



Egremont Action Plan

Egremont Town Centre and Markets Action Plan

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1: WHY have an Action Plan for Egremont?

1.1 Introducing the Action Plan

The Egremont Town Centre and Markets Action Plan ('the Action Plan') has been completed as part of the Market Towns Initiative. Its purpose is to set out a vision and strategy for the future of Egremont including a range of prioritised themes and actions that would be the focus of public investment, using funds provided by the North West Development Agency, West Lakes Renaissance and other available sources of funding and support.

The Market Towns Initiative covers Egremont, and a broader area including surrounding villages. To understand the relationship between Egremont and its sub-region, particularly in economic and property market terms, we have looked further afield, particularly concentrating on events in Whitehaven and Cleator Moor, Egremont's most significant neighbours by population. However the Action Plan itself is focused on the Town Centre of Egremont itself, principally Main Street and the network of access roads onto it. The Town Centre contains a number of development opportunities and sites, the future of which will have a direct effect on the role and function of the Town - and the wider area - and the potential benefits for local people and visitors.

To provide a framework for development in the Town Centre and to identify the potential uses of key sites and public spaces, Egremont Area Regeneration Partnership commissioned King Sturge LLP, supported by Transport Planning Partnership and New Market Solutions to assemble this Action Plan in December 2005. The Plan is specifically designed to influence the scale, scope and content of future investment in the Town by providing a physical and administrative framework that will help the Area Partnership achieve its objectives.

1.2 Status of the Action Plan

The Action Plan, whilst being aspirational, has been specifically designed to be deliverable and practical, using known and prospective investments in the Town as a catalyst for change. The Action Plan is not a blueprint for urban design, nor is it a statutory land-use document. However, it does set out a number of principles and a rationale for development that will provide a starting point for discussions with prospective developers and investors as well as the statutory authorities.

1.3 Structure of the Action Plan

This document provides the final agreed Action Plan, and within it aims to address the following objectives:

- Identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) affecting future capabilities of the Town to develop & strengthen its economic base;
- Produce an objective position statement setting out the framework within which further development can take place;

- Identify development proposals & investigate the potential for community gain;
- Identify & develop outline projects which are of strategic importance to the regeneration of the Town;
- Produce an Action Plan for future development of Egremont over the next 10 years.

The delivery of the Egremont Action Plan is in 2 parts: a Baseline Report, which is briefly summarised in Chapter 2, and can be accessed on request from the Egremont Area Regeneration Partnership, and this Action Plan document. The SWOT analysis and development of the position statement occurred in the Baseline Report. The findings allowed us to identify broad proposals for Egremont that build on strengths and opportunities and tackle threats and weaknesses to positively alter Egremont's current position. This creates a situation wherein it is possible to develop a series of outline projects, which can be seen as the tools with which the broad proposals can be delivered. These initial outline projects (twelve in all) were introduced at the Baseline stage, and then underwent rigorous stakeholder consultation, being modified and moulded into eleven specific projects, detailed in this Action Plan, and a wider consideration of the impact of current planning and regeneration policy in Egremont. The projects are predominantly physical in nature, and consist of a combination of thematic and site-specific elements. Some are based on long-held ideas derived from discussions with the local community, businesses and other stakeholders, whilst others are more recent additions to the recognised scope of deliverable change from which it is anticipated Egremont could benefit.

They are not mutually exclusive - in each case it is considered that the cumulative benefits to Egremont will grow exponentially as and when more elements of each are delivered. This cumulative effect makes cost benefit analysis more problematic, and to an inevitable extent each project can only be evaluated on its own merit at the inception stage - but the lessons learnt from analysis of other market towns of Egremont's scale, as well as the innate realisation of the benefits of partnership, the logic of 'united we stand, divided we fall', all need to be borne in mind throughout the upcoming years of hard work required to transform Egremont's fortunes. Some projects make take longer to deliver, or initially achieve less tangible benefits - but only a holistic approach taken now, at this time of great opportunity, will provide a sustainable platform on which to build.

2: WHERE does Egremont stand at present?

2.1 The Baseline Report

A Baseline Report was completed as the first part of the study that makes up the Action Plan. This involved site visits and surveys and desktop surveys to research the relevant key areas of study to provide an in depth understanding of the Town Centre. The Baseline Report includes details of the Town's history and community; economy and demographic make-up; urban form; tourism and leisure; market history and present condition; transport network and infrastructure, thus forming the backbone for the development of the strategy, enabling regeneration opportunities to be identified and provides the evidence base for this Action Plan. The following pages summarise some of the most salient points from the Baseline Report that have influenced and led to the conclusions made within this document.

2.2 Research Findings

The evidence of our research, the Market Town Health Check, Mini Masterplan and other analyses suggests that Egremont has reached a crossroads in terms of its economic future. Economic and cultural changes have eroded the traditional role and purpose of the Town and at the heart of this analytical process is the need to establish how Egremont can best serve the locality and be assured of a sustainable future. The geographical areas that Egremont has served in the past can now look to a wider range of towns within easy travelling distance for car owners. Egremont's key industry faces an uncertain future, which may produce short term benefits, but ask more worrying longer term questions. Market towns do benefit from the current policy focus, but towns in need of renewal, like Egremont, have to attract new investment. In the short term this will have to come mainly from public sources, but in the longer-term the needs of Egremont can only be answered effectively by increased market activity and commercial investment. The Market Town Health Check asked, four years ago, 'what league does Egremont want to play in?' We discussed above the fact that Egremont is, in the Government's 'sustainable community' terms, a small town competing against other centres in the 2,000 to 20,000 population band. Beyond this categorisation it is a market town, and an innately 'local' town - in the sense that its sizeable neighbour Whitehaven is too close for Egremont to offer a broad range of services that may be found in a more remote small market town - Egremont's catchment for service provision will always be highly localised, only via tourism could a broader catchment ever be envisaged.

In summary, Egremont is in the league of small market towns serving a limited catchment, and aiming to capture a greater share of passing trade and to diversify its own economic base. Its local competitors are Cleator, Cleator Moor and Millom. Unlike some market towns, Egremont has a good base from which to move forward. The problems it faces are not insurmountable and its decline is far from inevitable. In consultation it was clear that local people and stakeholders have mixed, though not necessarily contradictory, views about the direction of the future of the Town. Egremont has a commercial past and a current reliance on employment from Sellafield and its related industries. On the one hand there is the recognition of the potential for tourism and on the other not wanting (or belief in its ability to be) the kind of tourism dominated centre seen elsewhere in the Lake District. For all these reasons Egremont's future role as a working market town needs support and planning. The following chapter introduces the strategic objectives we feel have become apparent through all the work undertaken previously and by the

study team to this point. These (five) strategic aims hopefully represent the feelings of the majority of residents and stakeholders in the Town. They can be used as the justification for this next step - action planning. All the specific projects we come up with at this time need to be able to show that they tie into as many of the strategic objectives as possible, to ensure each project is justifiable in its own right, and perhaps most importantly, that everything that happens in Egremont is co-ordinated so that precious time, effort and finances are not wasted.

2.3 Stakeholder Consultation

A broad range of stakeholders were consulted over the period December 2005-April 2006, and the development of this Action Plan was undertaken under the guidance of the Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership throughout the course of its development.

2.3 Comparative Assessment

During the development of the Action Planning process a number of other towns operating within the Market Town Initiative Programme were visited, and discussions held with Town Centre Managers and other key stakeholders to gain some understanding of what shared problems MTI towns face, and where work has been undertaken to reverse or challenge economic decline. Further details on the specific case studies, Garstang in Lancashire and Haltwhistle in Northumberland, can be found in the Baseline Report.

2.4 Key Issues and Challenges

Employment and the Role of Sellafield

Generally employment levels in Egremont have remained relatively healthy in recent years. However wage levels have declined slightly and Egremont tends to lag behind the Copeland Borough average. Sellafield has long been a source of relatively high-paid jobs and a steady provider of employment opportunities. The scaling down of its operations could result in the loss of (depending on estimates) 7,000-9,000 jobs over the next ten to fifteen years. To some degree however, Sellafield's presence has not always proven entirely beneficial to Copeland's, and Egremont's economies, in that it has hidden underlying problems by providing employment opportunities for skilled labour from outside the Borough, therefore raising the average income and disqualifying Copeland from some funding assistance programmes which could have been used to address existing internal inequalities.

It is widely acknowledged by stakeholders in Egremont and by administrators in Whitehaven that Egremont experienced an economic upturn in its fortunes during the lengthy construction periods at Sellafield. The proximity of the Town to both Sellafield itself, and the NDA at West Lakes Science Park, gives it an opportunity to do likewise in the near future. The issue will be evaluating the extent to which Egremont bases its long term future on the nuclear industry, and how in the short-term it can most effectively serve and benefit from the presence of the NDA.

Inward Investment

Cumbria, and West Cumbria in particular, is not, and remains unlikely to be, a destination for significant inward investment at the level seen elsewhere in the North West region. Remoteness, infrastructure limitations, an absence of a strong business base in the financial, business and professional services sectors, limited local housing markets, and a general lack of population make Cumbria relatively unattractive for major external private sector investment. Tourism, for so long one of the county's key industries, will remain a vital source of economic

wealth - but growth in the sector is forecast to be slow, and international competition and time pressures (i.e. more people taking shorter holidays) combine to reduce the progress made by the ongoing enhancement of the tourism offer.

More positively, the North West market is continuing to witness a strong demand in industrial floor space with availability levels continuing to fall as take-up rates increase. Cumbria, and in particular, locations such as Barrow in Furness, attract local occupiers serving a local and regional market who have no specific requirement to be within easy reach of the motorway network, hence demand for industrial properties in the area is steady. The ready availability and cost effectiveness of property in many parts of Cumbria, compared with other areas of the UK, also provides a competitive advantage for investors. The West Lakes Region has been able to take advantage of this competitiveness which has led to a buoyant industrial inward investment market in the area.

Retail and the Town Centre

The development of the Town's bypass to divert through traffic away from the Town Centre has benefited the centre environmentally. However, local businesses feel that the resulting lower profile of the Town has caused a steady decline in trade and this would appear to be borne out by the number of vacant properties in the Town Centre. The retail catchment map within the Baseline Report confirms that Egremont draws the majority of its retail spend from within the Town and that its sphere of influence is very limited. The Taylor Young Mini-Masterplan identified 22 vacant premises on Main Street/South Street in 2004. Some of these appear to be residential properties. The current number of vacant commercial units stands at 12, with a further 5 residential properties empty (as of April 2006). Whilst the number of vacant units has not increased demand remains low with many units remaining vacant for a year or more. The Retailer Survey undertaken as part of this commission has identified at least 5 further retailers intending to close.

Summary

The key issues highlighted above, and many others, are discussed in detail in the Baseline Report. The purpose of this section is emphasise that the projects described later in this Action Plan are designed as a response to a series of identified issues and concerns, not simply a 'wish-list' of schemes arrived at without justification. Egremont is at a crossroads economically, and this situation impacts on the Town's social and environmental sustainability - hence the need for immediate co-ordinated action.

3: WHAT is the Vision for Egremont's future?

3.1 Vision and Objectives

On being established the Market Town Initiative in Egremont succinctly identified the issues facing the Town - namely that the role and purpose of Egremont has changed markedly in recent years. Significant investment in Whitehaven's service centre and the building of the bypass have changed the patterns of economic and social interaction. Whereas Egremont at one time provided a full range of retail and other services it is now accepted that much of this will be provided outside of the Town. The bypass means that Egremont is no longer a natural stopping off point for passing trade. A very high proportion of the resident population relies on Sellafield for its employment directly or indirectly and there has been a shift towards a suburban commuting culture that has fundamentally altered the role and purpose of the Town and how it functions on a day to day basis.

As a result Egremont has experienced a declining retail sector provision. What remains tends not to meet the expectations of local people in terms of range or quality. As the retail provision has declined it has inevitably led to some of the high street exteriors falling into disrepair and the empty shops contributing to a general air of a town on the cusp of more significant decline.

Consequently, the MTI Action Plan process developed a Vision for Egremont:

'To make Egremont a safe and positive town that makes the most of its many assets and provides valuable services to local people and visitors of all ages'.

The Mini-Masterplan in 2004 built upon this Vision, and this Action Plan continues in the same vein. As identified in the Baseline Report it is important to set a broad strategic framework based on the findings of the research undertaken by this and earlier studies, and to address the concerns that the MTI has identified. It appears that this strategic framework is best manifested in five overarching statements, which to some extent represent 'common sense' thinking, but need to be clarified nonetheless to provide justification for specific thematic and physical projects. The overarching statements are as follows:

- A Protect and Enhance Existing Assets (making the most of its many assets)
- B Concentrating the Retail Heart
- C Diversify the Economic Base
- D Developing a Broad and Vibrant Mix of Uses (making Egremont positive)
- E Improving the Functionality of the Town Centre (making Egremont safe)

If all five elements listed above are tackled together, Egremont will have a coherent town centre retailing strategy for delivering its Vision. All of the overarching statements above will not be delivered by the projects on this Action Plan alone, and the work of the Mini-Masterplan, the Gateways Study and Arts Strategy, along with the day-to-day efforts of EARP and Copeland Borough Council, will be equally vital.

3.2 Explaining the Statements

As noted above, all efforts at regenerating and developing Egremont should aim to achieve the same Vision. From the perspective of this Action Plan, the five overarching statements introduced above act as the objectives that will help deliver the Vision. Below the intricacies of each are described in more detail. Understanding each objective allows us to evaluate to what extent actual projects on the ground are contributing to each, and therefore in turn, what they are contributing to the Vision.

Protect and Enhance Existing Assets

- As previously identified, Egremont has a number of assets vital to the Town - the Castle; weekly market; attractive Main Street; Wyndham School; Bridge End Industrial Estate; the existing local community; the Crab Fair and other events; the work of consultants and the MTI team; the Regeneration Partnership; and others. These must be protected, and where possible or necessary enhanced. They should not under any circumstance be damaged or threatened by proposals in the Action Plan.

Concentrating the Retail Heart

- Main Street is an undoubted asset to Egremont - it is attractive, generally well-maintained, and has been built in sympathetic and well-scaled architectural styles. In an ideal world every unit would contain a successful and aesthetically pleasing retail user. In reality the Egremont economy cannot realistically sustain this, and our research suggests that Egremont's retail core is too elongated. Residential and other non-retail uses are not necessarily negative - but interspersed with retail units they do tend to impact negatively on shopper's perceptions. As has been noted with car parking analyses, shoppers do not walk far without significant incentive. Small retailers benefit immeasurably from clustering, as does the perception of a town when it has a thriving retail heart. Market Place and the southern end of Main Street are the present heart of Egremont, and should be actively supported as such. Units in this area should be allocated purely for public uses, ideally retail or active civic uses, to ensure enhanced and ongoing vibrancy.

Diversify the Economic Base

- The importance of Sellafield has been much reviewed in local economic analyses. Similarly the effects of Foot and Mouth Disease on agricultural communities and the tourism industry has been studied at a county level. Cumbria has long faced the problem of lacking economic diversity. Egremont can challenge this weakness at a local level by offering the right conditions for business start-ups, incubation, consolidation, and as a venue for external businesses in expansion mode. This is not a grand, sweeping unrealistic aim - just increasing the number of local one- or two- person businesses will be highly beneficial to Egremont in the short term, and increases the long-term chances of developing a successful local entrepreneur with the potential to significantly benefit the local economy, such as Kangol in Cleator Moor.

Developing a Broad and Vibrant Mix of Uses

- We want Egremont to be sustainable - there is no value in recommending uses in the Action Plan for dramatic effect that either cannot be delivered or will not survive in the long term in an environment such as Egremont. However, at the same time there is no need for a negative attitude, and we believe that the more uses - residential, tourist,

retail, civic or other - that can be brought into Egremont, the more vibrant and alive the Town will feel. So, if a convincing argument of sustainability can be delivered early on, any proposal that brings more vibrancy into Egremont should be viewed favourably.

Improving the Functionality of the Town Centre

- Egremont presently 'works' reasonably well - the Town is quite legible, parking is usually available if not ideally located, and most users feel the Town is safe, reasonably attractive, and provides most services they require on a day-to-day basis. However, it is not perfect - parking, the public realm, and the choice of services can be improved. Signage, both at a localised and sub-regional level, is definitely in need of enhancement. Therefore any proposals put forward need to show how they clearly assist in the improvement of functionality in Egremont.

3.3 Turning Ideas into Proposals

The next step in the development of this Action Plan was the 'brainstorming'! Many stakeholders, from shoppers to shopkeepers, local agents to landowners, and all the bodies directly charged with the regeneration of the Town were consulted, and from the consultant's side experts in urban regeneration, town planning, property valuation and assessment, town centre street markets, transport planning and retailing were commissioned to provide guidance on best practice elsewhere and their recommendations for Egremont. Over the early months of 2006 a series of potential projects were highlighted and assessed, resulting in a final list of twelve thematic or physical projects, which will be outlined in Chapter 4.

4: HOW is the Vision to be delivered?

4.1 Introducing the Detailed Proposals

Eleven project pro forma are provided in this chapter. These pro forma comprise the heart of the Action Plan, each viewable as a distinct project, but more effectively seen within the wider context of the Plan. Each pro forma includes the following:

Location and Project Description - Brief reference to the key components of the project;

Strategic Fit - How the project meets the five overarching statements that themselves aim to achieve the Vision;

Project Champion and Partners - A recommendation of which body should lead the project, and who should be seen as integral partners in delivery i.e. more than stakeholders for consultation;

Delivery Strategy - A brief assessment of the steps the project champion should be following to deliver the project;

Issues, Risks and Mitigation - Highlighting points, where not readily apparent elsewhere in the pro forma, where the risks of failure to deliver are most acute, and what can be done to reduce these threats;

Funding Sources - A list of key sources of funding support are provided, which are by no means exhaustive. As and when individual projects are taken forward it is recommended that a more detailed development brief is provided, including an indepth analysis of costs and available funds.

Outputs - An assessment of likely achievements, quantitative where possible (e.g. number of new jobs, business start-ups etc), elsewhere a qualitative assessment of outcomes to be provided;

Priority Level - The selection of these projects for the Action Plan automatically attaches a level of priority to their delivery - hence no project is deemed as 'low' priority. The prioritising level given here is a subjective recommendation based on the outcome of the research in the Baseline study.

4.2 The Projects

Each project has been assigned a number for ease of recognition - the numbers should not be viewed as an indication of importance or phasing.

Projects 1-3: The Ehen Court Road Projects

- 1 Managed Office Development, Ehen Court Road
- 2 Parking Management and Development
- 3 Ehen Court Road Corridor

The Parking Strategy does, of course, refer to the whole of Egremont - however it is centred on the modifications made to the major car park, which form the basis of Project 1, and to some extent, Project 3. The relationship between all three projects is close - if office development is successfully delivered the opportunity to rejuvenate the Ehen Court Road corridor will be optimised. It is the recommendation of this Action Plan that this cluster of projects be regarded as a priority for Egremont.

Project 4 - Development Beyond the Town Centre

- 4 Managed Workspace Development, Bridge End Industrial Estate

It is recommended that the relatively buoyant market for industrial inward investment is tapped - a project that whilst outside the heart of the Town, is an integral part of ensuring its economic vitality.

Projects 5-10 - Diversifying Egremont's Offer

- 5 Shop Frontage Improvements
6 Retail Diversification
7 Community Facilities
8 Upper Floor Use Strategy
9 Egremont Street Market Enhancement
10 Factory Shop Enhancement

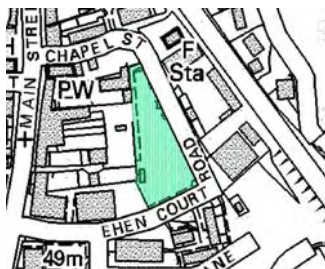
A series of projects have been devised that aim to rejuvenate the heart of Egremont Town Centre, by improving the aesthetics, increasing the level of on-street activity and providing a broader range of uses to maximise visitor spend and improve the choice of places to shop, live and work.

Project 11 - Administrative and Legislative Recommendations

- 11 Creating a Sustainable Partnership
Updating Planning and Regeneration Policy

The acquisition of a property to raise a rental income is a recognised method of sustaining a partnership's life and overcoming the traditional problem of the 'short-termism' of regeneration bodies, particularly in smaller towns and/or rural areas. Modifications to planning and regeneration policy is not viewed as a 'project', as it is not necessarily achievable over any timescale if wider conditions do not allow - however there is still scope for local stakeholders to advocate changes at the appropriate opportunities.

Project 1 Managed Office Development, Ehen Court Road



<p>Target Area</p>	<p>The Council owned car park on Ehen Court Road.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>A circa 15,000 sq ft two or three storey managed office building to be located on part of the Council owned car park (0.7 acre). The design would be high quality as would the type of space available within. This office development will primarily be aimed at contractors and consultancies working on the decommissioning of the Sellafield complex seeking accommodation close to the plant. The proposal is not just an office but for a serviced accommodation where services, security and IT solutions are included. Where space is available from small units to larger suites on flexible terms.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>This project fits three of the strategic statements. Firstly the project will diversify the economic base of the Town by introducing office use which will either attract contractors/consultancies working on the Sellafield decommissioning project or small knowledge based companies seeking flexible accommodation. Secondly the project will both assist in developing a broad and vibrant mix of uses in the Town and improve its functionality by introducing a use under-represented in the centre which will make use of Egremont's shops and other facilities.</p>
<p>Project Champion</p>	<p>This project could be led by Copeland Borough Council or West Lakes Renaissance either singly or in partnership.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>As above with a private sector partner. The Council's land would be their equity share in the project as could any grant awarded.</p>

Delivery Strategy and Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of feasibility report into establishment of serviced offices in Egremont. This would include a detailed market analysis, an assessment of the site, the preparation of outline scheme, appraisal of costs and values, and the development of a detailed procurement strategy (3 months). • Advertising, short listing and selecting a development partner (6 months). • Site preparation and building construction (12 months).
Issues, Risks and Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of car parking for town centre. • Possible resistance from public sector to location of offices in Egremont. • Lack of private sector interest. • Availability of funding.
Funding Sources	<p>The key funding source would be from the private sector but initial calculations would suggest that public sector funding would be required. This could come through European, English Partnerships or NWDA funding, channelled through West Lakes Renaissance. Another source might be the West Lakes Development Fund.</p>
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 15,000 sq ft net of office accommodation. • Approximately 70 jobs. • Contribution to the improved environment of Ehen Court Road.
Priority Level	<p>High</p>
Comments	<p>Broadening the range of uses within the Town Centre is essential if Egremont is to have a sustainable and attractive town centre. There is considerable potential, resulting from the decommissioning of Sellafield, for accommodation to be provided for the influx of high skilled workers that will be attracted to the area. It could be argued that this activity should be centralised in either Whitehaven or Workington but it is our view that some of the "crumbs" from this activity should be directed at Egremont where they will have a significant regenerative benefit.</p>

Project 2 Parking Management and Development



<p>Target Area</p>	<p>Ehen Court Road, Beck Green Car Park at Lamb Lane, and other small car parking areas.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>It is important to note that a number of projects suggested in the main report may have an effect on car parking demand in the future for the Town Centre as a whole. It is difficult to quantify the likely change in demand or capacity due to these proposals at this stage but it is important to identify them so that further assessment can be made at a later date when more information becomes available. Projects that have been proposed and may affect parking facilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relocation of the market onto the car park site North of the Main St./South St. Junction close to the war memorial; - Development of offices at Ehen Court Road; -Upper floor re-use strategy; -Improvement of retail service diversification. <p>There exists the potential to link a number of projects being promoted by this Action Plan and the Gateways Study. Whilst this parking strategy is primarily focused on functionality, Project 3 of the Action Plan and the Gateways Study both consider the need to improve the environmental quality of Egremont's key parking sites. In effect these two issues are closely inter-linked – the total number of visitors, frequency of usage and tendency to return will all be influenced by the quality of the environment, and each of these factors impacts on car park usage and functionality. Therefore it is considered that for this parking strategy to be effective, support should be provided for both the necessary environmental works.</p> <p>A number of options to meet future parking needs have been outlined. More detail has been provided on these in the Appendix to this Action Plan.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>This project will improve the functionality of the Town Centre by introducing additional and improved car parking facilities and introduce parking signage to improve accessibility. The project will also support a broad and vibrant mix of uses and concentrate the retail heart by increasing the number of spaces available, especially close to the retail hub.</p>
<p>Project Champion</p>	<p>Copeland Borough Council.</p>

Potential Partners	Highways Agency, EARP, West Lake Renaissance.
Delivery Strategy and Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility report to include site assessment, highway and environmental scheme design, costing and final appraisal (3 months). • Advertising, short listing and selecting of contractor to carry out scheme improvements (6 months). • Site investigation, preparation and Construction (12-18 months).
Issues, Risks and Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site suitability and access issues for pedestrians and vehicles; • Availability of funding; • Delivery of supporting environmental works.
Funding Sources	Local Transport Plan – potential for some minor works to be funded by developer agreements. West Lakes Renaissance could potentially assist through supporting the projects arising from the Gateways Study.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 30-50 extra parking spaces; • Improved environment (linking into the aims of the Gateways work); • Additional cycle/walking facilities to include cycle storage units, pavement widening and general environmental improvement.
Priority Level	Medium to High (transport and accessibility are key to Egremont – but delivery should also be a prime wider issue and therefore not as a direct responsibility of the Action Plan and local regeneration agencies).
Comments	It is essential that pedestrian and vehicular accessibility to proposed car park areas included in this project is improved for them to fully support the retail core. To this end options for the optimal parking strategy have been produced, and can be viewed as an appendix to this Action Plan.

Project 3 Ehen Court Road Corridor



<p>Target Area</p>	<p>Ehen Court Road, from eastern edge to junction with Main Street</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>The aims of this project are to ensure there are ongoing incremental improvements to this key corridor to the Town Centre.</p> <p>Ehen Court Road is second only to Main Street in importance to Egremont's streetscape. The road already links the largest car park, one of Egremont's key venues (Conservative Club), housing areas, and access to the Town's largest retail store car park, at the Co-Op. There is an existing recreational route to the east, with further use of this link to be encouraged by the ongoing tourism study. Another recommended project is the redevelopment of the car park site adjacent to this road. Ehen Court Road is presently very open, poorly signed, and unwelcoming to visitors. It is creating the impression that the car park is remote from facilities, leading to its under-use. Kwik Save, Co-Op and the Conservative Club provide weak aesthetics. Walkers, cyclists and car users will often approach the town this way and will receive a poor first impression.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>Actively recognising the importance of this gateway into the Town Centre by physically improving it will help assist the redevelopment of the car park, which in turn can assist in diversifying the economic base. Improving legibility and 'pulling' the car park and recreational route into the heart of town will also genuinely improve the functionality of the Town Centre as well.</p> <p>The emerging Gateways Project for Egremont provides a description of the type of signage and landscaping that should be applied across the Town. It is recommended that this project, whilst derived from an economic basis, links into the Gateways work.</p>
<p>Project Champion</p>	<p>EARP closely supported by Copeland Borough Council.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership, Egremont Town Council, Conservative Club, Kwik Save, Co-Operative Store, West Lakes Renaissance (via Gateways Project).</p>
<p>Delivery Strategy and Timescale</p>	<p>The delivery of the Ehen Court Road improvements should not be viewed as a consequence of allowing development on the main car park. However, the development of the southern section of the main car park will raise the possibility of Copeland Borough Council attaining assistance from the developer towards the environmental improvement of the Ehen Court Road Corridor. Any new</p>

	<p>development will be required to meet existing planning guidelines on design, scale and access. Elements of new development that have adverse impacts e.g. the loss (or need to relocate) parking space, or the re-routing of pedestrian pathways, require mitigation measures. These mitigation measures can include provision of direct benefits to community, physical and economic infrastructure improvements. It is recommended that any such contributions available from a developer be re-invested in the Ehen Court Road Corridor.</p> <p>With or without the advent of new development on the northern side of Ehen Court Road, it is recommended that funding, made available via the Gateways project or other sources, be allocated for this area as a priority. The 'snowball' effect i.e. improving the area so as to attract a developer, who in turn can provide more funds as well as wider benefits such as local employment during construction and operational stages, cannot be underestimated. As noted in the Baseline Report's market assessment, potential for economic revival in Egremont exists, but public sector led catalytic investment is still likely to be necessary. Basic environmental improvements, signage, street furniture and planting should begin immediately. Retailers, residents and businesses on the road should be consulted to determine their vision for the area, and also ask for their support, if not financially, certainly in terms of physically – e.g. planting, redecorating on private land. Again, this process should begin as soon as possible.</p> <p>EARP can actively promote the wider Gateway's improvements and should attempt to negotiate with key stakeholders, e.g. supermarket chains, how they can support the improvements physically and financially – effectively a sponsorship of the public works by the private sector. In return the possibility of adding business names to signage in key high profile locations could be considered. A town thrives on its commerce and it should not be seen as a negative step to use the sponsorship method of public-private partnership.</p>
<p>Issues, Risks and Mitigation</p>	<p>There is a risk that new development will occur on Ehen Court Road that will be isolated from the Town in terms of physical location, landscaping and building style. Adherence to the Gateways Project public realm recommendations will reduce this risk and increase the sense of Egremont being a single co-ordinated entity. If no new development is forthcoming on the car park there is a risk that Ehen Court Road will continue to be viewed as a secondary artery and not a priority for environmental enhancement. This will continue the poor perception Egremont cyclists and car users have when entering from this street. It will also undermine the wider efforts of the Gateways Project. Recognition of this project as a distinct part of a wider Action Plan for Egremont will ensure that it remains in public and regeneration deliverers' consciousness.</p> <p>Given the relative weakness of the Egremont economy, and the poor condition of the car park and surrounding area, the emergence of a potential developer should not be viewed as a method of securing funding to transform the Ehen Court Road Corridor or any other area. A carefully negotiated agreement between Copeland Borough Council and the developer would be more likely to benefit the area in the longer-term even if initial contributions were minimal.</p>
<p>Funding Sources</p>	<p>EARP via West Lakes Renaissance, private sector. It is estimated that delivery of this project would cost in the region of £170,000.</p>
<p>Outputs</p>	<p>Improved streetscape (which fits into a wider public realm strategy for the Town), greater pedestrian perception of security, raised values of property on Ehen Court Road, more attractive gateway for car and bicycle users entering the Town. This project has the potential to link effectively into the wider Egremont Gateways work, and assist in the delivery of a more coherent Parking Management Strategy (see Project 2 and Appendices).</p>

Priority Level	High

Project 4 Managed Workspace Development, Bridge End Industrial Estate



<p>Target Area</p>	<p>Bridge End Industrial Estate.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>The aims of this project are to provide local employment opportunities for local people and stimulate growth in small and medium-sized enterprises through the provision of quality, managed workspace for new and expanding businesses. Our market analysis highlighted a strong demand for existing premises on the Estate. In addition we believe that there will be demand coming out of the decommissioning work at Sellafield for small offices or workspaces. Bridge End is well situated to the A595 and Sellafield.</p> <p>We propose a development of a 1 hectare site at Bridge End on the land allocated for expansion in the Local Plan. This would be for a total development of about 20,000 sq ft net. This could be divided up into a number of units (up to about 8) to provide a range of unit sizes. The exact size and number of units would be dependent on more detailed market analysis. It is understood that West Lakes Renaissance has employed consultants to advise them on the opportunities that might be available to the Bridge End estate.</p> <p>This type of development has been pioneered by Network Space in the coalfield areas of England. They have a well honed product and service. Network Space is a joint venture between English Partnerships and developers, Langtree.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>The Bridge End Industrial Estate is an obvious asset to the Town. By developing it further this asset will be enhanced. The development of new small units will assist in the diversification of the economic base.</p>

Project Champion	This project could be led by the owners of the estate, the NWDA.
Potential Partners	An obvious developer for this scheme could be Network Space Ltd, given their mandate and extensive experience in delivering this type of product.
Delivery Strategy and Timescale	Preparation of feasibility report into establishment of workspace development. This would include a detailed market analysis, an assessment of the site, the preparation of outline scheme, appraisal of costs and values, and the development of a detailed procurement strategy (3 months) . Advertising, shortlisting and selecting a development partner (4 months if necessary) . Making planning and grant (if required) application (3 months) . Site preparation and building construction (9 months) .
Issues, Risks and Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suitability of site for development. • Possible resistance from public sector to location of scheme in Egremont. • Lack of private sector interest. • Availability of funding.
Funding Sources	The key funding source would be from the private sector but initial calculations would suggest that a small amount of public sector funding may be required. This could come through European, English Partnerships or NWDA funding, channelled through West Lakes Renaissance. Another source might be the West Lakes Development Fund.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 20,000 sq ft net of workspace accommodation for small and medium sized businesses. • Approximately 60 jobs.
Priority Level	High

Project 5 Shop Frontage Improvements



Target Area

Retail and service premises on Main Street and Ehen Court Road.

Project Description

Egremont and Copeland generally have already implemented the widely used shop front grant scheme, which provides assistance for security works e.g. shutters, pipes and gutters, traditional ironwork, re-pointing of brickwork, ornamental woodwork/brickwork, brick cleaning, re-rendering and repainting, fitting of a flag pole/Christmas tree pole, hanging basket frames, decoration of window frames, improvement of general aesthetics, professional fees of agent, and other project support costs. It generally does not support structural work, payment of statutory insurance or services fees, internal alterations and improvements, or the conversion of upper floor space to other uses.

This work should be continued – but as with many shop front improvement schemes, it requires active promotion. Many shopkeepers/owners remain unaware of what is available, or see the gaining of assistance as an elongated process. There is also an issue of design quality in Egremont – too many retail units have displays and signage that falls short of the desired quality. Even a small number of poor quality retail units has a significantly detrimental effect on the appearance of the Town, and the perception of both residents and visitors.

A combined design guidance and grant scheme, focused primarily on the retail heart of Egremont – south from Kwik Save to the Market Place – would encourage greater retail investment, greater consumer spend, and make the Town more visually appealing.

Strategic Fit

Grant and guidance support **protects and enhances existing assets**, both on an individual basis, and notably, on a more comprehensive basis. By targeting a fixed area it can **concentrate the retail heart**, by making the southern end of Town more attractive to potential investors. This will eventually help make the retail experience a **broader and more vibrant mix of uses**.

Project Champion

Copeland Borough Council.

Potential Partners	Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership, Egremont Town Council, local retailers (Local Business Network).
Delivery Strategy and Timescale	<p>Most local authorities are now employing consultants to produce design guidance for a town's shopfronts due to their lack of in-house resources and/or skills. Such commissions are costing approximately £25,000 at present.</p> <p>Partners in Egremont are generally already aware of the basic rules regarding shopfront improvement grants i.e. grant is paid retrospectively on completion of assisted works. Therefore no grant eligible work should start before a confirmation letter of grant eligibility has been received. The grant offer is always the maximum amount available, and cannot be exceeded.</p> <p>In the short term a meeting of key partners could identify at what point funding may be available to develop Shopfront Guidance. This Guidance could include grant criteria. On completion the combined document should be provided to all retailers in the Town's retail heart.</p>
Issues, Risks and Mitigation	The prime concern is when individual retailers do not support the Town's wider improvement strategy – this 'bad neighbour' syndrome spoils the Town's visual appearance, and frustrates those who maintain their premises to a high standard. Development of a statutory framework for good design gives the local authority and Regeneration Partnership powers to intervene where absolutely necessary.
Funding Sources	Copeland Borough Council, Market Town Initiative.
Outputs	Many small towns have produced Shopfront Design Guidance that has been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. The guidance can outline parameters in which retailers should work with regard to signage size and type, materials, lighting, and colours. A grant scheme which directly related these parameters would link the two key issues of finance and design.
Priority Level	Very High

Project 6 Retail Diversification



<p>Target Area</p>	<p>Market Place and the southern end of Main Street.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>The diversification of the retail offer of the Town Centre. This involves not only bringing in more retailers, but actively seeking out those retailers in sectors absent from the Town Centre. The shoppers survey and a gap analysis of the Town Centre indicates a number of retail and related services that are missing from Egremont i.e. florists, dry cleaners, specialist shops, good pub food offer, video rental. To a large extent it will be independent businesses that are able to take these types of retail opportunities forward and this project would seek to attract such businesses to the retail core of Egremont, which we see as stretching from Market Place to just beyond Kwik Save. However, there are also a number of pro-active steps EARP and partners can take to encourage retail diversification – more detailed outline is provided in the Appendices to this Action Plan.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>This project fits four of the overarching statements. Firstly concentrating the retail heart by encouraging new retail uses to cluster at the southern end of town will help to protect and enhance the existing assets by providing new occupiers for vacant or under used premises. Secondly, the project will both assist in developing a broad and vibrant mix of uses in the Town thereby improve its functionality.</p>
<p>Project Champion</p>	<p>EARP</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>Copeland Borough Council Independent Retailers</p>
<p>Delivery Strategy and Timescale</p>	<p>Development of a marketing strategy for the Town Centre including an incentive package to attract new retailers (4 months). Identification of suitable premises and discussions with owners (3 months). Identification and canvassing of local independent retailers etc who fit the 'gap' profile (6-8 months).</p>
<p>Issues, Risks and Mitigation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible resistance from public sector to physical contraction of retail centre. • Lack of private sector interest. • Availability of funding.

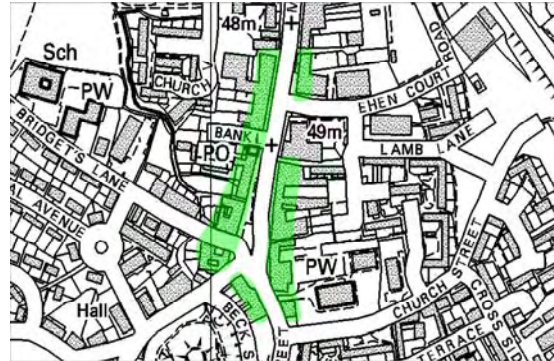
Funding Sources	Public Sector - Market Town Initiative - Copeland Borough Council Private Sector - Retailers
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reuse of redundant premises. • Expansion of retail/services offer. • Job creation.
Priority Level	High

Project 7 Community Facilities



<p>Location</p>	<p>Main Street and Market Place, Egremont.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>Encouraging the location of public sector facilities in the Town Centre that would benefit Egremont; for example, a Town Archive, Community Resource Centre.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>This project fits three of the strategic statements. Firstly, it will provide uses for vacant premises within the Town Centre and will, therefore, help to protect and enhance the existing assets. Secondly, the project will both assist in developing a broad and vibrant mix of uses in the Town thereby improve its functionality.</p>
<p>Project Champion</p>	<p>EARP/Town Council/ Community Action for Egremont.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>Private sector property owners.</p>
<p>Delivery Strategy and Timescale</p>	<p>There is already an identified need for a Community Resource Centre in Egremont of 550 sq m or greater. Options are currently being evaluated for the location of the Centre in Town. In respect of the Town Archive facility, premises have been offered by a local property owner and it is envisaged that the project could be delivered in the short term.</p>

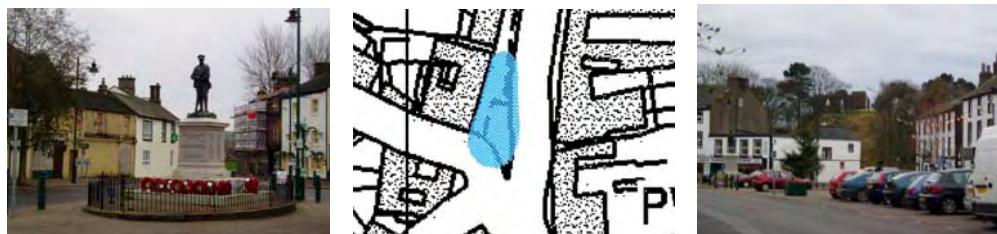
Project 8 Upper Floor Use Strategy



<p>Target Area</p>	<p>Floors above retail units on Main Street.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>Upper floor living can provide reasonably priced, decent accommodation in town centres. Government housing figures suggest 300,000 affordable homes could be provided this way. It can have further regenerative benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boosts size of retailers and traders market by increasing central population; Enhances aesthetics of shopping parades; Improves security; Provides vitality, assists evening economy – people more likely to use town centre in the evening if they don't have to drive/park/travel. <p>Upper floors will rarely provide attractive commercial space, especially within a limited retail and leisure market. Other than storage space, which does not help the town centre's vibrancy, there is unlikely to be a viable use besides residential uses.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>This project meets all the overarching statements to some degree – residential use can enhance existing assets by giving a greater degree of 'ownership'; it can help concentrate the retail heart by creating a centralised local populace who's presence will also develop a more vibrant mix of uses; increased numbers of people create a labour pool that can help diversify the economic base; and central living improves the functionality of the Town Centre by reducing travel times particularly for shopping and leisure facilities.</p>
<p>Project Champion</p>	<p>Project has to be instigated by building owners, though other partners can have a catalytic effect, especially the Council.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership and Copeland Borough Council – to provide guidance; a local housing association to act as an intermediary (see below). The LOTS Project, based in York would be an effective source of advice. (Living Over The Shop (LOTS) Project, 25 Bootham, York, tel. 01904 630963, email: ann.lots@ukonline.co.uk)</p>

<p>Delivery Strategy and Timescale</p>	<p>The key will be to provide clear guidance in policy of the benefits of utilising upper floor space. This clearly will not be a statutory requirement, but a situation that Copeland BC's development control policies actively encourage. The Local Plan could in time recommend the use of an initiative such as <i>LOTS (Living Over The Shop)</i>. LOTS is a leasing arrangement that creates an intermediary between building owner and residential occupier, protecting the interests of both. The intermediary can provide legal and practical advice, and the necessary management service ensuring the owner and tenants can remain isolated from each other. The recommended intermediary is a housing association.</p> <p>In the short term local partnerships can advise building owners of the benefits and mechanisms available.</p>
<p>Issues, Risks and Mitigation</p>	<p>Harrow, Haringey, Newcastle and Ripon Councils have been notably successful in addressing upper floor use – but all councils report frustrations in the 'time-consuming process of convincing retailers and freeholders to do it'. Some local plans, such as Newcastle, now have specific policies for encouraging re-use of upper floors.</p>
<p>Funding Sources</p>	<p>Renovation Grants are one source – owner-occupiers, landlords and tenants can apply for Renovation Grants from a Local Authority (though a series of rules and qualifications exist). They can be used to assist in the conversion of vacant commercial space to residential use. Making upper floors habitable will generally require support from owners themselves – with the incentive being the potential income achievable once the upper floor is occupied.</p>
<p>Outputs</p>	<p>Increase in population without requiring greenfield development; vibrancy and footfall of Main Street enhanced.</p>
<p>Priority Level</p>	<p>Medium</p>
<p>Comments</p>	<p>Many of Main Street's upper floors are already in some form of use, including residential space. The under-used upper floors do not provide a significant threat to the Town's future success, but the bringing in of greater upper floor activity would form part of a wider strategy to rejuvenate the Town Centre.</p>

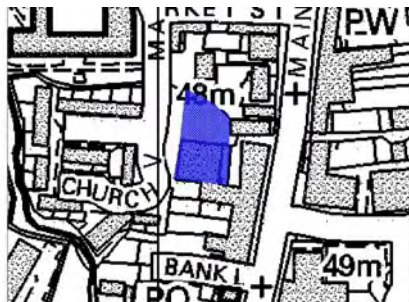
Project 9 Egremont Street Market Enhancement



Target Area	Egremont Market Place
Project Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment of qualitative operational management input to support the trading viability of the market, including Markets Business and Marketing Plan. • Provision of continental-style colourful "pop up" stalls. Operational support. • Provision of "pop up" lighting column for use by traders for stall lighting to enable better and longer sales presentation. • Remove trader parking from market place to car park to allow more stalls. • Encourage inclusive farmers market trading on same site. • Marketing and promotion of the market to customers and traders.
Strategic Fit	<p>Enhancing the market strengthens and diversifies the market's "offer" to attract more customers and traders. It creates a more vibrant market, a cornerstone of a town's viable retail "offer". Support and encouragement for small producers and traders diversifies local business and employment. A vibrant and attractive market is a key enabler for marketing the Town as a retail and tourist attraction towards sustainability in the medium and long term. Market trader parking off site, encouraged by incentives and a qualitative management regime, will create a more attractive and improved operational Market Place towards greater functionality of the Town Centre.</p>
Project Champion	EARP – may be in conjunction with another body.
Potential Partners	Copeland Borough Council (directly or via a specialist markets contractor).
Delivery Strategy and Timescale	<p>Local Authority to initiate in deciding whether to inject sufficient direct management and operational capacity or to externalise the markets service under licence (this would probably need to include Whitehaven market in terms of contract size). Local authority direct delivery or via supervised management contract (Year 1).</p> <p>Funding needed to purchase specialist stalls (c. £20K plus VAT) together with operational capacity to erect, dismantle, transport and store. Funding needed to purchase/install specialist lighting equipment (c. £3.5K plus installation plus VAT). (Years 1 and 2 subject to funding mechanism).</p>

	Customer marketing via partnership working; trader marketing via management initiatives. (Year 1 onwards)
Issues, Risks and Mitigation	<p>Lack of local authority support/possible reluctance to commit revenue resources long term though potential grant funded capital may be available to purchase equipment and include initial revenue costs. There is a lack of grant aided support.</p> <p>Need for management and traders' positive partnership working. Need for appreciation by all that (small trader) trading viability is essential - i.e. commercial factors are key, not purely service subsidisation.</p>
Funding Sources	Copeland Borough Council Market Town Initiative
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual and operational enhancement creating sustainability and marketability aimed at retail and tourism markets. • Increased foot flow to strengthened town centre retail cluster. • Increased specialist retail capacity supporting small business start-ups and customer base. • Return of farmer's market producer/trader diversification. • Environmental improvement to the Town Centre.
Priority Level	Very high
Comments	Detailed specialist advice on implementation is available on markets licensing/business planning/sourcing of specialist markets equipment, etc.

Project 10 Factory Shop Enhancement



<p>Location</p>	<p>Factory Shop and Car Park situated behind Chameleon Club on Main street.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>Enlargement of current factory outlet offer in the Town Centre to complement the existing offer.</p>
<p>Strategic Fit</p>	<p>This project fits four of the strategic statements. Firstly concentrating the retail heart by encouraging expansion of retail uses adjacent to main retail area. Secondly the project will both assist in developing a broad and vibrant mix of uses in the Town thereby improve its functionality. It will also help to diversify the economic base by broadening the current retail offer and attracting new customers to the Town Centre.</p>
<p>Project Champion</p>	<p>Factory Outlet Operator.</p>
<p>Potential Partners</p>	<p>Copeland Borough Council.</p>
<p>Delivery Strategy and Timescale</p>	<p>The delivery of this project is in the hands of the existing outlet operator. Planning Consent has been achieved and the aim is to start on site during May with completion planned for September.</p>
<p>Issues, Risks and Mitigation</p>	<p>Availability of funding.</p>
<p>Funding Sources</p>	<p>Private sector monies.</p>
<p>Outputs</p>	<p>Larger outlet store on current site.</p>
<p>Priority Level</p>	<p>Medium</p>

Comments

In response to the retailers' questionnaire of January this year, the manager of the Factory Shop indicated that the current store was too small to meet their current needs. The outlet attracts customers to Egremont from a wide area and further discussions with the manager have highlighted the need for better signage to the store both on the Ring Road and in town itself.

Project 11 Creating a Sustainable Partnership



Properties owned by Haltwhistle Partnership

Target Area	Egremont and Area.
Project Description	<p>One of the normal problems associated with initiatives like the Town Partnership is the short term nature of their funding. As a result the Partnerships spend much of their time chasing funding sources just to maintain staff and continue to operate. This has a twofold effect: it takes staff away from their main role and its staff have no job security.</p> <p>The proposal is for the Partnership to use grant assistance to purchase property and to let out that property to other public sector users and to use the income from these users to fund staff costs. This approach is used by the Haltwhistle Partnership in Northumberland.</p> <p>A property would be acquired and renovated. Ideally this would be in a prominent position on the Main Street and would have lain vacant and an eyesore. It would to have sufficient space for the Partnerships own requirements as well as accommodation that can be let out to both public and private bodies. This would enable the Partnership to have a prominent front door to enable it to become an integral and appreciated part of the Town.</p> <p>Depending on the configuration of the building purchase the space to be rented out could also include a shop or café space (Haltwhistle rents café space).</p> <p>In Haltwhistle the Partnership is taking on the role of a “social enterprise” – acting as a catalyst for various community initiatives: work with young and older people, providing a one stop shop for the Town, Sure Start, a neighbourhood nursery etc. With these initiatives comes grant from which the Partnership can obtain finding for administration and accommodation.</p>
Strategic Fit	The existence of strong and dynamic Partnerships is fundamental to meeting all five of the overarching statements of the action plan. The sustainability of EARP is therefore also important.

Project Champion	EARP and Copeland Council.
Potential Partners	NWDA.
Delivery Strategy and Timescale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before taking this proposal forward we recommend that contact be made with Haltwhistle Partnership to discuss their experiences in detail. • Preparation of a feasibility study on “Creating a Sustainable Partnership”. This would explore possible buildings, provide outline appraisals, identify possible funding sources, identify possible “tenants” and prepare a business plan for the development. (3 months) • Purchase and renovate building.
Issues, Risks and Mitigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a more prominent Partnership. • Becoming a “social enterprise”. • Risks associated with property ownership. • Obtaining capital funding. • Ensuring availability of potential “tenants”.
Funding Sources	Possible sources include NWDA (Market Town Initiative), Copeland Borough Council, West Cumbria Development Fund, European, West Lakes Renaissance, Lottery, Foundations, etc.
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership moves towards a sustainable future. • A “One Stop Shop” is created in the Town. • A prominent building on the Main Street is brought back into use. • A location is provided for office accommodation for public and voluntary bodies. • Meeting rooms are created for the community (chargeable).
Priority Level	High

4.3 Implications for Planning and Regeneration Policy

On 6th June 2006 this Council formally adopted proposals for the Replacement Copeland Local Plan. This followed assessment of submissions from interested parties on the Proposed Modifications published on 6th April 2006 with the Council resolving not to make any further modifications.

The 2nd Deposit Version of the Local Plan is considered to be the definitive pre-inquiry text on which all the subsequent changes and modifications have been based. The development of the Egremont Action Plan has been undertaken within the legislative framework of this document. The Local Plan acknowledges that 'a number of sites in Egremont Town Centre have been identified which are underused, vacant or derelict or where existing uses are not entirely compatible with their surroundings'. These sites are recognised as having a number of development options, and it is considered that all the proposals outlined in this Action Plan - many of which relate to the sites identified above - meet the guidelines of permitted development in Copeland.

Retail Allocations

One area of potential conflict with the Local Plan we have highlighted in the Baseline Study, and a subject that will require local stakeholder debate, is the development of non-retail uses in Egremont Town Centre. The Local Plan states 'whilst certain non-retail uses are acceptable at ground-floor level within the main shopping areas they can have the effect of creating dead frontages and so reducing the visual appeal of the centre'. This is an undoubtedly valid policy, and should be generally supported. However it is the recommendation of this study that the allocated retail extent of Egremont Town Centre be reduced at the next appropriate opportunity. Given the previously highlighted change in role of Egremont the Town's retail offer has been reduced, yet the residential market remains buoyant. Presently an ad hoc process of residential conversions in retail areas is undermining the Town's retail offer and interest to passers-by. A more focused retail use only policy in the commercial heart of the Town - stretching from Ehen Court Road junction to the Castle, would concentrate a smaller, but more vital retail core in Egremont.

Upper Floor Policy

An interesting and progressive example of planning policy with regard to upper floor re-use is provided in Newcastle City Council's Development Plan. It states:

'An important supply of new housing will be provided in association with commercial uses in shopping centres. The City Council will encourage such developments through:

- Appropriate schemes of grants for conversion of existing upper floors;
- Support for local conversion initiatives jointly with the business and voluntary sectors; and
- Incorporation in briefs and advice for development or redevelopment schemes.'

Whilst Newcastle is clearly an urban centre of a different scale to any town in Copeland, the fundamental premise behind this policy could be applied in any town centre of any scale. Defining a policy similar to this in statutory documentation ensures a level of political, legal and financial commitment to delivery.

4.4 Summary

Given a rudimentary assessment of the likely timescales required to deliver each of the projects outlined in this Action Plan, it becomes apparent that a significant proportion of the work will begin immediately, reaching a peak workload two to three years hence. Not only does this underline the requirement to ensure the sustainability of the partnership in the near future, it also suggests that the level of staff resourcing will need to be reviewed in 2007/08.

Project Title	Delivery Timescale:			Priority Level:		
	Short (0-1 yrs)	Medium (2-3 yrs)	Long (3+ yrs)	Very high	High	Medium
1 Office Development						
2 Parking Strategy						
3 Ehen Court Corridor						
4 Managed Workspace						
5 Shopfront Improvement						
6 Retail Diversification						
7 Community Facilities						
8 Upper Floor Re-use						
9 Market Enhancement						
10 Factory Shop Devpt						
11 Sustainable Partnership						
Planning & Regeneration Policy Recommendations	>>>>>>>> ongoing >>>>>>>>					

5: WHO is responsible and WHEN will it happen?

5.1 Priorities and Phasing

As with many regeneration schemes the key challenge will be to move the plans for Egremont Town Centre forward to implementation. It is at this stage that most schemes flounder, as the agency/agencies involved often do not have either the financial, logistical or knowledge capacity to take it forward.

The development circumstances in Egremont are such that delivery of major investment in the Town can be realised in a way that contributes to the long-term future of the Town. However, this cannot be left to chance. Delivering the value added regeneration outcomes will require intervention and contribution from key partners such as Copeland Borough Council and involving innovative use of its statutory functions.

5.2 Delivery Issues

Across Copeland there are already a number of organisations that form the basis of an existing economic regeneration 'delivery infrastructure'. There are, amongst others:

- Specialist regeneration and/or development companies (West Lakes Renaissance (WLR), Rural Regeneration Cumbria, West Cumbria Development Agency, West Cumbria Strategic Forum);
- Countywide bodies, including Learning and Skills Councils, Cumbria Tourist Board and Business Link;
- Local Government economic regeneration teams;
- Egremont Market Town Initiative and Egremont Area Regeneration Partnership;
- Local stakeholders with an interest in regeneration - e.g. Local Business Network, individual retailers, market traders.

The Millom Market Town Initiative also has potential to link with the work of Egremont MTI on key cross-cutting issues, such as tourism. MTI across Cumbria has infrequent meetings and exchange of best practice and experience, as it does in Lancashire and Northumberland. Increased contact between MTI senior staff - even if only by the remote tool of email - should be encouraged. MTI towns, particularly those in different counties, are rarely competitors to each other in economic terms, and indeed many mutually benefit not only from an exchange of experiences, but also more tangible practices, such as the distribution of promotional literature within each other's public spaces.

To support the work of WLR it is important that localised regeneration partnerships are proactive and sustainable. Egremont has, via the investment from MTI, the development of the Mini-Masterplan, the Gateways Study and this Action Plan, now created a robust development framework that can be used as the basis for gaining support from WLR and other strategic funding bodies. Two years ago the New Copeland Economic Strategy and Action Plan identified a 'pressing need for more project development skills and capacity in Copeland'. The appointment of various consultants to provide independent advice has assisted the process of project development - however inevitably it will always be those at the heart of Egremont's and Copeland's regeneration on whom the greatest pressures will fall. It is therefore vital that the

role of MTI Project Manager is supported politically and financially beyond 2008. Whilst the exact title and/or range of roles may be adjusted over time, the importance of retaining an experienced regeneration co-ordinator in Egremont for the lifetime of this Action Plan and potentially far beyond, cannot be overstated.

5.3 Funding

West Lakes Renaissance has traditionally supported office development at West Lakes Science Park. There is the expectation that this will change and Whitehaven will become the principal focus, to encourage urban regeneration. Cleator Moor and Egremont are not as yet a recognised part of this proposal, but they could find a role in providing supporting secondary industrial and office development.

West Lakes Renaissance support for the Gateways project across Egremont is vital. Proposals within this Action Plan, notably Projects 2 and 3, would benefit significantly from the receipt of funding.

A final source of potential assistance is the West Cumbria Development Fund - administered by a number of major locally active firms, including BNFL. It is likely that the Fund would be interested in supporting secondary industrial development in Egremont, as it helps put in place a deeper supply chain for the leading businesses. The Fund also assists the West Cumbria Development Agency, an organisation with the mandate to stimulate business growth and inward investment. Copeland Borough Council is a member.

5.4 Next Steps

These projects are presented to further the discussion regarding delivery of the Egremont Town Centre development. Expert legal, financial and property advice would be recommended to pursue individual projects where private operators and/or property is to be involved in the delivery process.

APPENDICES

Appendix to Project 2: Parking Management and Development Strategy



Introduction

In order to form an understanding of what possible future parking options are appropriate for Egremont town centre it has been necessary to undertake car park surveys for weekday, market day and weekend conditions. Improvements to the car park facilities will support the retail centre in the town for all users and help to support the proposed developments suggested in the whole document.

A charging regime exists for parking in the town in combination with a residential permit scheme in designated 'disc zones' and long term permit charging schemes for regular users. Together they provide a legible and cohesive charging system to accommodate both local and tourist parking requirements.

Existing Parking Facilities

Car park survey results for a typical weekday (Mon - Thurs), market day (Friday) and weekend day (Sat-Sun) can be found below along with a summary of results for each day case. Initial inspection of each survey demonstrates that existing onstreet car parking facilities operate close to capacity throughout the week, especially close to the retail hub, but that spare capacity exists on off-street public car parks in each survey case. Small numbers of illegally parked vehicles were detected on Chapel St. and Market St. during the weekday period. However, it was also observed that the charged off-street car park on Chapel Street was underused and it is understood, from further consultation, that many residents considered the car park insecure and in a poor condition. The car park is poorly surfaced but can probably accommodate about 60 parked cars in its current condition. Numbers of vehicles parked on the site varied between 4 and 10 during the weekdays surveyed and no more than 14 vehicles were counted on either market day or during the weekend.

The survey data confirms that the car park regime as a whole is able to cope with existing demand for parking. On the busiest survey day (Friday), public car space occupancy did not exceed 60%, with over 100 car park spaces available. However, from the survey data two important points can be made: Firstly, the demand for vehicle spaces in the core retail hub are considerably higher than towards the outskirts of town and, secondly, the Chapel St. car park is underused despite being within 200 metres of Main St. and the main retail hub.

Egremont Proposals

It is important to note at this point that a number of projects suggested in the main report may have an effect on car parking demand in the future for the town centre as a whole. It is difficult to quantify the likely change in demand or capacity due to these proposals at this stage but it is important to identify them so that further assessment can be made at a later date when more

information becomes available. Projects that have been proposed and may affect parking facilities include:

- Relocation of the market onto the car park site North of the Main St./South St. Junction close to the war memorial;
- Office development off Ehen Court Road;
- Expansion of Bridge End Industrial Estate (increased worker population using the town centre);
- Upper floor re-use strategy;
- Improvement of retail service diversification.

Egremont Parking Options

It is necessary that any future parking facilities in Egremont town centre support any proposed improvements to the retail facilities in the area. A number of available parking sites were investigated to determine whether they could support these proposals, in particular a possible car park site to the south of the castle on South St., but it was felt that this and other sites outside of the retail area were too far away from the main retail core to improve parking accessibility. From the collected survey data it was established that on-street parking is well used within the town centre throughout the week and that there is little scope for additional on-street parking spaces close to the retail heart on Main Street itself. In order to increase parking occupancy, two options beneficial to car parking facilities in the town have been identified and are outlined below:

Option 1

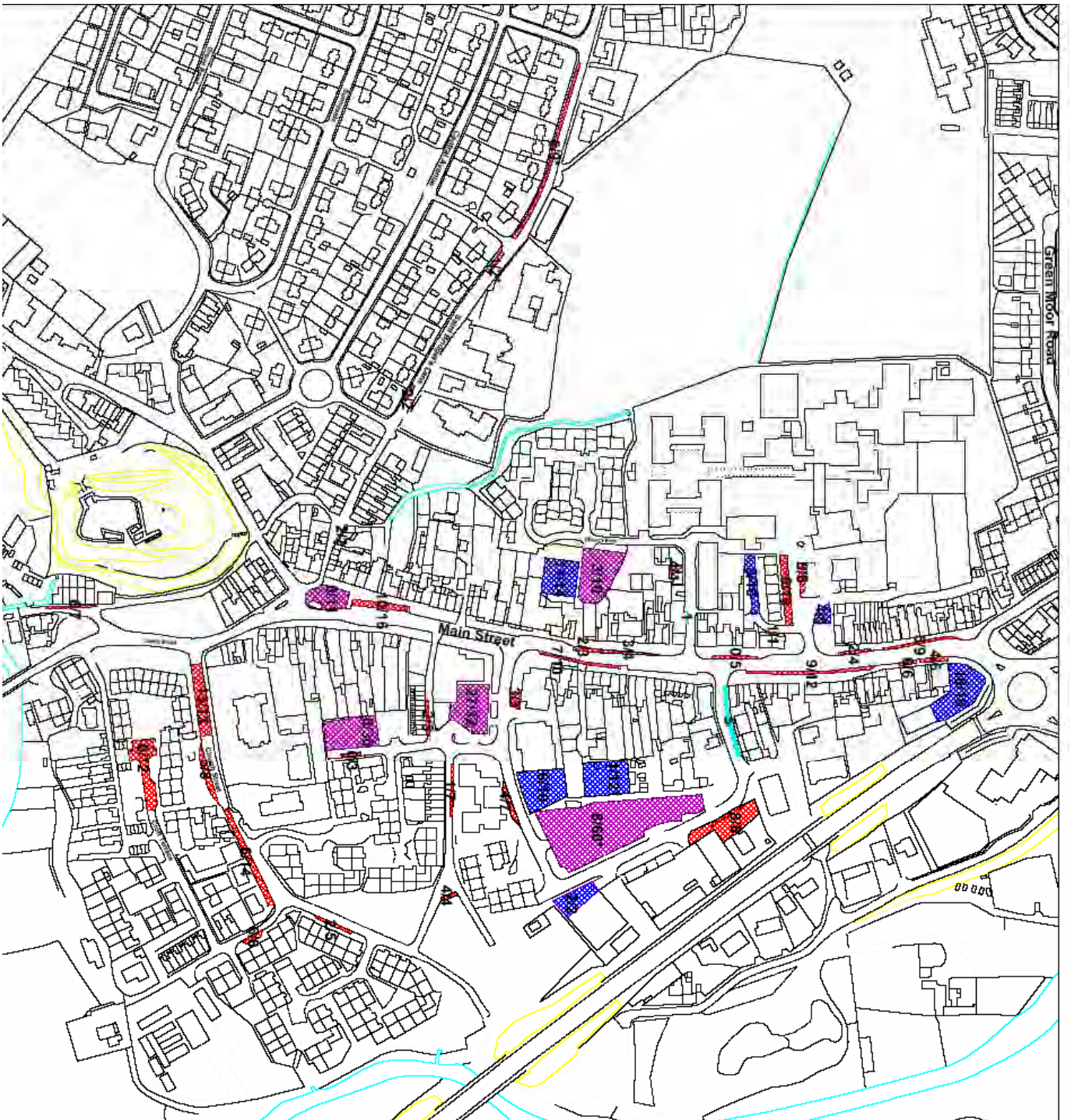
An off-street public car park site, for approximately 30 vehicles, to the south of Ehen Court Road and Lamb Lane is in need of environmental and accessibility improvements in order to improve its usage as a car park (Option 1 diagram below). It is estimated that design and preparation costs for developing this area would be in the region of £170,000. Accessibility and especially signage to the site needs to be improved for both pedestrians and vehicles so that the car park can become an important public car park facility for the town. The scheme could be implemented in conjunction with on-street parking, walking and cycling facilities, and environmental improvements on Ehen Court Road to help further rejuvenate this area, create additional parking close to the retail centre and improve accessibility to the proposed 30 space car park close by.

Option 2

Another feasible site for parking facility improvements exists as part of a scheme to introduce office space onto the existing Chapel St. car park site (Option 2 diagram below). It is possible to retain a large proportion of the existing car park as a public/private parking facility and make significant improvements to the car park environment to increase capacity and improve accessibility to and from the retail centre. An outline estimation of proposed private parking requirements at the site, based on an office development of 15000sqft (1500sqm), would require approximately 60 spaces for the office development, leaving an estimated 40 spaces on site as public parking spaces.

It is hoped both options will help to improve the Ehen Court Road corridor while increasing accessibility to car park facilities close to the retail area and, consequently, supporting existing and future retail developments. As detailed in Project 3 in the Action Plan it considered vital that funding be provided to improve the Ehen Court Road area even in the absence of new office development - therefore ensuring that if either Option 1 or 2 are pursued the Ehen Court Road Corridor is subject to investment and becomes the attractive gateway Egremont deserves.

WEEKDAY PARKING SURVEY (MON - THURS)



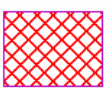
Private Parking Areas

TOTAL VEHICLES: 51
TOTAL SPACES: 69
OCCUPANCY (%): 74%



Public Parking Areas

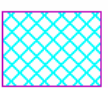
TOTAL VEHICLES: 47
TOTAL SPACES: 147
OCCUPANCY (%): 32%



Public On-Street Parking Spaces

TOTAL VEHICLES: 140
TOTAL SPACES: 220
OCCUPANCY (%): 64%

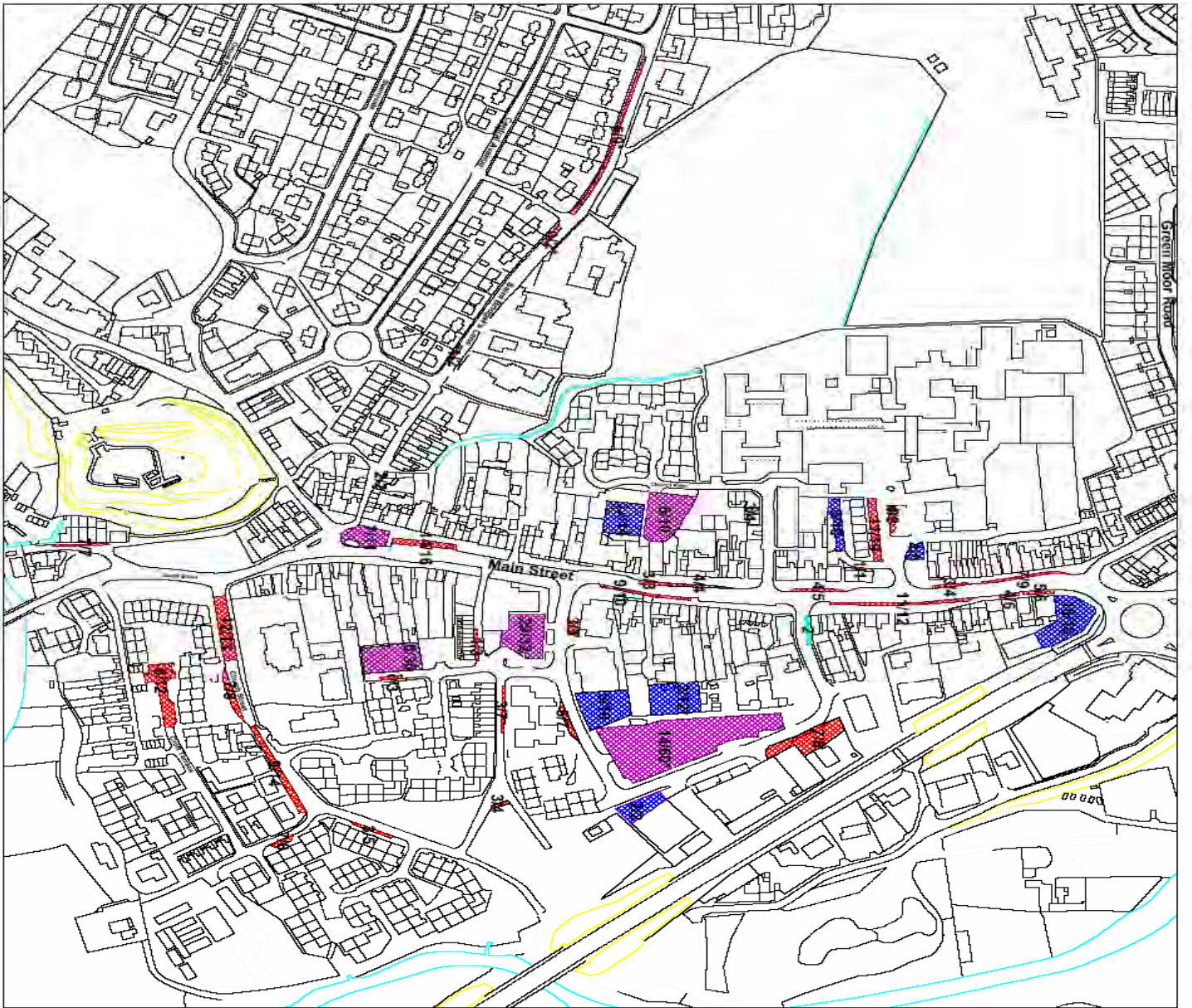
TOTAL VEHICLES: 187
TOTAL SPACES: 367
OCCUPANCY (%): 51%



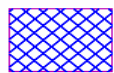
Illegal Parking

TOTAL: 6**

* No. of spaces estimated on site
 ** Not Included in final total



MARKET DAY PARKING SURVEY (FRI)



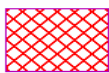
Private Parking Areas

TOTAL VEHICLES: 50
 TOTAL SPACES: 69
 OCCUPANCY (%): 73%



Public Parking Areas

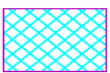
TOTAL VEHICLES: 55
 TOTAL SPACES: 147
 OCCUPANCY (%): 37%



Public On-Street Parking Spaces

TOTAL VEHICLES: 163
 TOTAL SPACES: 220
 OCCUPANCY (%): 74%

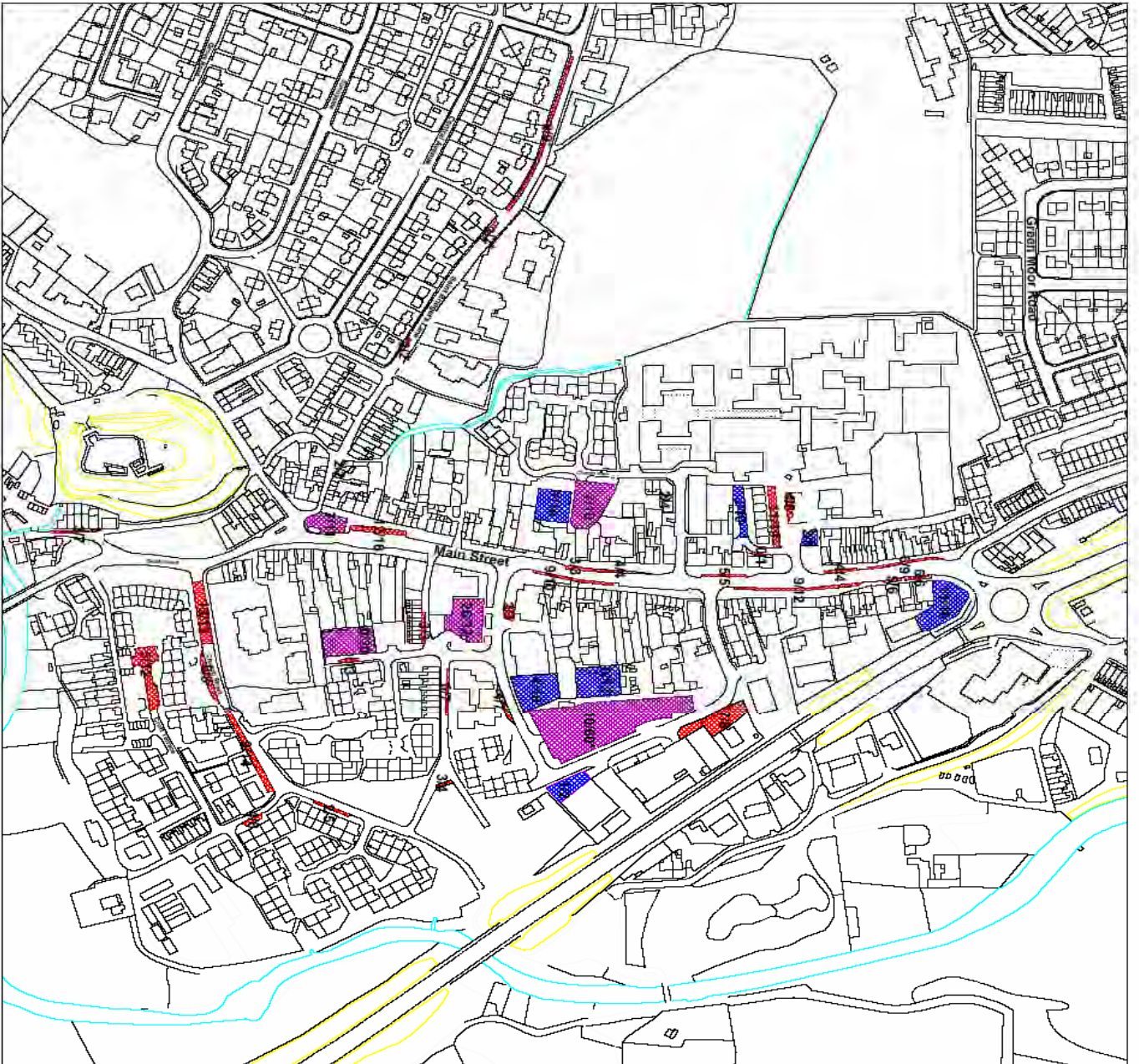
TOTAL VEHICLES: 218
 TOTAL SPACES: 367
 OCCUPANCY (%): 59%



Illegal Parking

TOTAL: 2**

* No. of spaces estimated on site
 ** Not Included in final total



WEEKEND PARKING SURVEY (SAT - SUN)

 Private Parking Areas

TOTAL VEHICLES: 28
 TOTAL SPACES: 69
 OCCUPANCY (%): 41%

 Public Parking Areas

TOTAL VEHICLES: 50
 TOTAL SPACES: 147
 OCCUPANCY (%): 34%

 Public On-Street Parking Spaces

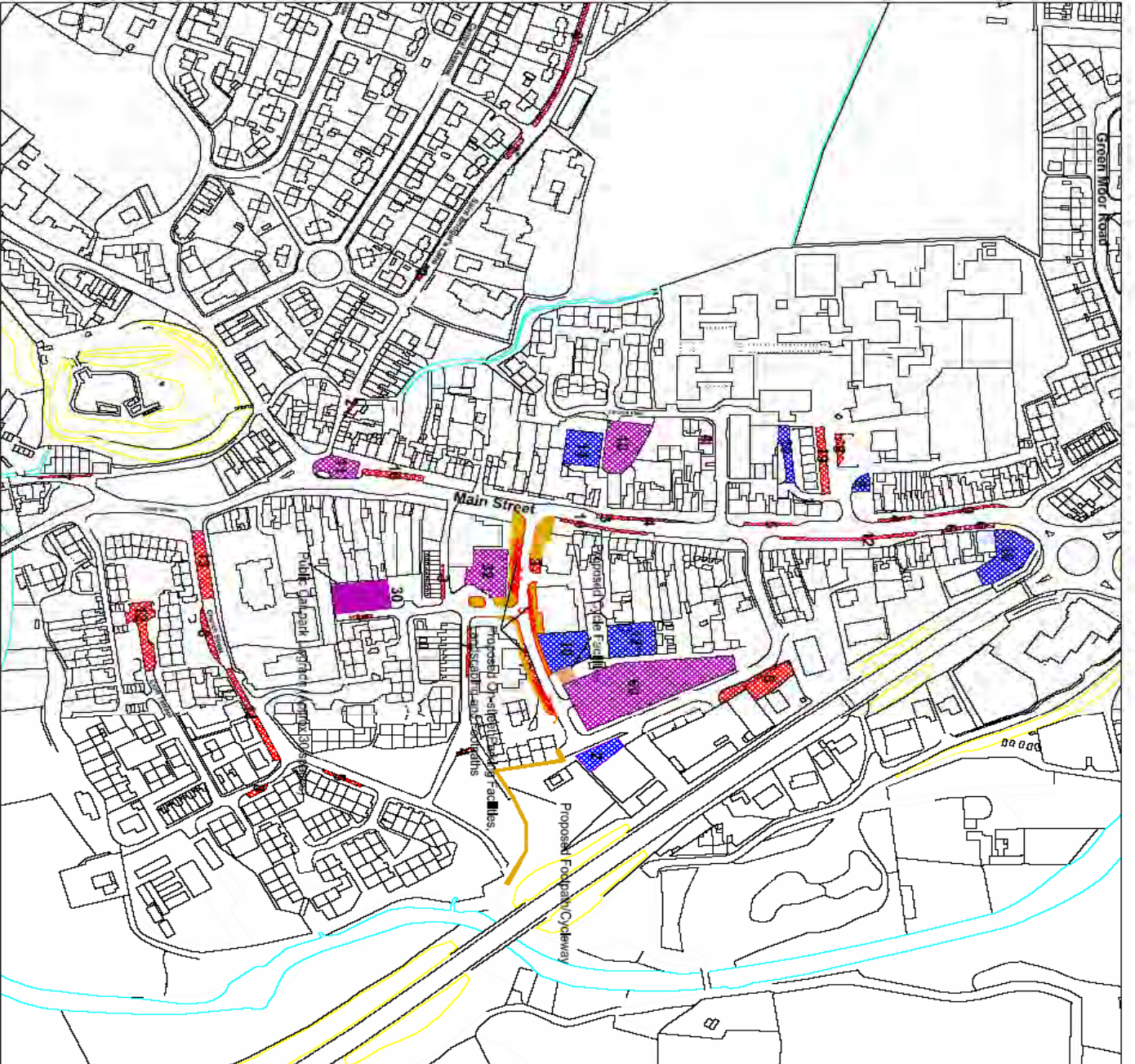
TOTAL VEHICLES: 159
 TOTAL SPACES: 220
 OCCUPANCY (%): 72%

TOTAL VEHICLES: 209
 TOTAL SPACES: 367
 OCCUPANCY (%): 57%

 Illegal Parking

TOTAL: 0

* No. of spaces estimated on site



OPTION 1

Car Park Stn. of Lamb Lane and Ehen Ct. Rd.

EXISTING / PROPOSED PARKING CAPACITY

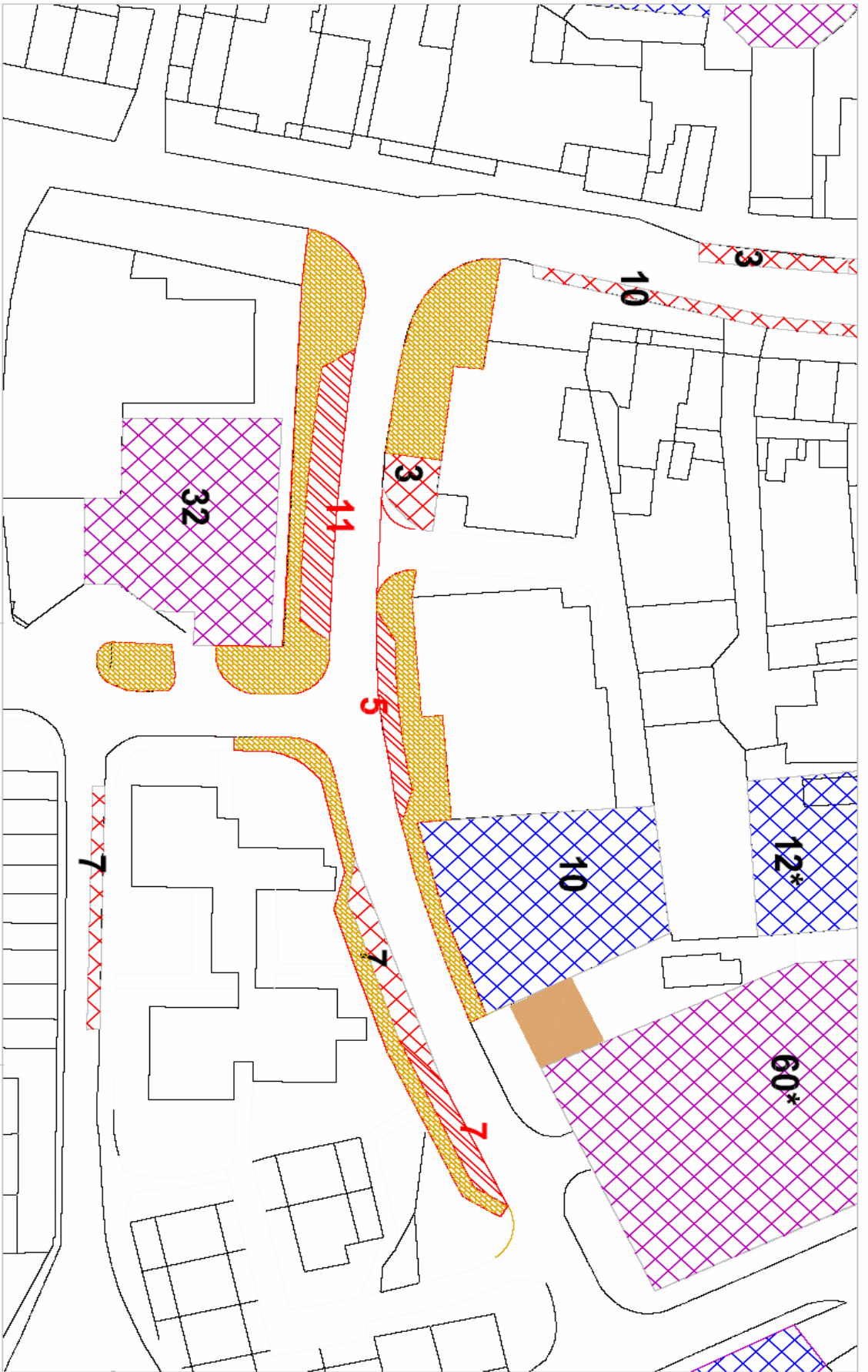
Private Parking Areas
 EXISTING SPACES: 69
 PROPOSED SPACES: 69

Public Parking Areas
 EXISTING SPACES: 147
 PROPOSED SPACES: 147

On-Street Parking Spaces
 EXISTING SPACES: 220
 PROPOSED SPACES: 243
 +23 SPACES APPROX.

EXISTING PUBLIC SPACES: 367
 PROPOSED PUBLIC SPACES: 390

* No. of spaces estimated on site
 ** Indicative plan only



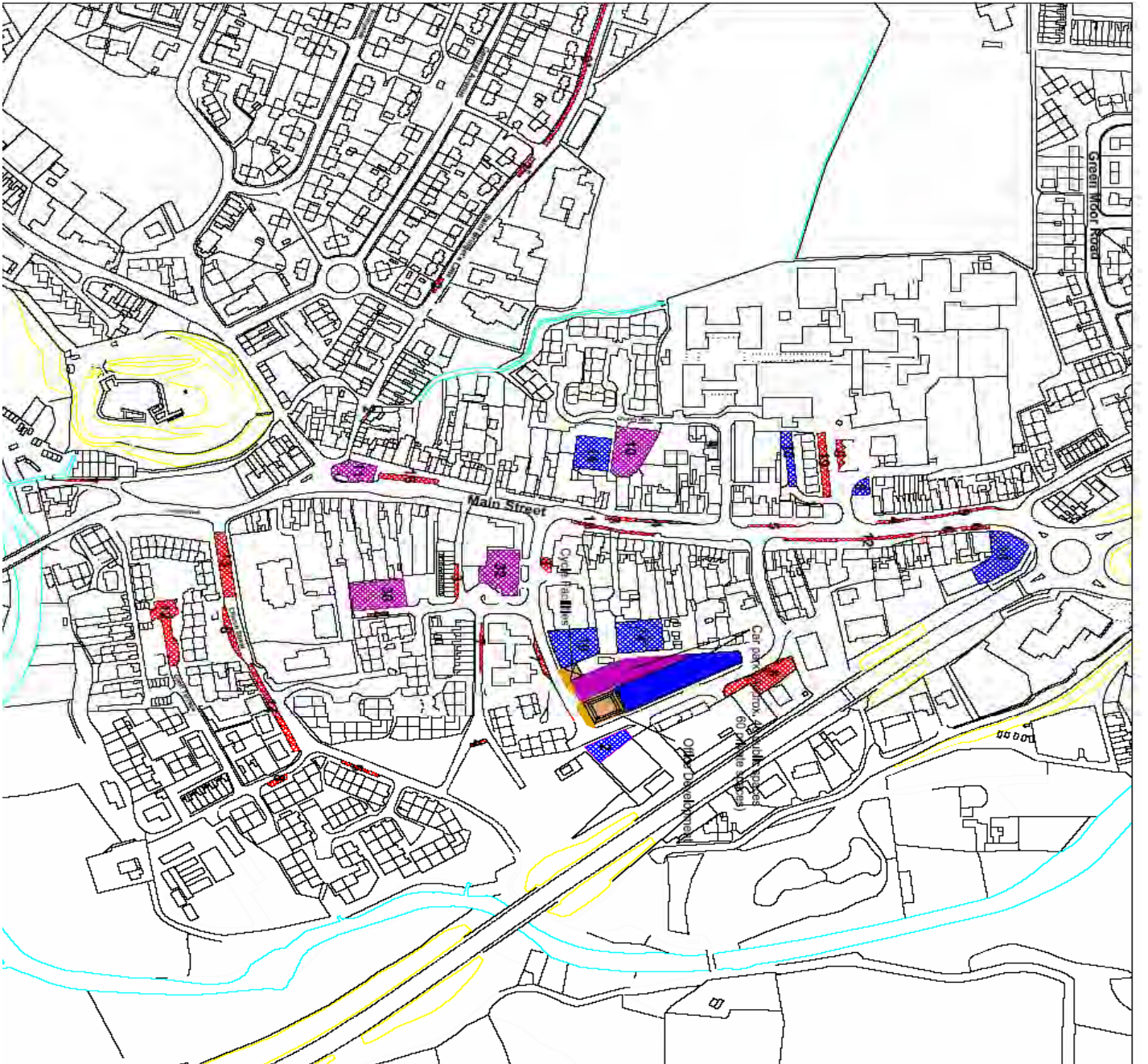
Ehen Court Road Parking**

EXISTING / PROPOSED PARKING CAPACITY

-  Existing Parking
-  Proposed Parking
-  Public Footway

1:500




* No. of spaces estimated on site
** Indicative plan only



OPTION 2

Chapel St. Car Park**

EXISTING / PROPOSED PARKING CAPACITY

<p> Private Parking Areas</p> <p>EXISTING SPACES: 69</p> <p>PROPOSED SPACES: 129</p> <p>+60 SPACES APPROX.</p>	<p> Public Parking Areas</p> <p>EXISTING SPACES: 147</p> <p>PROPOSED SPACES: 127</p> <p>-20 SPACES APPROX.</p>	<p> On-Street Parking Spaces</p> <p>EXISTING SPACES: 220</p> <p>PROPOSED SPACES: 220</p>	<p>EXISTING PUBLIC SPACES: 367</p> <p>PROPOSED PUBLIC SPACES: 347</p>
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* No. of spaces estimated on site
 ** Indicative plan only

APPENDIX TO PROJECT 6: THE NEED FOR RETAIL DIVERSIFICATION

Project 6 within the Egremont Action Plan outlines the need to diversify the retail offer in the heart of the Town. The purpose of this appendix is to expand on the need for this Project, and to outline in further detail how EARP and partners can help achieve this change.

JUSTIFICATION

A diverse range of retailers is a vital factor in driving economic development in struggling communities, as they provide access to low-cost, high-quality products and services, creating jobs, attracting other retailers and traffic to the area, and supporting community-based development efforts. They also dramatically enhance the streetscape, providing signage, colour and activity, which in turn impacts positively on pedestrian's sense of security.

Clearly the opposite situation is highly dangerous for the health of a town centre. Vacant units reduce the aesthetic and economic offer, in turn reducing consumer choice, attractiveness to visitors, and local employment opportunities. The spiral of decline affects neighbouring retailers, and eventually when a critical number of physical and sectoral gaps appear the necessary 'retailing mass' required to sustain a destination is not provided, and effectively the centre stops functioning in its original role, and becomes downgraded in the retail hierarchy.

If the population and employment opportunities elsewhere across the town are also declining, then logic dictates that the town authorities take the realistic approach of managing this decline as effectively as possible to ensure the optimal conditions exist for the remaining population. However, in Egremont's case there is no such decline - the residential market is active and new office and industrial space in the pipeline to support the existing facilities. Therefore, the missing link in creating a truly sustainable and attractive town centre is in the town's retail offer.

SITE PRIMING

The proposal in Project 11 for the Partnership to use grant assistance to purchase property and to let out that property to other public sector users and to use the income from these users to fund staff costs, is theoretically applicable to the encouraging of retail development.

A property would be acquired and renovated. Ideally this would be in a prominent position on the Main Street and would have lain vacant and an eyesore, hence justifying intervention. The Partnership refurbishes the building, and put it on the open market. The Council could actively encourage approaches by retailers or new entrepreneurs in retail sectors under-represented in Egremont, and as owners of the building negotiate favourable rates to ensure take-up. The benefits to other retailers and the town would be increase retail massing, and therefore higher footfall and spend, without directly replicating the present retail offer.

It is of course necessary for this approach to be evaluated with regard to Copeland BC's Standing Orders, to ensure that arrangements entered into are done so within a clear framework so as to enable monitoring of compliance.

Of course, site priming does not only relate directly to the retail premises, but also ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support increased retail. Whilst sometimes this may be beyond the day-to-day control of a local organisation such as EARP, it is their duty to encourage the various tiers of the local and county authorities to work together in ensuring adequate and

appropriate parking provision in the town, alongside a network of well-surfaced and signed road and cycle-paths within the area to meet the needs of local businesses, shoppers and visitors.

PRO-ACTIVE MARKETING

Once the retail market is understood in a town centre, the gaps can be highlighted. To some extent this will always be a subjective issue - different people want different things. However, there is no reason to ever be negative about the lack of particular retailers, or assume that they cannot ever be enticed into an area, as long as they are of a reasonable magnitude to sit alongside existing retailers without overtly threatening them - some degree of healthy competition is to be encouraged of course, as the consumer will benefit. It is also possible for smaller retail centres to 'fall off the radar' as such, and be neglected by retailers, unaware of their potential, which does appear to be the case in Egremont. The lure of the Lake District (especially Keswick & Cockermouth), and the demographic mass of Whitehaven are simple answers to why Egremont is struggling to provide a bountiful retail offer, however as can be seen with the residential market, Egremont does have a good sub-regional strategic position to capitalise on the growth of both centres (and the subsequent rise in prices that accompanies such growth). Within Egremont the gaps identified were primarily in the pub/restaurant sector, which raises the question of how to attract such users. Common in the US, and also becoming part of more pro-active local town partnerships in the UK, is the concept of developing a 'recruitment strategy', which outlines who to target, and how to go about bringing them into the town.

This strategy must be designed around considerations that are important to the retailer: sales potential, market penetration, potential to develop a strong identity and expansion into the new location. A recruitment strategy should identify targeted retail categories, compile community information (e.g. consumer surveys - quantitative data, i.e. a list of residents specifically supporting a particular type of retail development, can be very persuasive marketing tools), identify retail prospects (chains and local stores), and how to effectively contact those prospects. These stores could be identified by visiting Egremont's neighbours - Millom, Cockermouth, Maryport and others, as well as other market towns such as the case studies used in the Egremont Action Plan. Meetings with the owners/managers or a simple letter drop, outlining the progress made in Egremont, and the plans for the future.

Once the initial recruitment process is made, the community still has the dilemma of dealing with an empty store either in the interim before the new retailer moves in, or in the longer term if recruitment has been unsuccessful - and clearly it will be a slow and often frustrating process. Attracting a business or another use to a vacant store is not easy. In many situations it takes a business, local authority, and concerned citizen partnership to secure a new tenant. For successful retail development to occur, efforts must be comprehensive, well organised, and have broad support. They must include education, vision, positive attitudes, patience, local ideas, and investment.

Such partnerships can be built, wherein for instance - the public body provides some grant funding to improve the façade/interior of the vacant premises, and then allows private interests to advertise temporarily in that window space, or encourages the local community to fill the window with a display, possibly based on local civic themes. The private interests can pay a small fee for the advertising, the local community can assist in the physical upkeep of the building, and meanwhile an empty unit appears in use, improving the streetscape and vitality of the town. The public body, such as EARP, continues its pro-active marketing of the empty unit(s), and is assisted by the improved perception of the town when potential retailers undertaking their own scoping.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Incentives can be made available to retailers which will generate new revenue streams for the town centre either by establishing a type of business that does not currently exist within the town or selling products that are currently not available in the current retail offer. In addition, new retailers that offer a combination of existing products and new products "under one roof" may be considered for the incentives.

These incentives could include:

- 1) Assistance from a dedicated Fund that provides loans or equity at favourable rates. A notably successful example of this is the Rosebud Fund, established by Lancashire County Council's economic development arm, Lancashire County Developments - see: http://www.lcdl.co.uk/rosebud_fund/index.htm

The number of rules and caveats of the loan would be low, so that retailers can use it for a variety of uses. In applying for the assistance, the Partnership would look to ensure the following information was provided:

- The name, address, and telephone number of the applying retailer;
 - Provide the name(s) of the applicant's representatives and any other financial guarantors of the Business and their addresses and telephone numbers if different from above.
 - Provide background information about the applicant and guarantors, including business experience, if any, and all other relevant information the Council/EARP may need to consider while reviewing the application. Describe the corporate or partnership structure as applicable.
 - Briefly describe the proposed business along with the proposed business address. Include in this section: Name of the Business; Retail sector; estimated square footage of the new space; the location of the proposed project by street address and legal description. If the applicant is not the property owner, name the property owner at the time of application submittal.
 - Include a business plan with five years cash flow pro forma information showing the Project's ability to service its debt (this may be prepared by the applicant)
 - State the proposed time schedule for the Project including the dates anticipated for the following: Amount and anticipated closing date of the primary loan; anticipated lease execution date; Anticipated opening date.
 - Give three credit references for the applicant.
- 2) Additional incentives could be made available to cover expenses such as asbestos abatement, compliance with disability and access guidelines, ventilation, off-site improvements, and other tenant improvements including demolition, mechanical, plumbing, electrical and interior restoration. Shopfront improvements, considered in another distinct project within the Action Plan, are also of course a major incentive to attracting and retaining retailers, so long as the process is not too complex and off-putting to the tenant/owner in question - a common cause for concern in other towns studied.

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

It is envisaged that a relatively labour intensive, localised approach is actually beneficial for the early stages of delivering this Project. Working with Town Centre Managers elsewhere in Cumbria or similar market towns, start to build up a database of the type and names of retailers who would suit Egremont. Approach them, and build a database of target retailers. Most will not have it in their plans to expand, but at least Egremont's profile is raised, and they will be aware that

opportunities do exist as and when they do consider expansion. Aiming for small-scale retailers with a good local/regional knowledge and, ideally, evidence of a willingness to branch out beyond one centre, is the key. Therefore, initially an early list of identified gaps - such as dry cleaning stores and book shops - might bring the following names to the fore:

Dry Cleaning - Lakeland, Whitehaven/Carlisle; Sunlight Services, Ulverston/Penrith
Book Shops - Bookends, Keswick/Carlisle; The Book Shop, Ulverston/Kirkby Stephen

The consultation process mentioned above as part of the pro-active marketing campaign is important and must remain a high priority. Brainstorming events, where residents and stakeholders are brought together, either for this specific purpose or through standard civic meetings, can be used to gain feedback on what kind of shops people want. Typically such events provide a mixture of sometimes unattainable aspirations from some attendees, with a degree of negativity from others - a facilitating group such as EARP can provide guidance on what work they are doing and what is thought attainable.

After assessing resident's views and ideas, use their presence productively to assist in the building up of a database of demographic data, which in turn can be used as a marketing tool when approaching desired retailers - or even to encourage locals to realise and meet gaps in the market by starting up their own businesses. Retailers want information on gender; age; marital status; number of children; age of children; education; typical income; occupation; ethnicity; disability and health considerations and other such factors. Compile this localised data, supported by qualitative feedback from public consultation, and of course guidance on physical and financial issues (i.e. the range of properties available in the town centre; condition; ownership/agents; shopfront/upper floor re-use programmes; loan schemes; details on wider environmental/gateway works etc), and the basis of a retailer recruitment strategy comes together. Distributing this information (or at least a summary) to desired retailers, either through face-to-face meetings where possible or postal drops, websites, local and regional newspapers will not only raise Egremont's profile quite dramatically, but also indicate the town's co-ordinated and supportive community.