

## Leigh Town Centre Implementation Strategy - Schedule of Tasks

Task	Priority Area	Lead	Phasing
Review existing parking strategy - undertake a study of current and future parking capacity - length of stay, location, quality and pricing throughout Leigh to develop a refined parking hierarchy for the town which incorporates an appropriate parking signage strategy	General	Wigan Council	Ongoing
Phase out low quality in-fill parking through the planning process	General	Wigan Council (Planning)	Ongoing
Continue to work with community transport to provide a bus route linking LSV, the Infirmary and the Town Centre	General	Wigan Council	Ongoing
Commission a comprehensive movement and signage strategy to identify and define key town centre routes for vehicles, freight, servicing, pedestrians and cyclists, and ensure that they are each well signposted. The strategy should improve pedestrian and cycling connections to the retail core and edge-of-centre developments, reduce severance and vehicular dominance e.g. by directing through traffic onto Atherleigh Way	General	Wigan Council (Transport)	Short
Commission transport planners to design a more efficient and straight-forward highway layout to rationalise the existing traffic circulation system, ease navigation, increase legibility and reduce congestion.	General	Wigan Council (Transport)	Short
Strongly encourage and lobby for the LSM Guided Bus Way	General	Wigan Council	Short-Medium
Investigate the appropriate design and associated costs of street furniture and hard landscaping throughout the town centre and deliver a strategy of public realm improvements to key routes in particular Market Street, Railway Road, Bradshawgate and Spinning Jenny Way	Cross Cutting	Wigan Council	Short
Identify appropriate locations for additional tree planting and greenery to enhance the setting of key buildings and support the town centre pedestrian circuit	Cross Cutting	Wigan Council/ Township Forum	Medium
Consider a strategy for the maintenance of new planting and public areas	Cross Cutting	Town Centre Management Group	Medium
Prepare a Design Guidance for the Civic Quarter to determine its shape and size, improve legibility and access, reveal the scope for expanding the range of facilities and events, and reintegrate it with other parts of Leigh	Civic Quarter	Wigan Council	Short
Investigate, arrange and schedule appropriate programme of public events for Civic Square and Spinning Gate Shopping Centre	Civic Quarter/ Retail Heart	Town Centre Management Group	Short
Investigate, arrange and schedule appropriate programme of speciality markets for Civic Square	Civic Quarter	Town Centre Management Group	Short

Task	Priority Area	Lead	Phasing
Produce marketing material for Leigh which helps to establish the Civic Quarter as the cultural and community centre of Leigh including library, art gallery and theatre details; highlights the strengths of the retail offer at Spinning Gate, the market and Bradshawgate/Railway Road; the sporting and leisure offer at LSV; and includes the full schedule of events	General	Town Centre Manager Group	Short
Ensure decision is made and carried forward on one of the three priced out options for the provision of public toilets	General	Town Centre Manager Group	Short
Support the delivery of proposed refurbishment of the Turnpike Centre and secure funding for the delivery of the Turnpike Centre refurbishment	Civic Quarter	Wigan Council	Short-Medium
Commission a feasibility study to consider the potential to redevelop the former cinema site and the site to the west of the Town Hall including the potential to develop stronger linkages through from the Civic Quarter to Railway Road	Civic Quarter	Wigan Council	Medium-Long
Undertake a feasibility study, including consultations with local service providers to consider the scope for a super bus stop at the Eastern Gateway	Eastern Gateway	Wigan Council	Short
Prepare a Masterplan for creating a new Eastern Gateway	Eastern Gateway	Wigan Council	Short
Commission a transport management strategy to discourage unnecessary journeys	Cross Cutting	Wigan Council	Short
Gather evidence including footfall and spend, and best practice examples supporting the advantages of the full pedestrianisation of Bradshawgate to assist in consultations with local businesses	Eastern Gateway	Wigan Council	Medium-Long
Ensure through the planning process that new private investment in the town helps fund townscape improvements	General	Wigan Council	On-going
Engage with current developers to seek to secure the redevelopment of the Barlow Radiator Factory site and Bridgewater Business Park	South of TC	Wigan Council	On-going
Produce and maintain a schedule of the current town centre retail offer and voids to ensure that accommodation is available which meets the needs of occupiers serving the younger market, and that further retail development does not compete with the existing offer. This may also assist in maintaining dialogue with local retailers.	Retail Heart	Town Centre Manager Group	Short
Commission a focused strategy to improve the canal and its towpath and maximise access to leisure opportunities including investigate the costs and constraints for additional and upgraded crossing points over the canal	South of TC	Wigan Council	Short-Medium
Investigate again the potential of better linking LSV, Infirmary and Town Centre by commercial bus service	Cross Cutting	Wigan Council	Medium
Investigate potential options for the expansion of Spinning Gate Shopping Centre	Retail Heart	Wigan Council	Long



**Appendix A**  
**Stakeholder Issues and Aspirations**



## **Stakeholder Issues and Aspirations**

### **The Consultation Process**

In all developments, an important ingredient to the success of regeneration schemes is community involvement. This is especially so in Leigh where the issues that the Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan aims to address span social, economic and physical problems and therefore will deliver change to every resident and visitor alike. As such, work has been done to ensure that the Plan is premised upon not only commercial deliverability, but also upon strong stakeholder buy-in.

The first phase of our consultation process comprised a series of one on one interviews with key stakeholders (relevant officers within the council and sub-regional partners, key town service providers, local agents and major landowners/occupiers), followed by a joint meeting of the Leigh Township Forum and Leigh Town Centre Management Group in January 2009. These discussions revealed a number of issues and policy aspirations for Leigh Town Centre which the Plan now seeks to address. These include:

- Increasing the number of shoppers and visitors to Leigh
- Increasing the amount of spend in Leigh
- Raising Leigh's profile and image
- Improving the quality of life of Leigh's residents

The messages from these consultations fed into the Baseline Report which was issued in March 2009 and provided the robust evidence base from which an initial Vision was developed and actions identified to transform Leigh Town Centre.

These emerging actions were tested with stakeholders in April 2009 to help refine our thinking and inform options appraisal. Three separate sessions were held to ensure we obtained a cross-demographic opinion and provided plenty of opportunity for wider discussion:

- Key Stakeholder Consultation - to gain the views of people with a professional interest in Leigh
- Wigan and Leigh College Consultation - to gain the views of young people
- Public Drop-in-Session - to gain the views of local residents

A list of all consultees can be found in Appendix B.

### **Stakeholder Support**

All three sessions demonstrated broad support for the initial ideas for change in Leigh Town Centre. This endorsement is an important element in moving forward with confidence towards identifying a preferred option. Moreover it was an opportunity to check for gaps in our understanding and identify further areas where intervention was felt necessary. The following sections summarise these additional thoughts which have, on top of the Baseline findings, been used to inform this Strategy Action Plan.

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## Stakeholder Messages

### Key Stakeholder Consultation

A presentation was given for key stakeholders and breakout sessions held. The feedback received demonstrated encouraging approval of both the new Vision for Leigh and support for the objectives identified around this. Further comments included:

- The feeling that the actions for intervention were realistic and had great potential to restore pride in Leigh if implemented in a logical order
- The critical need to strengthen links between Leigh Sports Village and the Town Centre to ensure the centre is not isolated and cut off from opportunities brought to the area by this investment
- Confirmation that the Railway Arches as either a structure or development site (dependent on conservation issues) is an important Eastern gateway that has much bearing on transforming access in and around Leigh
- Weight placed on the need for intervention in the upper end of Bradshawgate to prevent stagnation. Belief that if full pedestrianisation is brought forward, it cannot be done in isolation of public access and transport issues in the east of the Town Centre

### Wigan and Leigh College Consultation

Given the challenges highlighted around the lack of usage of Leigh Town Centre by the younger population, it was felt to be important to gain their views on Leigh as a place for the youth, their experience of being located in Leigh Sports Village and their thoughts on the emerging Strategy and Action Plan. A workshop was held and questionnaires were also distributed. Analysis of these have once again shown enthusiastic backing given to the need for change. Further comments were centred around:

- A perception that Leigh Town Centre is unattractive, with a depressed reputation and little to do to keep the younger population occupied
  - The young population feel unsafe in certain areas (where drug-users, homeless and anti-social behaviour cause problems) and would like to see more police presence
  - Appeal for Leigh to have a more varied evening economy. It is currently one-dimensional and focused around binge-drinking (“£1 a drink offers”)
  - Delighted with new facilities at Leigh Sports Village but feels it lacks satisfactory public transport links to town (currently only a College bus service that runs once in the morning and in the night), proper footpaths (currently badly lit and next to busy roads) adequate food provision (expensive canteen) and would like to see a retail offer develop within the grounds
  - Strong support spanned all four priority actions identified so far with particular high level backing for strengthening the Town Centre
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## Public Drop-in-Session

A drop in session was organised in order to allow the wider community to come and discuss their ideas and reservations. A series of exhibition boards presenting the work undertaken to date were created (see end of Appendix). A questionnaire was distributed to gain views on the level of support surrounding the new Vision for Leigh Town Centre. There was across the board endorsement of the four objectives developed to achieve the new vision. The key messages coming from this session were:

- Approval that the Vision goes towards preserving Leigh's unique identity and restoring its pride level
- Noted large spaces available for development that could enhance Town Centre usage and attractiveness as an investor environment (particularly land to the south of the canal)
- Feeling that Leigh Town Centre has no 'return appeal' for visitors and residents alike (leisure, retail, environmental and evening offer) and population movement out of the Borough is becoming more apparent
- Need for more business support from the Council in Leigh Town Centre to stop further closures of local independent traders (affected by the economic downturn and stagnated centre) who contribute towards the unique independent retail environment not easily found in other similar sized towns
- Strong enthusiasm for relocation of the Outdoor Market to its old site on Market Square to reanimate the Civic Quarter. Less eagerness to see any expansion of Spinning Gate Shopping Centre, but not averse to the idea
- High level support for improving accessibility to what is considered an complex Town Centre. Particular desire to see improved accommodation of sustainable travel (walking and cycling) and better public transport links
- First instance support for the possible extension of the pedestrianisation scheme at Bradshawgate and the long term redevelopment of the 'Boulevard site', along with enhancements to the Town Square as the main public events space
- Concern surrounding vast amount of litter on the streets and dull pedestrian environment. Desire to see more public art installations and 'inner town' beauty

## Conclusion

The consultation process held in Leigh has demonstrated almost strong endorsement of the new Vision for Leigh Town Centre and actions developed to assist achievement of this. The further comments contributed by the community has only strengthened this vision and achieved a stronger stakeholder buy-in that will help push forward the Strategy and Action Plan more quickly and effectively.

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## Introduction

### Purpose of the Masterplan

The Leigh Town Centre Masterplan will guide investment and development in the town over the coming 15 years to ensure that Leigh is an attractive and successful town centre.

It comes at a time when a number of recent developments have been completed nearby and some further exciting proposals exist. It is important to ensure Leigh taps into this potential and raise its profile and image, remaining competitive whilst maximising the town centre offer to the benefit of local businesses and residents.

### Progress to date

DTZ (regeneration consultants), EDAW (urban designers) and Faber Maunsel (transport planners) have:



- Reviewed regional/local policy guidance and other useful documents
- Considered key social and economic characteristics
- Reviewed the property market
- Considered access and movement around the town
- Undertaken site visits and spatial analysis
- Consulted with key players including the Township Forum, the Leigh Town Centre Management Group, Wigan Council and the local Member of Parliament.

### What we want to achieve today

We want to share our findings in terms of Leigh's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and test our initial thoughts on the types of actions which will enhance Leigh. Your views will then be fed into the final Masterplan which is due for completion at the end of May 2008.

### How to have your say

Your feedback is important to the Masterplanning process. Please review the consultation boards and let us know your views by completing a questionnaire and submitting it in the box provided.

Members of the Masterplan team are on hand throughout the consultation. Please feel free to ask the team any questions you may have, or to simply have a chat about your thoughts, the Masterplan process so far, or the future of Leigh Town Centre in general.



23 APRIL 2009

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

### Strengths

- Leigh is the second most important centre in the Borough
- Leigh residents are loyal to and proud of Leigh
- Leigh has one of the most successful and busiest indoor markets in the Borough
- Strong independent retailers offer a wide range of goods
- The retail centre is compact - closely surrounded by residential areas, which are within easy walking distance of the town centre
- Recent investments in the area include: Leigh Sports Village, Personage Retail Park, and Leigh Commercial Park
- The town has four Conservation Areas and many heritage assets including iconic buildings such as Leigh Town Hall and St Mary's Church



### Opportunities

- The completion of Leigh Sports Village
- Proposal to transform the Turnpike Centre
- Make better use of Leigh's environmental assets, in particular the canal network, Pennington Park and the surrounding Green Belt
- Long term aspiration for a guided bus way linking Leigh to Manchester City Centre
- Improve the location and quality of the outdoor market to complement the successful indoor market



### Weaknesses

#### Environment

- Leigh town centre currently lacks a sense of arrival due to poor quality gateways
- Parts of the town centre are unattractive to walk around
- The canal is hidden from view and acts as a barrier due to limited crossing points
- There are limited pedestrian linkages between the Town Centre and new developments on the edge of town

#### Access

- There are concerns over the pricing, availability and location of Leigh's car parking
- Leigh has no railway station
- The bus station is at capacity and buses add to the town's congestion
- One way road systems make access and movement around Leigh difficult
- Market Street and Spinning Jenny Way are busy and 'cut off' the town centre from the surrounding areas

#### Other

- There are a lack of public toilets in Leigh town centre
- The evening economy (including restaurants and pubs) and leisure offer is currently limited
- Spinning Gate Shopping Centre is not very visible to those passing
- Leigh suffers from pockets of concentrated multiple deprivation where unemployment is also relatively high



### Threats

- A decreasing population with a small proportion of young adults
- When measured against other places Leigh:
  - Performs poorly in terms of residents' skills
  - Performs poorly in terms of residents' health
- Investment in other competing retail centres including Warrington, The Trafford Centre, Bolton, Wigan and Manchester city centre makes it harder for Leigh to compete
- Limited investor confidence in the current economic climate



## Vision, Objectives and Priorities for Action

### A New Vision for Leigh Town Centre

"A unique and attractive town centre serving the needs of local residents whilst also attracting visitors to its shopping, historic, environmental, cultural and sporting assets"



#### Objectives

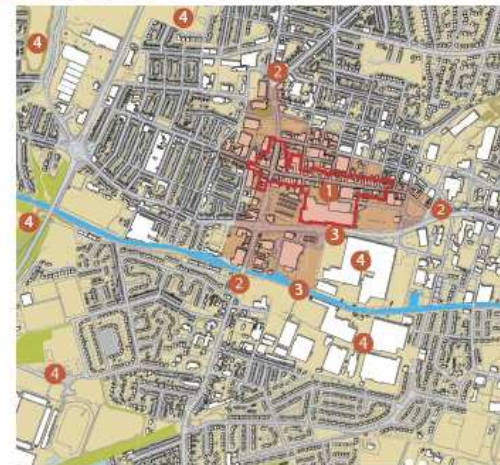
A series of objectives have been developed to assist in the achievement of the Vision for Leigh town centre:

- Increase the number of shoppers and visitors to Leigh
- Increase the amount of spend in Leigh
- Raise Leigh's profile and image
- Improve the quality of life of Leigh's residents

#### Delivering Change - Priorities for Action

Possible actions are grouped under the following themes and further details provided on the next boards.

1. Strengthening the town centre offer
2. Improving accessibility
3. Improving the quality of the environment
4. Maximising development opportunities



## Strengthening the Town Centre Offer

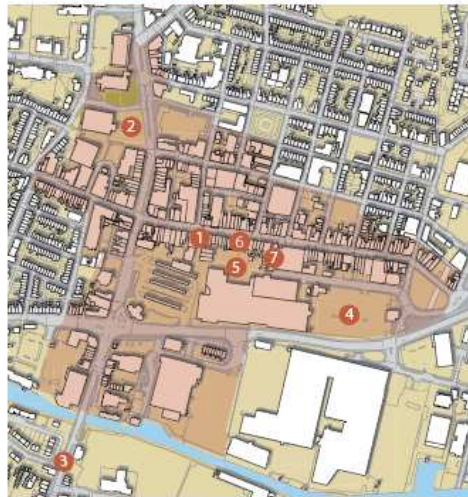
### Improve pedestrian signage and linkages

1. Creation of an arrival gateway/improved signage off Bradshawgate to the Bus Station (at Superdrug)
2. Link the town centre together including the Civic Quarter - the heart of the town centre
3. Enhance links to Leigh Sports Village and the residential areas south of the canal.

### Expansion of the Shopping Centre

**Option 1:** Extend the range and quality of retailing in the town centre by utilising the car park site (east of Spinning Gate Centre) incorporating a new high quality, accessible car park within the expansion plans (4). Also consider relocating the service yard to free up more space closer to Bradshawgate and improve the footfall throughout the town centre (5).

**Option 2:** Expand the Spinning Gate Centre using the 'Boulevard site' in order to create a direct link between the Spinning Gate Centre and the wider area of shops. Thus improving footfall throughout the town centre and improving the quality and viability of shops across the town (8).



### Strengthening the outdoor market

**Option 1:** Retain the outside market in its current location, but improve signage and install public toilets in an accessible location (7).

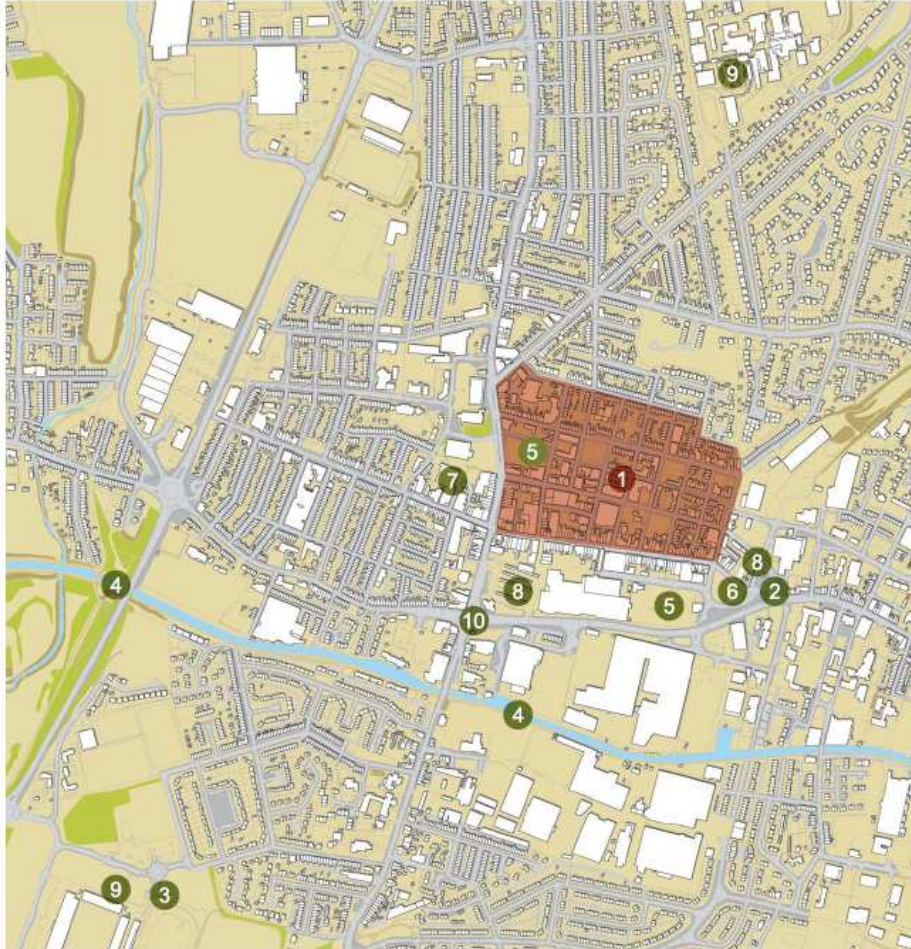
**Option 2:** Consider relocation to a less windswept location in addition to improved signage and the installation of public toilets in an accessible location.

### Raising the profile of Leigh

- Expand the programme of major events (at least 3 per year)
- Attracting visiting niche markets such as a farmers, Christmas, craft market (up to 4 per year)
- Creation of a 'What's on offer in Leigh' brochure listing all businesses



## Improving Accessibility



### Enhance Parking Provision

- Ensure sufficient capacity to cater for the existing and future parking requirements of the Town Centre
- Cater for short stay parking through amended pricing structure
- Establish a logical signage strategy for directing vehicles to appropriate car parks

### Improve the Quality of Parking

- 1 Improve the environmental quality of the existing off-street parking facilities
- 2 Phase out low quality in-fill parking
- 3 Address security concerns in Bengal Street multi-storey car park

### Improve Accessibility in Leigh

- Reinforce main routes with a signage strategy for the town centre and key approach roads
  - Encourage through traffic onto the Athelrigh Way through improved signage and highway design
  - Develop an appropriate route for delivery vehicles
- 1 Simplification of the existing one-way system
  - 2 Simplification and road layout improvements to the eastern gateway

### Encourage Sustainable Travel

- Build upon existing improvements to walking and cycling routes
  - Develop a wayfinding strategy for sustainable modes of transport
- 3 Improve walking and cycling linkages between the town centre and surrounding areas especially Leigh Sports Village
  - 4 Improve connections to the canal and surrounding green spaces

### Public Transport Improvements

- Facilitate opportunities provided by the proposed Leigh-Salford Guided Busway
- 5 Establish high quality facilities, including information provision, and gateways to the Town Centre through the creation of 'super stops'. Potential exists at the existing bus station and the proposed 'eastern gateway'
  - 6 Improve sustainable public transport connections to Leigh Sports Village and Infirmary

### Reduce Severance and Improve Pedestrian Conditions

- Reduce the dominance of vehicles in the Town Centre
  - Improve crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at key junctions and at strategic locations
- 7 Improve safety through targeting collision hot-spots

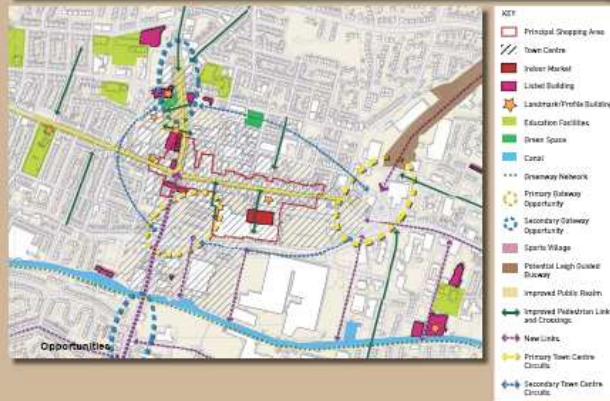
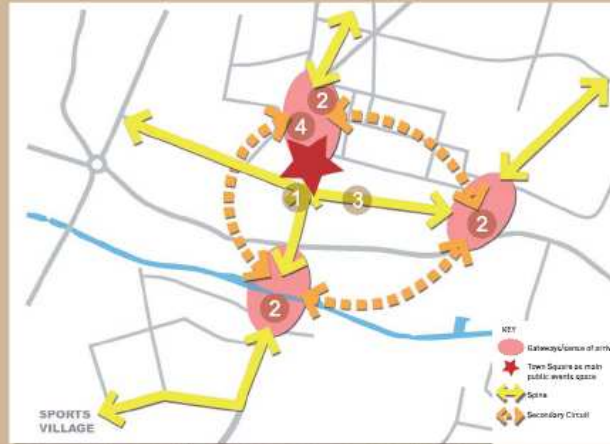
**LEIGH TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN**

*CREATING A BETTER FUTURE FOR LEIGH - Have Your Say!*



**Environmental Actions**

1. Creation of three gateways to create a sense of arrival and hubs of activity across the town centre
2. Expansion and enhancement of the pedestrian / shopping town's circuit including the possible extension of the pedestrianisation scheme at Bradshawgate
3. Improved signage at arrival points and within the town centre
4. Renewal of the outdoor market canopy and long term redevelopment of the 'Boulevard site'
5. Improvements to the Civic Quarter and enhance the town square as a main public events space



## Future Development Opportunities

There are a number of current planning applications, permissions and proposals for key sites in Leigh. **What are your views about their future uses?**

**Parsonage**  
Employment



**Land to south of Town Centre**

Creation of an attractive, high quality mixed use development focused on the canal and linking better to the Town Centre



**Hilton Park**

North - residential  
South - retail (large units)

**Leigh Sports Village (LSV)**

Leisure focus (pinema, bowling etc) or to support existing use  
Retail? - Tesco proposing new store

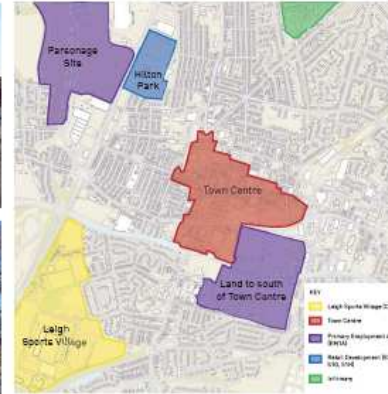


**Town Centre**

For any sites coming forward the focus should be on retail or improving public realm

**Infirmiry**

Focus for health provision in the town supported by improved transport



Are you aware of any other opportunities? **Where? What could be developed?**



**Appendix B**  
**List of Consultees**



## Joint Meeting of Leigh Township Forum and Leigh Town Centre Management Group

Tuesday 27 January 2009

Name	Organisation
Janis Maleedy	Wigan council
D.A Boardman	LBP Rotary
Terry Middlehurst	Rotary Leigh
Elsie Middlehurst	LBP
Cllr Anne Turnock	Atherleigh
Sheila Darbey	
Rev Steve Wilkinson	Christ Church
Neil Pont	Pont
Robert Watson	Leigh RBL
Alan Marsden	
Ian Keaton	Railway RPS
Alison Eaton	WLCT
Marie Whiteley	GMPTE
Cllr Kevin Anderson	Leigh South
Charlie Lowe	ALW PCT
Pam Stewart	LTF
Sue Greensmith	WMBC
Jacquelyn Farrington	Higher Folds R.Ass
James Ashworth	Citizen
Chris Howcroft	Howcroft's Florist
Jean Howcroft	Howcroft's Florist
Dorothy Bowks	LBP and Soroptomist
Ayrton Westwood	Spinning Gate Shopping Centre
Anthony Canning	Cannings
Susan Canning	Cannings
Dennis O'Halloran	GBD Discount Ltd
Martin Stones	Stones Carpets
Charles Rigby	Township
Andrew Sharrock	Township Manager
Cllr Myra Whiteside	Leigh West
Tony Ratcliffe	Ratcliffes of Leigh
Cathy Ratcliffe	Ratcliffes of Leigh
Caroline Baker	DTZ
Aimée Fabri	DTZ



## Initial One-to-one Consultations

January - June 2009

Name	Organisation
Christine Bainbridge	Wigan Council - Economic Development
Keith Molley	Wigan Council - Economic Development
Dave Rowethorne	Wigan Council - Planning Development Control
Tom Barrett	Wigan Council - Planning Policy
Jason Kennedy	Wigan Council - Conservation
Steve Thompson	Wigan Council - Planning
Peter Gascoigne	Wigan and Leigh Culture Trust
Richard Allen	Wigan and Leigh Culture Trust
Janis Meedley	Wigan Council
Jo Harrop/Chris Leather	Wigan Council - Planning
Peter Wickett	Wigan Council - Cycling and Public Transport
Danny Orrell	Wigan Council - Area Traffic Engineer
Kevin Hargreaves	Wigan Council - Head of Traffic Management
Emma Barton	Wigan Council - Engineering Services
Mark Tilly	Wigan Council
Susan Haslam	Legat Owen (Shopping Centre Management)
Ayrton Westwood	Spinning Gate Shopping Centre
Andrew Sharrock	Township Manager
Dennis O'Halloran	The Bed Shop
Julie Hotchkiss	Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT
Rita Chapman	LIFT Manager
Andy Burnham	MP
Gill Sinnott	Wigan and Leigh College
John Dennis	Greenbank Partnerships Ltd
Julie Wileman	GMPTE
Steve Bostock	GMPTE



**Leigh Town Centre Masterplan**  
**Stakeholder Consultation Event**  
**Thursday 23 April 2009**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Dorothy Bowker	
Amy James	How Planning
Marie Gillott	Job Centre
Cllr Keith Cunliffe	Leigh East
Alison Eaton	Leigh Library
Cllr Kevin Anderson	Leigh South
Rita Chapman	PCT
Dennis O'Halloran	The Bed Shop Leigh
Janis Maleedy	Town Centre Manager
Wendy Coyle	Wigan Council, ERO
Peter Wickett	Wigan Council, Transport
Tom Barrett	Wigan Council, Planning
Nigel Herdman	Wigan Council, Planning
Steve Thompson	Wigan Council, Planning
Danny Orrell	Wigan Council, Traffic
Gill Sinnott	Wigan & Leigh College
Richard Allen	Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust
Marie Whiteley	GMPT
Cllr Ann Turnock	WMBC
Christine Bainbridge	WMBC
E Middleshurst	LBP
J Ashworth	Citizen
K Molloy	WMBC
Cllr Myra Whiteside	WMBC
D A Boardman	Rotary and LBP



## Leigh Town Centre Masterplan

### Public Consultation Event (Drop in Session)

Thursday 23 April 2009

Name
Mr & Mrs J E Boardman
B Roberts
R Bailey
M Whedwell
Gordon Jackson
M Waddelowe
David Hull
R A Drinnan
J Boone
Dean Lambert
Pat Quigley
Steve Hampson
H Booth
Tony Ratcliffe
Yvonne Eckersley
Stuart Preston
Joy Smith
Dave Bowyer
E Short
Rev H Strowbridge

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