disconnected. This important link should be reconnected to allow travel from Walsden and Todmorden directly to Burnley and to Blackpool beyond.

Mytholmroyd - a station-less station

The Five Towns

Introduction
People came together to create market towns for
a combination of spiritual, civic, economic and
cultural reasons. These all found their spatial
expression close to, or in, the Marketplace or High
Street. These iconic spaces established identity
and purpose for both the towns and the outlying
communities they served. It was flexibly
programmed, responding to a variety of needs,
appropriate to both time and place.

For many centuries, these Marketplaces
supported transition and growth, until such time as
external forces removed their reason for being.

The towns of the Upper Calder Valley are no
exception. If the Renaissance of the Valley is to
deliver new purpose and meaning to its natural,
urban and human landscapes then a new
meaning and purpose must be created for each of
its Marketplaces.

The 21st Century Marketplace
To survive, prosper and serve the Valley
community as a whole, a 21st Century
Marketplace must be created in the heart of each
town, a place for exchange and connectivity:
cultural, creative, civic, spiritual, virtual, intellectual
and economic. Wherever possible, products,
processes and ideas will be locally 'branded',
each playing their part in promoting a 21st century
image for the Valley.

Public Realm, Land Uses and Growth
In each of the five towns, a step change in quality
of their public realm must be simultaneously
delivered, blight must be removed, land uses
rationalised and the growth of each town defined
and proactively planned for.

Left: Todmorden market

Improving Public Realm

Background
The previous prosperity of the Valley and its industrial heritage has left a legacy of quality buildings. Whilst economic decline in the twentieth century has resulted in some loss, the built environments within the town centres largely remain intact but the spaces between the buildings are poorly detailed with inappropriate materials.

Streets have been re-designed to facilitate the easy and fast movement of vehicular traffic, with the car taking priority over the pedestrian and cyclist. Pavements are often narrow and crossing points infrequent and poorly located. Walking in the towns next to busy roads is unpleasant, polluted and dangerous. Paving, road surfaces and street furniture are generally poor quality, uncoordinated and incongruous.

The resulting environment presents a poor image, undermines confidence and discourages inward investment.

Strategy
To promote investment and economic activity in the Valley through delivering a step-change in the image and attractiveness of the town centres through the implementation of a high quality, long-term, public realm strategy.

Actions

1. Public Realm Strategy
The implementation of a high quality public realm strategy should create pedestrian friendly areas where vehicular access and speeds are controlled, creating environments of confidence that encourage greater exploration of the centres and make walking a pleasure. Streets, squares and waterside locations must become attractive and lively places adaptable for a variety of activities.

In Todmorden, under the Market Towns Initiative, new investment in the public realm has started to improve key locations and create an increased confidence that has underpinned a recent phase of private sector investment.

A valley wide Public Realm Strategy should now be established that is long term, high-quality and responsive to the individual character of each town.

2. Town Centres
Within the core of each town a "golden carpet" of high quality materials, landscaping and street furniture should be laid out to create attractive environments of streets and public spaces that provide a focus for a wide range of activities, supported by a flexible traffic management regime.

3. Gateways
Gateways should be created for each of the towns that announce arrival and reinforce identity. The use of landmark buildings and structures, the narrowing of the highway and the use of special surface treatments can welcome the traveller, define arrival within the town centre and ensure that traffic slows down.

"Congenial and humane public spaces are the visible expression of our culture and civilisation"

"When the quality and character of spaces are restored, towns become attractive to live and invest in"

4. Key Arteries
The experience of passing through the towns of the Valley along the road, canal, river and rail arteries, either by car, walking, cycling, or canal boat, should be made more pleasurable and attractive through a series of initiatives to address each specific corridor.

5. Road
Within the town centres the streets should be designed to improve the environment for the pedestrian. This can be achieved through the creation of wider pavements, speed tables that define crossing points, new street tree planting and street furniture. These measures should enforce slower traffic speeds within the towns.

6. Canal and Riverside
Better connectivity should be established between the town centres and the river and canal corridors including new points of access, crossing points and footbridges. Along the canalside and riverside, pedestrian accessibility should be improved through the provision of disabled access, safety lighting and boardwalks where buildings currently sit tight to the water's edge.

7. Rail
Whilst the Valley is fortunate that its railway infrastructure, with the exception of the Burnley link, has survived virtually intact, several of its stations are unwelcoming and have poor connections to the heart of the town. For existing stations, a better sense of arrival should be created, together with enhanced connectivity to the town centre, including new points of access, crossing points and footbridges. New stations should be promoted for Cornholme and Luddenden Foot.

Removing Blight & Rationalising Land Use

Background
Historically the towns along the Upper Calder Valley have turned their backs on the river and the canal. The valley floor was the preferred location for industry as a source of power and a route for the transportation of goods.

Today, many mill buildings remain in a poor state of repair and are underutilised. Other former sites have been redeveloped for alternative industrial uses. Other sites are occupied by distribution warehouses characterised by poor quality, out-of-scale sheds that are land hungry, employ a small workforce and require servicing resulting in Heavy Goods Vehicles accessing the town centres and the valley corridor as a whole.

Removing Blight

Vacant sites are prevalent, and their future uses are restricted by the inflexible employment allocation of the Calderdale Unitary Development Plan. These sites are often located on the canal, river and road corridors and present an image of dereliction and neglect for the Valley.

Strategy
To unlock these strategic sites and utilise attractive locations for mixed-use development through a reassessment of their permitted land use.

Actions

1. Mixed-Use Initiatives
Sites within the town centres offer the opportunity for mixed-use regeneration in locations that will enhance the appearance of the Valley and utilise river and canalside locations.

All new development should provide for a variety of activities, their cumulative effect creating places to live, work and enjoy.

2. Development Briefs and Design Codes
development briefs and design codes should be prepared for specific sites. The permitted land use for areas of derelict sites and existing mills should be changed to mixed-use to facilitate regeneration. The overall balance of permitted development should include a significant percentage of commercial space, live/work units, workshops, and other employment generating uses, in addition to a mixture of both 'market' and affordable housing.

This, along with the provision of local and community facilities, will ensure the creation of sustainable environments. Active uses at ground level will need to be proactively sought in order to create centres of activity in key locations.

Developments must be fine grain and of a scale appropriate to their locations. Quality built frontage must be presented to the canal and river corridors with existing quality buildings retained and converted to new uses. Servicing and car parking should be screened from public view.

3. Land Use Research
A comprehensive study should to be undertaken of the industrial and distribution uses operating in the Valley to develop a long-term strategy that protects existing employment, prepares a plan for future development and, where appropriate, examines relocation initiatives. Existing businesses could be relocated to other locations within the Valley outside the centres of towns,

"You can turn a pictures face to the wall, but you can't turn away a derelict landscape"

or to more appropriate locations within Calderdale closer to the motorway and rail distribution networks.

Town Centre Car Parks

Background
The economic viability of town centres is traditionally deemed to rely on the provision of convenient car parking. These surface car parks, often in key locations close to the centre of these towns, are visually detrimental and erode the urban fabric.

Strategy
To unlock strategic town centre sites and utilise their locations for mixed-use developments through creating alternative and accessible parking facilities.

Actions

1. Mixed-use and Public Space Initiatives
Comprehensive proposals for a parking strategy for each town should be developed to provide alternative convenient parking locations that enable the release of town centre car parks for redevelopment opportunities or the creation of new public space. These sites should be assessed comprehensively as any piecemeal redevelopment proposals will not realise their full potential.

The strategy should aim to provide an appropriate parking capacity, combined with the promotion of an integrated public transport strategy. The provision of any additional car parking beyond the current provision within the centres should be carefully monitored. However, additional car parking is acceptable in locations in close proximity to public transport interchanges, including railway stations.

2. Cross-subsidies
The creation of alternative car parking sites may require cross-subsidy from other Renaissance developments. A comprehensive strategy should be adopted to ensure that where added value is created through redevelopment, profits can be reinvested in other Renaissance projects.

3. Sharing Provision
Demand for car parking within the towns varies throughout the day, evening and weekends. The strategy should encourage the sharing of any parking provision, and a flexible traffic management scheme should be introduced so that car parks can be used for alternative social, cultural and economic activities, as and when desired.

4. Design Issues
Mixed-use developments should be of an appropriate scale and massing to fit within sensitive locations. Their proposed design should relate to existing buildings in terms of footprint, scale and proportion. Car parking should be either underground or within enclosed courtyards, concealed from public view. In urban, canalside location, buildings should be positioned directly on the back of the towpath, providing a high degree of visual policing.

Industrial sites in Hebden Bridge

Industrial sites in Sowerby Bridge

Industrial sites in Todmorden

☐ Industrial Areas
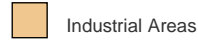
Unlocking Underutilised Sites

Background
Within the towns are a number of sites that historically have remained underutilised. These sites, often in close proximity to the town centres, have remained undeveloped for a variety of reasons including problems of access, land ownership and development restrictions. These underdeveloped sites present a poor external image for the Valley.

Strategy
To unlock the potential of these strategic town centre sites, through a coordinated investment programme that relies on cross-subsidy from other revenue generating projects, for the benefit of the Valley as a whole.

Actions

1. Mixed-Use Initiatives
These sites offer a significant opportunity to create mixed-use developments that can bring life and activity to the town centres.

2. Park and Ride
A number of these sites are located next to railway stations and their re-use as car parks will improve accessibility, displace parking from desirable sites within the town centre and help to promote an integrated public transport strategy.

3. Improved Accessibility
In several locations, redevelopment opportunities are currently prejudiced by poor accessibility. Transportation studies are required to identify, cost and assess the impact of improving accessibility in order to open up beneficial development opportunities.

"Our Heritage is our future"

Housing in Mytholmroyd

Housing in Hebden Bridge

Housing in Todmorden

☐ New housing
☐ Old housing

Defining Growth

Background
Development in the Valley has seen a number of distinct phases. The early settlements and their subsequent expansion, through the Industrial Revolution in the 1800s and through the early 1900s was in the form of compact development in the town centres.

Since the 1930s, the towns have grown outwards from the centres, with less dense development characterised by semi-detached houses and large gardens. More recent development pressure has resulted in the expansion of the towns up the hillsides to locations previously deemed unsuitable.

Simultaneously, the town centres have declined and their economic rationale disappeared.

Strategy
To define settlement boundaries and stop outward expansion through concentrating regeneration in the centres of the towns and villages to create sustainable environments and a greater range of activities.

Actions

1. Settlement Boundaries

In the future, outward expansion should be prohibited. Settlement growth needs to be clearly defined to ensure that there is no coalescence between settlements and town boundaries should be clearly marked with, as a general rule, all new development taking place on derelict or underutilised sites within or close to already built-up areas that are in need of investment.
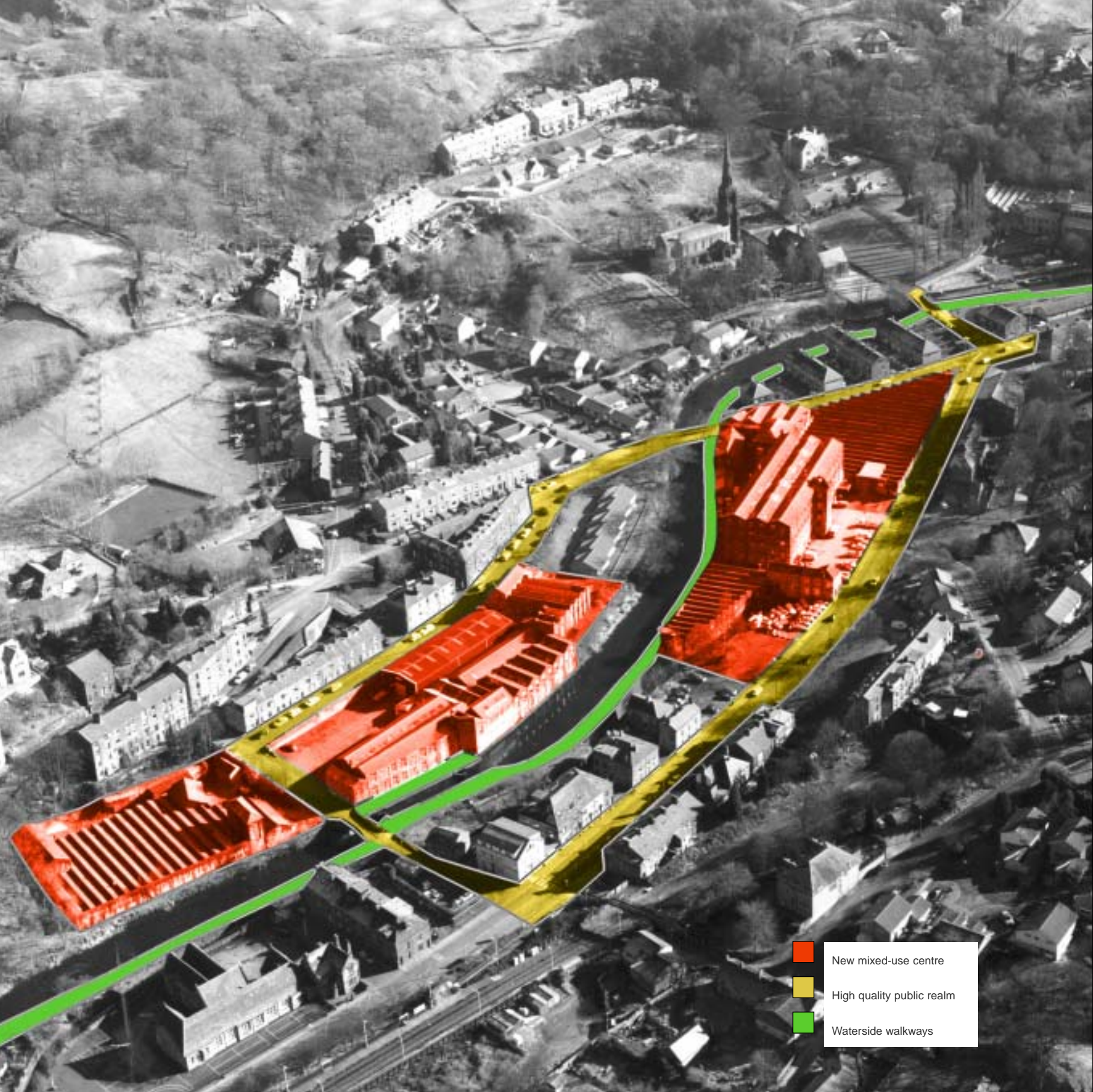
"How should we greet the countryside?"

Walsden

Conserving the Heart

Transformational Project: creating a mixed-use heart for the town

"The town's too long and thin and there is no real heart"

Introduction

Walsden is the smallest of the five major settlements situated on the floor of the Upper Calder Valley. It is the most westerly village in the Valley and is close to the border with Lancashire. It is linear in form, stretching along the Rochdale Road parallel to Walsden Water and the Rochdale Canal.

Background

The village grew up along the main road over the Pennines connecting Lancashire and Yorkshire. The Industrial Revolution saw the growth of the village, with the arrival of the canal and later the railway. The area around the canal and river became a focus for manufacturing and a number of mill buildings still exist today.

Following the decline of manufacturing in the Valley, the surviving mill buildings are either vacant or significantly underused. Occupation is low and often accommodates uses that employ a small number of people and generate limited revenue. As a result, little investment has been put into these buildings over recent years.

Future uses are currently restricted by the Calderdale Unitary Development Plan that designates the area for employment uses. The location is some distance from the motorway network, and the inflexibility of the existing buildings for manufacturing has resulted in little interest being generated for future reuse.

The town's two main areas of activity are at the Rochdale Road and Alma Street junctions close to the Post Office and the railway station and at

Riggs's Garden Centre, further to the west and one of the major employers and tourist attractions in the Valley.

As in Todmorden, living in outlying areas of the town is more popular than living in the town centre. There is a large demand for residential properties in the surrounding area and residential values are high. This is due in part to the stunning landscape and convenient rail access to Manchester.

Strategy

To utilise the quality of the existing buildings and environment around the river and canal, to create a new mixed-use quarter that establishes a vibrant new heart for Walsden.

A New Mixed-Use Centre

The area between Rochdale Road and Alma Street includes a number of impressive mill buildings overlooking the canal and river. Conservation Area status should be sought for this area, assisting its regeneration through the retention and conversion of existing buildings for a mixture of uses including residential, live/work, employment, shops, cafes, workshops and other leisure uses.

New development should be integrated within the area with quality built frontages overlooking the canal and river corridors. On Rochdale Road, new landmark buildings could be created to announce the new heart of the town from the road and railway.

Improved accessibility to the canal and river corridors should be promoted through improvements to the walkway and towpath.

New mixed-use centre

High quality public realm

Waterside walkways

Todmorden

Creating a 21st Century Marketplace

"Whilst property values rise on the valley sides, there's real deprivation at the heart "

Introduction
Todmorden is a market town at the western end of the Upper Calder Valley. The town sits at the confluence of the River Calder and Walsden Water, which runs under the Town Hall.

Background
From a crossing point on the river, Todmorden developed into an important textile manufacturing town. Its former prosperity is reflected by a number of beautiful nineteenth century civic and religious buildings, many built by the Fielden manufacturing family.

With the decline of the textile industry during the mid-twentieth century, the population of Todmorden decreased from 30,000 to approximately 15,000 people.

Todmorden has a large rural catchment area, stretching to the east towards Walsden and along the Valley towards Portsmouth and Cornholme which all rely heavily on the wide range of facilities and services in the town. Whilst local shops are struggling, there is a successful indoor and outdoor market. Some manufacturing industry still exists today, although more recently the town has attracted a young but growing economy centred on small, creative media based businesses.

Housing in the countryside around Todmorden is popular, generating high property values, whilst demand and value for housing within the town centre is reduced due to the poorer quality environment and the risk of flooding. Actions to address these issues are detailed in the housing section of this document.

Bramsche Square

Todmorden today

Creating the 21st Century Marketplace

Todmorden Town Centre
The market building and the Town Hall sit in a sea of car parking. The Town Hall is hidden from the square behind a 1960's 'eyesore' building. Poor quality public realm and dead frontages contribute to the lifeless feel of the town centre. The town turns its back on its two greatest assets, the river and the canal.

Bramsche Square Transformational Project
Bramsche Square should be transformed into a place for people, not cars. The 'eyesore' building on Bridge Street should be demolished to open up a new vista between the Town Hall and the Methodist Chapel. The proposed new Creative Media Centre, in a prominent location in the centre of the square, will act as a catalyst for the economic regeneration of the town.

Rationalising Land Use
Vacant and underutilised sites and buildings in the Valley are generally located close to the river and canal, and within easy walking distance of town centres. One such example is the area opposite the 'Great Wall of Tod,' where there are large areas of derelict buildings and vacant sites. and poor quality public realm along the canal tow path.

A New Mixed-use Waterside Development
The area opposite the 'Great Wall of Tod' could be transformed into a new urban neighbourhood with frontages built on the back of the towpath and overlooking a new canalside square. The neighbourhood could contain a mixture of uses and could include workshops, offices, live/work units and a variety of housing types and tenures.

Todmorden
Transformational Project

Strategy

To create a new 21st Century Marketplace to stimulate the economic regeneration of the town and its hinterland.

Actions

Bramsche Square

The proposal is to build upon the success of the market and enhance the setting of the Town Hall through the creation of a 21st Century Marketplace in Bramsche Square that creates a focus for the town and acts as a hub for new economic activities, events and festivals.

Bramsche Square has the potential to be a multipurpose, vibrant public space that promotes different activities throughout the day and early evening, during the week, at weekends and on public holidays. It should be a space for people not cars; a place for shopping, working, relaxing and living.

A new Creative Media Centre is proposed in a prominent location in the centre of the square to act as a beacon for the economic regeneration of the town and the wider community it serves. It would be a place for the exchange of ideas and information, for facilitation and learning and for support for small businesses - both the focus and the 'animator' of the 21st Century Marketplace.

The demolition of the 'eyesore' 1960s building on Bridge Street would create a new vista between the Town Hall and the Methodist Chapel, with the potential for the existing retailers to be moved to the corner of Halifax Road and Myrtle Street. A flexible parking regime should be created within the square, with alternative parking provided elsewhere.

1. Bramsche Square is undefined
2. Poor quality facades overlooking central space
3. The Town Hall is hidden

1. Demolition of building establishes a relationship between the Town Hall and the Methodist Chapel
2. A new building on Halifax Road and Myrtle Street frames the Methodist Chapel

1. New building frames key vistas, encloses Bramsche Square and creates a backdrop to the market. The space between key buildings is defined
2. Pavilion building brings activity to square

1. New bridge to Tipside unlocks an underutilised site
2. New buildings enclose south facing public spaces along the canal
3. Views between Halifax Road and the canal maintained
4. New mixed-use frontages overlooking the canal

High quality public realm

Transformational projects

Key buildings

Green waterside walkways

New bridge

Other Town Project

Neighbourhood Regeneration

Todmorden should have a whole town Neighbourhood Renewal Assessment or Neighbourhood Management Pathfinder Programme to improve the deteriorating conditions in some of the town centre neighbourhoods where poor housing and social conditions have combined with environmental degradation to threaten social cohesion and affect quality of life. This issue is explored in more detail in the housing section of this document.

Key Issues

1. The market and Town Hall are surrounded by large areas of surface car parking and poor modern buildings that contribute little to the quality and activity in the town centre.

2. The town centre has many areas of poor quality urban realm, vacant or underused sites and buildings. This contributes to the centre feeling empty and lifeless.

3. The town turns its back on two of its greatest assets, the canal and the river. Due to its industrial past, mills line the water's edge. Many of these are now underused, vacant or have been redeveloped with industrial sheds.

Bramsche Square: The creation of a vibrant new heart for Todmorden; the splendour of the Town Hall revealed; spaces defined by quality buildings with active frontages, unified by the 'golden carpet' they stand on. High quality public realm inviting a wide range of activities to take place.

The 21st Century Marketplace activated by social, cultural, economic and intellectual exchange
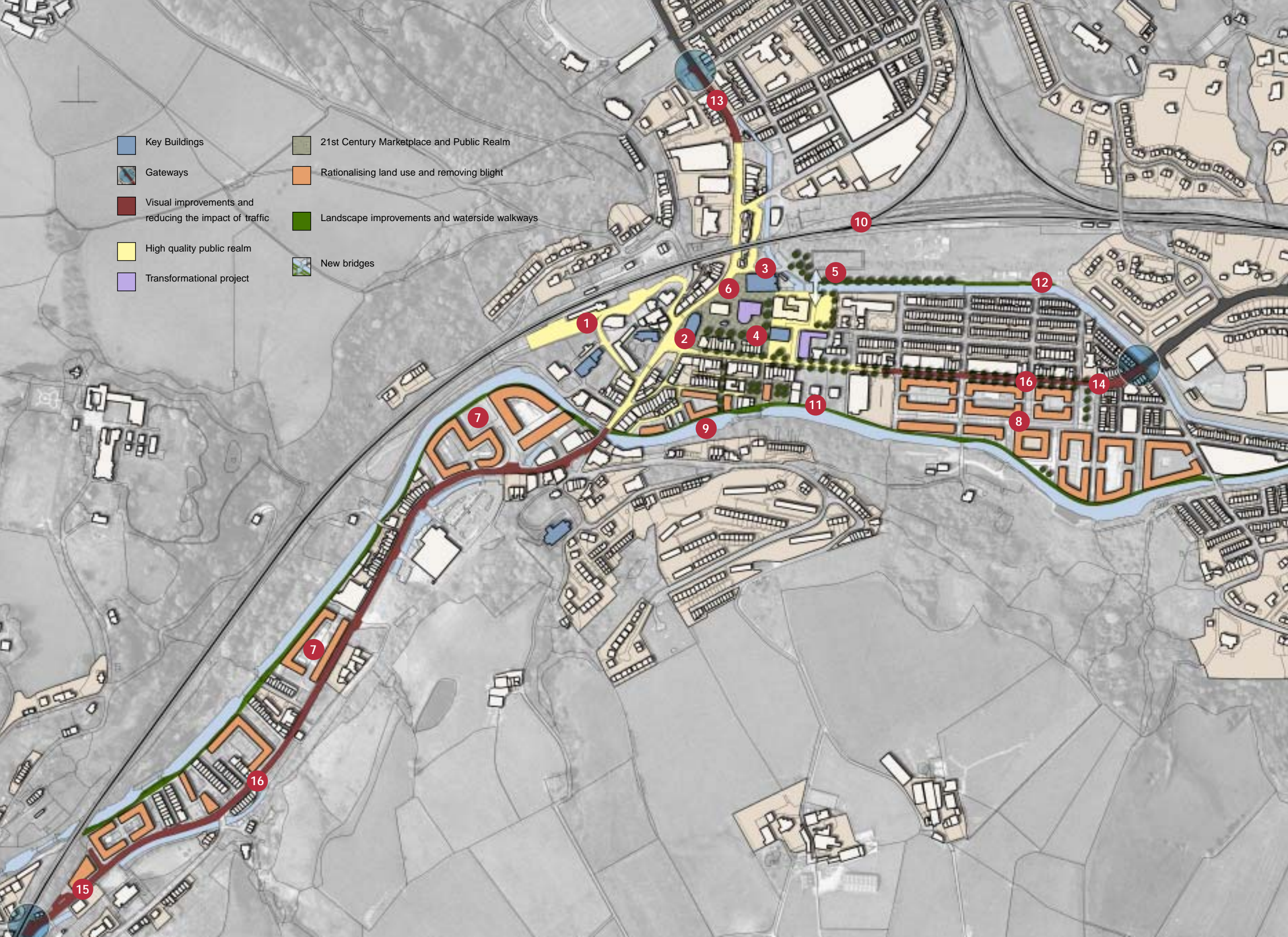
Todmorden Masterplan

New mixed-use development overlooking the canal

New mixed-use quarter overlooking 'The Great Wall of Tod'

Key Buildings: 1. The Station; 2. The Town Hall; 3. The Market. **Town Centre Projects:** 4. Bramsche Square Transformational Project; 5. New bridge Link to unlock Tipside; 6. A 'Golden Carpet' of public realm. **Rationalising Land Use and Removing Blight:** 7. Between the canal and Rochdale Road; 8. Between the canal and Halifax Road; 9. Canalside locations in the Union Street area. **Gateways and Arteries:** 10. Reinstating the Burnley Curve; 11. Towpath improvements; 12. Riverside path; 13. Gateway on Burnley Road; 14. Gateway on Halifax Road; 15. Gateway on Rochdale Road; 16. Visual improvements/reducing the impact of traffic.

Legend

- Key Buildings
- Gateways
- Visual improvements and reducing the impact of traffic
- High quality public realm
- Transformational project
- 21st Century Marketplace and Public Realm
- Rationalising land use and removing blight
- Landscape improvements and waterside walkways
- New bridges

Hebden Bridge

Reinforcing the Heart of the Town

*" Our success
may also be
our problem"*

Introduction

Hebden Bridge is a market town that sits at the
centre of the Upper Calder Valley. It grew up at
the confluence of the River Calder and Hebden
Water. Due to the narrowness of the Valley at this
point, much of the town is built on the northern
valley sides with dramatic terraces following
the contours.

Background

Hebden Bridge grew up around a river crossing on
the packhorse trail between Halifax and Burnley.
With industrialisation, mills were built in the town
and it became a centre for the production of
corduroy, fustian and ready made clothing.
It became known as 'Trouser Town'. With
industrialisation came prosperity and beautiful
civic and religious buildings.

The town's economy declined with the collapse
of textile manufacturing in the Valley. However,
during the late 1960s and 70s the town benefited
from an influx of settlers who saw the
opportunities offered by the town and the benefits
of low house prices in a beautiful setting. These
settlers brought new skills and helped the town to
slowly regenerate itself as a centre for tourism,
small craft businesses and creative industries.
More recently the town has become a centre for
alternative technology.

Currently the town is seeking to ensure that the
vitality and diversity of its population is
maintained, and to achieve a balance between its
success as a tourist destination and its popularity
as a place to settle as, due to rising prices, it
becomes increasingly difficult for local people with
low incomes to buy homes in the town and
surrounding villages.

Reinforcing the Heart of the Town

Improving connections from the station to the town centre

Enhancing green routes

Hebden Bridge Town Centre
The town centre is dominated by vehicular traffic and has large areas of surface car parking. The market is not as successful as it could be and is located just outside the main shopping area.

Reinforcing the Heart of the Town
A new Marketplace could be created on St George's Square and Lees Yard. A 'golden carpet' of high quality public realm should be laid across the town centre in order to realise its full economic potential as a backdrop for an increasingly wide range of social, cultural and community activities.

The Station is Disconnected from the Town
The station is the busiest in the Valley and is used by many visitors and tourists, especially those visiting Hardcastle Crags. The station is difficult to access by foot. Pedestrians have to walk along the main road or through the park to reach it.

Linking the Station to the Town
The existing station car park should be enlarged and become a proper public transport interchange. The connections from the station should be improved by creating a safe and attractive new route through the park with new footbridges over the river and canal.

Hebden Bridge
Transformational Project

Strategy

To create a series of high quality public spaces and walkways that connect the railway station to Hardcastle Crags, linked to the creation of a 21st Century Marketplace that can act as a focus for the town by providing space for markets, festivals and the outward expression of creativity.

Lees Yard and St George's Square

St George's Square and Lees Yard have the potential to become the new 21st Century Marketplace for Hebden Bridge. The existing on-street car parking should be relocated to create two interlinked public spaces.

The existing market, currently located to the west across Hebden Water, should be relocated to be closer to the retail centre of the town. A pavilion to generate activity is proposed in St George's Square, whilst a new mixed-use building in Lees Yard would create active frontages onto the square with shops or cafés at street level, framing the important vistas along Albert Street and Crown Street.

Redevelopment of the Market Site

The relocation of the existing market to St George's Square and Lees Yard creates the opportunity to redefine the former Marketplace.

Adjacent to the impressive Town Hall is a vacant site currently used for surface car parking. This site was never developed. The proposed new building will address the space in front of the Town Hall, define an important corner and enclose the street leading to Old Gate. This prime site should be developed as a mixed-use building.

The existing Marketplace should be redesigned with a hard landscaped shared surface defining the full extent of the space between its containing buildings. The rationalised layout should be designed to accommodate a small number of additional car parking spaces to replace those lost adjacent to the Town Hall.

In the longer term, the existing fire station could be moved to a more accessible location in the town, with the site redeveloped for a new mixed-use building providing enclosure to the northern side of the square.

21st Century Marketplace

Links to the Station

Waterside walkways

High quality public realm

Green waterside walkways

Transformational projects

New bridge

Key buildings

Linking the Station to the Town

The existing coal yard should be utilised to extend the area around the railway station to create an improved public transport interchange, increased commuter parking on weekdays and alternative visitor parking at weekends.

Improved pedestrian accessibility between the railway station and the town centre should be created by the direct pedestrian route proposed from the station to the town centre across Calder Holmes Park, including the installation of two new footbridges over the river and canal, and good levels of lighting.

Green Routes

On a single day in 1896, 8,000 people arrived by train to visit Hardcastle Crags. It remains one of the most popular destinations for visitors to the town. By utilising the riverbank and canalside, a continuous pedestrian route should be created linking the station along the canal and river all the way to Hardcastle Crags. This requires a long term strategy that is implemented as opportunities arise along the canal and river corridors.

Key Issues

1. The market is not successful as it is located outside the town centre away from the areas of heavy pedestrian traffic.

2. The town is dominated by vehicular traffic including HGVs gaining access to industrial units within the centre or passing through to reach Keighley Road.

3. The station is the busiest in the Valley, yet it is disconnected from the town centre. The route from the station to the centre is either via Calder Holmes Park and New Road Memorial Gardens, using a tortuous, unlit path, or along the busy main road, which has narrow pavements and dangerous crossing points.

4. The riverside and canalside are underutilised, especially as a route through the town up to Hardcastle Crags.

Site adjacent to Town Hall

Site adjacent to Town Hall developed for a variety of uses

Existing car park on the river's edge

Proposed new riverside walkway and piazza

Hebden Bridge Masterplan

Canalside activity created to the rear of the Picture House

High quality public realm on Old Gate

Legend:

- Key Buildings
- Gateways
- Visual improvements and reducing the impact of traffic
- High quality public realm
- Transformational project
- 21st Century Marketplace
- Rationalising land use and removing blight
- Landscape improvements and waterside walkways
- New bridges

Key Buildings: 1. The Town Hall; 2. The Picture House; 3. The Station. **Town Centre Projects:** 4. George's Square and Lees Yard Transformational Project; 5. Development of the site next to the Town Hall; 6. Redevelopment of the Fire Station site; 7. Development of Garden Street; 8. A 'Golden Carpet' of public realm. **Rationalising Land Use and Removing Blight:** 9. Between the canal and the river; 10. Along the Halifax Road; 11. Along Victoria Road. **Gateways and Arteries:** 12. Extending the station car park; 13. New Footbridge; 14. Towpath improvements; 15. Riverside path to Hardcastle Crags; 16. Western Gateway; 17. Eastern Gateway; 18. Gateway on Keighley Road 19. Visual improvements/reducing the impact of traffic.

Mytholmroyd

Creating a new Market Town
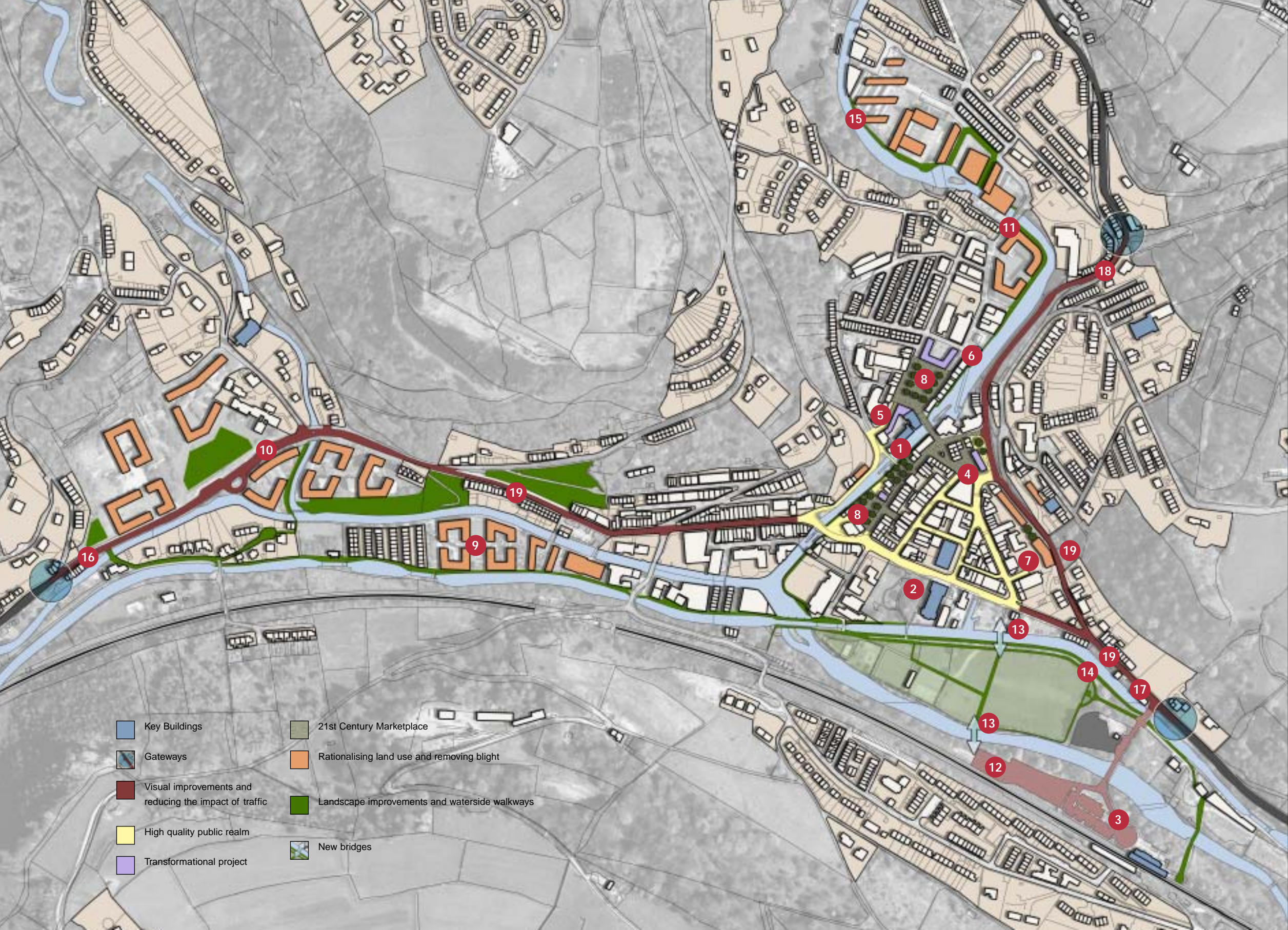
" We've never really been a Market Town"

Introduction

Mytholmroyd is a village rather than a market town. It sits at one of the widest sections of the Valley at a crossing point over the confluence of the Rivers Calder and Cragg Brook.

Background

Mytholmroyd grew up around a river crossing on the packhorse trail from Sowerby to Heptonstall. The village lacks any identifiable centre with a limited collection of shops along Burnley Road and New Road and a small supermarket in George Street.

However, the village is a spiritual and educational centre with Catholic, Methodist and Anglican churches. Mytholmroyd is also home to Calder High School, the largest secondary school in the Valley.

The village grew dramatically from the middle of the twentieth century, as the outward expansion of large suburban housing estates, on the much flatter valley sides, spread out from the centre.

Mytholmroyd is also famous as the birthplace of the late Poet Laureate, Ted Hughes, and there are plans to build an international centre dedicated to poetry in the village.

Transformational projects
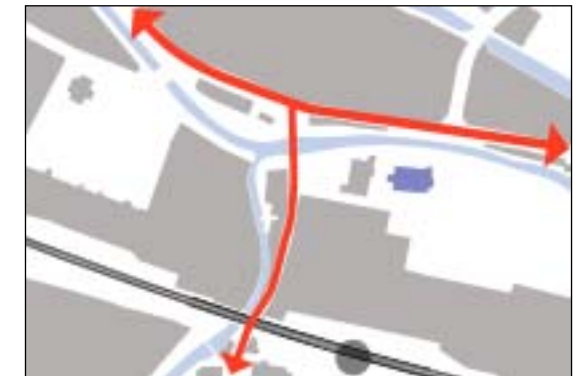
Mytholmroyd today

Two new Marketplaces

The Community Centre Site
The Mytholmroyd Community Centre is in the heart of the village and sits at the back of a large and underutilised car park. The north-west corner of the site is owned by the Primary Health Care Trust and will soon be available for redevelopment.

The Community Centre Square
Both the Community Centre car park and the land owned by the Primary Health Care Trust should be redeveloped to create a public square surrounded by a mixed-use development, containing creative and small business start-up units, studios, workshops, live/work units and a mixture of housing types and tenures. At the same time, the existing Community Centre buildings would be either renovated or rebuilt to include an enhanced range of facilities for both the local and valley wide community.

St Michael's Church and Sunday School
St Michael's Church is hidden behind its own Sunday School building. The space in front of it is used as a car park. A thin row of shops on Burnley Road blocks the views of the church and the river. The public toilets, on the corner of the bridge, are the most prominent buildings in the town. St Michael's Square has the potential to become not only the new heart of Mytholmroyd but also, given its strategic location at the centre of the Valley, a symbol for the Renaissance of the Valley as a whole.

St Michael's Square
To optimise the opportunity to create a 21st Century Marketplace, a new building is proposed that would straddle the River Calder, containing new facilities for the Sunday School, a creative and small business 'hub' and a combination of other uses. It would provide a fitting location for the spiritual and operational home of the Flying Shuttle, complete with its audio-visual camera obscura (see page 87). The public toilet site would be developed, framing a gateway to the bridge.

Mytholmroyd
Transformational Project

Strategy

To create a new market town with two new urban spaces and a 21st Century Marketplace at its centre - a flagship project at the heart of the Valley.

St Michael's Square

The proposal is to create a new heart for the town that accommodates a 21st Century Marketplace and is a place for events and celebrations.

St Michael's Square would be created by the demolition of the existing Sunday School and the thin wedge of shops running along the southern side of Burnley Road, opening up views of the church.

An eye-catching new landmark building on the A646 would straddle the river, enclosing the western side of the new square. It is proposed that the northern side of the square should be open to the river, creating views across it from Burnley Road.

The new building would replace the facilities currently contained within the Sunday School and could include a spiritual centre, a centre for the exchange of ideas and culture, a place for the collection of information, facilitation and learning, and support for small business and entrepreneurship. It would provide an excellent location for the offices of Upper Calder Valley Renaissance.

A new pedestrian footbridge is proposed to the north-east corner of the square, providing links that connect areas of the town and especially the route from Calder High School to the railway station. The bridge would form part of a wider strategy to create a series of river and canalside walks.

1. St. Michael's Church is hidden by the Sunday School

2. Buildings on Burnley Road hide the church and the river

3. Public toilets currently mark the centre of the town

4. Underutilised Community Association site and redundant Heath Centre

5. Poor pedestrian linkage from the Railway Station
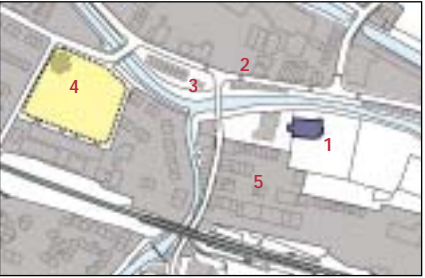
1. Demolition of the Sunday School reveals the facade of St Michael's Church

2. Pedestrian and visual link established to the Railway Station

3. Demolition of the existing buildings on Burnley Road opens up views to the river

4. Demolition of the redundant Health Centre increases the development site
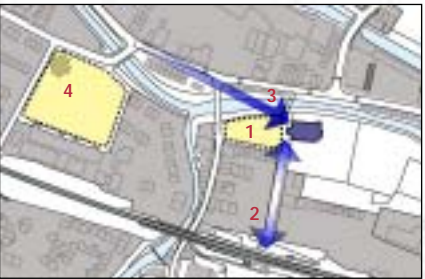
1. Proposed new community building incorporating the Sunday School encloses St Michael's Square

2. New bridge from church square to Burnley Road

3. Mixed-use development on Community Association site creates a new mixed-use square

1. Better pedestrian route to the Station through the mixed-use area on George Street

2. Existing toilets demolished and replaced with a landmark building

George Street Redevelopment

A study of this area needs to be carried out, working closely with the different landowners to promote the comprehensive redevelopment of this shabby, rundown area of the village. The creation of a new mixed-use neighbourhood should include retail, employment and residential uses in close proximity to the centre of the village. The development would incorporate a new pedestrian route connecting the railway station to St Michael's Square and the new pedestrian footbridge over the River Calder.

The Community Centre

The Community Centre currently provides an important range of facilities for the village, contained within buildings occupying the southern part of their site, backing onto the railway. The existing car park to the north represents a significant land asset that could be transformed into a new public square surrounded by mixed-use development. The proposal could include workshops, offices and live/work units that bring activity and, more importantly, an economic focus to what is at present an underutilised space in the heart of the village. The scheme could release land value for reinvestment in the provision of facilities for the wider community, including a new swimming pool. Car parking provision could be retained with a rationalised layout and enhanced landscaping.

Key Issues

1. St Michael's Church is an important landmark in the town and is hidden from view behind the Sunday School building.

2. The space in front of the Sunday School is underutilised.

3. The public toilets mark the centre of the village

4. The Community Centre is located overlooking a large and underutilised car park, next to land owned by the Primary Health Care Trust which will soon be surplus to their needs.
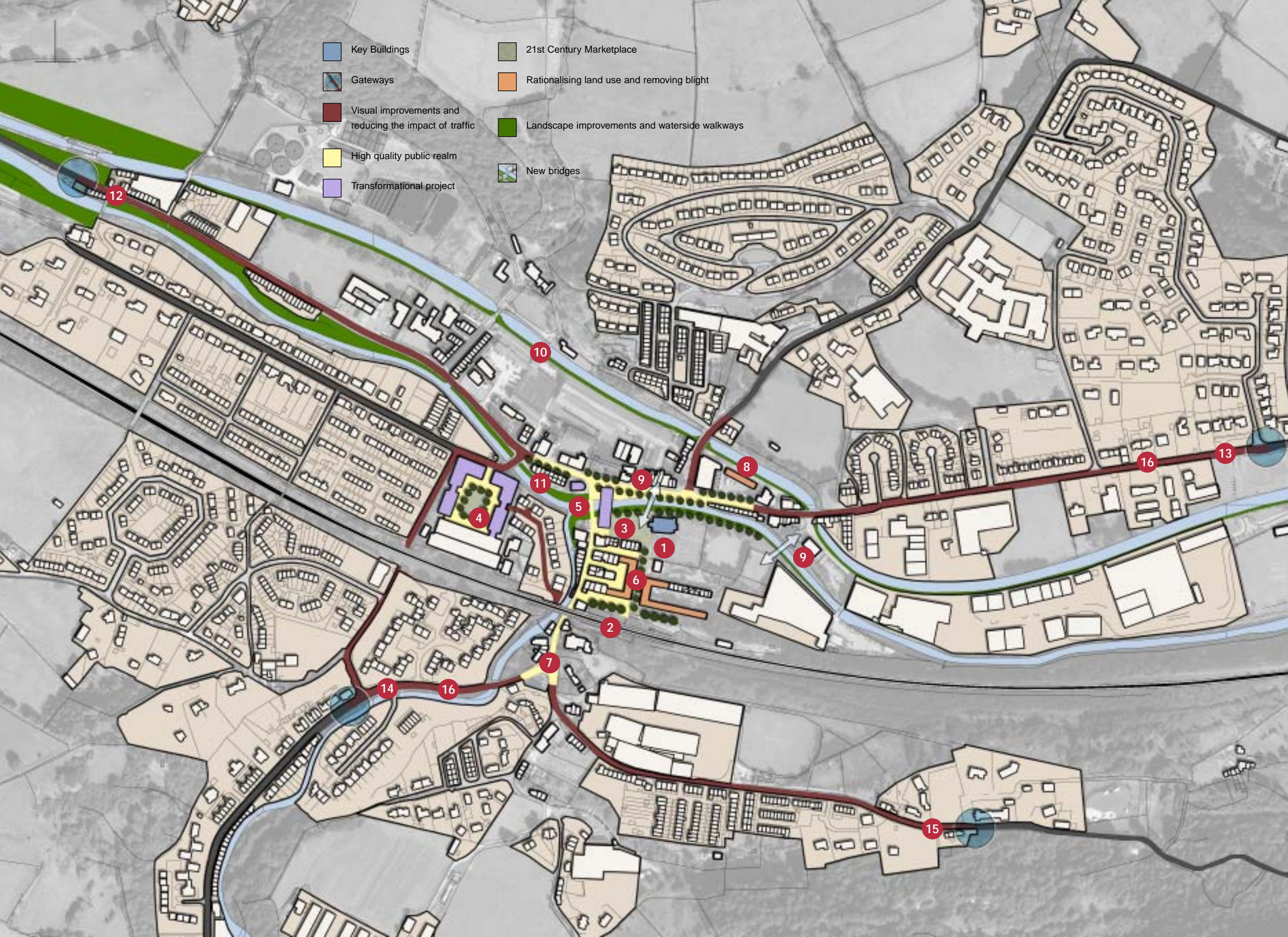

Transformational project

▢	High quality public realm	▢	Green waterside walkways
▢	Transformational projects	▢	New bridge
▢	Key buildings		

St Michael's Church and Sunday School

St Michael's Square: a new 21st Century Marketplace

Legend

- **Key Buildings** (blue)
- **Gateways** (blue hatched)
- **Visual improvements and reducing the impact of traffic** (dark red)
- **High quality public realm** (yellow)
- **Transformational project** (purple)
- **21st Century Marketplace** (grey-green)
- **Rationalising land use and removing blight** (orange)
- **Landscape improvements and waterside walkways** (green)
- **New bridges** (blue/green hatched)

Mytholmroyd Masterplan

Permeability: creating better links between facilities

New landmark building on Burnley Road, replacing the public toilets.

Key Buildings: 1. St Michael's Church; 2. The station **Town Centre Projects:** 3. St Michael's Square transformational project; 4. New Community Centre Square; 5. New Landmark building; 6. George Street area regeneration; 7. A 'Golden Carpet' of public realm; 8. Canalside building **Gateways and Arteries:** 9. New Footbridge; 10. Towpath improvements; 11. Riverside path; 12. Western Gateway; 13. Eastern Gateway; 14. Gateway on Cragg Road; 15. Gateway on Scout Road; 16. Visual improvements/reducing the impact of traffic.

Sowerby Bridge

Creating a new Town Quarter

"Our past is prouder than our present"

Introduction
Sowerby Bridge is a market town on the outskirts of Halifax, located at the eastern gateway to the Upper Calder Valley. The Rivers Calder and Ryburn meet under the impressive bridge in the heart of the town, close to the famous Town Hall, only half of which remains.

Background
Sowerby Bridge grew around a crossing point on the Rivers Calder and Ryburn. The important weaving and spinning villages at the time were Sowerby and Norland (on the tops). Subsequently, Sowerby Bridge continued to grow as weaving moved from the tops to the valley floor as mills were built on the banks of the River Calder.

As with the other valley towns, manufacturing declined during the mid-twentieth century due to competition from abroad. The population of the town decreased and a quarter of its shops closed. The market struggles to be viable.

In recent years, a series of canalside projects have been undertaken in the town acting as catalysts for future regeneration. Since the reopening of the Rochdale Canal in 2002, the town boasts the deepest lock in the country.

The Wharf is a mixed-use project currently nearing completion that includes the refurbishment of a collection of old mill buildings surrounding the canal basin. The warehouses contain a thriving mix of business and tourist uses, including offices, pubs, restaurants and narrow boats for hire for trips along the Valley.
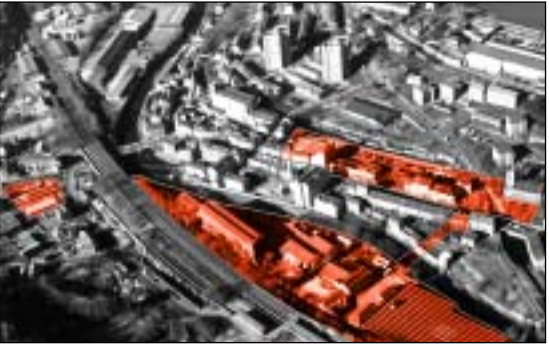
Development opportunities

Sowerby Bridge today

A new Town Quarter on the southern banks

The Town Centre
The area between the station and Wharf Street is currently neglected and underutilised. There are many industrial buildings situated on Holmes Road between the station and the River Calder and a poor quality, rusty iron footbridge crosses the river.

A New Bridge for Sowerby Bridge
The industrial uses on Holmes Road could be relocated and the existing industrial buildings demolished or restored. A new, spectacular pedestrian footbridge could cross the river and link Wharf Street to the station. A new heart for the town could then be created away from the busy A58 and closer to the river and station.

The Canalside and the Deepest Lock
Backs of shops and the Kwik Save car park overlook the canal and the deepest lock basin in the country, Tuel Lane Lock. On the north side of the canal is a large superstore car park. There are poor links between Wharf Street and the canal and along the canal itself. Poor quality surface car parking is blighting an area with the potential to be a major tourist attraction for the town.

A Mixed-use Area along the Canal
There could be a new, fine grain mixed-use area along the canal with a new public space linking the canal to Wharf Street, where the public toilets are currently located.

Sowerby Bridge
Transformational Project

Strategy

To regenerate the town centre between Wharf Street and the station through the creation of a new mixed-use quarter that reconnects the disparate areas of the town and restitches the urban fabric

Actions

A New Town Quarter

A new focus and town quarter for Sowerby Bridge should be created away from the busy main road and closer to the river and railway station. There are three key components within this transformational project that would radically change the character of this neglected area of the town. These include: providing a new pedestrian link from the railway station to Wharf Street as part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the Holmes Road area; reinstating Old Cawsey linking The Wharf to Town Hall Street; and encouraging pedestrian accessibility to the river and canal through a linked network of canalside and riverside walkways.

A Bridge for Sowerby Bridge

Visible from a number of locations in the town, this landmark bridge would create a direct link from the railway station across the river to Old Cawsey and Wharf Street. The bridge would span from the existing arches on the northern platform across the river, on axis to Christ Church.

New buildings could be accessed from the bridge and the regeneration of the adjoining industrial area would transform it into a vibrant residential and mixed-use quarter overlooking the River Calder. This could be achieved by relocating the existing industrial businesses to an alternative site, improving vehicular access from the west, restoring the historic mill buildings and replacing the old industrial sheds with high-density, mixed-use buildings grouped around a series of high quality public spaces overlooking the river.

Reinstatement of Old Cawsey

This historic lane runs parallel to Wharf Street and the river. Redevelopment in locations along its route and overlooking the canal will bring activity to this area through the creation of a new mixed-use neighbourhood.

1. Industrial uses situated in inappropriate locations on the riverside
2. Poor pedestrian links between the railway station and the town centre
3. Area of vacant land adjacent to The Wharf
4. Area of vacant land on Old Cawsey facing the canal and the river

1. Relocate the existing industrial uses to alternative sites and demolish existing buildings
2. Create a pedestrian footbridge linking the railway station to Old Cawsey
3. Demolish existing toilets and create new square
4. Move the market to Wharf Street

1. Create a new square on the south side of the river
2. Reinstate Old Cawsey
3. Create a new square addressing The Wharf
4. Create a riverside walk
5. Provide a new car park off Holmes Road with a footbridge link to The Wharf

1. Build a mixed-use development along the riverside
2. Create a mixed-use development along the canalside

Improving Accessibility to the River and Canal

Throughout Sowerby Bridge, pedestrian thoroughfares should be created to improve accessibility between the town centre and the canal and river. A circular promenade should link The Wharf in the east to the park in the west.

Other Town Projects

Relocation of the Market

It is crucial for the future viability and sustainability of the market that it is relocated to a new site closer to existing shops and facilities. The market could be moved to a location which is close to Wharf Street, which would be better for the market traders. The existing Wharf Street car park occupies an accessible site close to existing shops and The Wharf. An eye-catching, innovative new Marketplace could be created, utilising the changes in level across the site to create new stalls with parking at its lower level. In the long term, an indoor market could perhaps be located inside the adjacent Bingo Hall.

The release of the existing market site for residential-based, mixed-use development could generate finance to cross-subsidise the relocation of the market.

Wharf Street Car Park

In the longer term, the Kwik Save car park could be redeveloped and the public toilets demolished. This would open up a large area of land between the canal and Wharf Street that could be used to create a larger, retail based mixed-use area with quality built frontages addressing the canal and enclosing a new public space.

Key Issues

1. The station is disconnected from the town centre.
2. The river and canal are underexploited.
3. The market is in decline.
4. The town is dominated by traffic.
5. Key river and canalside locations are occupied by inappropriate uses.

A new Town Quarter

High quality public realm
Transformational projects
Key buildings
Green waterside walkways
New bridge

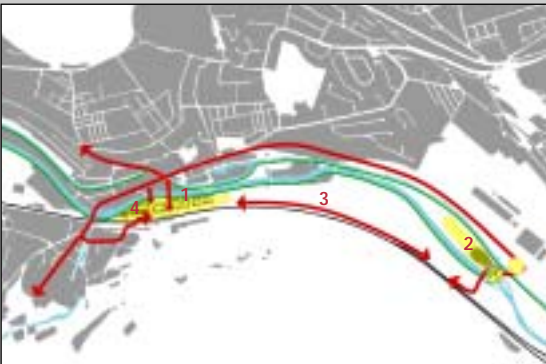Town Centre (left), the River Calder and station to the right

View of new footbridge connecting town centre to station and riverside walkway
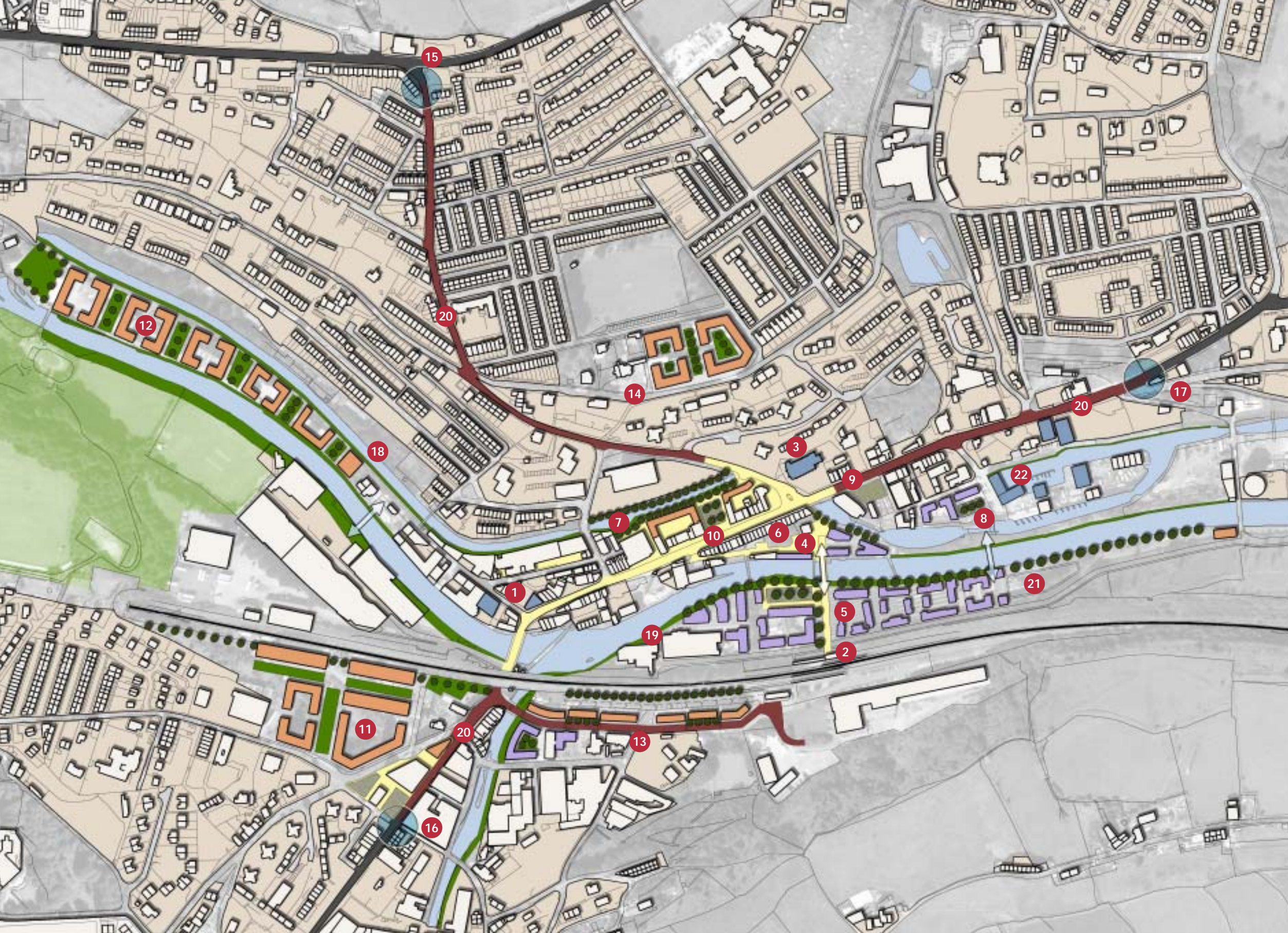
Sowerby Bridge Masterplan

1. Existing Routes
2. Holmes Road landlocked

1. Holmes Road redeveloped
2. Stern Mills, potential site for new and relocated businesses
3. Potential new vehicular link through Stern Mills to unlock Holmes Road Area
4. New footbridge across the River Calder

Key

- Key Buildings
- Gateways
- Visual improvements and reducing the impact of traffic
- High quality public realm
- Transformational project
- Potential market relocation
- Rationalising land use and removing blight
- Landscape improvements and waterside walkways
- New bridges

Key Buildings: 1.The Town Hall; 2. The station; 3. Christ Church. **Town Centre Projects:** 4. New Bridge over the river; 5. Holmes Lane; 6. Old Cawsey; 7. Canalside; 8. Development beside the Wharf; 9. The new market; 10. A 'Golden Carpet' of public realm; **Rationalising Land Use and Removing Blight;** 11. In the West End; 12. Along Hollins Mill Lane; 13. Along Station Road; 14. Off Tuel Lane. **Gateways and Arteries:** 15. Gateway at the top of Tuel Lane; 16. Gateway on Rochdale Road; 17. Gateway on Bolton Brow; 18. Towpath improvements; 19. Riverside path; 20. Visual improvements/reducing the impact of traffic; 21. Parking and a new footbridge; 22. The Wharf.

The Flying Shuttle

Weaving the Valley Together

Introduction
The Flying Shuttle is a conceptual project, symbolising the weaving together of the warp and the weft of the Upper Calder Valley in an interconnected series of physical, environmental, cultural, social, spiritual and virtual projects; some visible, some invisible.

Just as the Flying Shuttle revolutionised the weaving process in the late 18th century, moving faster than the eye could see to bring economic prosperity to the Valley, so will its 21st century equivalent give collective expression to the quality and creativity of the Valley and its communities.

The Flying Shuttle will create a continuous quilt of connectivity, uniting the Valley and allowing it to become greater than just the sum of its parts.

Marking the Valley
A traditional activity for both residents and visitors is to walk a valley, often with the goal of reaching a vantage point or landmark. Such viewpoints are often spontaneously marked by walkers with a stone cairn, or 'way station', which grows incrementally as each traveller adds his or her stone to the pile. Stoodley Pike is a monumental version of one of these cairns, built in 1815 to commemorate the victory at the Battle of Waterloo.

Whilst the invisible presence of the Flying Shuttle will be felt everywhere in the Valley, its physical expression will be given form and function through the creation of a series of 21st century Way Stations on the valley tops. The project will be called Marking the Valley.

Marking the Valley will be a public art project that will create eleven Renaissance Way Stations at advantageous points to the north and south of the central valley axis. These points will literally and figuratively mark a transition between the sheltered valley and the exposed Pennine landscape of the tops.

The Renaissance Way Stations
The Renaissance Way Stations will have both a public and a private character. They will be linked visually, and with sound and electronically. Just as the Flying Shuttle carried yarn so Marking the Valley will allow 'shuttles' to carry light, sound and messages from side to side across the Valley and down into the towns themselves. Each Station will form a point of visual focus and act as a shelter from the elements.

The Competition
It is intended that six of the Renaissance Stations should be designed locally and five by an international competition.

Form and Materials
No limitation will be placed on the shape, height, colour or material of the Station. However, consideration should be given in the design to the context and setting of the Valley. The following points will be included in the briefs:

- Marking the Valley is a project that remembers the past but is firmly focused on the future
- Stations will have individual characters

Left: The Renaissance Way Station Valley Model by Roger Burnett

- Stations should be able to communicate with other Stations, either using focused human sound or wireless communication
- A facility should be provided to record the thoughts of travellers
- Consideration should be given to using sun, wind and water as power sources for the Stations
- The Stations will form a visual and virtual network in the Valley – in doing so they will make the largest permanent public artwork in the world
- Each Station should allow for the subtle wear and presence of travellers to be recorded simply – as walkers will often create informal stone cairns at high points on a well travelled route
- Each individual design must contain common elements that will enable celebratory events to take place across the Valley.

Festivals and Activities

The Flying Shuttle will be given further shape and form through the creation of a series of events and activities that will build up over time to create a collective image for the Valley, locally, nationally and internationally.

The Calder Valley Festival

Through integrated programming, the cultural community of the Valley will work towards the creation of The Calder Valley Festival, harnessing talents and energies both rural and urban, to celebrate and promote everything the Valley has to offer. Whether concentrated or dispersed over several months, the Calder Valley Festival has the potential, say within five years, to establish itself as an internationally renowned event.

Celebrating the Valley Warp

Each of the individual elements of the Valley Warp should be celebrated once a year, resulting in one event taking place every quarter - the River Festival, the Canal Festival, the Railway Festival and the Road Festival. The latter could include the Calder Valley Marathon, a subtle way of starting to rethink the way movement is accommodated along the valley floor, through closing the A646 for a combination of running, walking, cycling and rollerblading events.

Celebrating the Valley Weft

The Valley Weft could be celebrated through the Calder Run, weaving up and down the Valley with runners electronically recording their progress at each Renaissance Way Station and in each of the 21st Century Marketplaces, automatically taking up his or her place in an ever expanding pantheon of participants.

The Valley of Storytelling

Each of the Renaissance Way Stations, as well as the 21st Century Marketplaces, could be a place for both recording, and listening to, stories. In tribute to Ted Hughes, many of whose poems were inspired by the landscape of the Valley, the 21st Century Marketplace in Mytholmroyd could be designed to include an audio-visual camera obscura, the focusing of which would bring together his poems and their landscape inspiration.

The Flying Shuttle Cocktail and Renaissance Ale

To celebrate the launch of the Vision and Charter, a Renaissance Ale has been brewed locally and a Flying Shuttle Cocktail invented, both to be enjoyed locally in time for Christmas, at the Market of Ideas being held in Hebden Bridge.

UpperCalderValleyRenaissance
weaving it all together

A closing dispatch from the Upper Calder Valley

John, you asked me to dip my pen in a bottle of Scotch and come up with something lyrical – so here it is! Let me tell you what I believe the spirit of the Renaissance is all about. But be warned: like alcohol, it's addictive.

Renaissance is all about new ideas, new initiatives, new alliances and new beginnings. It is about shaping a better future, a future that isn't dependant on a run-of-the-mill five-year plan, but on a bold and imaginative, fifty-year Vision. As with Rome, the Upper Calder Valley Renaissance cannot be built in a day. Aptly, my twelve-month old son helped to launch the "Bringing It All Together Weekend" in June. Renaissance is an investment for our children's future and the real fruits of the project will be reaped by his generation, not ours.

You told us from the outset that the Renaissance process would be "vision led not funding fed". I've no problem with that. In recent years I've seen too much public money go towards too many ill-conceived schemes. White elephants are not a native species of this valley. Also, we have been told by John Prescott that, "Our policies, programmes and structures of governance are based on engaging local people in partnerships for change". I've no problem with that either. Over this first year of Renaissance the people of the Upper Calder Valley have sub-scribed to that strategy in their thousands.

But the government and Yorkshire Forward must stay with the daring initiative that they have set in motion. And in doing so they must understand that creativity – for that is what we're engaged in, be it through housing, farming, industry or any other form of human activity – by its very nature, involves doing things differently. Creative thinking does not easily fit into regimented tick boxes, nor does it rigidly adhere to prescribed rules and regulations.

Already the people of the Upper Calder Valley have begun to move mountains. Nine months ago I was hardly aware of farming in the valley, but I'm certainly aware of it now! The farmer's Action Plan sets a benchmark for all the other Action Groups to aspire to. Their contribution alone will go a long way towards creating a sustainable future for this region. In Mytholmroyd, the Church, the Community Association and the local people are intent on creating a twenty-first century Market Town from scratch and, into the bargain, celebrating the life and work of their native poet, Ted Hughes.

As for us in Sowerby Bridge, for years we've all grumbled about traffic congestion. Someone once said; if they can't move the road let us move the town. That quip led to the Courier publishing a picture of how Wharf Street would look if converted into a branch of the Rochdale Canal. Well, it's no longer a joke. A group of us here are now working on an ambitious plan to move the town centre 200 yards to the south. But even assuming that Wharf Street remains dry, Sowerby Bridge can still boast of more water than Venice.

Five hundred years ago Michelangelo impoverished himself in making the first Renaissance happen and I've just blown my families Tax Credit in doing the same. That is what it takes in commitment and passion. As we come to the end of this first year, on the tops and in the five towns, there's elation and exhaustion. The people of this valley will scream if you ask us to fill in another "Post It" - but we'll be damned if we'll let the initiative die!

From Roger Burnett, Sculptor, Sowerby Bridge to John Thompson 1 December 2003