

Concept 1

Reconnection - Streets and spaces

The principle aim of the masterplan is to maximise connections back to the surrounding area while releasing a large area of underutilised town centre land for positive use.

Historic analysis of the site illustrates that the area west of Cheapside and east of the railway line has always lacked a coherent urban grain. It comprised a collection of industrial buildings that developed in an ad hoc fashion prior to the construction of the 1960's retail development. The evolution of the town through this period reinforced the sense of Cheapside as 'front' and the area behind as 'back'.

This evolution was largely due to the railway line which formed a strong edge to the east of the town centre. Kendray Street (formerly Queen's Road) has been the only route crossing the railway since the mid 19th Century. Today it is particularly problematic - the level crossing is one of the most high risk in the country. Closing the crossing and creating a new pedestrian friendly bridge is a vital component of the masterplan proposals.

The linkages are as follows;

Pedestrian bridge

A new east west link that will enable the closure of the Jumble Lane level crossing, the creation of a new surface car park with easy access to the town centre, a generous, safe route for football fans on their way to an from the Oakwell.

New shopping boulevard

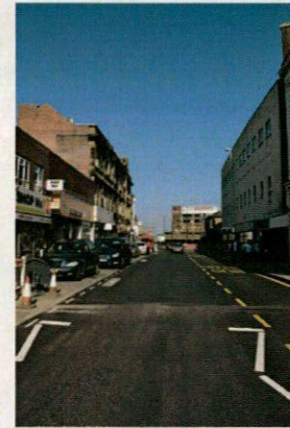
A new north south link that will connect Midland Street to Lambra Road. This will encourage pedestrian travel from the south into the town centre and create the infrastructure for the town to grow southwards in the future.

Extension to New Street

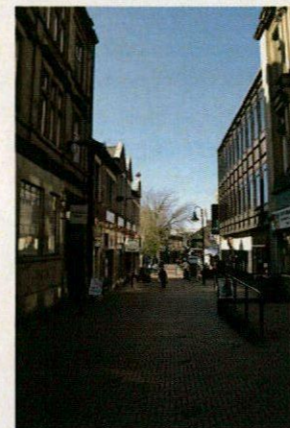
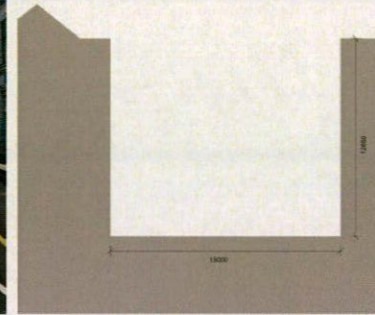
A new east west link that will extend New Street eastwards and connect Cheapside with the proposed new shopping boulevard. This link will create a 'retail circuit' for the first time which will allow a more pleasant shopping experience and a better balanced movement of people within the town centre.

Market Square

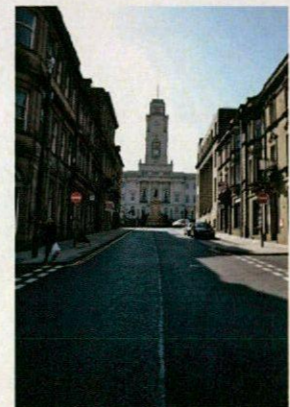
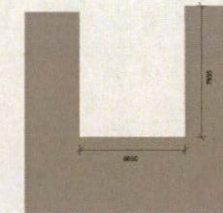
The square is located at the meeting of all of these routes and will be a place of orientation and coming together.



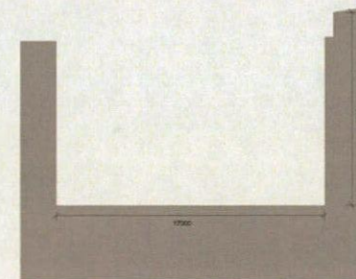
Eldon Street



Market Street



Regent Street



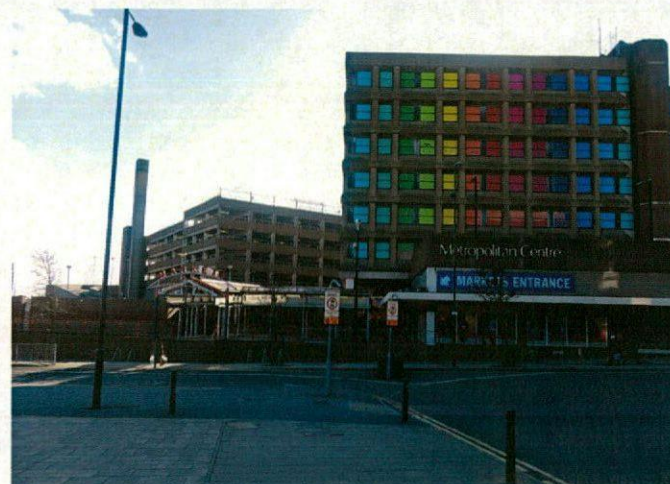
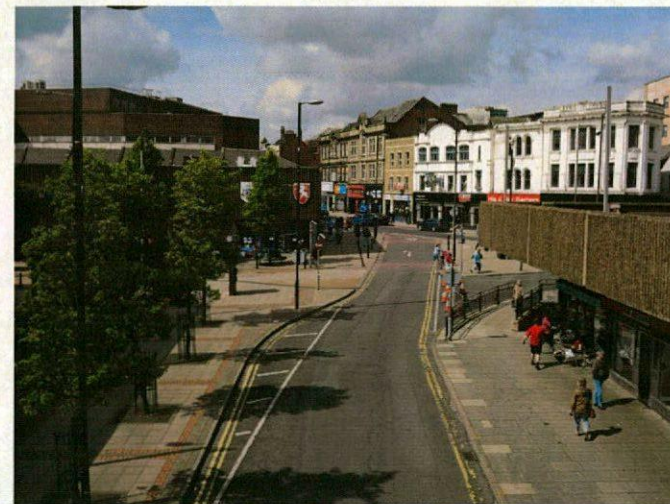
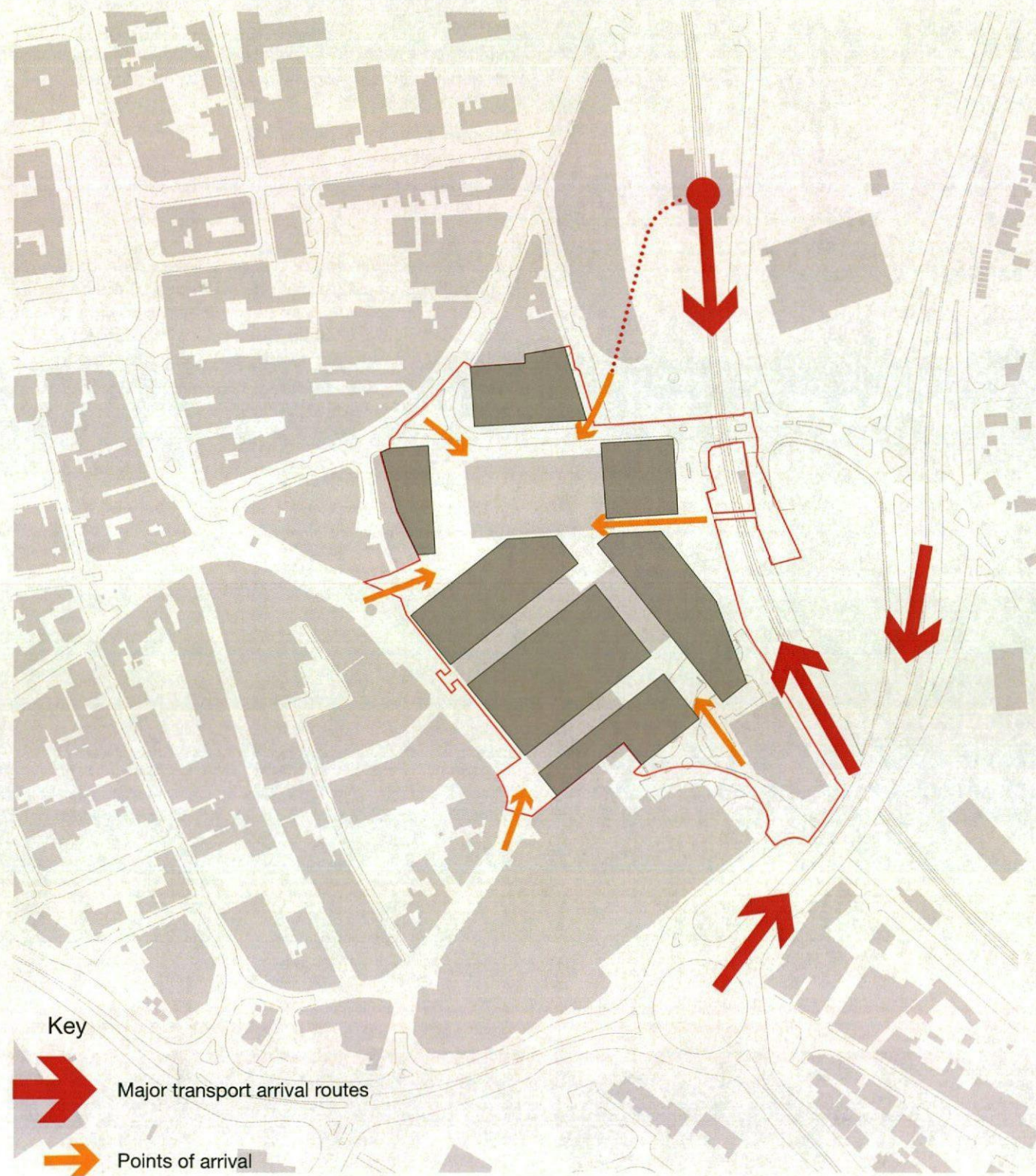
Concept 2 Urban structure

The urban principles inherent to Barnsley have evolved over centuries and relate to street hierarchy, plot structure and built fabric. Nearly every street in the town offers a different combination of historic built form and urban grain and no street is enclosed by an architecture of a single period. Examples include the finer grain and scale of Market Street, the medium width and 3 storey enclosure of Eldon Street and the distinctive open scale of Cheapside. It is exactly these relationships between spatial hierarchies and built variety that have informed the masterplan and influenced the design of the streets, spaces and enclosing buildings across the Better Barnsley Town Centre site.

The heart of the development, The Market Square, will be enclosed by primary frontages including a new market hall and public library. The massing of these buildings, and the others that form its edges, will give the square a clear volume, clarity and scale.

Development plots have been carefully considered to positively engage the various site constraints and opportunities. This ensures that issues of orientation, natural lighting, views, frontage, relationship to context and amenity have all been considered while optimising the use of the available land and providing flexible floor space that is attractive for potential investors.

Key
 Urban structure
 Potential routes



Concept 3 A sense of arrival

Introduction

The town is accessed in a number of ways and the masterplan seeks to engage these to create a sense of arrival and gateway into the town centre.

Car, bus and Rail

From the north east of the site people arrive by bus and train to the transport interchange. It is important this major point of arrival is considered within the proposals to ensure a positive first impression.

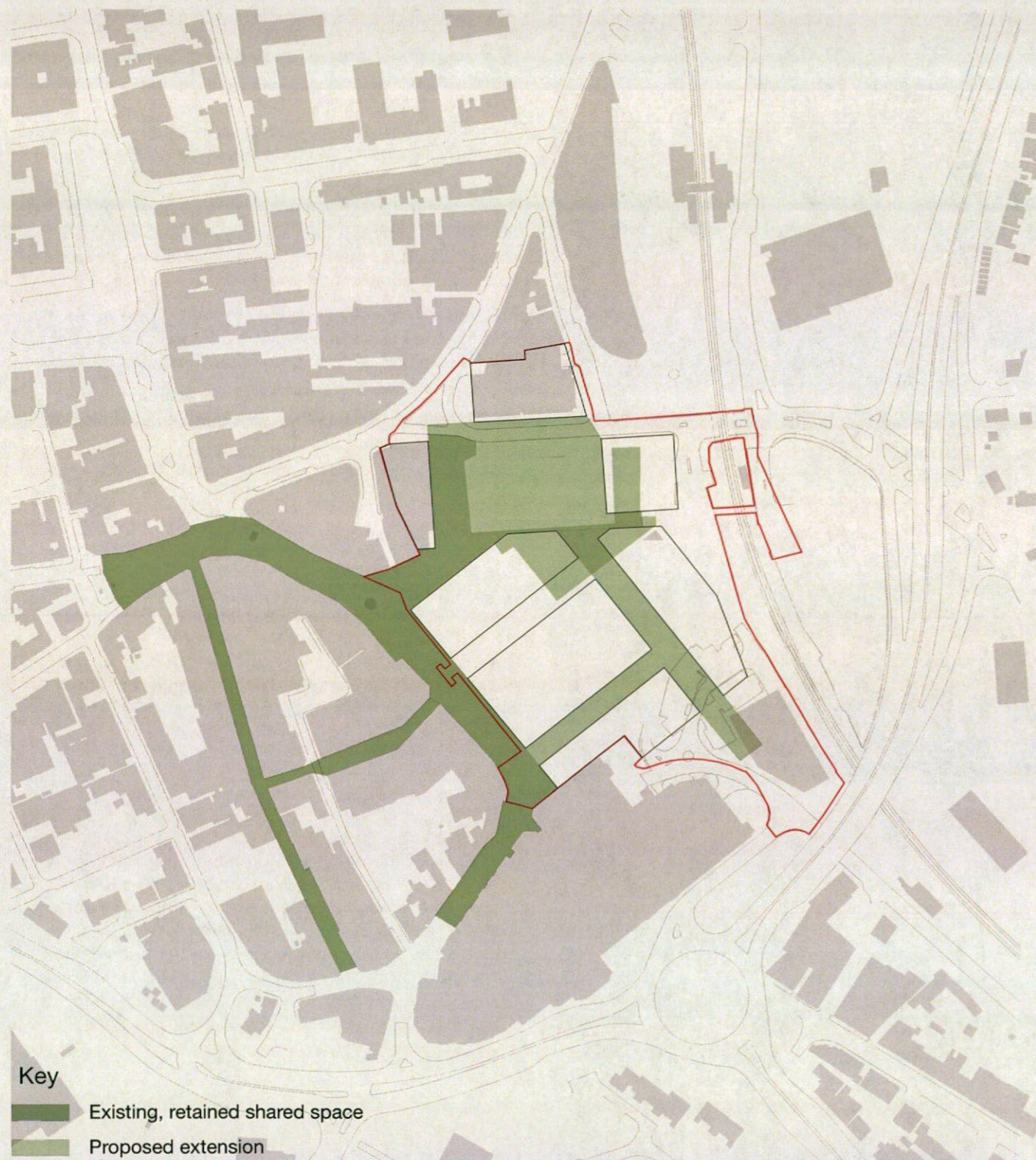
The visibility of activity on the Market Square with a mix of retail and leisure uses on its edges will provide an attractive entrance to the town from the interchange.

The potential for the existing public realm to connect to the Market Square has therefore been a key driver in the design process. This has included detailed studies into how the challenging levels on Kendray Street and the retained concrete slabs beneath Central Offices can be positively manipulated to contribute to this sense of arrival rather than become a barrier.

The proposed pedestrian bridge also offers the potential to greatly affect the approach by both rail and car. The bridge must traverse the railway line by at least 5.8m. The existing levels allow the bridge to run from grade adjacent to the new square whilst achieving this clearance. Lifts and stairs are then required to come back down again with the CEAG car park site. The bridge, and these lifts and stairs, have the potential to become a strong sculptural form that could be enhanced by careful lighting that could communicate a very strong message of arrival.

Pedestrians

The site is predominantly approached by foot from the north and west as routes from the east and south are closed by the railway, bypass and the imposing form of the Alhambra Centre. A vital driving principle is the address this so that the town is more permeable and connected.



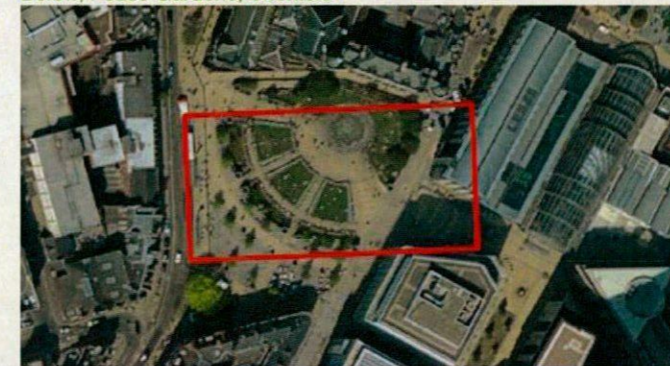
Below, Chesterfield Market



Below, Doncaster Market



Below, Peace Gardens, Sheffield



Concept 4 Shared space

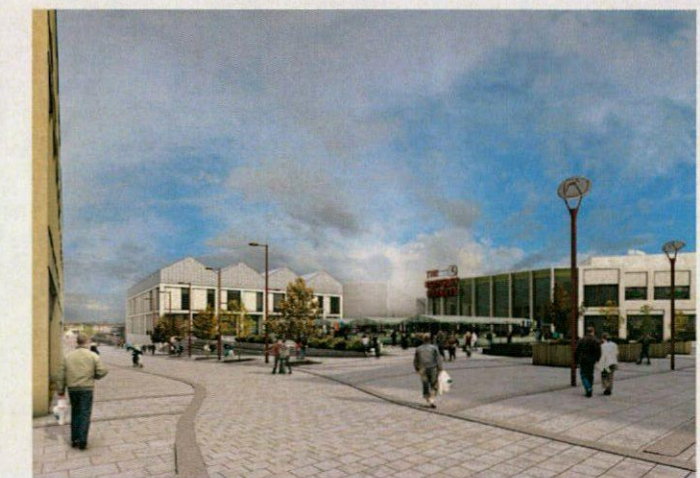
The quality of the public realm is key to the success of the development.

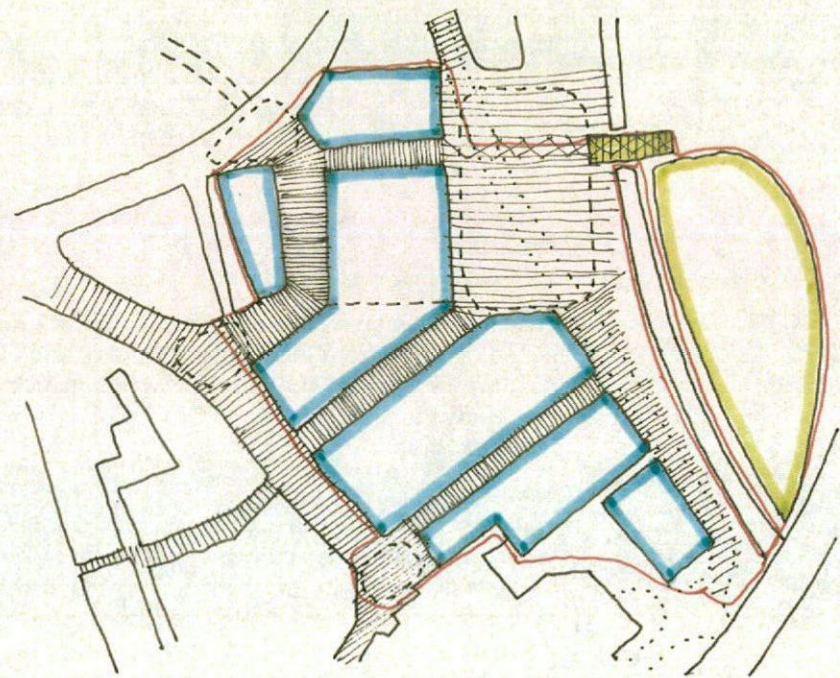
The attraction of a generous open Market Square which offers the potential for amenity, recreation and commerce will transform the town centre into an attractive destination while giving coherency to the converging new and existing streets.

A study of a wide range of comparable squares, both local, national and international has informed the design of this vital new space, some of which are shown to the left - it's scale, enclosure, it's edges, and critically, it's capacity to facilitate a wide range of activities and functions at every scale from a large Christmas market to a small group of friends meeting before going shopping.

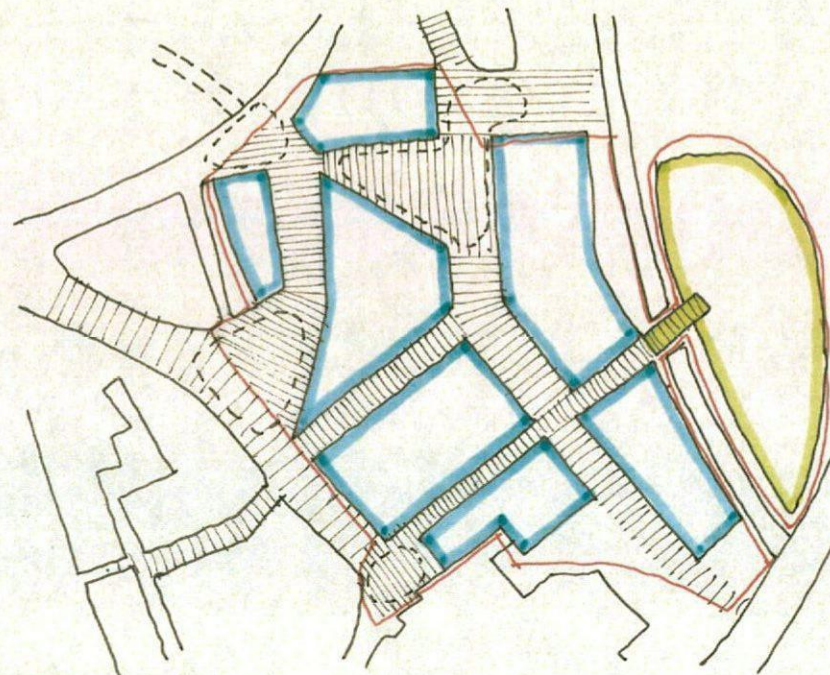
The design of the streets has also been considered. Comprehensive studies have been undertaken to understand the spatial dimensions of key streets within the town to influence decisions on width, height of adjacent buildings and their uses.

Images Left: Proposed Market Square over existing aerial image, Chesterfield Market, Doncaster Market, and Peace Gardens Sheffield
Image Below: Proposed Market Square

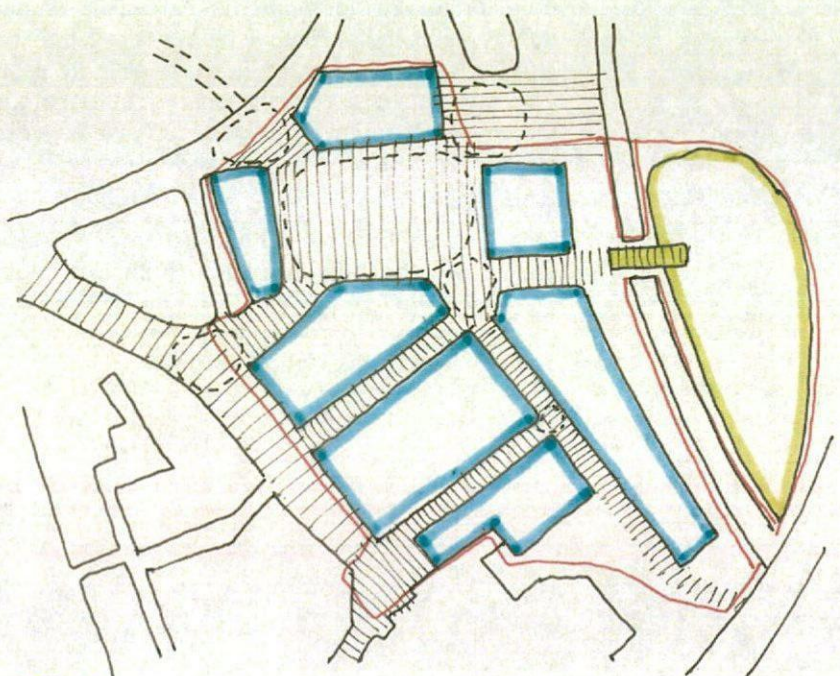




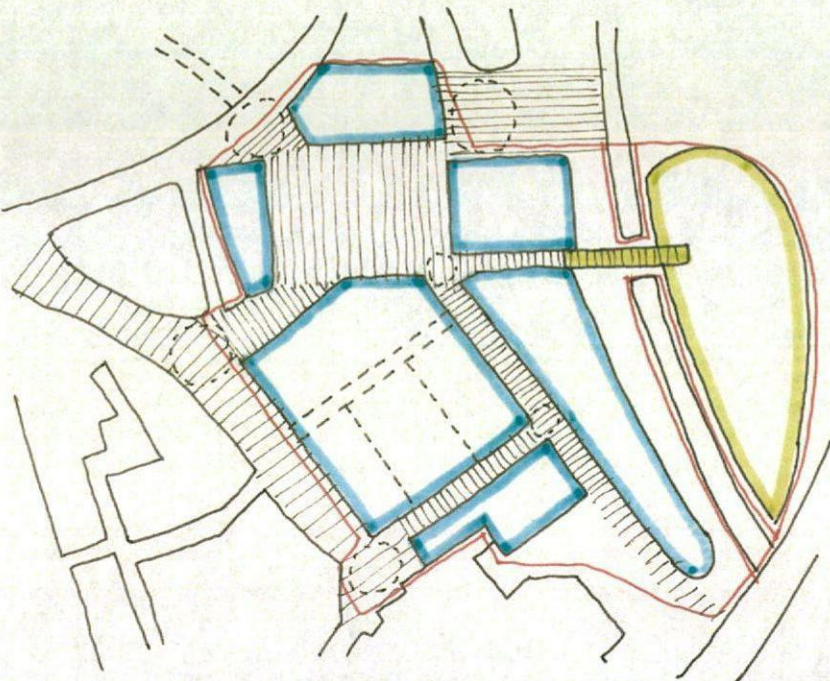
Option 1



Option 2



Option 3



Option 4

Early masterplan studies

The adjacent diagrams illustrate some of the iterations through which the masterplan design has evolved to arrive at the proposal;

Option 1

A study of how a new market square might be created as an extension of that currently in front of the Transport Interchange with the under utilised land next to the railway line brought into use. The creation of east west routes through the Metropolitan Centre was also a key consideration at that stage.

Option 2

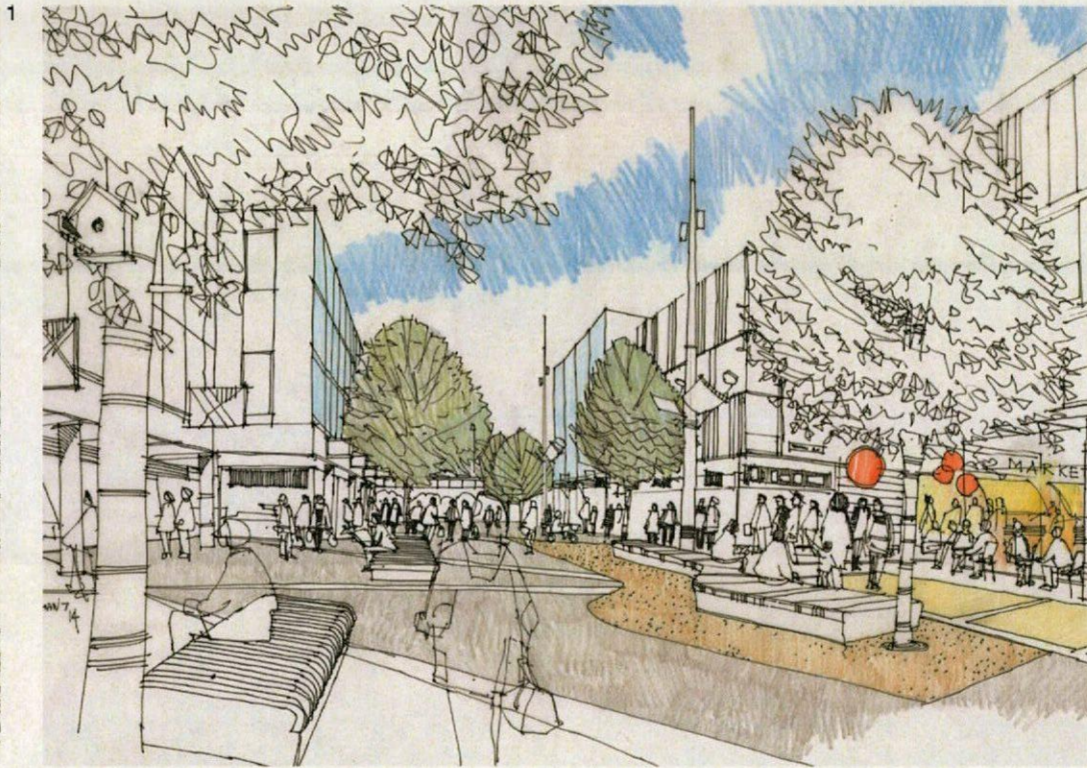
This iteration explored how a new shopping spine, lined with shops and restaurants on both sides could be introduced linking a market square to Lambra Road and also screening the town centre from the railway.

Option 3

This arrangement was arrived at following analysis of the size of public space required to hold both an outdoor market and events. It also began to explore how a retail circuit could be reinforced through the creation of a number of 'landscape nodes'.

Option 4

At this stage the Design Team had considerably more technical information about both the site and existing buildings. The setting of the block dimensions and streets was adjusted to enable the valuable undercroft to be retained in its entirety for servicing.



2 Form, scale and massing
 The various iterations of the masterplan have been tested in 3 dimensions throughout the design process. This included the making of a 3d computer model that was used as a base for the production of sketch streetscenes.
 The 4 adjacent images are representative of these studies.

Image 1
 This illustrates an early intention to create a strong sense of arrival from the Transport Interchange into the new market square. The fountains express an idea to somehow manifest the Sough Dyke which runs below Kendray Street

Image 2
 This describes how the new shopping spine might look. It contains ideas that were later adopted such as pedestrian priority, strong landscape elements, places to stop and rest. It also describes a scale to the development of 3-4 storeys to ensure the development is appropriate to its context - the masterplan is about knitting into the existing town centre context.



Image 3
 This describes how the town centre could be accessed from the east from CEAG car park. It communicates the ambition for a wide bridge that can easily accommodate the large volume of football fans that regularly travel to and from the town centre the Oakwell football stadium. Also apparent is our understanding, at that stage, of how the development might be serviced by a new designated service road adjacent to the railway line.

Image 4
 This is a view from New Street towards the Metropolitan Centre with the Alhambra on the right. The importance of an east west connection through the Met Centre in this location was apparent from the early stages in the development of the design proposals.