

**INVEST
ST HELENS**

TOWN

INVESTMENT

PLAN



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL





PROPOSED MARKET HALL - CGI



GLASS FUTURES - CGI

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CENTRED TOWN**

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NEW HOMES DELIVERED

382



JOBS CREATED

236



LEARNERS SUPPORTED PER ANNUM

170



BROWNFIELD LAND RECLAIMED

8.10 HECTARES



NEW BUILDINGS/ FLOORSPACE CREATED

20,625 SQM



PUBLIC REALM ENHANCED

5.6 HECTARES



PROJECTED VISITOR NUMBERS PER ANNUM

200,000



YOUNG PEOPLE SUPPORTED

78,000



01

ST HELENS – A CULTURALLY CENTRED TOWN

St Helens, like many towns of its type, felt the cold wind of contraction and modernisation, as its large industrial employers, one by one shut their operations down and closed their doors for the last time. The void which ensued led to a blighting of our proud town, which the most farsighted of administrations would have had difficulty in addressing. Thus a period of general decline began, which witnessed the slow and inexorable decay and vibrancy of our town centre, its woes only compounded by the typical seventies monolith developments within the heart of the town, from which a great deal of its character had been ripped out.

Despite all of this our town toughed it out, its people remaining loyal and resolute in the face of hardship and disappointment.

The deep-rooted pride in everything that the town was still shines through, evidenced in the engagement work undertaken for the purpose of this Town Investment Plan (TIP). It is however, not just about the past, our town looks forward to and deserves a brighter future. The beacon of innovation has never been extinguished. It's in the DNA, culture and fabric of the town itself. We see it expressed in the fabulous endeavours of a vibrant and resurgent arts and culture sector and in the passion expressed for our heritage assets. In the entrepreneurial drive demonstrated across the borough and in the pride taken in the outstanding achievements of our rugby league club – Saints.

I am intensely proud of St Helens; it is an immense personal honour and privilege to be Chairman of the St Helens Town Deal Board. When the call went out for people to serve on the Board, it was answered in great measure. Further testament, of the support and desire to see the town centre emerge from its years of decline and flourish again in a new age of development and prosperity. I could not be prouder of the efforts every member of the Board has put into this TIP, particularly at a time when so much worry and uncertainty surrounded their own businesses and jobs.

St Helens is a people bursting with desire to see the town move forward and embrace a new future, one built on its past glories, but very much focused on what the future can deliver. The enthusiasm which has greeted the advent of the Glass Futures development, highlights the town at its brilliant best. This timely reminder of what all generations of our people associate our borough with, is a huge confidence boost.

Glass Past meets Glass Futures is a fitting catalyst to light the blue touch paper of regeneration, so let's crack on!

JOHN TABERN

*Chair of the St Helens
Towns Fund Board*

02

EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY

PILKINGTON GLASS



02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

St Helens is home to over 180,000 people, with a strong identity and sense of pride that is rooted in its history and heritage. A key part of this is glass – part of its evolutionary building blocks and an integral part of St Helens’ future. The opportunities presented by Glass Futures, a world-class research and development sustainable, low carbon glass manufacturing facility will contribute to reducing sector emissions by at least 10%.



ST HELENS DAY CELEBRATIONS - 150 YEARS CELEBRATIONS IN 2018



There is confidence in the future, reflected by increasing business investment and therefore more jobs and opportunities; strong housing growth; a growing reputation as a centre for arts and culture and a nationally recognised, award-winning approach to delivering health, care and community wellbeing.

In our position at the heart of the North West, we have excellent road and rail infrastructure connectivity and are a short travelling distance from two international airports and the Port of Liverpool. Its spatial location in terms of Greater Manchester to the east, Cheshire & Warrington Sub-region to the south and Lancashire to the north makes it extremely attractive to logistics and distribution operators.

St Helens forms part of a strong Liverpool City Region which ‘has enjoyed a sustained period of growth and development’ supported by regeneration and economic opportunities including developing an international culture and visitor economy; diversifying the economy and progressing key sectors including clean growth, material science, infectious

disease control and high-performance computing and AI².

The focus for our Towns Fund bid is to build upon the catalytical opportunities within St Helens town centre, particularly Glass Futures³, Phase 1 of which has secured BEIS and UKRI funding. Glass Futures will support the borough’s economic recovery creating local jobs, skills and importantly inspiring the next generation of the borough’s residents, but we cannot rely on this opportunity alone.

The town centre requires real investment to be able to capitalise on this opportunity—in terms of place-making and regeneration, support for local businesses, encouraging young people to succeed and creating a strong offer and experience to reverse the decline of the high street. As with many towns and cities UK-wide, we cannot rely on the retail sector to attract people back into the heart of our town. We need to deliver a town centre that matches the potential of the borough and underpins the role that St Helens will have in the Liverpool City Region.

¹ LCR (2020) Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan

² ibid

³ A Joint Venture between St Helens Council and industry/ private sector

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The borough has many strengths but also several challenges, which we are working to address and are responded to within our Town Investment Plan (TIP):



Transforming St Helens’ cultural and heritage offer through creating an impressive experience for visitors which builds upon the town’s key heritage assets and provides much-needed support for the visitor economy which has been significantly impacted as a result of Covid-19. This cultural focus will help positively change the perceptions of the place and the outlook of its people, particularly in terms of health and wellbeing.



Creating higher value jobs for local people, as well as the opportunity to up or re-skill, particularly within the research and innovation sectors whilst also addressing the borough’s lower than average productivity rates.



Addressing health deprivation through offering appropriate health and wellbeing support to residents given that St Helens experiences significant of health inequalities⁴ which impacts upon productivity rates for the borough, a strain on health-related services and negatively effects the wellbeing of young people. There are disparities within the borough with a 10.4 years life expectancy variation between the least and the most deprived wards⁵.



The need to provide affordable and high-quality housing borough-wide but particularly in diversifying the offer in the town centre, which aligns strongly to addressing health deprivation and provides a place-making opportunity – creating the critical mass of people to reside within the heart of the town centre and new people who will work, play and spend in the town.



Providing improved key connections and enhanced public realm to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport to access the town centre, stay for longer, and helping shift the focus back into the high-street as opposed to the out-of-town retail parks on its periphery.



⁴ IMD (2019)

⁵ In Rainford males are expected to live until 82 years old but only 71.6 years for those in the town centre ward (Source: Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Mortality, 2020)

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR SHARED VISION FOR ST HELENS OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS

2020-2030



GLASS FUTURES - CGI

“By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental well-being** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport and digital connections** borough-wide”.

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Towns Fund investment is key to securing the transformational change for St Helens and to supporting our sustainable growth ambitions. Our funding ask is for **£38.55m of towns funding⁶** to deliver the following:

A
GLASS FUTURES
PHASE 2

(INCLUDING CANNINGTON SHAW)



B
TOWN CENTRE LIVING
& REGENERATION



C
ST HELENS
HERITAGE WORLD



D
HEALTHY
COMMUNITIES

(YOUTH ZONE, HEALTH INNOVATION HUB)



E
CONNECTED
PLACES



F
DIGITAL
INFRASTRUCTURE



Our proposed projects are located within, or in close proximity of St Helens Town Centre, as this is where the funding will make the most impact. The borough needs a town centre to be proud of, one which reflects the growth ambition, capitalises on its industrial heritage and the opportunity that a **globally significant project** in Glass Futures provides. The route to deliver this immense opportunity is through Town Deal.

Building on the nationally and globally significant project that is Glass Futures, we consider our Towns Fund Programme to be regionally important. Large-scale transformational growth is proposed within St Helens Town Centre through a series of complementary projects which will have a significant impact on the people, and the businesses in St Helens. Such changes will create long-lasting opportunities for St Helens Town Centre, the borough and City Region as a whole.



⁶ Comprises £38.25m capital funding and £0.3m revenue funding support

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR PROPOSED TOWNS FUND PROJECTS SPATIAL PLAN

PROJECT A
Glass Futures Phase 2

PROJECT B
Town Centre Regeneration
and Living

PROJECT C
St Helens Heritage World

PROJECT D
Healthy Communities

PROJECT E
Connected Places

-  Creating Strong Pedestrian Links
-  Transport Nodes
-  Green Bus Route to Liverpool
-  Major Road
-  Improved Link and Public Realm

PROJECT F
Digital Infrastructure
(borough-wide)

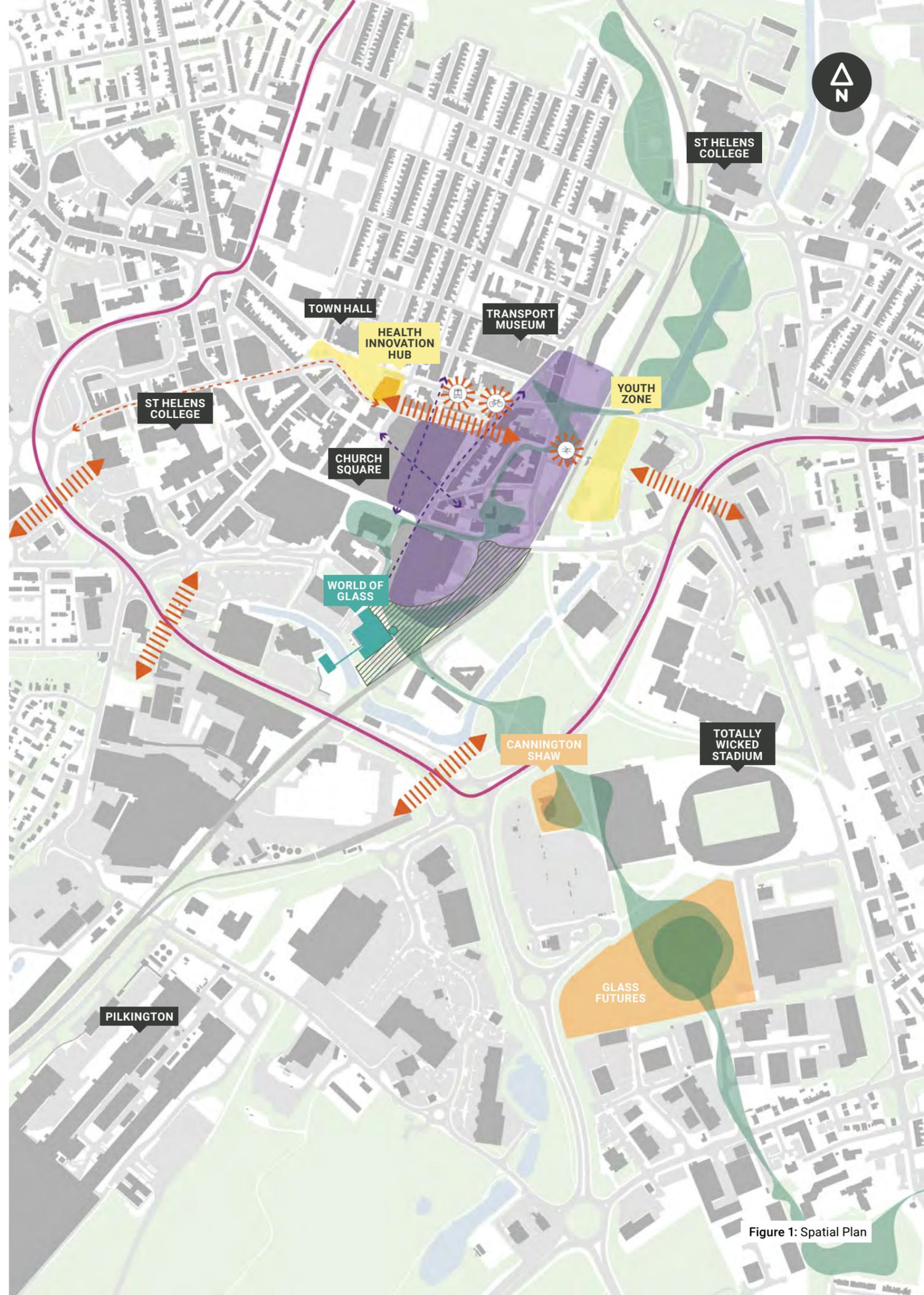


Figure 1: Spatial Plan

02. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All of our projects are aligned with the **nationally and globally significant Glass Futures project** which will create the UK's first medical glass research and development centre of excellence in St Helens, a town and borough which is renowned for its heritage and innovation in glass-making. Such an ambitious project not only requires investment into the facility itself, but also needs to be complemented by the necessary investment into the regeneration and transformation of the town centre, including new high-quality housing, amenities⁷, transport and digital infrastructure to be able to maximise its impact and benefit the people of St Helens.

With the support of Towns Fund investment, we will benefit our residents and generate new employment opportunities, a skilled workforce, high quality and affordable housing, excellent amenities and services that people come to expect in a thriving town centre. New opportunities will be matched with a focused skills programme, enabling the town and borough to benefit from the high growth jobs created in the City Region.

St Helens is a **borough of opportunity, ingenuity and has strong potential for growth**. The borough has been identified as a key place for transformational regeneration by **English Cities Fund (ECF)**⁸. The Council and ECF have signed a 20-year Borough wide commitment comprising an Overarching Development Agreement to deliver a potential £200m mixed use scheme in St Helens Town Centre as well as

improvements for Earlestown as part of Phase 1⁹. Town Deal is the very catalyst that is needed to spark the momentum. Towns Funding investment will act as seed-capital to kickstart this partnership opportunity, which intends to create a revolving fund as surplus profits are to be re-invested in other much-needed parts of the borough.

ECF provides a strong delivery mechanism for Towns Fund and is a tried and tested approach which has already successfully achieved regeneration in other parts of the UK, including in Salford and Liverpool. ECF's expertise and experience provides St Helens with a nationally significant opportunity, and with the Towns Fund investment as a catalyst, the town and borough is ripe and ready for transformational growth. St Helens is a first for ECF investment insofar as the borough-wide approach which is proposed. Towns Funding will help to unlock the

initial development phase for the town centre but the Development Agreement approach between the partnership will enable the grant funding to go further; effectively acting as a revolving fund mechanism to deliver future growth and priority interventions across the borough.

It has repositioned itself as a borough for change and transformation, with a new delivery-focused structure, new leadership capacity in place for growth, and with ECF aligned as a key delivery partner to take forward the borough over the next 20 years. The Towns Fund Programme we have put forward is deliverable by March 2026; a number of the projects are well established and are 'shovel ready' to start incurring the funding allocation in 2021 and delivering the step-change which is needed to take St Helens into the future.

⁷ Including the Health Innovation Hub, Youth Zone & cultural offer

⁸ ECF comprises developer Muse Developments, fund manager Legal & General and Homes England

⁹ The ODA was announced on 15th December 2020 - <https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/ecf-st-helens-ink-20-year-development-agreement>



GLASS FUTURES - CGI



PROPOSED MARKET HALL - CGI

03

INTRODUCING

ST HELENS



03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

**ST HELENS
BENEFITS FROM
BEING WITHIN
1-HOUR DRIVE-
TIME FOR MORE
THAN 7 MILLION
PEOPLE AND
4.3 MILLION
EMPLOYEES.**

St Helens forms part of the Liverpool City Region (LCR) and has circa 180,585 residents¹⁰. Spatially, it is well-connected to the other LCR authorities and abuts the Cheshire & Warrington sub-region, Greater Manchester and West Lancashire boundaries, and midway between the commercial and cultural hubs of Liverpool and Manchester.

Its central location enables St Helens to benefit from excellent connectivity on the strategic road network with direct links to the M62 and M6. The arterial A580 East Lancashire Road also traverses the north of the borough. Its location allows easy access to Liverpool and Manchester Airports and the Port of Liverpool.

¹⁰ ONS population in 2019 (source: info4StHelens.gov.uk)

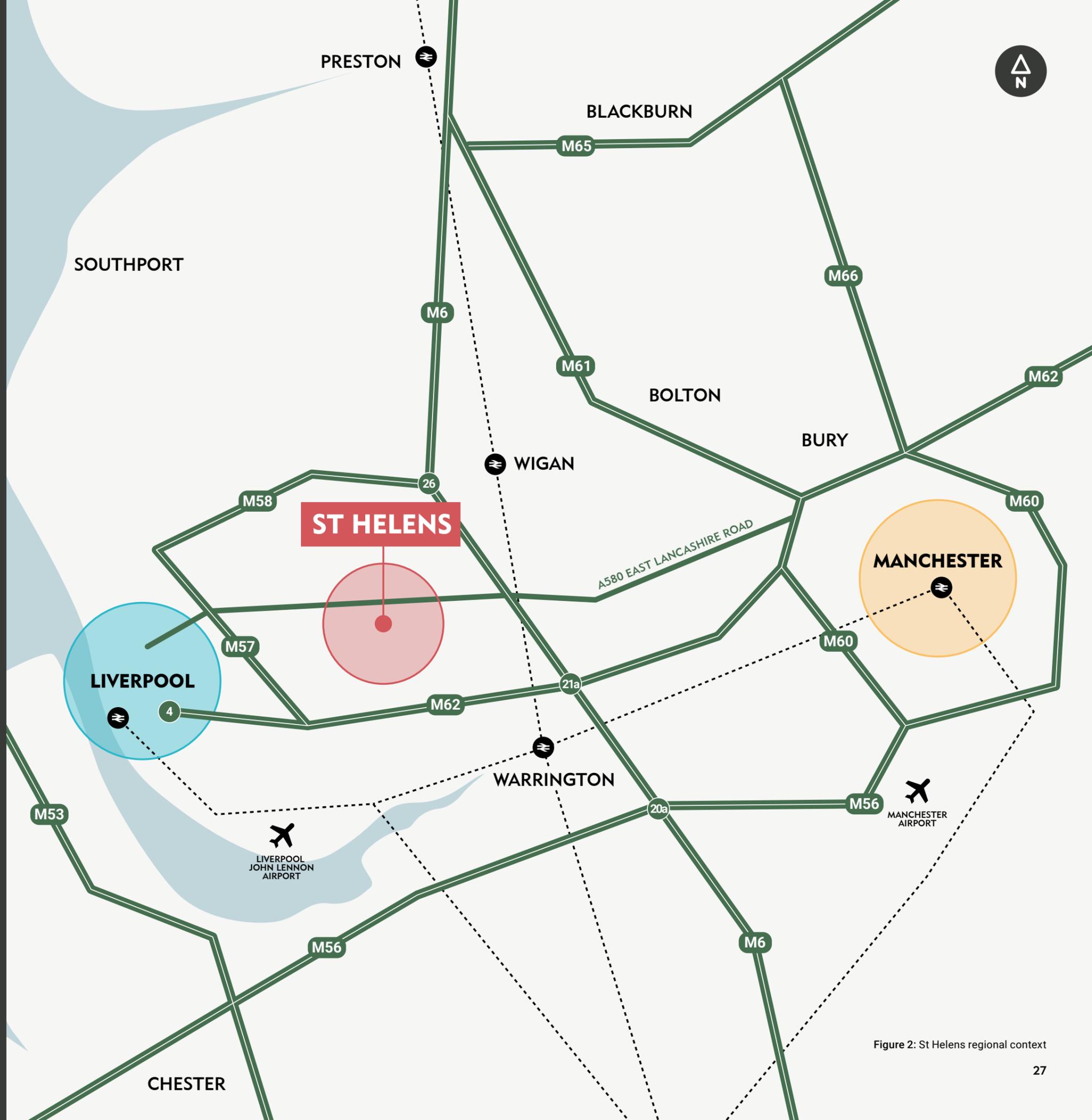


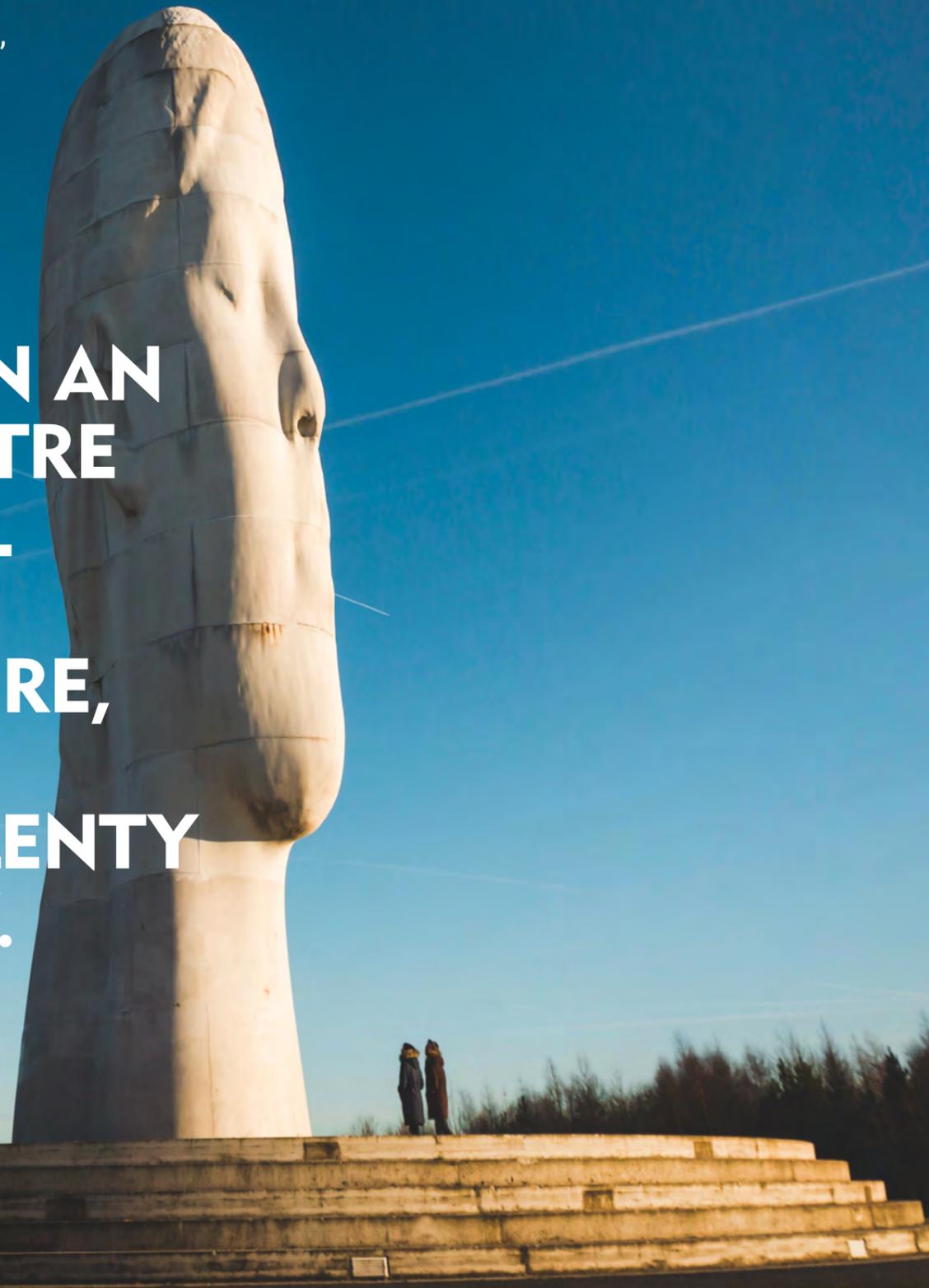
Figure 2: St Helens regional context

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

The Borough comprises key centres and substantial urban areas (including Haydock, Newton-le-Willows and Rainhill) alongside villages and hamlets (Figure 3).

'ALTHOUGH ST HELENS HAS BEEN AN INDUSTRIAL CENTRE IT BOASTS RURAL SURROUNDINGS WITH AGRICULTURE, TRADITIONAL VILLAGES AND PLENTY OF GREEN SPACE'.

THE DREAM



Achievements include the new rugby stadium for the Saints Rugby Football Club, Town Centre Campus for St Helens College, creation of The Dream¹¹ and logistics sites attracting Amazon and Movianto at Haydock Green.

¹¹ 'A major art work asset' (Arts Strategy 2020)

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

- Key Settlements
- St Helens Administrative Boundary
- Proposed Housing Growth Areas
- Proposed Employment Growth Areas
- Railway
- Motorway
- A Roads

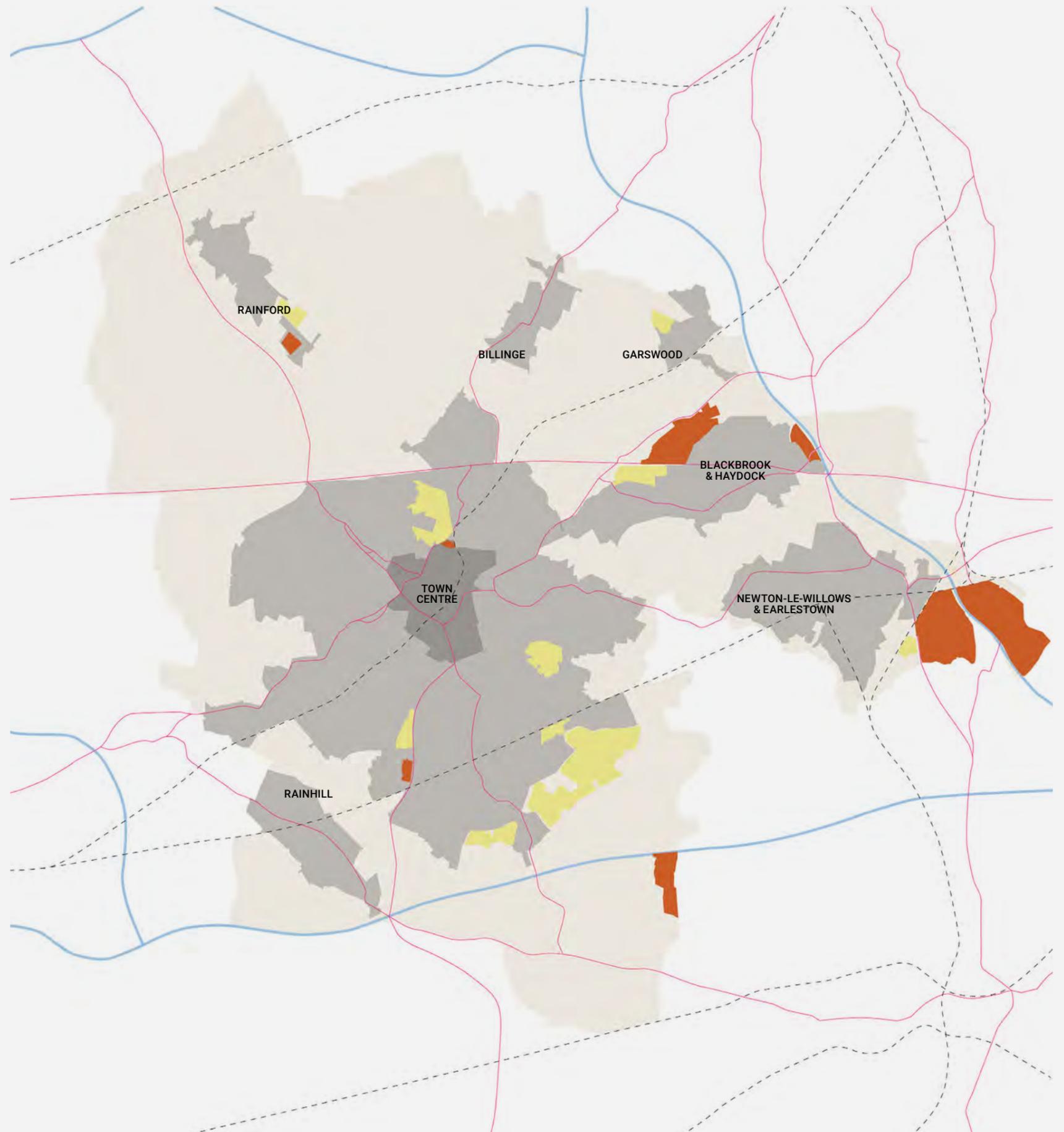


Figure 3: St Helens - Key settlements and proposed areas of growth

Figure 4: St Helens in the context of the UK

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS



65%

OF THE BOROUGH IS GREEN BELT¹²



ST HELENS HAS UNDERGONE POSITIVE CHANGE INCLUDING THE CREATION OF A STRONGER ECONOMY WITH OVER

4,000+

NEW JOBS CREATED¹³ - INCREASED EARNING POTENTIAL FOR RESIDENTS AND THE GROWTH IN BUSINESS BASE OF **OVER 9%**¹⁴



30

MINUTES DRIVE-TIME TO THE PORT OF LIVERPOOL



4.3M

EMPLOYEES ARE **WITHIN 1 HOUR'S** COMMUTING TIME OF ST HELENS¹⁵, AND PROVIDE A SKILLED WORKFORCE FOR THE MANY KEY EMPLOYERS THAT HAVE CHOSEN TO LOCATE IN ST HELENS



ST HELENS OCCUPIES A PRIME POSITION ON THE MOTORWAY NETWORK, WITHIN

4HRS

DRIVE OF **35 MILLION PEOPLE**¹⁶

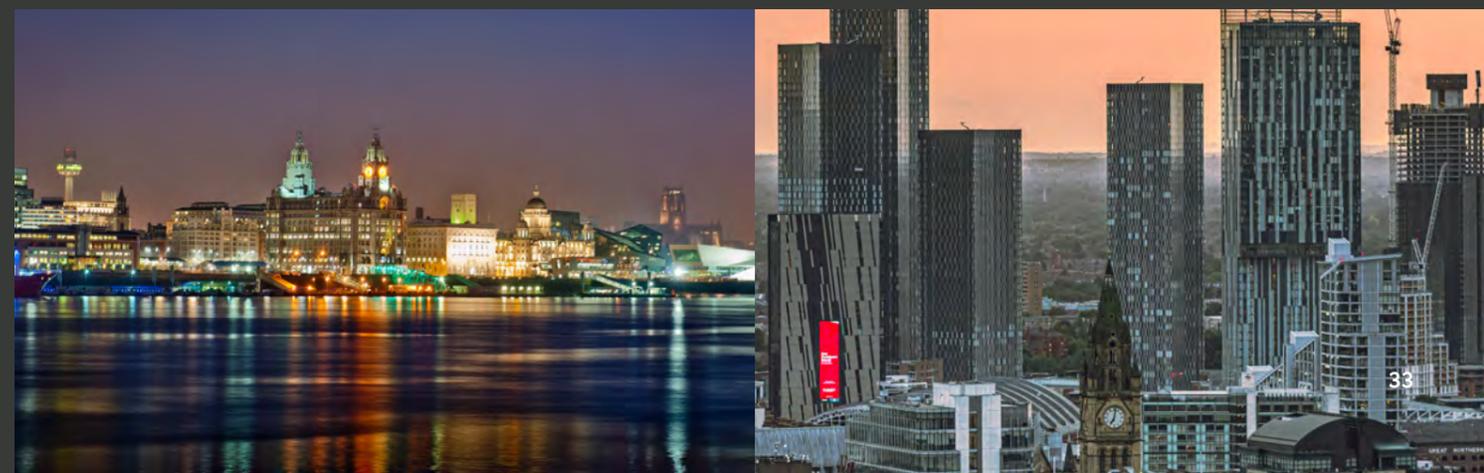


40

MINUTES DRIVE-TIME TO MANCHESTER



¹² St Helens Green Belt Review (2016)
¹³ Between 2016 and 2017
¹⁴ St Helens City Growth Strategy (2008-2018)
¹⁵ Invest in St Helens
¹⁶ Invest in St Helens



03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR EVOLUTION

<p>1086</p> <p>Newton-le-Willows (as Neweton) is mentioned in the Domesday Book</p>	<p>1552</p> <p>There is a reference to St Elyn's Chapel, 'consisting only of a 'challis and a lytle bell', a chapel of ease for travellers from Prescot to Warrington. The townships of Ecclestone, Windle, Parr & Sutton existed and the area is known for agriculture and mining</p>	<p>1726</p> <p>The Turnpike Road opens from Liverpool to Prescot, providing connections to St Helens</p>	<p>1757</p> <p>The St. Helens / Sankey Canal opens, built by Henry Berry (the first canal of the industrial age)</p>
<p>1829</p> <p>Mr Josias C. Gamble founds a chemical works</p>	<p>1826</p> <p>Pilkington Glass is founded</p>	<p>1798</p> <p>Lee Watson establishes the St. Helens iron Foundry (later bought by Robert Daglish)</p>	<p>1773</p> <p>The St. Helens / Sankey Canal opens, built by Henry Berry (the first canal of the industrial age)</p>
<p>1829</p> <p>The Rainhill Trials take place, to select which locomotive design will be used to operate the Liverpool & Manchester Railway. Stephenson's Rocket wins.</p>	<p>1830</p> <p>The Liverpool & Manchester Railway Line opens. It is the first intercity line in the world. It is carried over the Sankey Canal by the Sankey Viaduct – the first major railway viaduct in the world.</p>	<p>1842</p> <p>Thomas Beecham begins producing Beecham's Pills</p>	<p>1873</p> <p>St. Helens Rugby Football Club is founded</p>
<p>1974</p> <p>St. Helens becomes a Metropolitan Borough</p>	<p>1896</p> <p>The Gamble Institute (a technical institute) is opened</p>	<p>1889</p> <p>The County Borough of St. Helens is formed</p>	<p>1886/87</p> <p>Cannington Shaw begins production as the world's first regenerative furnace for the continuous production of glass bottles & Pilkington begins production for the continuous production of flat glass.</p>
<p>1993</p> <p>Parkside Colliery closes (the last deep colliery in the Lancashire Coalfield)</p>	<p>2000</p> <p>The World of Glass opens</p>	<p>2009</p> <p>Jaume Plensa's "Dream" statue is unveiled at the former Sutton Manor Colliery site</p>	<p>2012</p> <p>St. Helens Rugby League Club (Saints) move to Langtree Park (later renamed Totally Wicked Stadium)</p>



Beecham's Tower



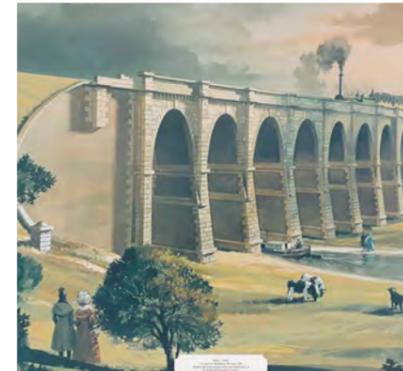
Pilkington, Grove Street Works 1879



Ravenhead Pit Plaque



Replica Rocket at Rainhill



Sankey Viaduct



The World of Glass

“I am a St Helens lad, born and bred. As a youngster, I grew up in an industrial powerhouse, a town even then I was proud of being known as the glass making capital of the world. When the time came for me to find a job, I followed my Father and my Grandfather before him, into the Glass Industry. Such was the nature of things in an era when the phrase “job for life” was common amongst the older generations. I owe much to the industry that gave me a good living, opportunities and the benefit of a University education.”

JOHN TABERN
CHAIR ST HELENS TOWNS FUND BOARD

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR EVOLUTION

The borough of St Helens derives its name from the chapel of St Elyn, which stood where the townships of Eccleston, Windle, Parr and Sutton met, in what is now St. Helens Town Centre. The area developed from the early modern period due to its coal deposits. The creation of the Sankey Canal (1757), England’s first modern canal, enabled coal to be transported to Liverpool and beyond, and was a catalyst for the development of the town centre. The southern part of the borough was scene of the 1829 Rainhill Locomotive Trials, won by Stephenson’s Rocket. The Grade I Listed Sankey Viaduct (1830) was the first major railway viaduct in the world, built to carry the Liverpool-Manchester Railway over the Sankey canal at Newton-le-willows.

St Helens became a centre for innovation in glass making, chemical production, and pharmaceuticals. By the mid-twentieth century, St Helens had:

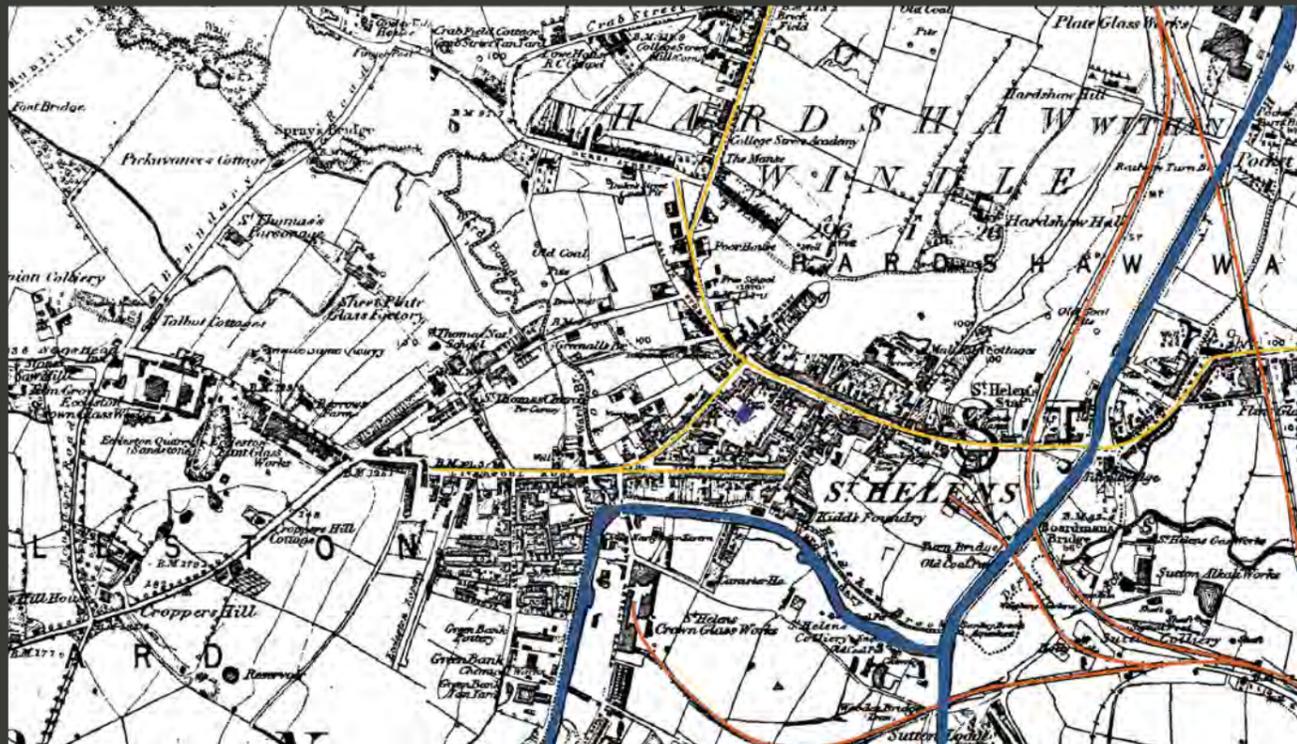


30,000
GLASS WORKERS



20,000
MINERS

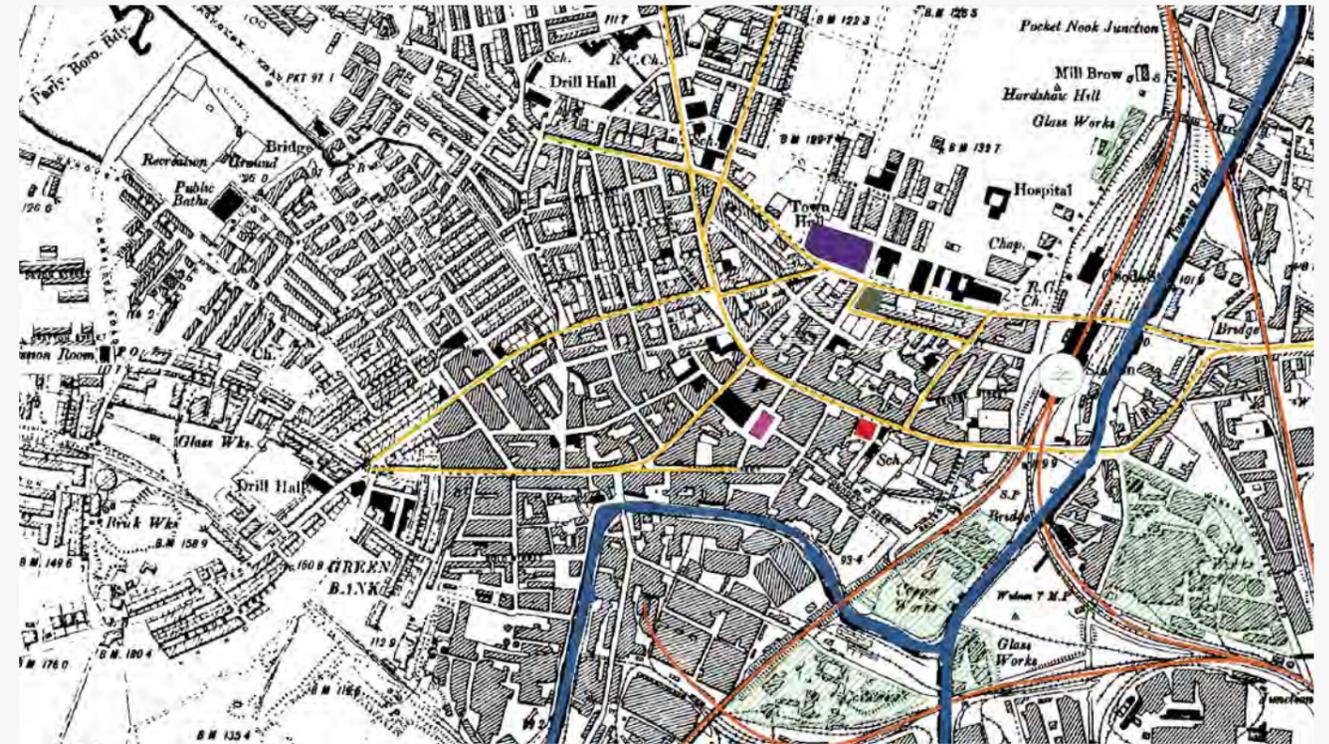
and many thousands more in other industries.



1850

The current day street pattern along Church Street is visible as are the railway lines and canal. The Town Hall is shown in a different location.

- CURRENT DAY STREET PATTERN
- TOWN HALL
- RAILWAYS
- CANAL



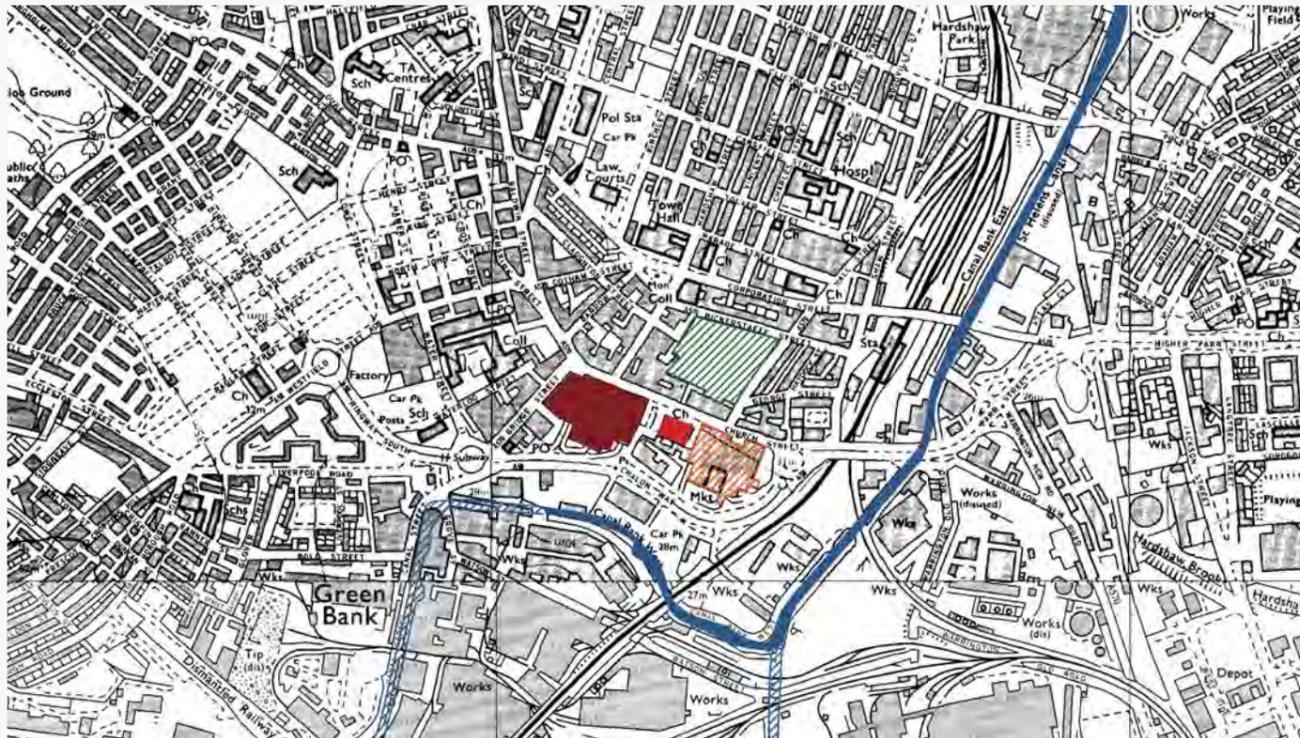
1890

The historic street pattern is clearly visible and remains to the current day. The town hall has now become the market and the Town Hall has been constructed in its current location along with the library and train station. The growth of the industries around the canal and railways can be clearly seen, notably: glass, copper, lead and the gas works.

- CURRENT DAY STREET PATTERN
- TOWN HALL
- RAILWAYS
- ⊙ RAILWAY STATION
- CANAL
- MARKET
- ST HELENS CHURCH
- GROWTH OF INDUSTRY
- LIBRARY

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR EVOLUTION



1980

The block containing the original market hall and square has been demolished as has the block to the east of St Helens Church. The Church Square shopping centre built. North of St Helens Parish Church has been cleared ready to construct The Hardshaw Centre. By the 1920s significant lengths of the canal have been filled in.

- CHURCH SQUARE SHOPPING CENTRE
- ST HELENS CHURCH
- BLOCK DEMOLISHED
- PLOT CLEARED FOR HARDSHAW CENTRE
- CANAL
- BACK FILLED CANAL

PRESENT DAY

The most significant changes over the past 40 years is the removal of industry and associated rail lines.



03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR PEOPLE

“St Helens - a place that exudes northern spirit – where our people are proud, they work hard, and are full of ingenuity and endeavour – but are also brave, kind, compassionate and blessed with an unbreakable sense of community”.

ANDREW DARRON
GROUNDWORK CHESHIRE, MERSEYSIDE AND LANCASHIRE
ST HELENS TOWNS FUND BOARD MEMBER



PAUL BLANCHARD, MULTIMESH UK

“St Helens is a historic place with a bright future. Past successes are the foundation for future significant growth in the industries and sectors that are important to the way we live now, including low carbon technologies, medical technologies, logistics, digital firms and our advanced manufacturing. The people of St Helens are its biggest asset – generous, practical and immensely supportive, St Helens firms will ensure that the community will benefit from Town Centre regeneration.”

TRACY MAWSON
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
ST HELENS CHAMBER



CORAL PRODUCTS PLC - AMBASSADORS



STEPHEN SINGLETON, EUROSOLVE

Our people have a strong sense of pride and are very loyal to the borough and the town, there is a plethora of close-knit resilient communities. They are proud of St Helens’ rich history and have a strong entrepreneurial and innovative spirit which is rooted in the town’s manufacturing past, and which continues to the present-day.

These views and aspirations of the local community are embedded within the TIP, clearly demonstrating the vision and projects have the support from those who will be impacted.

The sense of pride is a powerful asset, local people are fiercely protective of ‘their own’. Communities in St Helens are renowned for pulling together in times of crisis and need; the St Helens Together response to Covid-19 is a compelling example of this.

It is this sense of unbreakable community spirit that sets St Helens apart from its neighbours, creating a powerful collaborative approach that will be the driving force behind the success of Towns Fund.

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

TOWNS FUND BOUNDARY

The Towns Fund boundary broadly correlates to the ONS Major Towns and Cities boundary and encompasses all or part of the following wards¹⁷:

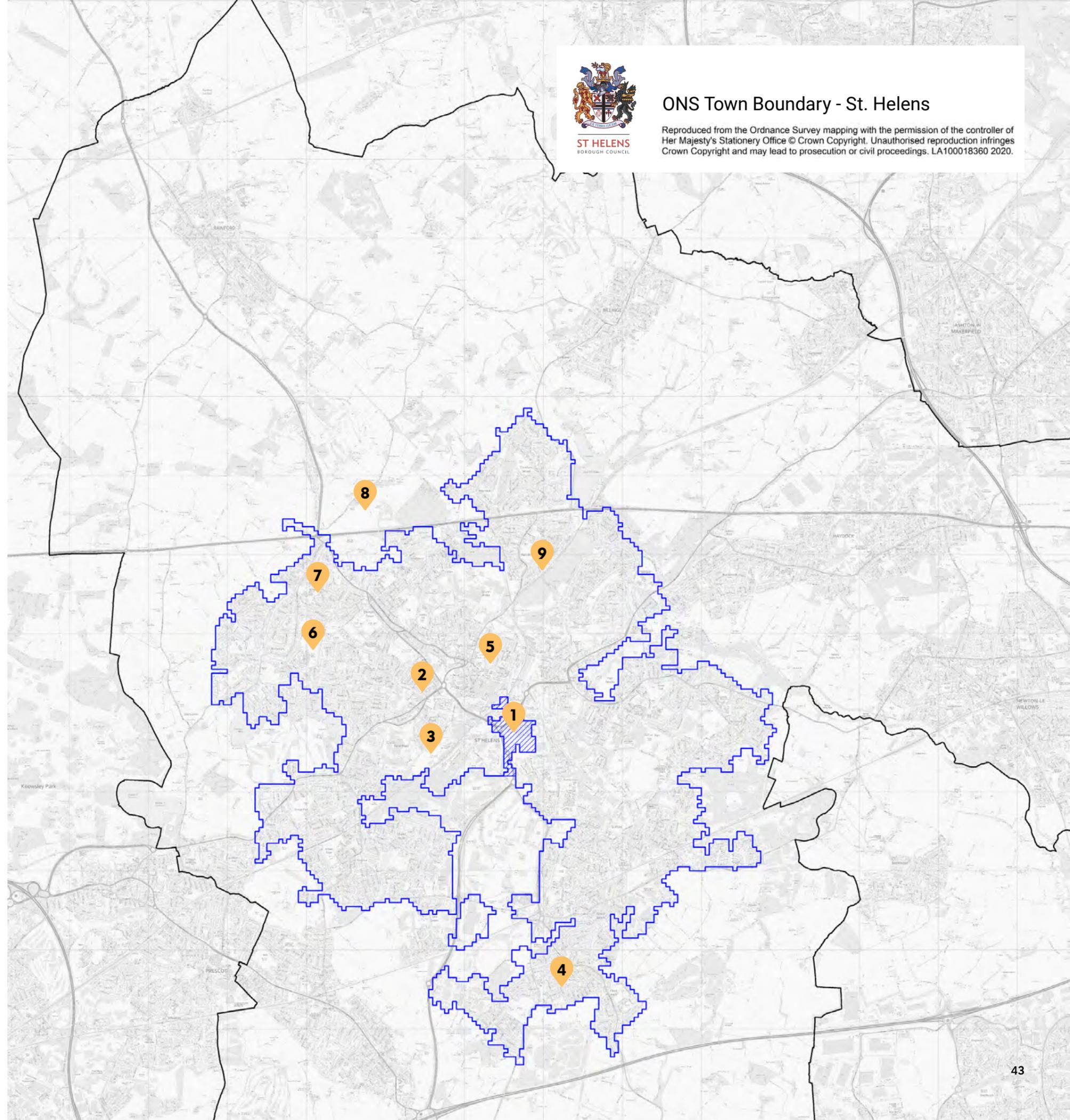
- 1 Town Centre
- 2 West Park
- 3 Thatto Heath
- 4 Bold
- 5 Parr
- 6 Eccleston
- 7 Windle
- 8 Moss Bank
- 9 Blackbrook

KEY

-  ONS Major Towns & Cities
-  St. Helens Borough Boundary

¹⁷ An amendment to the boundary was agreed with BEIS to incorporate the Glass Futures project given that this is a major project for the town (Figure x).

Figure 6: Towns Fund Boundary Plan (revised to accommodate Glass Futures Proposals) (Source: St Helens Council)



ONS Town Boundary - St. Helens

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03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

St Helens Town Centre is the focus for the Towns Fund investment as this will deliver the greatest catalytical impact for the borough and is a key priority for the community¹⁸. Each of the proposed projects complement one another.

- ST HELENS TOWN CENTRE
- GLASS FUTURES



Figure 7: St Helens Town Centre and Glass Futures

¹⁸ Based on stakeholder feedback in 2016/17 and latest engagement in 2020

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

Our strengths provide a strong baseline laying the foundations for future growth.

CULTURALLY CENTRED

Our cultural heritage provides uniqueness. The borough developed through its industrial roots in glassmaking and coal mining, providing home to key employers: **Pilkington, Beechams and the Darglish Foundry.** St Helens' motto, *Ex Terra Lucem: Out of Earth- Light*, reflects the borough's mining history.

This cultural heritage remains important today with the opportunity for enhanced place-making centred around key Listed buildings and the two Conservation Areas (Figure 8).

- Listed Buildings
- Key Buildings
- ▨ Conservation Areas
- ① Church of St Helens (Grade II Listed)
- ② Quaker Meeting House (Grade II Listed)
- ③ Former no. 9 Tank House (Grade II* Listed and Scheduled Ancient Monument)
- ④ No. 7 Bottle Shop, Cannington Shaw (Grade II Listed, Scheduled Ancient Monument, Heritage at risk register)
- ⑤ St Mary's Lowe House, (Grade II Listed)

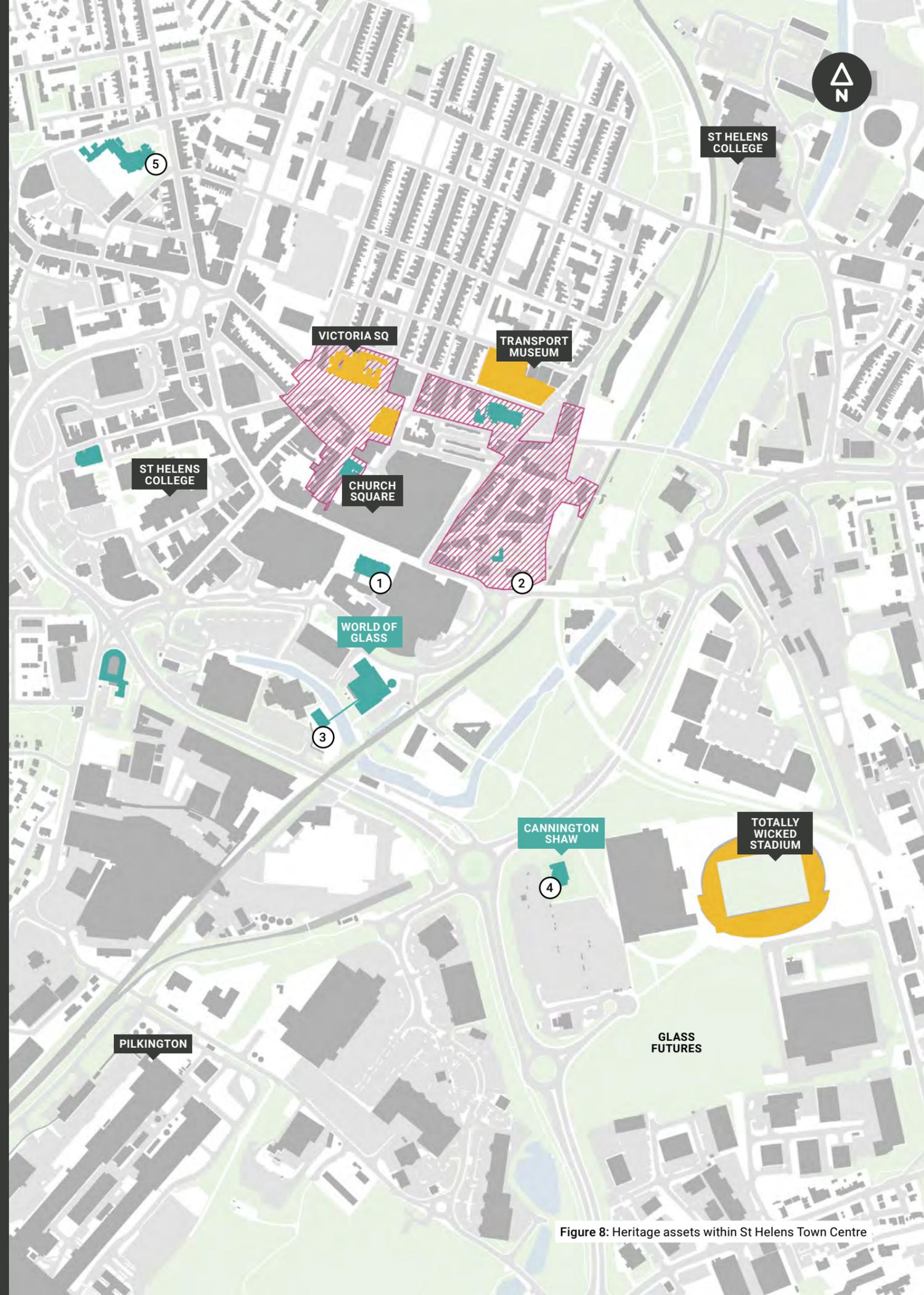


Figure 8: Heritage assets within St Helens Town Centre

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

Arts and culture are important to the borough. It was the first borough of culture in the Liverpool City Region in 2018 and will be in 2023.

It is a *'hotbed of creativity'*¹⁹ with Heart of Glass, which focuses on socially engaged art, and the Council's Arts in Libraries programme securing National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status. Other important cultural assets include the Citadel and The Theatre Royal, and organisations such as The World of Glass, MD Productions, Platform Studios and Citadel Arts.

There is the opportunity to create the town as an art centre, delivering public art, heritage trails and events over the next ten years²⁰.

THE WORLD OF GLASS



MORE THAN

46,000



JOBS RELY ON THE HERITAGE ECONOMY IN THE NORTH WEST²¹

HERITAGE ATTRACTED MORE THAN

25M



VISITS TO THE NW IN 2019, GENERATING REVENUES OF

£1.62BN

²²

ENGAGEMENT IN THE ARTS IN ST HELENS IS IMPROVING – INCREASING FROM 31% IN 2014 TO NOW OVER



50%

OF THE POPULATION BEING ENGAGED.²³

OVER

7,000



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN ST HELENS ENGAGED WITH ARTS & CULTURE THROUGH THE 'DEAR ST HELENS' PROJECT.

BETWEEN 2014 AND 2020, HEART OF GLASS DELIVERED MORE THAN

565



WORKSHOPS, EVENTS AND PROJECTS AND COMMISSIONED **677 ARTISTS** TO ACTIVATE NEW SPACES AND PARTNERSHIPS

¹⁹ St Helens Storybook (2017)

²⁰ St Helens Borough Heritage Opportunities, June 2019 and St Helens Borough Arts Strategy, July 2020

²¹ Historic England (2019) Heritage and the Economy

²² ibid

²³ Based on Active Lives Survey data between 2014 and 2020

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

HOME TO
AWARD-WINNING
 BUSINESSES AND
 A GROWING
 ECONOMY

PILKINGTON GLASS



St Helens provides home to award-winning businesses in manufacturing and digital technologies. Many choose St Helens because of its unrivalled position, connectivity and access to a large skilled workforce. St Helens is a **'Making Town'**, known for glass production and innovation, engineering and manufacturing, materials science, logistics, advanced manufacturing, recycling and the circular economy. Our health and social care sector also has potential for employment growth.

4,780



BUSINESSES IN ST HELENS INCLUDING



Sainsbury's



TATA STEEL



NUMEROUS SMES ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO A BOOMING BUSINESS COMMUNITY²⁴

5,000+



NEW JOBS HAVE BEEN CREATED WITHIN THE LOGISTICS AND DISTRIBUTION SECTOR AND MAJOR OPERATORS INCLUDING



²⁴ UK Business Counts (2020) NOMIS

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

St Helens benefits from a growing economy

OVER

75%



OF WORKING AGE ADULTS ARE IN WORK, ALMOST **5,000 MORE** THAN 5 YEARS AGO.

A STRONG

ASSET BASE²⁶

WITH A GOOD DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR²⁷

16-25



YEAR OLDS IN ST. HELENS HAVE A HIGHER ECONOMIC ACTIVITY RATE THAN NATIONALLY²⁵

ON AVERAGE,

12

NEW FIRMS START IN THE BOROUGH EACH MONTH



²⁵ PROMIS Report December 2020

²⁶ Manufacturing, transportation & storage, wholesale & retail and administrative/support services

²⁷ St. Helens has c. 15% less employed in public sector than is the case nationally

²⁸ Coral Products, Klockner Pentaplast

²⁹ Heptron, 2DHeat

³⁰ Firms include: The Filter Design Company (also known as Core Protection Systems); Inovus



MANUFACTURING

St Helens' advanced manufacturing sector is a critical driver of jobs and economic prosperity. There is innovation for recycled plastics manufacturing²⁸ and growth potential in the low carbon sector²⁹. This 'restructured' manufacturing sector is showing signs of growth (GVA).



DIGITAL & CREATIVE

St Helens benefits from close proximity to the digital powerhouses of Liverpool and Manchester, and as part of the Liverpool City Region. LCR has strengths in AI/high-performance computing (HPC), digital materials chemistry/advanced manufacturing, and infection control/health innovation.



LOGISTICS & DISTRIBUTION

At the heart of the M6 growth corridor it has strong growth prospects in logistics which has benefited from employment growth over recent years, and particularly as a result of Covid.



HEALTHCARE

St Helens has medical technology manufacturers which are growing rapidly³⁰.

HOME TO OVER

300



MANUFACTURING BUSINESSES, EMPLOYING

6,000

 PEOPLE

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION HAS A COMBINED DIGITAL GVA OF

£359M



NGF



WINCANTON

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

EDUCATION
AND SKILLS

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

High quality teaching institutions are within the heart of the town centre. St Helens College offers vocational courses and apprenticeships, modern teaching facilities and prides itself on 'Connecting Classroom to Career' for students. It specialises in growth sectors³¹ and established the Northern Logistics Academy in December 2016.

The University Centre provides Higher National Certificates and Diplomas, Foundation Degrees and Honours Degrees and has developed strong links with the University of Chester and University of Central Lancashire (UCLan).

Carmel College is regionally and nationally outstanding.

ST HELENS CHAMBER

APPROXIMATELY

8,000



STUDENTS HAVE DEVELOPED STRONG LINKS WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER AND UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL LANCASHIRE (UCLAN).

APPROXIMATELY

3,000



STUDENTS ARE ENROLLED AT ST HELENS COLLEGE

THE CHAMBER DELIVERS APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS TO MORE THAN

1,500



PEOPLE EACH YEAR.

WAYS TO WORK HAS HELPED OVER

100



LOCAL PEOPLE INTO WORK DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.

ST HELENS CHAMBER

St Helens Chamber is one of the most successful large social enterprises in the country, with over 100 staff based in a flagship business incubator building and three other sites in St Helens and Liverpool. St Helens Chamber is a Membership organisation, the Growth Hub for St Helens, and provides several business support and business start-up programmes.

WAYS TO WORK

Ways to Work - a successful employment and skills programme secures jobs and training opportunities for the hardest to reach groups of adults in the borough.

³¹ including advanced manufacturing, creative & digital, low carbon, health & life sciences and the visitor economy

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS



ST HELENS CARES

St Helens Cares (established in 2018) is a nationally recognised approach to delivering health and care and provides a locality-based approach to tackle health deprivation with a wide range of partners.³² Future proposals are to deliver an Integrated Care Partnership model.

CONNECTIVITY

A key driver is St Helens' position on the strategic road network and its excellent connectivity to large urban populations, including the cities of Manchester and Liverpool. It is less than 30 minutes by train to Liverpool and has strong bus connections within the borough and to Liverpool. SuperPort has attracted over £500m of transport investment into the City Region supporting logistics and road freight operations; a number of these businesses have chosen St Helens as their base.



GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Over half of the borough is rural or semi-rural benefiting from an extensive network of countryside and greenspaces, including 120 designated Local Wildlife Sites. Victoria Park in Windle secured Green Flag status in 2019 and Carr Mill Dam provides the biggest inland body of water in Merseyside. Public realm is also within the more urban settings including the Sankey Canal and Vera Page Park in the town centre.

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

OUR STRENGTHS

STRATEGIC
DEVELOPMENT
SITES AND
OPPORTUNITIES

We have key strategic development sites to support our economic growth ambitions. These do not require Towns Funding but will complement the projects in the Town Investment Plan (TIP) delivering sustained economic growth over the next 20 years.

GLASS FUTURES PHASE 1/FOUNDATION INDUSTRIES

St Helens Council and Glass Futures are working in partnership to deliver a Global Centre of Glass Excellence on the former United Glass site. The project is supported by UKRI, Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, St Helens Council and the industrial partners to Glass Futures. Phase 1 will be the world's only open access sustainable research and development glass centre, due on site in April 2021, scheduled for completion in Autumn/Winter 2022.

It will drive the decarbonising strategy for the glass industry providing the technical solutions and reducing sector emissions by at least 10%.

The facility will retain demonstration manufacturing capabilities and decarbonise the high-temperature industrial processes. The St Helens spur of HyNet, to secure a dedicated low carbon fuel supply³³ for Glass Futures and the Foundation Industries Sector, is at business-case stage.

A Foundation Industries Campus, bringing together manufacturing activity, innovation and research & development centres is also on the horizon which could align with transformation proposals for the town centre.



GLASS FUTURES - CGI

“On behalf of Glass Futures and our partners, we wholly support the St Helens Town Investment Plan and specifically the proposal to bring forward a new advanced manufacturing facility in the medical glass sector to the town. It has arguably never been more important to support the UK medical industry and we look forward to playing our part in helping the country grow the economy following the global pandemic. We are proud to base our new Global Centre of Glass Excellence in St Helens and look forward to working with the Council and our industry partners to make this ‘phase 2’ project a huge success.”

RICHARD KATZ
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
GLASS FUTURES

03. INTRODUCING ST HELENS

COWLEY HILL

Comprises 42 ha former Pilkington UK Ltd site within 15-minutes of the town centre (800 metres). A planning application to deliver up to 1,100 dwellings, mixed use development and new public realm/greenspace is in the process of being determined³⁴. Cowley Hill, together with proposals to regenerate the town centre, provides an opportunity to increase the population of the town centre and create new family-housing.

DISTRICT HEATING NETWORK

Proposals to create a district heating network (DHN) in St Helens town centre are aligned with the clean growth agenda³⁵. Using waste heat from Pilkington Greengate Glassworks creating clusters within the town centre, it will provide heating to public-sector buildings, affordable housing schemes and future connections to growth areas³⁶.

LCR BACKHAUL NETWORK

A city regional network of high capacity fibre and duct cabling that will connect several transatlantic cable landing and major economic assets. It will improve the LCR fibre connectivity to bolster long-term productivity, increase the attractiveness of the LCR for investment and as a place to live.

It will act as a 'open access' platform for telecoms service providers to develop additional fibre capacity ('Local Loops') to provide fibre capacity to homes and businesses.

A joint venture partner is being procured and launched in spring 2021.

OMEGA SOUTH WESTERN EXTENSION

The Omega site (31 ha) proposes to extend the existing Omega Logistics Park³⁷ into St Helens' administrative boundary, building on the success of this logistics hub and create circa 1,900 new jobs³⁸.



PARKSIDE EAST SUPERHUB & RAILFREIGHT INTERCHANGE

A 198 ha strategically positioned development site with rail connectivity to create a new logistics Superhub with a railfreight interchange. It will provide multi-modal connectivity to the Port of Liverpool and to other national and global locations. The Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) will create economic, employment and regeneration benefits. It will contribute to economic recovery, help to build export potential, utilise and improve the local skills base, and bolster the area's manufacturing and other key growth sectors.

³⁵ This will not be funded through Towns Funding given the projected delivery programme

³⁶ Including Glass Futures, Town Centre Regeneration & Cowley Hill

³⁷ Sited at Junction 8 M62, Omega sits within Warrington Borough Council's administrative boundary providing predominately B2/B8 employment uses given its strategic location to the motorway network and Port of Liverpool.

³⁸ Planning application approved at Planning Committee in October 2020 but has been called in for a formal decision by the SoS.

04

KEY

CHALLENGES,

OPPORTUNITIES

AND EVIDENCE

OF NEED



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

Key challenges and opportunities have been identified through discussions with Board Members³⁹, analysis of socio-economic data, and builds upon community engagement feedback⁴⁰. These have been categorised into the five intervention framework categories which also formed the basis of Board Member and Council officer focus groups

THE WORLD OF GLASS



URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE



CULTURE & HERITAGE



EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH



TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

³⁹ See Appendix B for list of Board Members

⁴⁰ as part of MyTown, the Borough strategy work, Big Conversation and Draft Local Plan consultation

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

TOWN CENTRE HEALTH-CHECK

St Helens town centre has suffered from declining footfall and market share of comparison goods. Previously the town was very vibrant and benefited from loyal shoppers. A perfect storm with the introduction of out-of-town retail parks⁴¹, the closure of Marks & Spencer's in March 2019, Topshop in July 2019 and the broader macro trends of a shift to online retail has badly impacted the town centre. The high street is over-stocked in terms of retail quantum, has an over-supply of lower value shops, and there is a need to create a broader experiential offer to entice people back into the town centre.



BETWEEN 2011 AND 2016 THERE WAS A REDUCTION IN MARKET SHARE OF

15.6%



FOR CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR⁴²

IN 2018 LESS THAN A

QUARTER



OF RESPONDENTS VISITED THE TOWN CENTRE AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK

18.1%



AND TWO THIRDS OF RESPONDENTS NOTED THE OPPORTUNITY TO IMPROVE THE TOWN CENTRE AS AN EVENING DESTINATION⁴³.

THE MARKET HAS

51%



OCCUPANCY AND DECLINING FOOTFALL.

VACANT SHOPS INCREASED FROM

12.8% - 15.8%

(2011) (2016)⁴⁴

GREATER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE VACANCY RATES⁴⁵.

⁴¹ offering convenience and free car parking

⁴² WYG (2018) St Helens Retail and Leisure Study, January 2018 Update

⁴³ Ibid- 66% of respondents stated they wouldn't visit St Helens town centre in the evening (2018 study).

⁴⁴ WYG (2018) St Helens Retail and Leisure Study, January 2018 Update

⁴⁵ 11.2%

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

“Layout and structure of town centre needs a total re-think! Need to make it easier for small retail & food/drink businesses to thrive with smaller retail units and improved look and feel.”

“There needs to be a town centre redesign to make the area attractive – needs to be less shops (we can’t fill them), cheaper business rates to attract in independent businesses, improved environment with more greenery and landscaping, plus some places to sit.”

“Safe outdoor spaces are essential to young children and their families to stay happy and healthy.”



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

QUALITY OF BUILT-ENVIRONMENT

The quality of the built environment and cohesiveness within the town centre is poor. Assets are disparate and disconnected; wayfinding is lacking, and public spaces do not achieve their full potential nor encourage dwell-time.

200 HA



OF BROWNFIELD LAND IN THE BOROUGH⁴⁶ COULD BE DEVELOPED

ALMOST

10 HA



OF BROWNFIELD LAND IS IN THE TOWN CENTRE

HOUSING OFFER

Town Centre housing is generally low quality, with little alternative to the existing terraced stock which borders the town centre, to the north⁴⁷. The housing stock needs to better reflect local need—appealing to a new demographic, addressing local affordability and provide alternative tenures.

The borough has experienced housing growth over recent years, but new build stock has been focused in affluent areas. Delivering economic growth must be alongside an improved housing and providing sites for SME developers and Registered Providers.

⁴⁶ St Helens Council (2019) Brownfield Land Register

⁴⁷ 77.4% of households in WA9/WA10 live in either terraced or semi-detached dwellings (Source: Experian)

ST HELENS HAS A HIGHER PROPORTION OF YOUNGER HOUSEHOLDS, SINGLE-PERSON RENTERS AND HOUSEHOLDS WITH LIMITED BUDGETS THAN THE NORTH WEST AVERAGE⁴⁸

TRENDS FORECAST AN INCREASED DEMAND FOR PRIVATE RENTED OPTIONS⁴⁹, AND SMALLER DWELLINGS, PARTICULARLY IN THE TOWN CENTRE⁵⁰.

ST HELENS REQUIRES

514

DWELLINGS PER ANNUM⁵¹ INCLUDING

117

AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS.

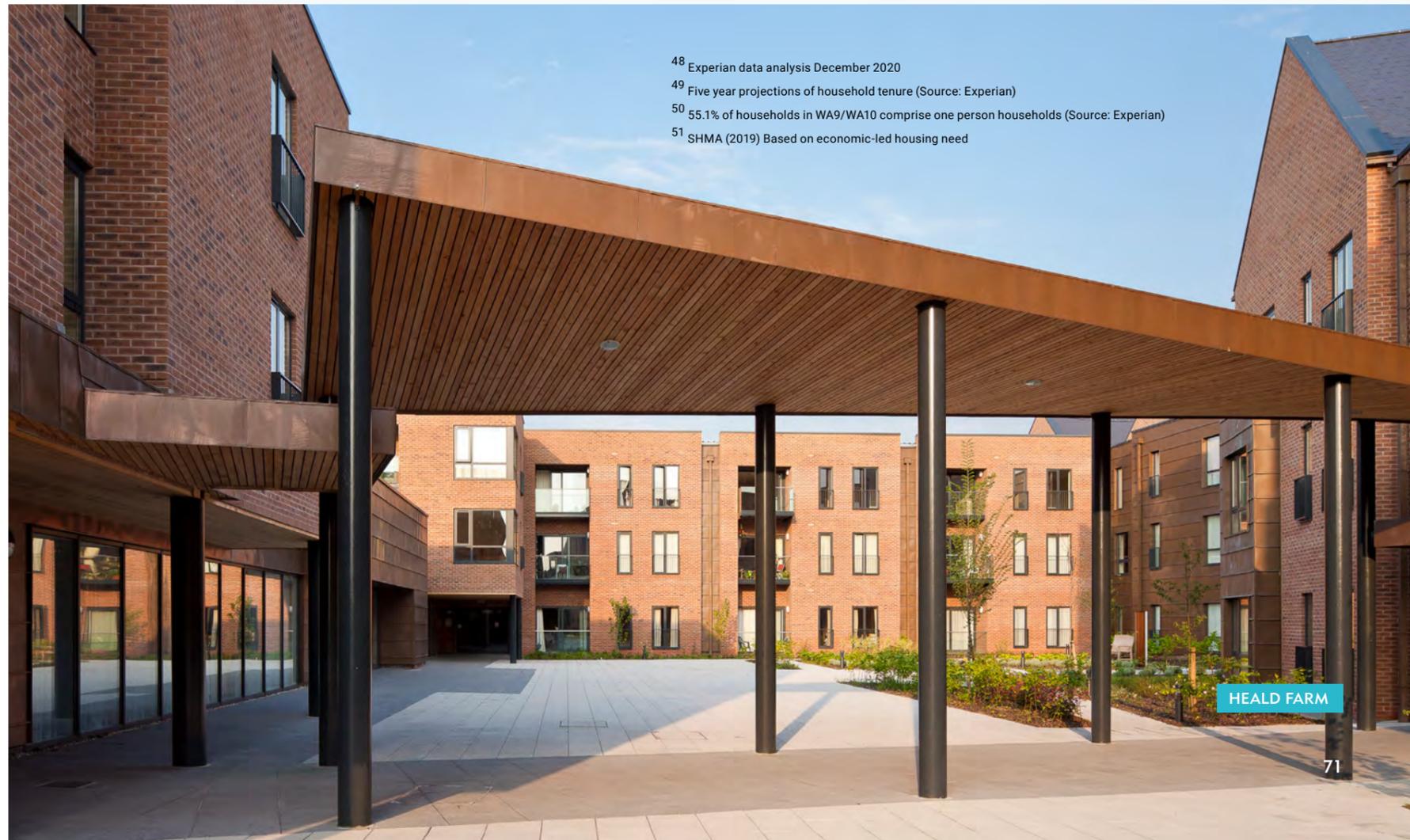


⁴⁸ Experian data analysis December 2020

⁴⁹ Five year projections of household tenure (Source: Experian)

⁵⁰ 55.1% of households in WA9/WA10 comprise one person households (Source: Experian)

⁵¹ SHMA (2019) Based on economic-led housing need



HEALD FARM

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

COVID IMPACT

Government's decision to close non-essential retail outlets during lockdown has impacted both retail and leisure.

It is estimated that there has been a reduction in retail sales of -7.5% in 2020 in St Helens, compared with 3.4 % growth in 2019, increasing already struggling or heavily indebted retailers at risk of falling into administration, leading to higher vacancy rates.

Figure 9: Five Year Projections of Household Tenure (Source: Experian)

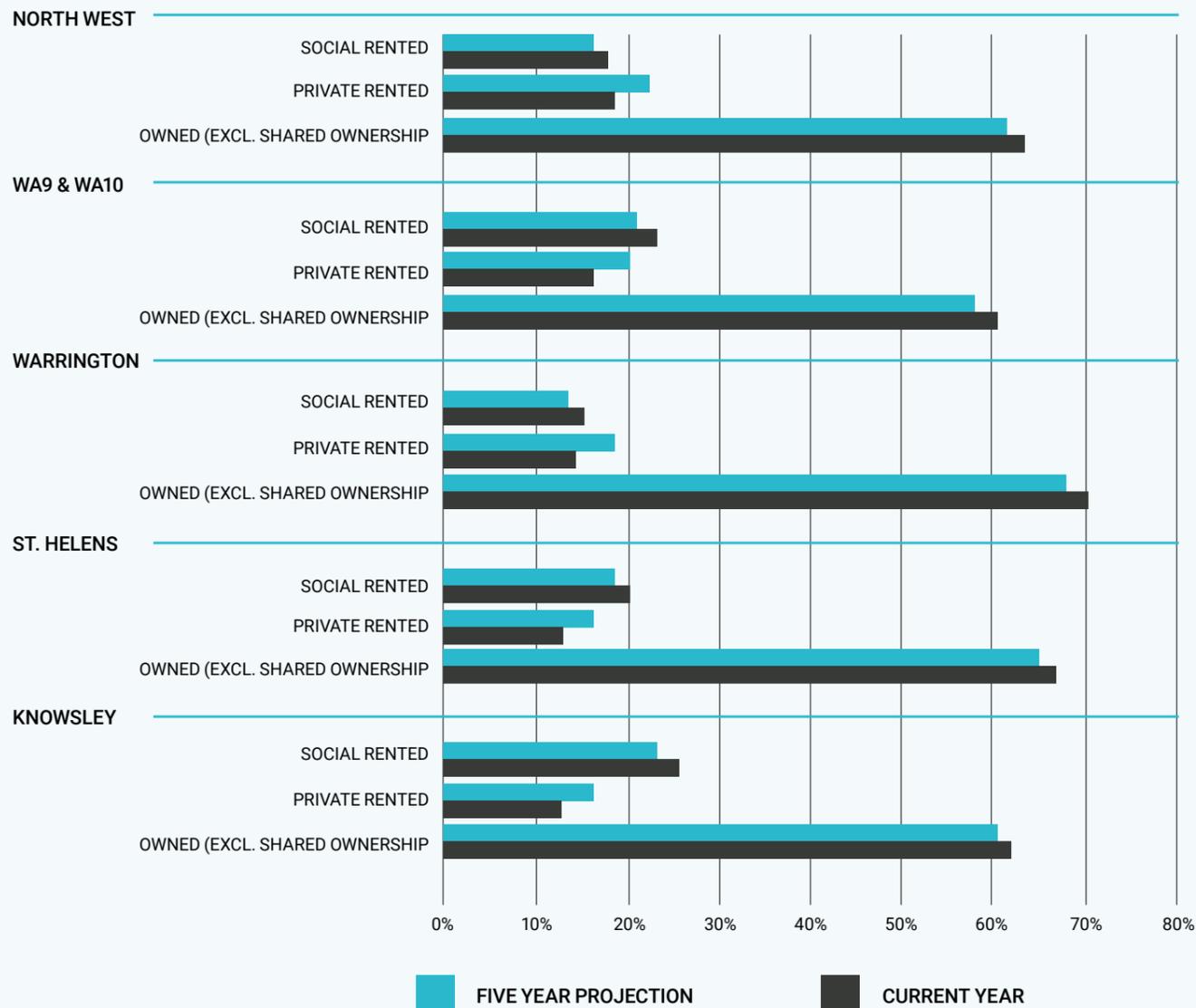
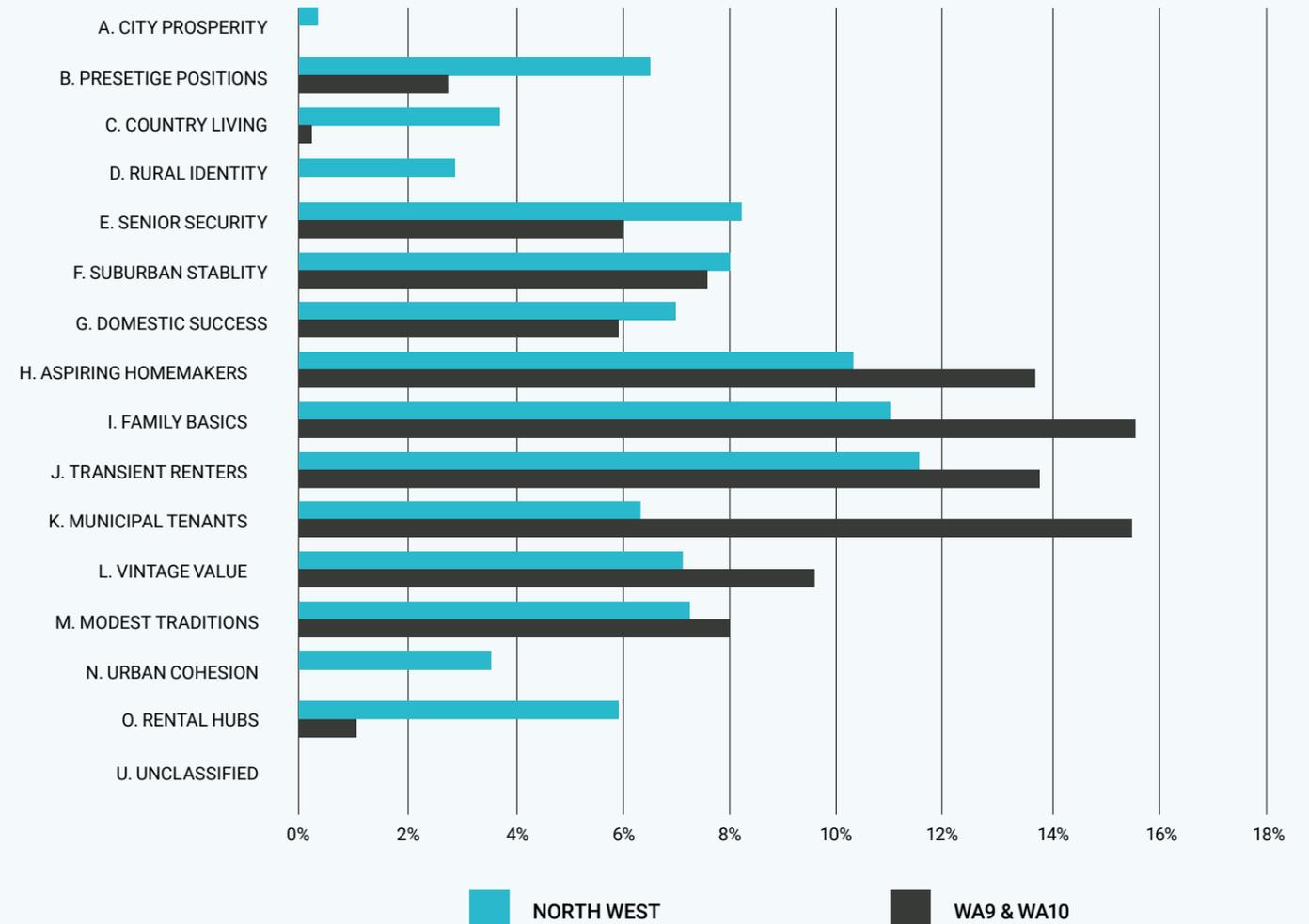


Figure 10: Socio-demographic analysis of St Helens' households compared to the North West, based on Mosaic classification data (Source: Experian)



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Introducing a mix of new uses and diversifying the traditional retail offer through 'shrinking and linking' the town centre. This will include repurposing monolithic shopping centres which over-dominate the built form.



2

Creating amenity and experience so people want to visit and spend time in St Helens, are encouraged to dwell, spend their disposable income and create a vibrant high street.



3

Positively changing the perceptions of the town centre, through meanwhile uses to show change is happening.



4

Delivering a quality town centre living offer to provide an alternative for those wanting to experience the new amenities in the town centre. This will appeal to a new socio-demographic and create a critical mass of new population who will invest in their local high street.



5

The availability of development sites and the potential of brownfield land to enable growth with minimal environmental impact.



6

Improving place-making and redeveloping Council-owned assets including heritage buildings and brownfield land to best effect.

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

CULTURE & HERITAGE

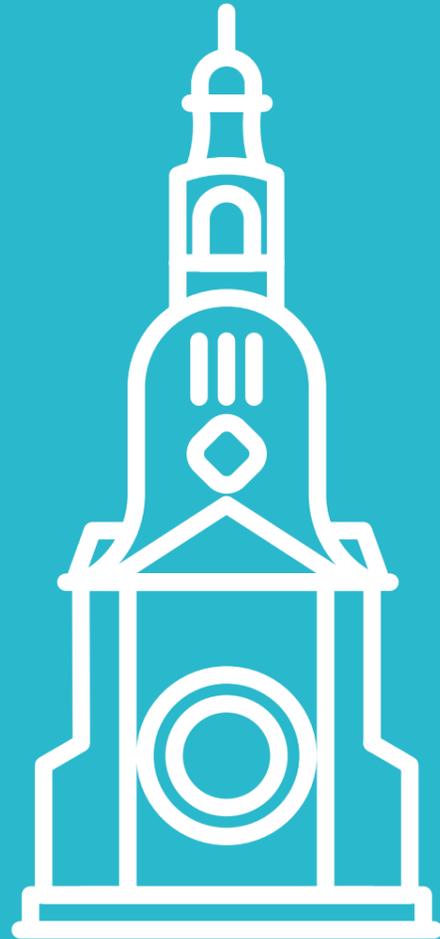
Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

POOR VISITOR EXPERIENCE & PLACE-MAKING

St Helens has a rich history and culture but the overall offer and experience is lacking. Cultural assets are under-appreciated and have suffered from a lack of investment.

Some key assets are hidden from view or have been over-taken by insensitive modern developments:

- **Sankey Canal**, the UK's first modern industrial canal, is obscured by a multi-storey car park and dominated by surface car parking.
- **Cannington Shaw**⁵², the world's first regenerative furnace for glass production, is on the Heritage at Risk Register and has been left to ruin.
- **The World of Glass (TWOG)**, a millennium project which hosts the town's glass heritage has suffered from falling visitor numbers and is disconnected to the heart of the town through poor quality public realm and wayfinding.
- **The Gamble**, an important community asset, and home to the St Helens' archive requires remedial works.



⁵² Scheduled Ancient Monument and Grade II Listed



“Utilising parts of the town centre to develop a historical zone would bring in both investment and footfall – there is so much to do as it would be a diverse feature and something to build a new future for the town centre.”

“Foster pride and invest in town’s heritage – using canals, glass museum etc. all together we could have a heritage industry...providing jobs, pride and further investment – History has become a growth industry let’s build on ours.”

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

CULTURE & HERITAGE

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

LACK OF CULTURAL COHESIVENESS

There are key cultural groups within the town and cultural assets but poor coordination between them. Cultural assets are physically disparate and there is no 'St Helens' Story' as an overarching narrative to weave these assets together.

FALLING VISITOR NUMBERS & LOSS OF INCOME

Attractions have suffered from falling visitor numbers, exacerbated due to Covid. Income has been impacted, and whilst cultural funding will assist in the short-term⁵³, these assets need to be re-purposed and repositioned to be sustainable and viable.

- **The Citadel** was a popular music venue and theatre but closed in June 2019. Citadel Arts offers an arts and culture programme now relying on pop-up locations.
- **The World of Glass** has suffered from falling visitor numbers, closures as a result of Covid and declining income. Income in 2020 declined by almost 88% compared to 2019⁵⁴, despite relocating the town's library into the building. The museum offer is dated and the building (which includes the Grade II* listed Jubilee Cone building) needs repair.

COVID IMPACT

Venues have been forced to close and there is a major strain on the Council's budget to support this sector. Cultural organisations have been the recipients of grant funding⁵⁵ to help them during Covid.

⁵³ £757,000 grant funding has been provided since March 2020

⁵⁴ TWOG Forward Plan (2020)

⁵⁵ ibid

“There is next to no opportunity to showcase your art or develop yourself as an artist. Given the popularity of art in the town this is absurd, and more should be done to help support local artists.”

“More money to be used on actual music venues – there is a fair-sized music backing in St. Helens and talent coming through, one way to help the town would for music to be taken seriously, giving an increase in jobs and tourism from further afield.”

“Encourage people to visit and create a centre for the community.”



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

CULTURE &
HERITAGE

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Using heritage and culture as a key place-making opportunity for the town – heritage is part of St Helens' DNA and needs to be showcased appropriately.



2

Providing stronger links between the heritage and cultural assets, encouraging greater partnership working between the cultural organisations within the borough – including the two NPOs⁵⁶ and TWOG



3

Building on the cultural opportunities in the borough and North West – including the Shakespeare of the North in 2022 and St Helens as the Borough of Culture in 2023.



4

To support economic recovery and address health & wellbeing inequalities. Events such as 'A Mad Love Takeover Festival' in 2019 focused on the links between art and mental health.



5

Delivering a comprehensive heritage, culture and arts strategy for the borough.



6

Becoming a Centre of Excellence for socially-engaged art – building on the 'Creative People and Places' Programme (Heart of Glass) and investing in artists, support programmes and events⁵⁷.

⁵⁶ Heart of Glass, Libraries Service⁵⁷ Take Over festival

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES & PRODUCTIVITY

St Helens has comparatively high levels of unemployment compared to England and experienced a decline in employment growth between 2015 and 2018⁵⁸. St Helens has a higher proportion of claimants than the average for Great Britain⁵⁹ and more workless households⁶⁰.

Whilst the number of economically active people is higher than the national average⁶¹, St Helens has a lower productivity rate, fewer people in higher value employment sectors given the sectoral make-up of the borough, and gross weekly pay is below the regional and national average⁶².

High level professional jobs are underrepresented, and the labour market is characterised by low skilled occupations. There is considerable commute out to other regions for work, including Warrington, Liverpool, Knowsley and Wigan.

“Need to invest in the community into the town, how we operate and how we make a small hardworking town shine, because the working people of St. Helen’s make the town rotate and we need to support that.”

“Help tackle the increasing unemployment rates and homelessness.”



⁵⁸ -2.3% employment growth compared to 3.7% national average (Source: Business Register and Employment Survey 2018)

⁵⁹ 6.9% in St Helens compared to 6.3% for Great Britain. ONS claimant count, October 2020

⁶⁰ 17.3% compared to 13.9% for GB (ONS annual population survey – Jan-Dec 2019)

⁶¹ 79.9% compared to 79.4% for Great Britain (ONS annual population survey – Jul 2019-Jun 2020)

⁶² ONS annual survey of hours and earnings (2020) – St Helens residents earn £536.50 per week o average compared to £560.30 for the North West and £587.10 for Great Britain)

OVER

7,615

IN ST HELENS IN NOVEMBER 2020 EQUATING TO

6.9%

OF 16-64 YEAR OLDS⁶³



THE PERCENTAGE OF CLAIMANTS IN ST HELENS IS

6.9%

COMPARED TO 6.3% FOR GREAT BRITAIN AS A WHOLE⁶⁴



OVER A QUARTER OF CHILDREN

25.2%

IN ST HELENS LIVE IN INCOME DEPRIVED FAMILIES⁶⁵



16.5%

OF THE WORKING AGE POPULATION IN ST HELENS IS EMPLOYED DEPRIVED⁶⁶



ST HELENS IS THE

9TH

MOST EMPLOYMENT DEPRIVED AUTHORITY⁶⁷

⁶³ Out of work benefits, NOMIS

⁶⁴ ONS claimant count, October 2020

⁶⁵ Indices of Deprivation 2019

⁶⁶ Indices of Deprivation, 2019

⁶⁷ Ibid 2019

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

SKILLS GAP

Those with NVQ level 4 and above is below the regional and national average. Productivity and skills gaps mean that St Helens’ residents are more vulnerable to the economic impacts of Covid, with a higher proportion (52.1%) of employees in the ‘at risk’ employment categories compared to the national average⁶⁸. Our jobs market is generally skewed towards a higher proportion of lower skilled jobs which has a cause and effect impact on skills retention⁶⁹.

Education and skills relative deprivation will worsen without investment. Our residents need to have the right skills to benefit from emerging and growth sectors. Poor educational performance limits progression into and skills availability in the labour market.

ST HELENS HAS

32.8%



OF THE POPULATION AT NVQ LEVEL 4 OR ABOVE, COMPARED TO 36.1% FOR THE NORTH WEST AND 40.3% FOR GREAT BRITAIN⁷⁰

OVER

30%



OF ST. HELENS’ LOWER LAYER SUPER OUTPUT AREAS (LSOAS) ARE IN THE MOST DEPRIVED 20% OF LSOAS IN ENGLAND.

Employers report a tightening of the labour market, with difficulty filling technical roles due to a shortage of qualified candidates and in lower level roles due to job readiness.

We need to develop, retain and attract skilled people, and encourage aspiration focusing on STEM subjects⁷¹. These skills combined with an entrepreneurial culture will deliver success in industry, research and innovation. We need to develop, retain and attract skilled people, and focus on STEM subjects. These skills combined with an entrepreneurial culture will deliver success in industry, research and innovation.

⁶⁸ Source: Business Register and Employment Survey, Grant Thornton 2018 and 2020. At risk sectors have been defined by having over 50% reduction in GDP, e.g. retail.

⁶⁹ 45% of St Helens’ population are in managerial and professional occupations compared to over 49% for Great Britain as a whole (NOMIS, Employment by Occupation, October 2019-September 2020)

⁷⁰ ONS annual population survey Jan-Dec 2019

⁷¹ science, technology, engineering and mathematics



“More access to education for adults[and] training so people can get employment.”

“We need to invest into our future children, for their education, their mental state and their support – we need to support the Children because they’re the future.”

“A youth and community hub would really help to bring footfall into the town centre and make it more vibrant.”

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

ASPIRATIONS AND CONFIDENCE

Local aspirations are low – echoed in the lower level of business start-ups. St Helens’ business base has grown at a slower rate than the North West and the national average. St Helens is ranked 303rd out of 317 local authorities in England for business density indicating a lack of resilience to an economic shock⁷².

PROVISION OF HIGH-QUALITY OFFICE STOCK AND CO-WORKING SPACE

The quality of office-stock provision in the Borough and town centre is poor. Lack of Grade A Office stock and latent demand, which has been building since the last office transaction at Mere Grange⁷³, means there is a potential opportunity for new provision and could reduce the net outflow of workers. Due to lack of suitable stock St Helens occupiers have relocated⁷⁴.

New office space needs to be matched with public realm enhancements, connectivity and an improved Food & Beverage (F&B) offer to secure the ‘battle for talent’.

The quality of office-stock provision in the Borough and town centre is poor. Lack of Grade A Office stock and latent demand, which has been building since the last office transaction at Mere Grange, means there is a potential opportunity for new provision and could reduce the net outflow of workers. Due to lack of suitable stock St Helens occupiers have relocated.

HEALTH DEPRIVATION

Ranked as the 26th most deprived local authority in England out of 317, St Helens’ relative position has deteriorated since the 2015. Nearly a quarter of St Helens neighbourhoods (LSOAs) lie within the most deprived 10% in England. Relative health and disability deprivation is very pronounced; 42% of St. Helens’ LSOAs in the most deprived 10% in England. There is significant inequality in life expectancy across different wards in St. Helens, with 10.4 years difference between the highest and lowest wards for men and 9.2 years difference for women.



“Mental health is a big issue in St Helens... which needs more stuff to support.”

RANKED AS THE
26TH
MOST DEPRIVED LOCAL
AUTHORITY IN ENGLAND OUT OF
317



OVER
40%
OF ST. HELENS’ LSOAs IN THE
MOST DEPRIVED 10% IN ENGLAND.



⁷² ONS UK Business counts, 2019

⁷³ 2 units totalling 5,523 sq ft were let in 2019 to Apollo Health Care (599 sqft) Mere 1 and Volker Rail (4,924 sqft) Mere 107/108 for £12.50 per sqft

⁷⁴ For example, Rapid EIP IT company to Liverpool and 360 Resourcing to Warrington (CBRE)

⁷⁵ Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

MEDICAL GLASS PRODUCTION

Given the Covid pandemic there is an increased focus on ensuring a robust UK-based supply chain to address our health needs. Glass Futures has prepared an initial feasibility study to investigate the supply of medical glass noting:

- The UK consumes between 150 million and 200 million vials for injectables medicines each year, but currently has no manufacturing capability for these.
- Vial manufacture in the UK is based on imported glass tubes.

COVID IMPACT

We are already seeing the heavy toll the pandemic has had on mental health. This is more pronounced in St Helens where levels of deprivation in relation to employment, education and social interaction with friends and family means that people are at greater risk of experiencing poor mental health.

THERE IS SIGNIFICANT INEQUALITY IN LIFE EXPECTANCY ACROSS DIFFERENT WARDS IN ST. HELENS, WITH

10.4 YEARS

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE HIGHEST AND

9.2 YEARS

DIFFERENCE FOR WOMEN.



ST HELENS CURRENTLY HAS THE

5TH

HIGHEST SUICIDE RATE IN ENGLAND AND WALES.



ST HELENS IS THE

8TH

MOST DEPRIVED AUTHORITY IN TERMS OF HEALTH DEPRIVATION AND DISABILITY⁷⁶



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

**EMPLOYMENT,
SKILLS & HEALTH**

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Co-ordinating action to strengthen labour market performance



2

Engagement with Liverpool City Region’s critical mass of innovation, science, research and university assets



3

Creating a net zero carbon sustainable circular system that recycles glass used in medical and healthcare back into high quality vials for injectables.



4

Creating a UK-focused supply chain for medical glass vials



5

Increasing our Social Enterprise sector to revitalise our local economy and develop enterprise and skills.



6

Boosting enterprise and improve rates of business start-ups and scale-ups



7

Driving improvements in English, maths and digital core skills



8

Developing R&D led solutions, products and services for reducing carbon and adopting sustainable technologies.



9

Building on St Helens Cares model to create a health hub within the town centre.

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

Our growth ambitions need to be supported by sustainable transport interventions and address connectivity issues.

POOR PEDESTRIAN & CYCLE PERMEABILITY

Local connectivity in terms of pedestrian and cycle-links is poor. The Town Centre's built form hinders permeability and visual sightlines, contributes to the underuse of public spaces⁷⁷ and the link between St Helens Central to the bus station is not obvious nor does it provide a sense of arrival⁷⁸. Vehicles take priority and is a difficult environment for pedestrians and cyclists to navigate.

A lack of dedicated cycling infrastructure causes risks to cyclists, specifically around the bus station and cycle routes are not linked to the wider network- making it difficult for cyclists to be able to navigate through town safely.



7%

OF RESIDENTS CYCLE AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK, BELOW THE LCR AVERAGE OF 13%⁷⁹



32%

OF ST HELENS' RESIDENTS DON'T CYCLE BUT WOULD LIKE TO⁸⁰



56%

THINK MORE CYCLING WOULD MAKE ST HELENS A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK⁸¹



72%

THINK SPACE SHOULD BE INCREASED FOR PEOPLE SOCIALISING, CYCLING AND WALKING ON THEIR LOCAL HIGH STREET⁸²



⁷⁷ Such as Victoria Square

⁷⁸ St Helens Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Review (2019)

⁷⁹ Bike Life 2019 – Summary Report (LCR CA)

⁸⁰ Bike Life 2019 – Summary Report (LCR CA)

⁸¹ ibid

⁸² ibid

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

BUS STATION CAPACITY AND ENVIRONMENT

Corporation Street and Bickerstaffe Street can become overrun with buses⁸³, contributing to the vehicular dominance of the streetscape. This poses a risk to passengers, where passengers alight directly on the road.

There is an imbalance in the number of services, with some stands very busy throughout the day whilst others are much less used. Improvements to the station would improve the public realm, its walking and cycling permeability, safety, and critically – improve connections to St Helens Central to encourage an uptake in rail use and reduce journey times associated with linked trips via bus and rail.

ST HELENS HAS A VERY HIGH PROPORTION OF TRIPS INTO THE TOWN CENTRE BY BUS, AT AROUND

26% & 31%



IN THE AM PEAK AND INTERPEAK RESPECTIVELY ⁸⁴

THE BUS ROUTE 10A BETWEEN ST HELENS TO LIVERPOOL HAS MORE THAN

2M PASSENGERS A YEAR



THE 10A ROUTE TAKES

24 MINUTES LONGER TODAY THAN IT DID THREE YEARS AGO ⁸⁵



⁸³ 118 buses per hour in both directions from Bickerstaffe Street

⁸⁴ Mott Macdonald (2016/17)

⁸⁵ Green Bus Routes Outline Business Case, July 2020, LCRCA/ Merseytravel

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

ENCOURAGING MODAL SHIFT

Relatively few trips are made on foot or by bike, and the town does not have high quality cycle routes connecting St Helens to key destinations in neighbouring areas.

There is poor connectivity between the bus and rail network, particularly the lack of a direct rail link from St Helens town centre into Manchester. There is the opportunity to provide better linkages and improved public realm between St Helens Central and the bus station, and, longer-term, the frequency of service that is currently offered⁸⁶.

Residents would like to see more government spending on public transport, cycling and walking

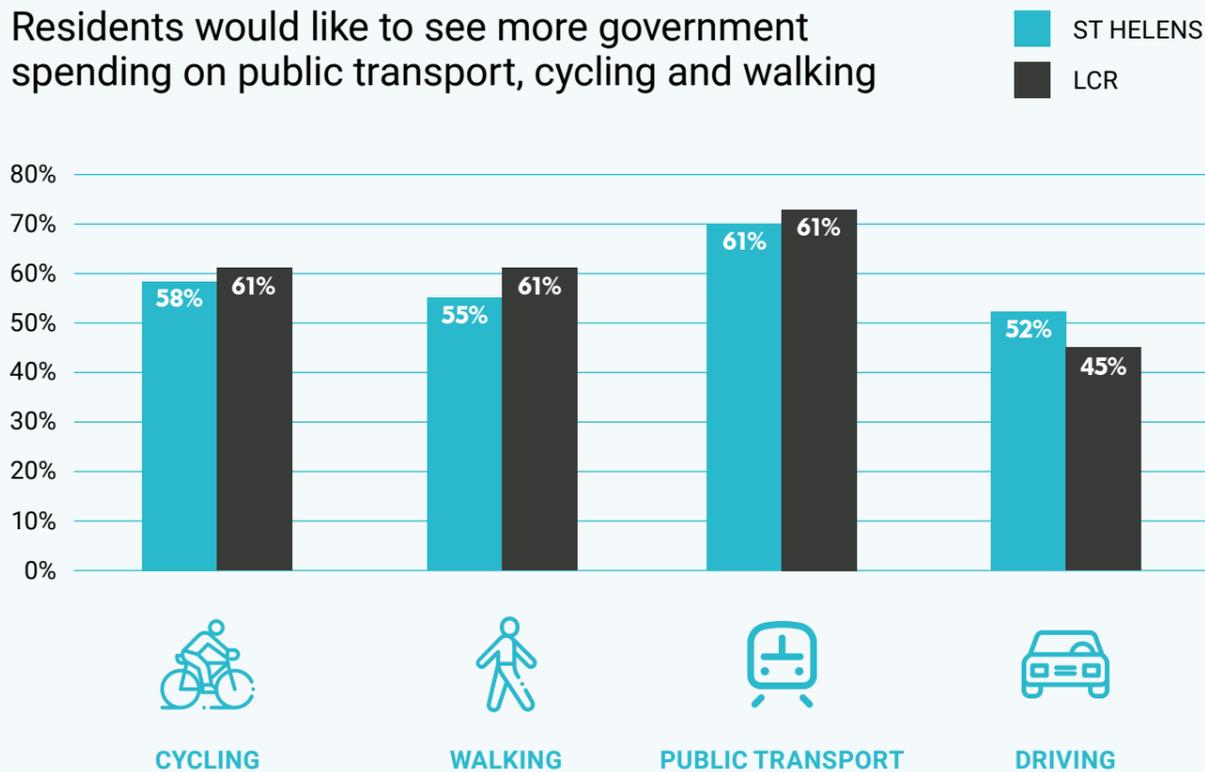


Figure11: St Helens' residents opinion as to how Government spending should be allocated (Source: LCR CA, 2019, Bike Life)

IN 2016/17 THERE WERE

19,000

DAILY TRIPS INTO THE TOWN CENTRE, BUT **53%** WERE UNDERTAKEN BY PRIVATE CAR.



THE REGIONAL AVERAGE OF

68.3%

DRIVING A CAR OR VAN FOR COMMUTING PURPOSES IS HIGHER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE OF **54%**⁸⁷



CYCLING ACROSS THE BOROUGH IS **LOWER** THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE AS A MEANS OF COMMUTING **(1.5% VERSUS 2.9%)**.



8.7%

OF PEOPLE IN ST HELENS WALK TO WORK COMPARED WITH **11.3% NATIONALLY**



OVER TWO FIFTHS

44%

ARE CONCERNED ABOUT SAFETY AND **75%** WOULD LIKE TO SEE SEGREGATED CYCLE TRACKS



THE PERCENTAGE COMMUTING BY TRAIN IN ST HELENS IS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE, AT

3% VERSUS 5.6% NATIONALLY



⁸⁶ Currently (pre-covid) there are 86 buses an hour from St Helens bus station and 6+ trains per hour from St Helens central.

⁸⁷ St Helens Local Plan Transport Impact Assessment, WSP, January 2019

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

CONCRETE COLLAR

The 'concrete collar'⁸⁸ constrains access, connectivity and trips into the town centre. Acting as a barrier to permeability between employment and residential areas to the south of the town centre it contributes to a reliance on commercial areas outside the town centre⁸⁹.

The A58 corridor is highly trafficked, with vehicles travelling over the speed limit. The dual carriageway and the large roundabout at A58 Parr Street and Peasley Cross Lane are difficult to navigate for pedestrians and cyclists. The A571 is also a busy route and has a lack of formal pedestrian crossing facilities.

COMBINED TWO-WAY FLOWS ON THE A58 IN THE AM AND PM PEAKS ARE

2,176 & 2,566

VEHICLES PER HOUR RESPECTIVELY ⁹⁰

COMBINED TWO-WAY FLOWS ON THE A571 IN THE AM AND PM PEAKS ARE

1,554 & 1,846

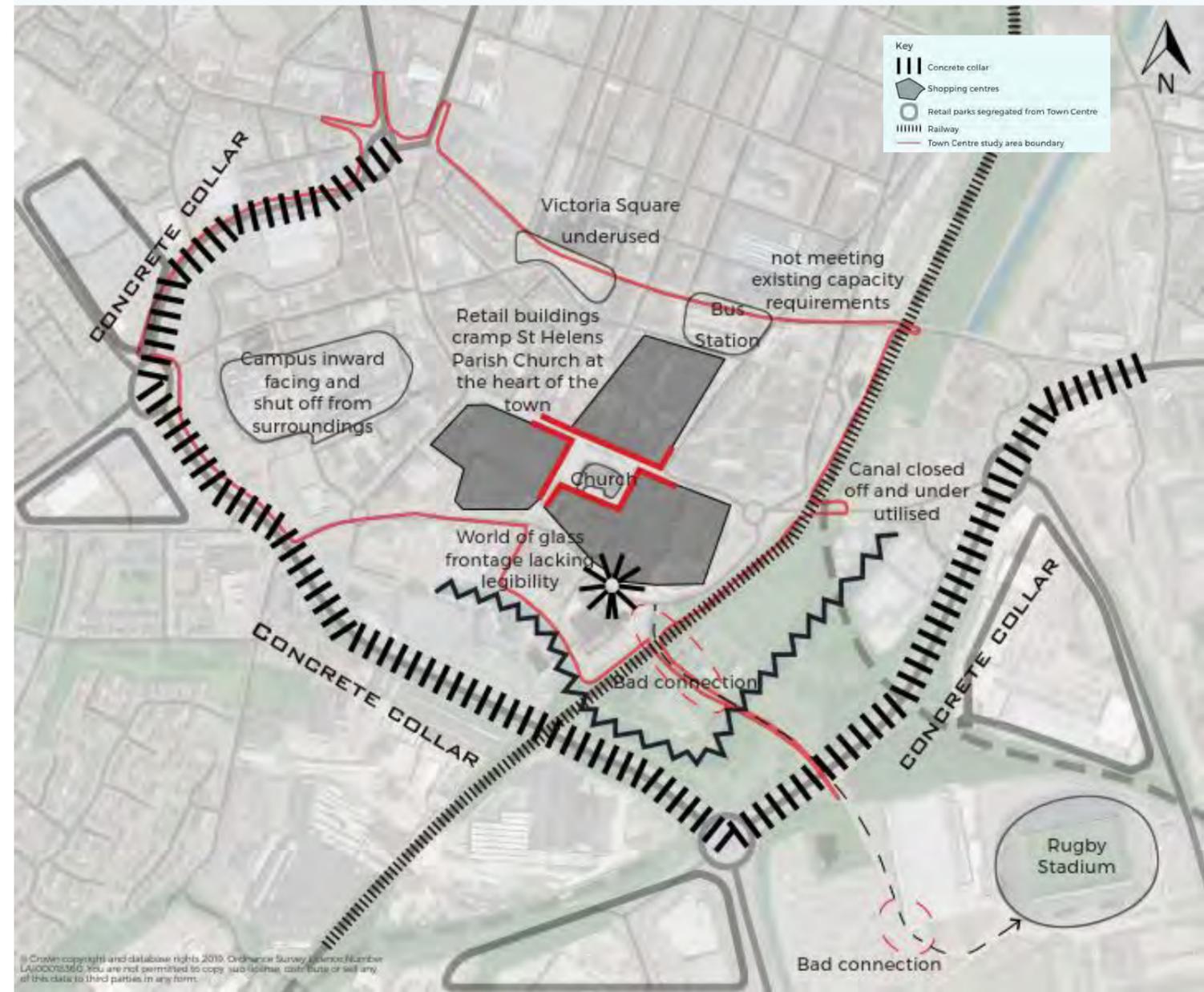
VEHICLES PER HOUR RESPECTIVELY ⁹¹

HIGHER RATE OF **KSI**⁹² COLLISIONS ON THE KEY ROUTE NETWORK IN ST HELENS COMPARED TO OTHER AREAS OF THE CITY REGION.

⁸⁸ A58, Linkway East, Parr Street
⁸⁹ WSP (2019) St Helens Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Review
⁹⁰ DfT 2019 countpoint data
⁹¹ ibid
⁹² Killed or Seriously Injured (Source: LCR Road Safety Strategy 2017-20)

“I think the trees and benches would make the town more attractive and will give home to more birds and allow the elderly to enjoy and have nice places to sit down.”

Figure 12: St Helens Town Centre Public Realm Enhancement Review (2019 WSP)



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04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Enhancing the attractiveness of public transport, facilitate greater interchange between rail and bus services and improve the reliability of the transport network, especially bus services.



2

Improving safety measures for pedestrians and cyclists.



3

Providing better connectivity between communities and employment opportunities, amenities and key town centre services, enabling local communities to access growth opportunities including Glass Futures.



4

Enhancing connectivity between economic centres and employment opportunities to key jobs markets.



5

Improving air quality and reduce car trips into the town centre.



6

Improving access to the rugby stadium, heritage and visitor attractions and visitor experience by making the access to the attractions part of the attraction itself.



7

Supporting the town centre as vibrant, inclusive and sustainable place to live and work through enhancing the attractiveness of sustainable modes of travel.



8

Capitalising on increased walking and cycling in response to Covid and encourage further take-up of more sustainable modes.



9

Place-making/better sense of arrival



10

Redesigning the bus station to make the layout and design as operationally efficient as possible⁹³.

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

To compete with other centres, attract investment, new businesses and residents St Helens needs to be future-proofed, having the right infrastructure and technology to meet current and future demands. This will support recovery and underpin our transformational innovation-led growth.

Access to fast, reliable and affordable internet connectivity is essential. Digital connectivity is a critical infrastructure, facilitating the ability to learn, work, shop and socialise, and provides access to vital public information and services.



THE IMPACT OF A UK-WIDE FIBRE-TO-THE-PREMISES (FTTP) BROADBAND ISP NETWORK BY 2025 IS A GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA) UPLIFT OF

£59BN



THE TAKE-UP OF ULTRAFAST SERVICES ACROSS LCR IS BELOW

3%



THERE IS LESS THAN

21%



COVERAGE OF FULL FIBRE BROADBAND TO PREMISES AT A CITY REGION LEVEL

POTENTIAL BENEFIT TO THE LCR WOULD BE

c.£1BN



OVER A 15-YEAR PERIOD FOR BOTH BUSINESSES AND HOUSEHOLDS.



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

LACK OF DIGITAL COVERAGE

Broadband access is unevenly distributed, often due to affordability. Gigabit-capable connectivity is low in the Liverpool City Region. The Council wants to provide progressive digital connectivity infrastructure borough-wide including broadband/fibre, mobile telecommunications (4G/5G) and public wi-fi and has prepared a Digital and Smart Borough Strategy (2021-24).

An overlay of the proposed growth areas identifies the 'white spots' where broadband coverage is limited (Figure 13). These gaps must be addressed to facilitate forecasted growth, especially Glass Futures which is seeking to develop first-class research & development capabilities.

Ultrafast broadband is available in existing residential areas, but internet speeds fall dramatically within the town centre itself, where less than 10Mbps speeds are available. Given the shift and reliance on an online presence for retailers, the need for fast, reliable broadband is essential. Coverage falls to nil for future proposed growth areas including Glass Futures and Cowley Hill.

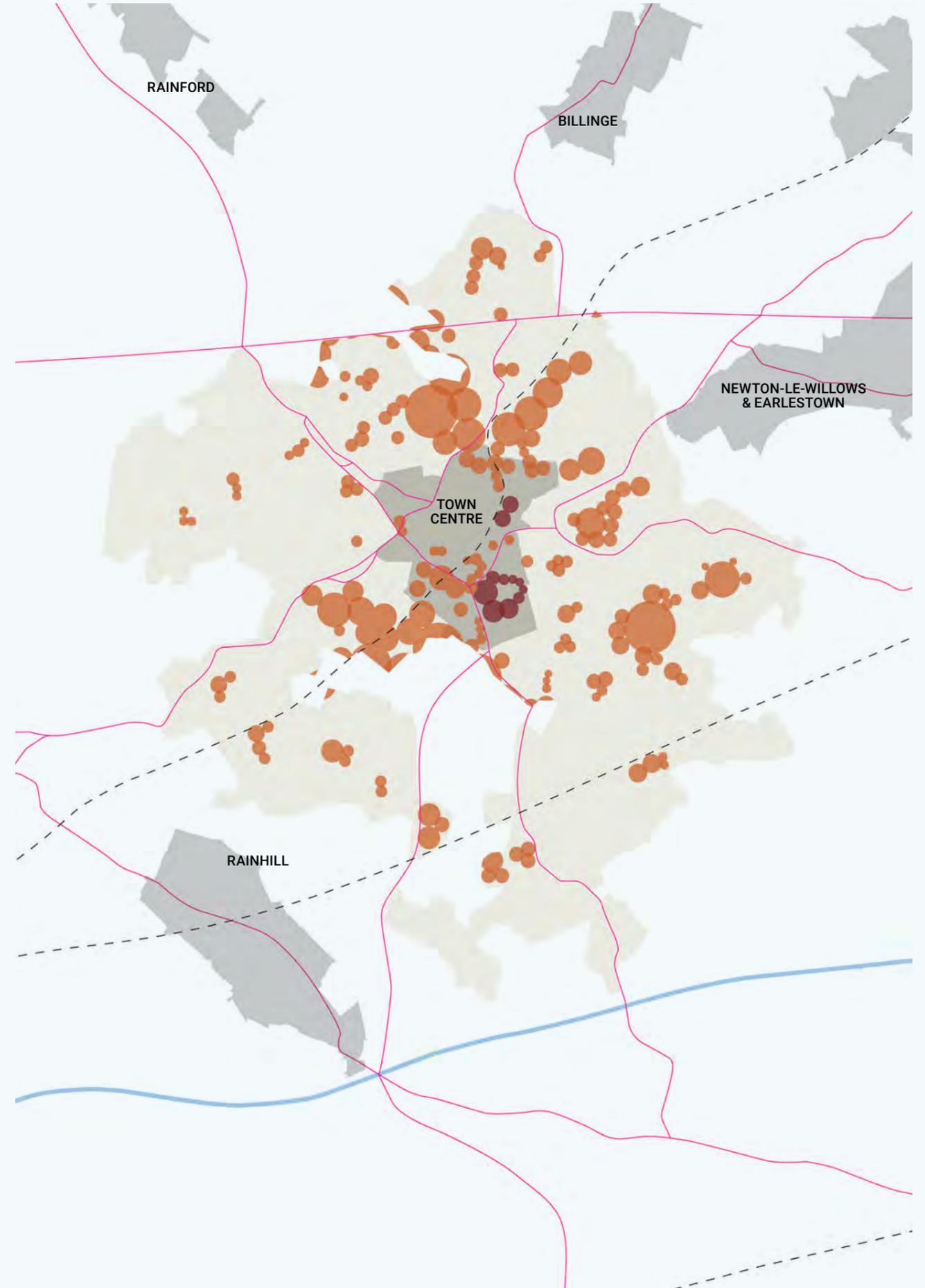
A proliferation of digital infrastructure does not close the "digital divide" for those who cannot afford or do not know how to use digital services. We must ensure digital connectivity is delivered in a fair and inclusive way across our borough, and that residents have suitable skills and means.

A proliferation of digital infrastructure does not close the "digital divide" for those who cannot afford or do not know how to use digital services. We must ensure digital connectivity is delivered in a fair and inclusive way across our borough, and that residents have suitable skills and means.

BOROUGH WIDE BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

- No Broadband Cover
- No Broadband Cover on Development Site
- Town Fund Bid Boundary
- Key Settlements
- Railway
- Motorway
- A Roads

Figure 13: Broadband coverage, St Helens - areas in orange/dark red are those with no broadband coverage



04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY

Key Challenges & Evidence of Need

DIGITAL EXCLUSION

IN 2014

11%

OR 5.9 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UK
HAD NEVER USED A COMPUTER⁹⁴

IN 2018

5.3M

ADULTS, OR 10% OF THE ADULT
UK POPULATION, WHO WERE
NON-INTERNET USERS⁹⁵

Often those digitally deprived are on low incomes and are disproportionately represented in St Helens. Covid has placed even greater emphasis on the need for digital connectivity. We will support with equipment and training providers for both staff and participants.

COVID IMPACT

Just as the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated that digital skills are a form of basic literacy, it has highlighted that digital connectivity is a critical infrastructure, facilitating the ability to learn, work, shop and socialise, and provide access to vital public information and services. The Council recognises this and working with Torus Homes has successfully delivered a 'Digital Inclusion During Covid' initiative to offer residents support.

The increased demand on the digital network due to home working is also a challenge. Residents require faster network speeds to work from home effectively.

⁹⁴ ONS statistics⁹⁵ ibid

04. KEY CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES AND EVIDENCE OF NEED

DIGITAL
CONNECTIVITY

OPPORTUNITIES



1

Building on the opportunity of the LCR Backhaul Network which will be completed by 2023.



2

There is direct correlation between connectivity investment and economic performance. Integrated digital connectivity and the availability of full fibre will benefit St Helens by powering innovation, supporting business start-ups, growth and productivity gains, developing new high-tech business clusters, and attracting inward investors.



3

Delivering digital infrastructure across the towns fund area and borough-wide, which does not leave our rural areas or key business corridors behind.



4

The creation and maintenance of LCR-wide digital infrastructure will provide additional skills and job opportunities at all levels



5

Enabling effective and efficient citizen engagement and public service delivery – creating community resilience and support residents in their communities.



6

Supporting residents to maintain their independence and improve health and well-being outcomes.

05

OUR VISION,
OBJECTIVES &
STRATEGY



PROPOSED CANNINGTON SHAW - GLASS FUTURES

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

CONTEXT

There has been considerable engagement with key stakeholders to inform the vision, building on previous engagement in 2016/17 and the views from the Towns Fund Sub-Groups (Appendix C).



05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

ST HELENS' TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN:

“By 2030 St Helens will be **culturally centred**, will nurture and celebrate its **cultural and industrial heritage**, will build upon its creative and innovative gene in **glass making and foundation-industries** to innovate and **do things differently**, and create new opportunities, including those from the City Region. **Vibrancy** will be created for the town centre; the town will be a **smaller, accessible and enjoyable place to come together** and will be a place where the community will learn from one another, improve their **physical and mental well-being** and where people want to live, work and visit. Businesses and residents will be attracted to the new opportunities available, will have **quality spaces** to dwell and linger and will benefit from **improved transport** and **digital connections** borough-wide”.



05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

VISION

CULTURALLY CENTRED

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	S01: A smaller, sustainable & accessible Town Centre	S02: Delivering a high-quality residential offer	S03: Changing Perceptions	S04: Establishing foundations for future growth	S05: Raising Community & Young People's aspirations	S06: Improving health outcomes	S07: A Future-proofed Town	S08: Connected Communities
THEMES	URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE		CULTURE & HERITAGE	EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND HEALTH			CONNECTIVITY	
OUTCOMES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Remediation of brownfield sites removing blight and improving perceptions with 8.10 ha of land remediated ✔ Increase in town centre resident numbers ✔ Greater activity and vibrancy. ✔ Enhanced townscape & public realm ✔ Increased town centre footfall, dwell-time & expenditure ✔ New employment opportunities created (with associated uplift in GVA) ✔ Reduce crime rates and anti-social behaviour (increased natural surveillance) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Improved cultural and heritage offer ✔ Increased visitor numbers ✔ Greater dwell-time ✔ Jobs created/ safeguarded 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Support business start-ups ✔ Support existing businesses ✔ Learners supported to secure qualifications & skills ✔ Land value uplift ✔ Jobs created/safeguarded ✔ Improve health and wellbeing 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work & places of interest ✔ Reduced congestion within the town ✔ Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises pedestrians ✔ Increased digital use by businesses ✔ Increased ability of residents to work remotely / flexibly ✔ Secure digital inclusion ✔ Enhanced digital skills for residents and businesses 	



05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

TIP STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Our 10-year Town Investment Plan (TIP) aligns with wider aspirations for the Borough, as set out in the emerging Local Plan and Borough Strategy (Figure 14). Collectively these strategies will drive the growth and transformation of the borough. With a focus on Towns Fund and the short to medium term our strategic objectives are as follows:

- 

1 Establishing the foundation for future growth through the catalytical impact of Glass Futures and the opportunity to harness innovation and skills for the benefit of the local community.
- 

2 Delivering a high-quality residential offer within the town centre to meet housing need, diversify the town centre housing stock and providing the opportunity for a new residential population to thrive in the town centre as part of our wider place-making ambitions.
- 

3 To create a smaller, more sustainably accessible Town Centre to respond to changing high-street functions; shrinking the proportion of retail and introducing a diverse mix of town centre uses to complement the residential offer. Creating the right spaces and places for independent businesses to thrive and building on the opportunities of greater footfall and visitors into St Helens as a result of Glass Futures.
- 

4 Positively changing the perceptions of the town and the borough through maximising St Helens' heritage and cultural assets to provide a distinctive offer for visitors, residents and businesses and introducing meanwhile uses to create a vibrant, animated place.



Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life



Promote good health, independence and care across our communities



Create safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods for all



Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy



Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture



Be a responsible council



5

To enable our children, young people and the local community to raise their aspirations and take pride in their place through providing the right places and spaces to meet, collaborate, learn and develop their skills to benefit from new employment opportunities and the transformational growth of the borough.



6

Ensuring digital inclusion and laying the foundations for communities, businesses and visitors to digitally connect, for businesses and investment to be attracted into the borough and supporting residents and businesses to be able to adapt to a new digital agenda.



7

Connecting communities with employment opportunities through ensuring sustainable movement and accessibility for St Helens town centre and borough wide.



8

Building on the St Helens Cares model to create a first-class health, wellbeing and social care hub for the town and improve residents' health outcomes.

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

SPATIAL STRATEGY

Our Towns Fund projects are located within St Helens Town Centre and spatially are in three key areas:

- 1** **South of the Linkway/Peasley Cross**
 Glass Futures Phase 2, Cannington Shaw as a proposed visitor centre, and the 'Concrete Collar' element of the 'Connected Places' project.
- 2** **Church Square/High Street/St Mary's**
 Town Centre Regeneration/Living project and St Helens Heritage World
- 3** **Civic Quarter**
 Healthy Communities and Connected Places project (related to the bus and train station)

Whilst not depicted in Figure 15, the digital infrastructure project cuts across the whole of the Town Fund area.

PROJECT A
Glass Futures Phase 2

PROJECT B
Town Centre Regeneration and Living

PROJECT C
St Helens Heritage World

PROJECT D
Healthy Communities

PROJECT E
Connected Places

- Creating Strong Pedestrian Links
- Transport Nodes
- Green Bus Route to Liverpool
- Major Road
- Improved Link and Public Realm

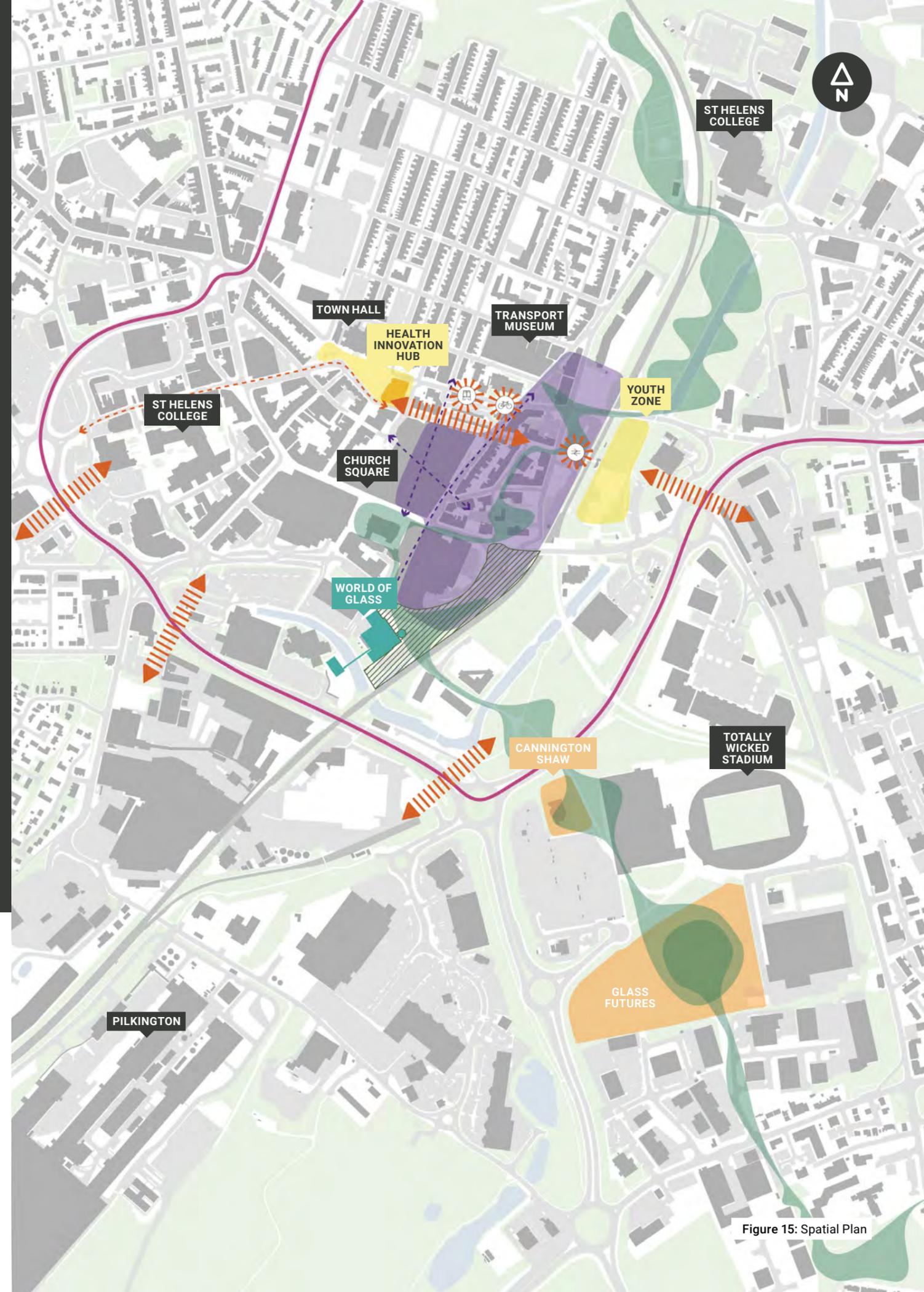


Figure 15: Spatial Plan

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

PRIORITY AREAS

Our short, medium and long-term priorities in relation to Towns Funding projects are referenced in table 1.

TOWNS FUND PROJECT	SHORT-TERM (WITHIN 2 YEARS)	MEDIUM TERM (3-5 YEARS)	LONG-TERM (6 YEARS PLUS)
GLASS FUTURES PHASE 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of a Masterplan for Peasley Cross (Foundation Industries plan) Developing the Business case for Glass Futures Phase 2 Prepare a business case for Cannington Shaw reviewing options to repurpose the heritage asset alongside Glass Futures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Glass Futures Phase 2 	
TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION /LIVING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of a comprehensive Town Centre Masterplan/ Development Framework in conjunction with ECF. Developing the Full Business case Agree and finalise a Phase 1 Town Centre transformational scheme incorporating a mix of proposed uses including residential and potential for commercial floorspace, leisure, hotel and new market hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Phase 1 Town Centre Mixed-use Scheme (including residential elements) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of Business Case for Town Centre Scheme Phase 2 Delivery of Town Centre Scheme Phase 2
ST HELENS HERITAGE WORLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a full business case and secure planning for a repurposed World of Glass attraction (St Helens Heritage World) Support town centre public realm animation and programming delivered by existing arts and cultural providers including Citadel Arts, Heart of Glass, Cultural Hubs and others to attract and encourage footfall to the town centre post pandemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver St Helens Heritage World including enhancement public realm around the cultural quarter of the town, new heritage trail and park 	
HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing the Business case for the Health Innovation Hub Developing the Business case for the Youth Zone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of Health Innovation Hub (Gamble building) Delivery of Youth Zone 	
CONNECTED PLACES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare a full business case and secure planning for a new bus station Prepare a full business case and secure planning for new linkway pedestrian crossing points and new cycleways Prepare a full business case and secure planning for new public realm proposals town-centre wide (in conjunction with the overarching masterplan), including upgrading public realm around the train station – St Helens Central. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the new bus station Deliver the proposed crossing points and cycleways Deliver the upgraded public realm 	
DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing a full business case and delivering full-fibre broadband Borough-wide to residents and businesses. Deliver digital skills programme in associated with Clickworks/ Ways to Work 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connecting into the LCR Backhaul Network which is intended to be delivered by 2023 and to create a St Helens 'local loop' Establish a 5G network 	

Table 1: Towns Fund Priority Areas

The potential hotel and office elements are expected to be delivered outwith towns fund Outwith Towns Funding investment ask

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

TIP THEME	 URBAN REGENERATION AND LAND USE	 CULTURE AND HERITAGE	 EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH	 TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY	 DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY
Towns Fund Guidance Themes	Urban regeneration, planning and land use	Arts, culture and heritage	Skills infrastructure Enterprise infrastructure	Local transport	Digital connectivity
Strategic Alignment – Local Authority	<p>St Helens Town Centre Strategy 2017: outlines the need to diversify the retail and leisure offering to meet family needs.</p> <p>Draft St Helens Local Plan (2019): Identifies a need to provide new housing choices for a growing population, allowing for up to 9,000 new homes, as well as to deliver 215 hectares of employment space and support the development of tourism, leisure and rural economies.</p>	<p>St Helens Heritage Strategy (2020): Recognises heritage as an important part of sustainable development.</p> <p>St Helens Town Centre Strategy 2017: Identifies ‘culturally centred’ as one of three town centre themes.</p>	<p>St Helens People’s Plan (2017-2020): Sets out the vision to improve the lives of people in St Helens, with one of the aims to contribute to increasing aspiration, education and reducing poverty across the borough.</p>	<p>Draft St Helens Local Plan (2019): Presents the Council’s priorities for transport to support economic growth, accessibility, improve air quality and minimise emissions in the borough.</p>	<p>Our Digital Strategy and Action Plan (2016-2020): Will support the improvement of Council services and culture change and provides opportunities to support a digitally enabled workforce, thereby supporting economic growth as well as social ambitions.</p>
Strategic Alignment – Sub-Regional	<p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Identifies a Towns Agenda that focusses on town centres to improve private investment and making public plans more attractive for investment.</p> <p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Identifies key growth sectors within the economy and recognises the need to invest in people’s skills within the City Region.</p>	<p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Support the growth of a recognised sub-regional sectoral strength in the visitor economy.</p> <p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Recognises the opportunity for the City Region to project itself internationally through its cultural, sporting and natural assets.</p>	<p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Responds to recognised sub-regional challenges, including a historic skills gap, a lack of private sector jobs, high levels of worklessness and pockets of concentrated poverty.</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategy (draft 2020): Responds to the need to enable the collaboration between innovators in research, industry, and society to help close the productivity gap. The LIS also seeks to create the most inclusive economy in the UK, addressing systemic disadvantage.</p> <p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Responds to the COVID-19 pandemic by outlining targeted interventions to support the recovery, including recognising the importance of employment support programmes and improving links between education and employment.</p>	<p>Combined Authority Transport Plan (June 2019): Sets the vision to develop a transport system that is affordable and reliable, integrated, easy to use, and supports the development of new and existing communities.</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategy (draft 2020): Plans support the provision of infrastructure to connect residents to opportunities, allowing the City Region to build on its assets and ensure residents can contribute to and benefit from innovation and growth.</p>	<p>Building Our Future – LCR Growth Strategy (2016): Will support growth across a series of elements of the economy (including recognised strengths in the digital and creative sector and financial and professional services) as well as supporting greater social inclusion.</p> <p>Local Industrial Strategy (draft 2020): Plans will support the introduction of the strategic infrastructure needed to connect residents to opportunities. Industrial digitalisation has also been identified as an opportunity.</p> <p>Building Back Better – Economic Recovery Plan (2020): Seeks to eradicate digital poverty and supports the digitalisation of businesses with investments in infrastructure and growing the digital service offer and engagement in it important to success.</p>

Table 2: Strategic Alignment

05. OUR VISION, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGY

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT



URBAN REGENERATION AND LAND USE



CULTURE AND HERITAGE



EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS & HEALTH



TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

TIP THEME

Strategic Alignment – National

- Help to kickstart the COVID-19 recovery (as outlined in Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government’s COVID-19 recovery strategy) by securing a new future for the town centre
- Aligns with government recognition of the changing role of town centres (e.g. through the Future High Streets Fund) and a need to increase housing levels

- Builds on the presence and success of two Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations
- Creative People and Places investment made in the Heart of Glass
- Supports priorities identified in the Culture White Paper

- DCMS funding request made for the Youth Zone
- Youth Investment Fund for activities to support young people
- COVID-19 Arts Funding to protect leisure and cultural facilities through the pandemic
- Build on UKRI and BEIS investment in Glass Futures phase 1 and the wider ambitions of the UK Industrial Strategy

- Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy (2019) aligns with the development of Local Industrial Strategies to achieve net zero
- Contributes towards the UK Industrial Strategy (2017) Clean Growth ambitions
- Aligns with the ambitions of the National Infrastructure Strategy, prioritising interventions at a local level

- Supports BDUK ambitions to stimulate private investment in high speed connections across the country
- Supports the UK Industrial Strategy (2017) ‘AI and Data’ Grand Challenge for the UK to develop specialisms and digitisation to develop local, innovative solutions to global challenges

Thematic Alignment

Activity under this theme will also support achievements across the other four themes by creating an environment and diversified activity mix that enhances both perceptions and experience of the town.

Activity under the culture and heritage theme will also support and be supported by improvements to connectivity and investment in Town Centre Regeneration. An opportunity has also been identified to re-use a heritage building (The Gamble) under the employment and skills theme.

This theme will align with improvements in digital and transport connectivity, improving the ability of residents to access work. Town Centre Regeneration activities will also help to create new local employment opportunities.

The delivery of activity under this theme will support aspirations under the urban regeneration, culture and heritage and employment and skills themes by improving connections into and around the town centre.

This theme will support employment and skills and urban regeneration activities. Further, improved digital connectivity offers the potential to generate wider environmental benefits as levels of unnecessary travel are reduced.

Example Project Alignment

The Town Centre Living works will also benefit from the delivery of improvements to the bus station, improved digital connectivity and improved pedestrian and cycle routes.

The heritage element links to Glass Futures phase 2 (which seeks to build on St Helen’s specialism) while the Town Centre Regeneration works and connectivity improvements will help to improve visitor’s wider experience of spending time in the town and the likelihood of repeat visits.

This theme will benefit from improvements to local superfast broadband through The Loop and the introduction of new uses through the Town Centre Living project.

Improvements under this theme will help to support the success of proposed works to The Gamble, the success of the canal and glass heritage centre and the Town Centre Regeneration works by providing both an enhanced entry point to the town and improved, safe connections across it..

Improved digital connectivity will support improvements under the employment and skills theme, helping businesses to work more efficiently and access new markets – which can support jobs growth – and help those that are currently disengaged from the employment market to be engaged. It will also support aspirations to attract new residents and businesses into the town.

Table 2: continued

06

OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

ST HELENS TOWNS FUND ASK

St Helens Town Fund Board is seeking to secure **£38.55m** of Towns Fund investment to support the delivery of our strategic priorities identified within our TIP. This will be matched by other public sector funding streams as well as leveraging in private-sector investment (including that of ECF) and will deliver a step-change within the key areas of intervention within the town centre and for the borough as a whole. The importance of Glass Futures and the alignment of this with the wider Towns Fund programme will deliver a programme which is nationally significant and benefits the wider Liverpool City Region.

The core areas of focus within the town centre are those where the most transformational change will occur, with the opportunity to create a wider 'ripple effect' as a result of the initial investment. This catalytical impact can be demonstrated through the partnership with ECF, where surplus profits created will be used to create a revolving fund for the Borough's transformation. The Towns Fund investment will support this approach.



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

PRIORITISATION PROCESS

An initial list of over 100 project ideas and concepts were put forward by the Town Fund Board building upon the outcome of the engagement exercise via MyTown, feedback through other key stakeholders in St Helens (including Council officers) and focus group discussions with all Board members⁹⁶. All members of the Towns Fund Board asked to participate in at least one focus group to identify and discuss ideas for Towns Funding.

Individual project proformas were completed and then appraised by CBRE which included 1:1 discussions with each Focus Group lead to identify a 'top 3' and to rank the project ideas put forward.

CBRE objectively appraised the top-ranking projects using an evaluation matrix (Appendix D); key to this was ensuring that projects were capable of delivery within the Towns Fund period (i.e. spend by 31/03/2026) and adhered to the Towns Fund guidance.



*Focus Groups were established around the following themes: business & skills; heritage & culture; regeneration & land use; connectivity

⁹⁶ Focus Groups were established around the following themes: business & skills; heritage & culture; regeneration & land use; connectivity

THE EVALUATION PROCESS WAS A TWO-STAGE PROCESS WITH THE KEY CRITERIA IDENTIFIED BELOW.

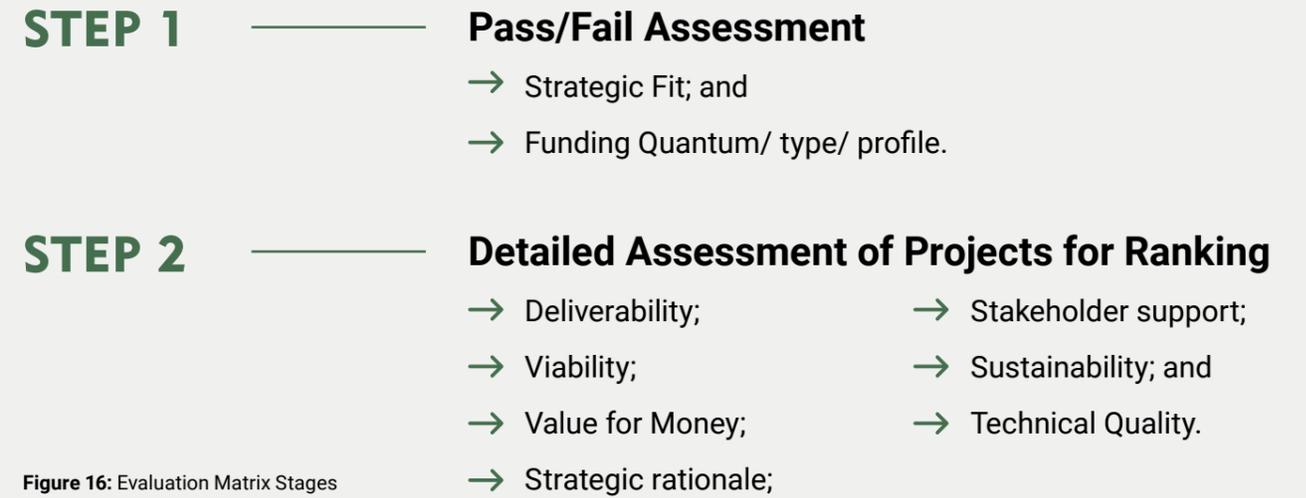


Figure 16: Evaluation Matrix Stages

The focus group sessions coupled with the evaluation matrix analysis provided the initial shortlisted projects which were presented back to Board and formally ratified on 16th October 2020.



Figure 17: Shortlisting approach

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

PRIORITISATION PROCESS

A total of 14 projects were initially within the shortlist (Table 3) and then through project scoping and engagement with key partners to ensure that projects were capable of delivery by March 2026, a revised shortlist of 6 projects was identified for the November Board. This also 'grouped' or aligned key projects together as part of an overall programme approach (Table 3).



PROJECTS
(AS AT OCTOBER BOARD)

THEME

REVISED PROJECT SHORTLIST
(NOVEMBER BOARD)

Urban Regeneration & Land use



Town Centre regeneration

Town Centre Living

Town Centre Living

Youth/ Community Zone

Healthy Communities

District Heating Network

Culture & Heritage



Canal & Glass Heritage Centre

St Helens Heritage World

Canal & Glass Heritage Trail

Employment & Skills



Glass Futures Phase 2

Glass Futures Phase 2

Meanwhile/Pop up uses

Community/health hub/co-working space (The Gamble)*

Transport Connectivity



Bus Station Improvements

Connected Places

Town Centre Permeability – pedestrian/ cycleways

Wider Borough Network – pedestrian/ cycleways

Digital Connectivity*



Digital High Street

Digital Infrastructure

The Loop

*Project merged with Youth Zone to create 'Healthy Communities' project

Table 3: Project shortlisting/ grouping approach

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

OUR TOWNS FUND PROJECTS

St Helens Towns Fund Ask comprises a total of 6 projects with a collective investment requirement from Towns Funding of £38.55m and a total value of over £140m. All 6 projects align together to create a programme which is greater than the sum of its individual parts (Table 4). The projects are as follows:



A GLASS FUTURES PHASE 2

(INCLUDING CANNINGTON SHAW)



B TOWN CENTRE LIVING & REGENERATION



C ST HELENS HERITAGE WORLD



D HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

(YOUTH ZONE, HEALTH INNOVATION HUB)



E CONNECTED PLACES



F DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

ALIGNMENT OF TOWNS FUND PROJECTS

Our proposition of priority projects mutually reinforce one another. Spatially they are linked together, given the focus for the investment is centred around the town centre but they also align with other non-Towns Fund projects identified within the Council’s pipeline of proposals for the town centre and the borough (Table 4).



NATIONALLY SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS	TOWNS FUND PROJECT ALIGNMENT	RATIONALE
<p>GLASS FUTURES PHASE 1 <i>(Already funded)</i></p> <p>New glassmaking pilot plant facility and a Global Centre of Excellence for the sustainable manufacture of glass</p>	<p>Town Centre Regeneration/Living</p>	<p>New uses including the creation of a mixed-use development in the heart of the town centre with the potential for commercial office space, a hotel and complemented by a new high-quality Town Centre Living residential offer, public realm and active ground-floor uses will be instrumental to providing the right place-making conditions to attract business and further investment into the town, including making Glass Futures a more attractive proposition.</p>
<p>GLASS FUTURES PHASE 2 <i>(Investment sought through Towns Fund)</i></p> <p>A Global Centre of Excellence for research and innovation related to medical glass production and includes ‘where glass past meets glass futures’ through the redevelopment of Cannington Shaw as a visitor centre.</p>	<p>Connected Places</p>	<p>Those visiting the Glass Futures plant facility and Centre for Excellence will be encouraged to spend time in the town centre through enhanced connections. The Connected Places project will enable local residents to have improved sustainable transport choices to travel to work, including those working at Glass Futures itself.</p> <p>Upgrading the public realm and addressing the overall legibility of the town centre will make it more attractive for new businesses (including those related to innovation in glass manufacture) to want to locate and/or expand their operation in St Helens.</p>
	<p>Healthy Communities</p>	<p>The health and wellbeing of St Helens’ residents will be improved through the creation of the Health Innovation Hub and Youth/Community Zone – providing opportunities for increased activity rates, delivering the right environment for people to talk about mental health issues and seek out the right level of support and raising aspirations of young people to follow career pathways in health and social care, glass futures or research & development across other foundation industries.</p>
	<p>Digital Infrastructure</p>	<p>Digital connectivity will be crucial to St Helens’ success. The need to lay solid digital foundations and ensure the infrastructure and skills levels in St Helens are fit for the future will be key to ensure Glass Futures Phase 1 and 2 can operate effectively and enable the town and borough to be attractive to existing innovative businesses and those wanting to relocate here.</p>
	<p>St Helens Heritage World</p>	<p>The development of our heritage, cultural, arts and visitor offer will aid the Town’s recovery through encouraging greater footfall, dwell-time and linked trips to benefit the retail and leisure sector in the town, as well as aligning with health and wellbeing objectives and the important link between culture, arts and health. This project in turn will support changing perceptions of the town and borough and assist with positive place-making.</p>

Table 4: Alignment of Towns Fund Programme, including linkages to nationally significant project: Glass Futures (Phase 1 & 2)

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

CLEAN GROWTH

Addressing climate change and delivering clean growth is a core component which underpins all of the proposed projects ensuring that they adhere to the clean growth principle of Towns Fund. St Helens Borough Council declared a Climate Change Emergency in July 2019 and aspires to achieve a zero-carbon target by 2040. The Council has several priorities to achieve this including encouraging net-carbon developments and communities⁹⁷.

There is scope to spatially link the projects with an overarching district heating network for the town (Figure 17), in addition to the project-specific clean growth/ sustainability targets and outcomes.

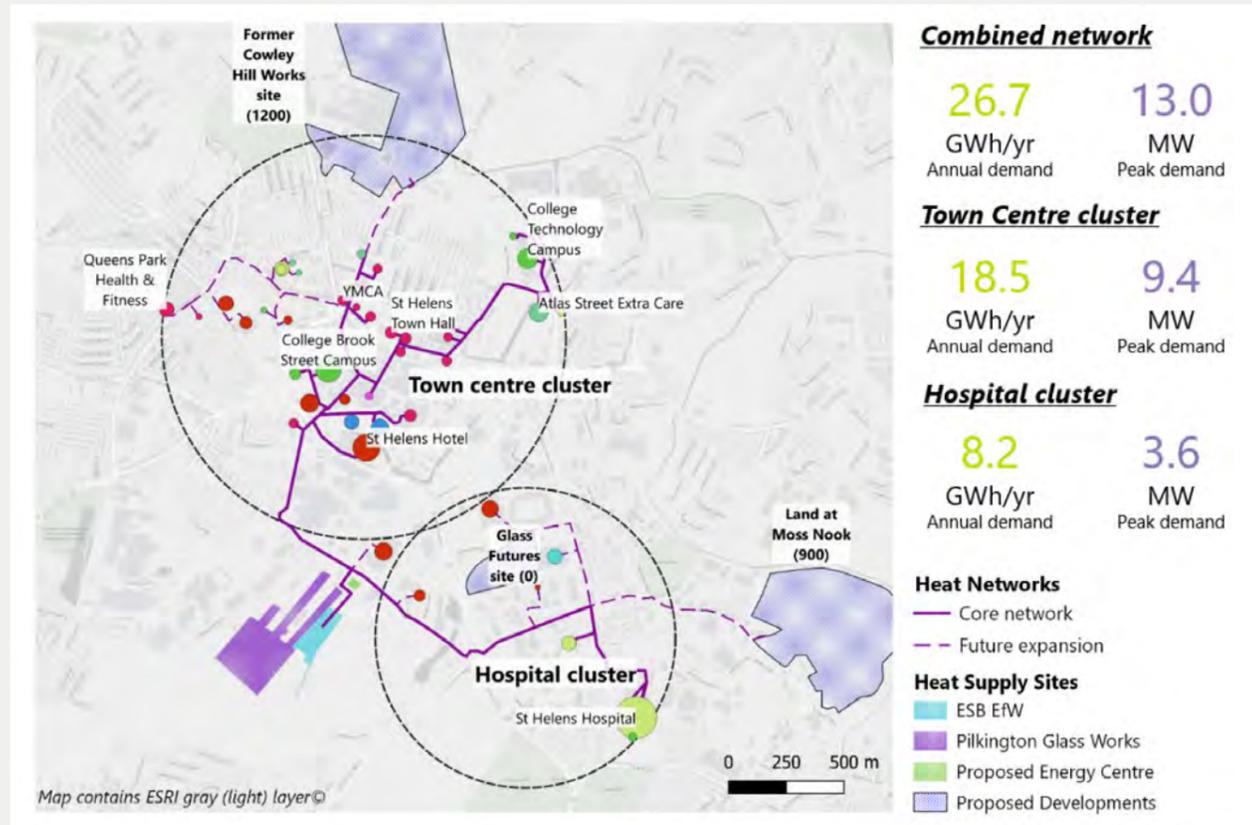


Figure 17: Proposed District Heat Network – Indicative Plans (subject to Funding & further feasibility)

COVID-19 IMPACT

A key consideration for the Towns Fund programme has been the impact and the response of the borough to the Covid-19 pandemic (as detailed in the 'Evidence of need' section). Our priorities are those which will have the greatest catalytic impact on the economy, social and physical regeneration and are needed for economic recovery, but also support the borough and town in achieving a sustainable, long-term future. As a result of Covid-19 key trends such as the growth in online commerce have accelerated and had an even greater impact on our high-street. Towns Fund investment cannot be delayed; funding support is needed now to reverse the decline and ensure we have a Town Centre which is fit for the future and our growth aspirations.

BENEFITS

Our investment priorities will act as seed capital to support the regeneration of the town centre. Surplus profits from the ECF proposals will be put back into the development account as part of the ECF partnership arrangements and recycled to create additional benefits elsewhere in the town and the wider borough.

Further analysis will be undertaken at business case stage but the overall benefits will include:

- Additional Gross Value Added
- Delivery of high quality, affordable housing
- Creation and safeguarding of jobs
- Supporting existing and new businesses
- Creation of a vibrant town centre
- Attracting new visitors into the town and borough
- Positively changing the perceptions of St Helens

ACCELERATED FUNDING

The Towns Fund Board has agreed to use £1m of Accelerated Towns Funding to demolish an eyesore within the town centre – Chalon Way car park, which will create a visual link to the Sankey Canal and provide the opportunity for meanwhile uses in the short-term. In the medium term this site will become a future development plot, likely to accommodate future residential use.

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

PROJECTS

Table 5: Towns Fund Projects

PROJECTS	PROJECT OVERVIEW	TOTAL PROJECT VALUE (INDICATIVE)	TOWNS FUND ASK - CAPITAL	TOWNS FUND ASK - REVENUE	INDICATIVE MATCH FUNDING	ESTIMATED OUTPUTS
A Glass Futures Phase 2	The delivery of a world-class centre of excellence for medical glass production, research and development which builds upon Glass Futures Phase 1 and includes the re-purposing of Cannington Shaw - a Grade II Listed heritage asset and scheduled ancient monument to create a visitor centre where 'glass past meets glass futures'	£34.25m	£13.25m	£0.2m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £10m industry investment £5m BEIS medical glass bid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45 jobs created 50 new learners assisted Restoration of 'Heritage at Risk' asset
B Town Centre Regeneration & Living	Repurposing of St Helens town centre high-street to create a mixed-use scheme including delivery of high-quality residential dwellings within the heart of the town centre and across brownfield infill parcels across the town.	£40.35m	£9.5m	£0.1m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Helens Council ECF Homes England Levelling-up funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 382 Residential dwellings (Direct & Indirect) 6,764sqm Leisure/ retail floorspace created Enhanced public realm - 8,759sqm Brownfield land reclaimed - 4 ha Businesses Supported
C St Helens Heritage World	A reimagined World of Glass experience coupled with public realm enhancements, new park and digitally enabled heritage trail.	£11.9m	£3m		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Helens Council ECF Heritage Lottery Arts Council Historic England Clore Duffield Foundation Garfield Weston Foundation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 new jobs created Estimated 200,000 visitors per annum Creation of new Park Creation of new Heritage Trail
D Healthy Communities (Youth Zone and Health Innovation Hub)	<p>Comprises two discrete elements but both are linked together under the 'Healthy Communities' programme with a key focus on health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Youth & Community Zone Provision of a youth and community zone to provide leisure uses and services provision for young people and the wider community in the town centre.</p> <p>Health Innovation Hub Repurposing of The Gamble, a Grade II listed heritage asset, to create a health innovation hub providing key health services, training and co-working space for health-focused SMEs to collaborate and innovate, continuing the success of the St Helens Cares Model.</p>	<p>£11.07m Health Innovation hub</p> <p>£12m Youth & Community Zone</p>	£3m		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> £5m DCMS Torus Group St Helens Council ECF 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation of a dedicated youth zone including 2 no. football pitches Creation of Health Innovation Hub Businesses and social enterprises supported enhancement of Victoria Square 51 jobs created 78,000 visitors to youth/community zone per annum
E Connected Places	An overarching Connected Places programme for the Town Centre which includes enhancements to key public transport nodes including new bus station delivery and public realm upgrades to St Helens Central, creation of enhanced permeability, way-finding and public realm town centre wide and provision of pedestrian and cycle connections traversing the 'Concrete Collar' of St Helens Linkway.	£21.7m	£7m		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Helens Council ECF Merseytravel LCR CA 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved bus station created - 8,787 sqm Public realm enhanced New footways/cycleways installed Public realm improvements to St Helens Central - 18,049 sqm
F Digital Infrastructure	Creation of a local loop which connects into the LCR Backhaul Network and provides full-fibre broadband to homes and businesses Borough-wide.	£26.5m	£2.5m		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital infrastructure provider - £21m St Helens Council - £3m 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 42,500 homes connected 100 jobs created

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

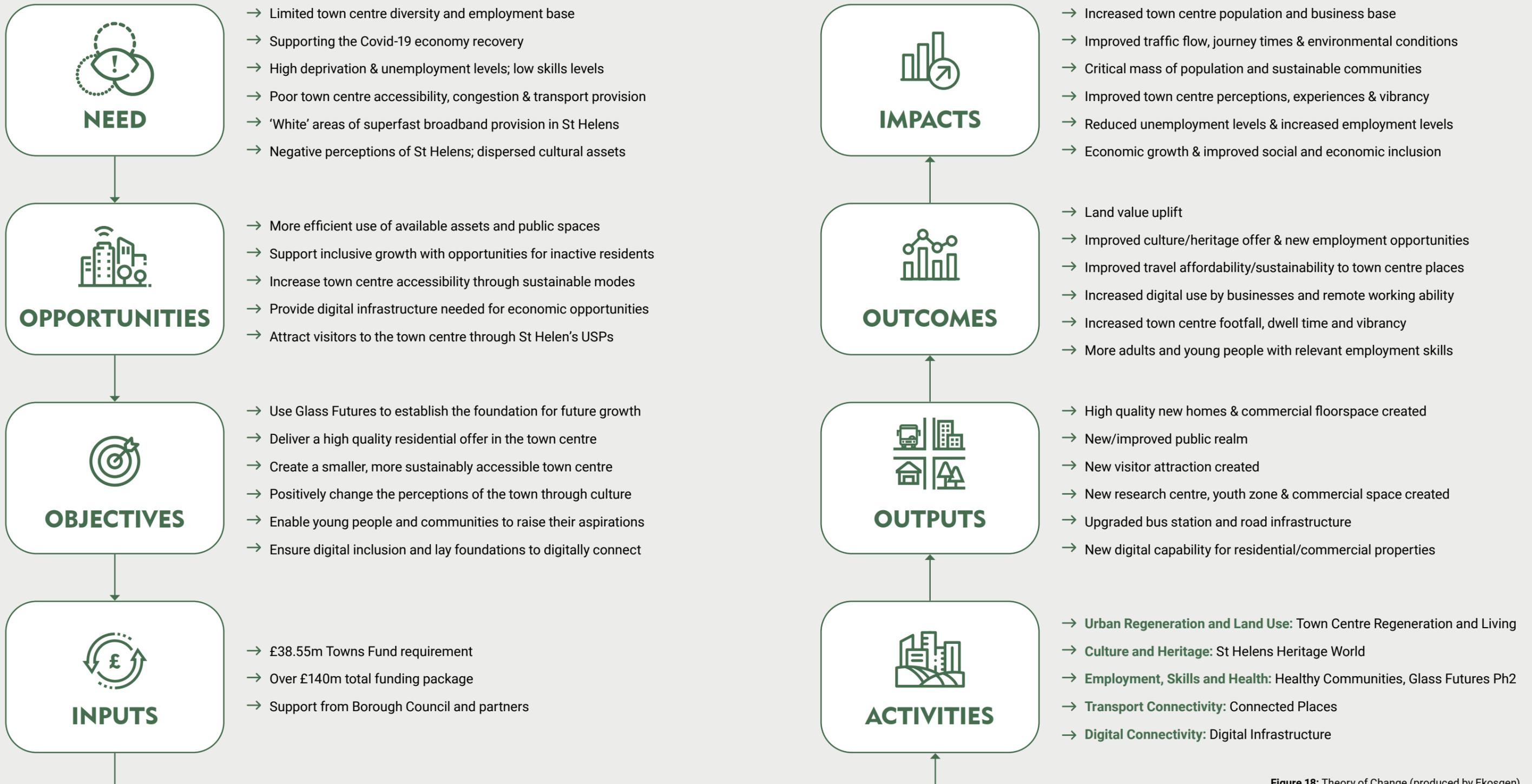
REVENUE FUNDING

In addition to the Towns Fund capital ask we are also seeking £0.3m revenue funding (as identified in Table 5) to provide project management and consultancy support to deliver the Towns Fund programme alongside our restructured Growth Team.



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

THEORY OF CHANGE PROGRAMME OVERVIEW




INPUTS



IMPACTS

- Increased town centre population and business base
- Improved traffic flow, journey times & environmental conditions
- Critical mass of population and sustainable communities
- Improved town centre perceptions, experiences & vibrancy
- Reduced unemployment levels & increased employment levels
- Economic growth & improved social and economic inclusion



OUTCOMES



OUTPUTS



ACTIVITIES

Figure 18: Theory of Change (produced by Ekosgen)

06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

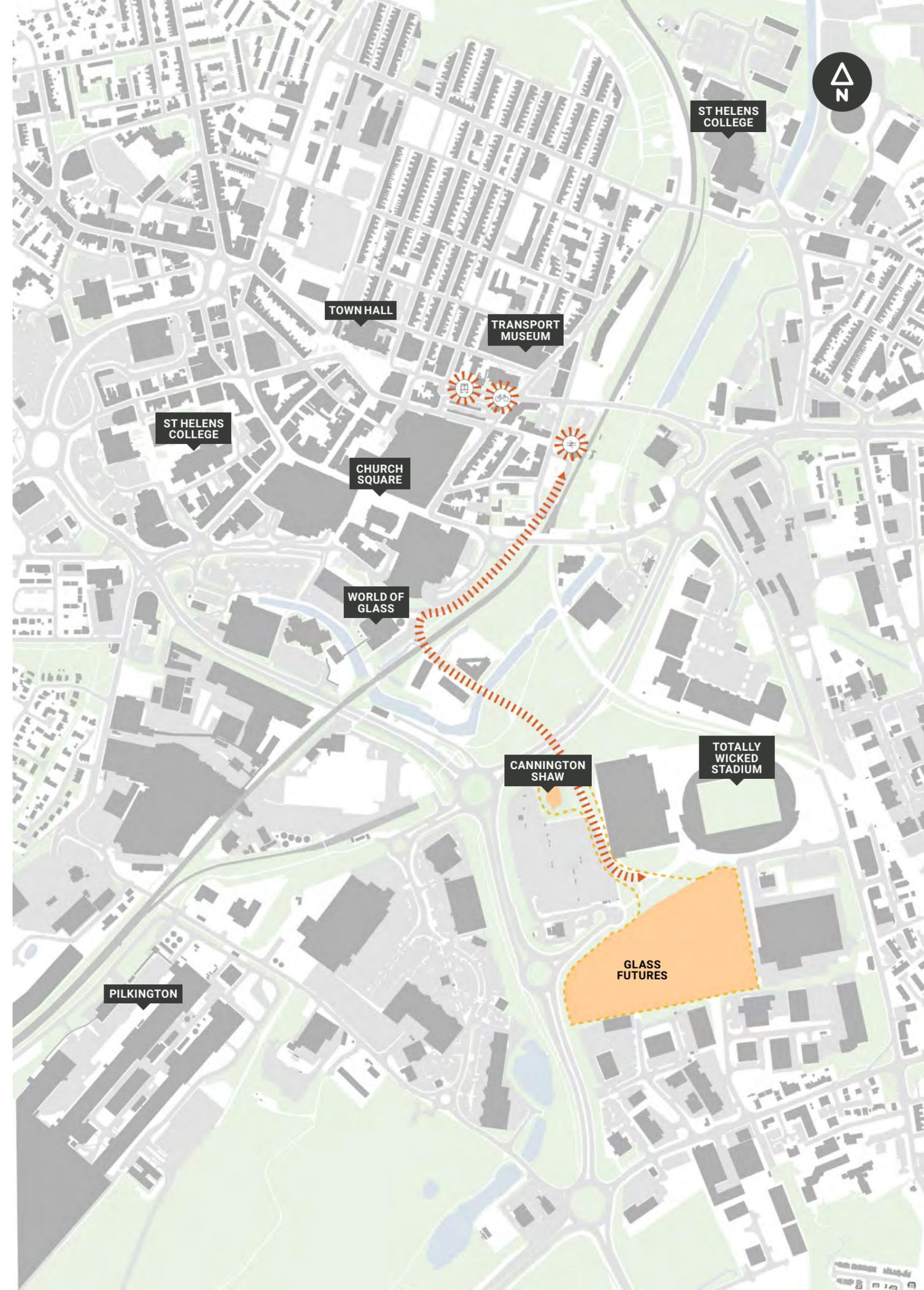
A GLASS FUTURES PHASE 2

KEY

 Transport Nodes

 Glass Futures

 Creating Strong Pedestrian Links



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

B TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION AND LIVING

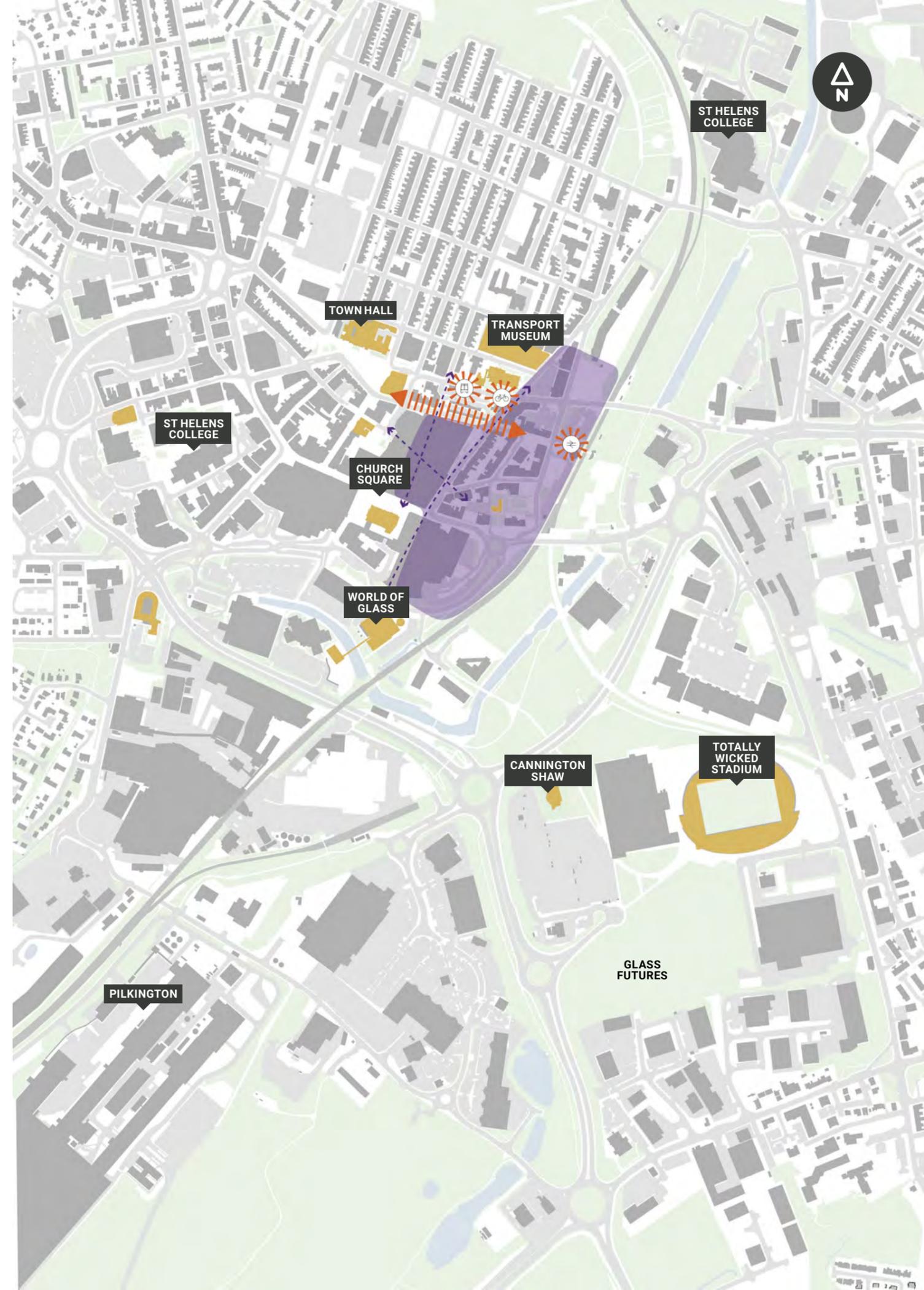
KEY

 Town Centre Regeneration/Living

 Transport Node

 Improved Link and Public Realm

 Key Buildings



07. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

C ST HELENS HERITAGE WORLD

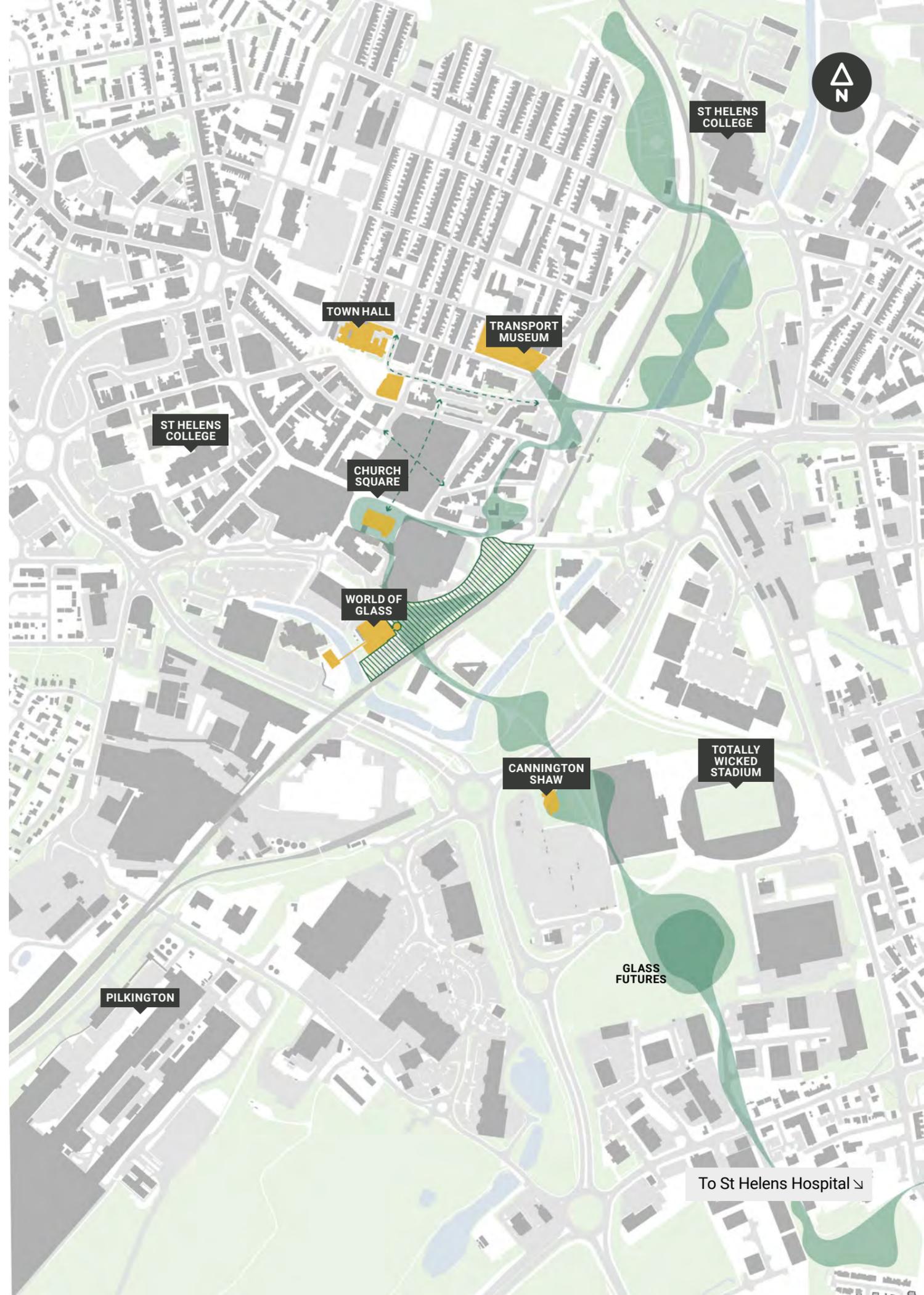
KEY

■ St Helens Heritage Trail

➔ Pedestrian Links

▨ Discovery Park

■ Key Buildings



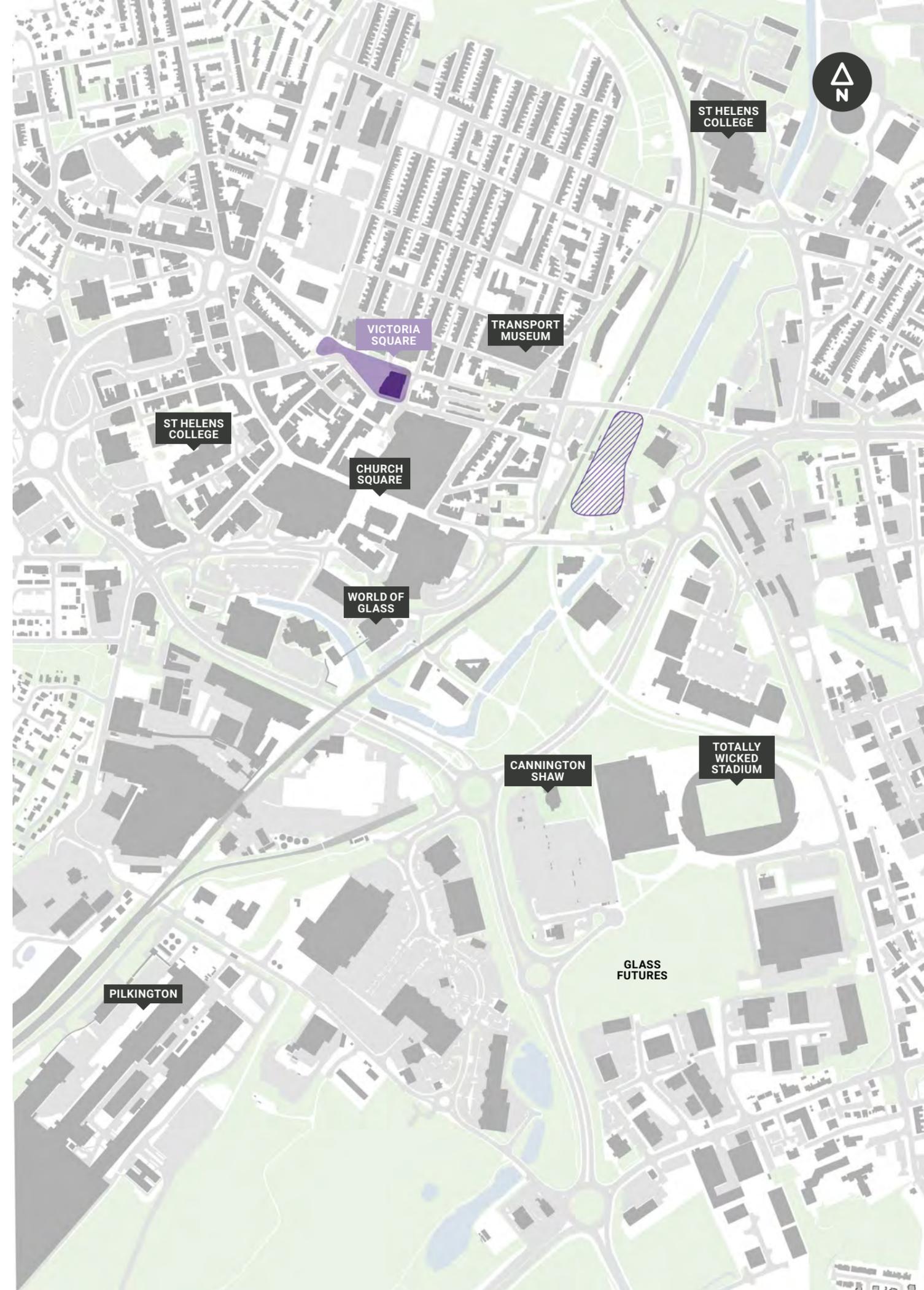
06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

D HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

(YOUTH ZONE, HEALTH INNOVATION HUB)

KEY

- St Helens Heritage Trail
- Gamble Institute
- Disused Railway Line Green Route
- Youth and Community Zone
- Discovery Park
- Victoria Square Public Realm

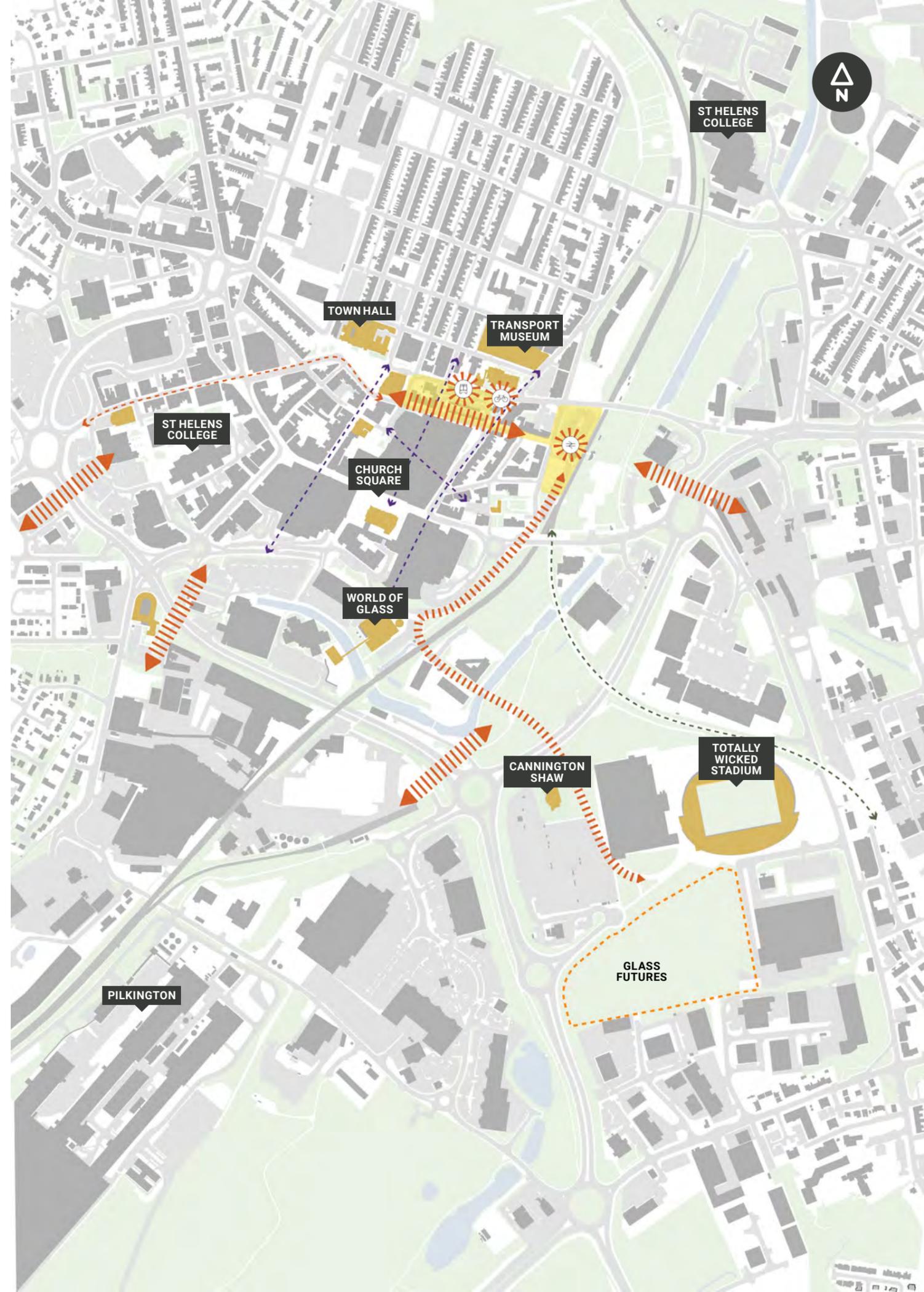
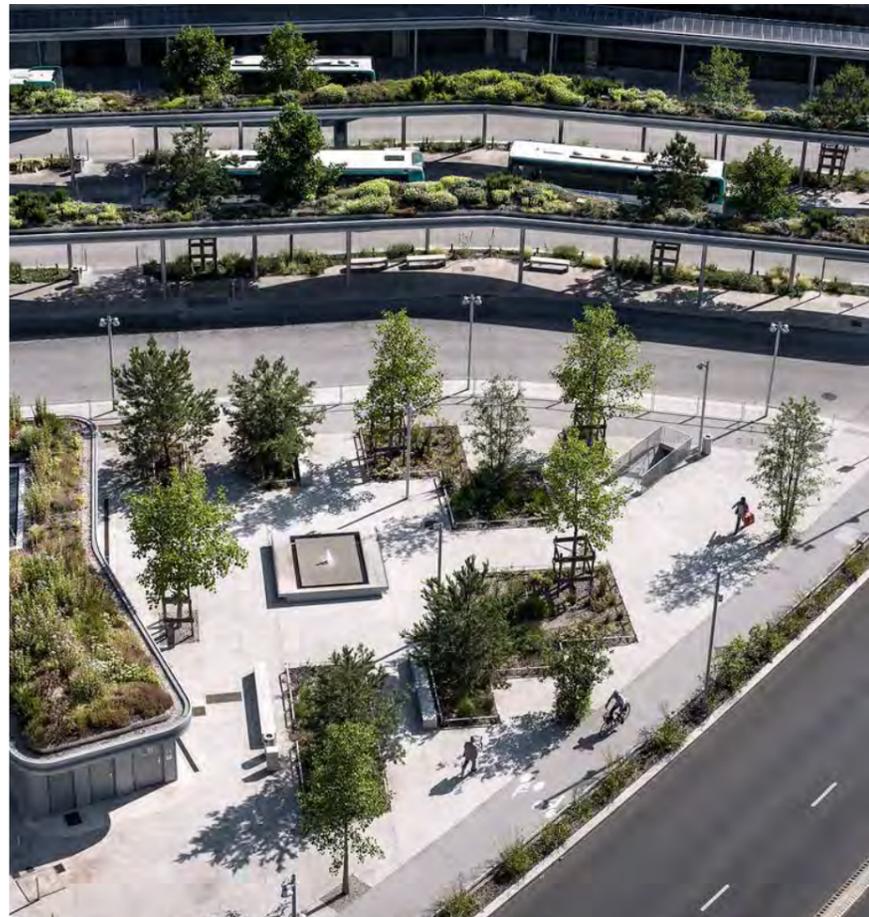


06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

E CONNECTED PLACES

KEY

-  Transport Nodes
-  Improved Link and Public Realm
-  Green Bus Route to Liverpool
-  Disused Railway Line Green Route
-  Transport Hub
-  Key Buildings
-  Creating Strong Pedestrian Links



06. OUR TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN

F DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE

KEY

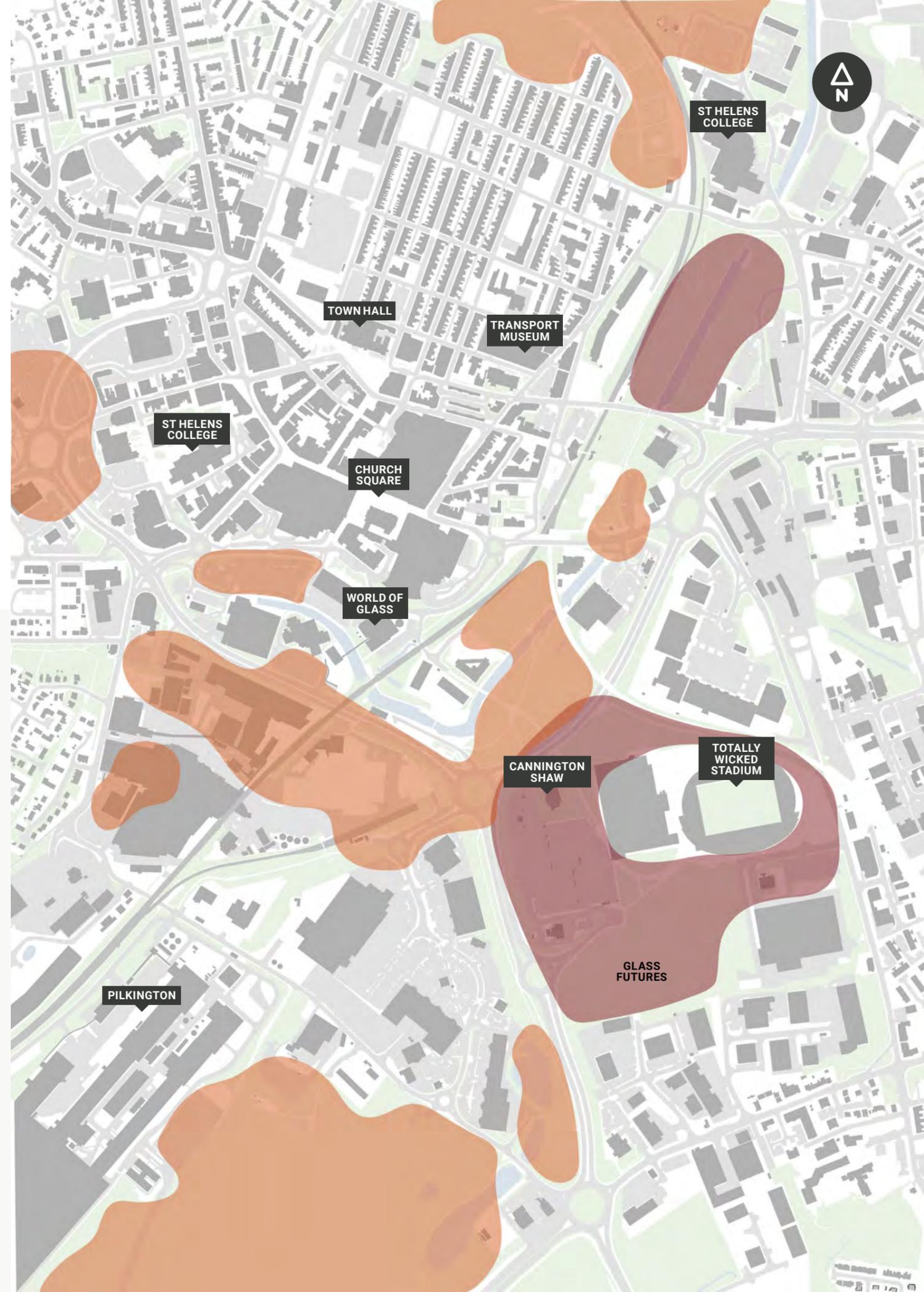
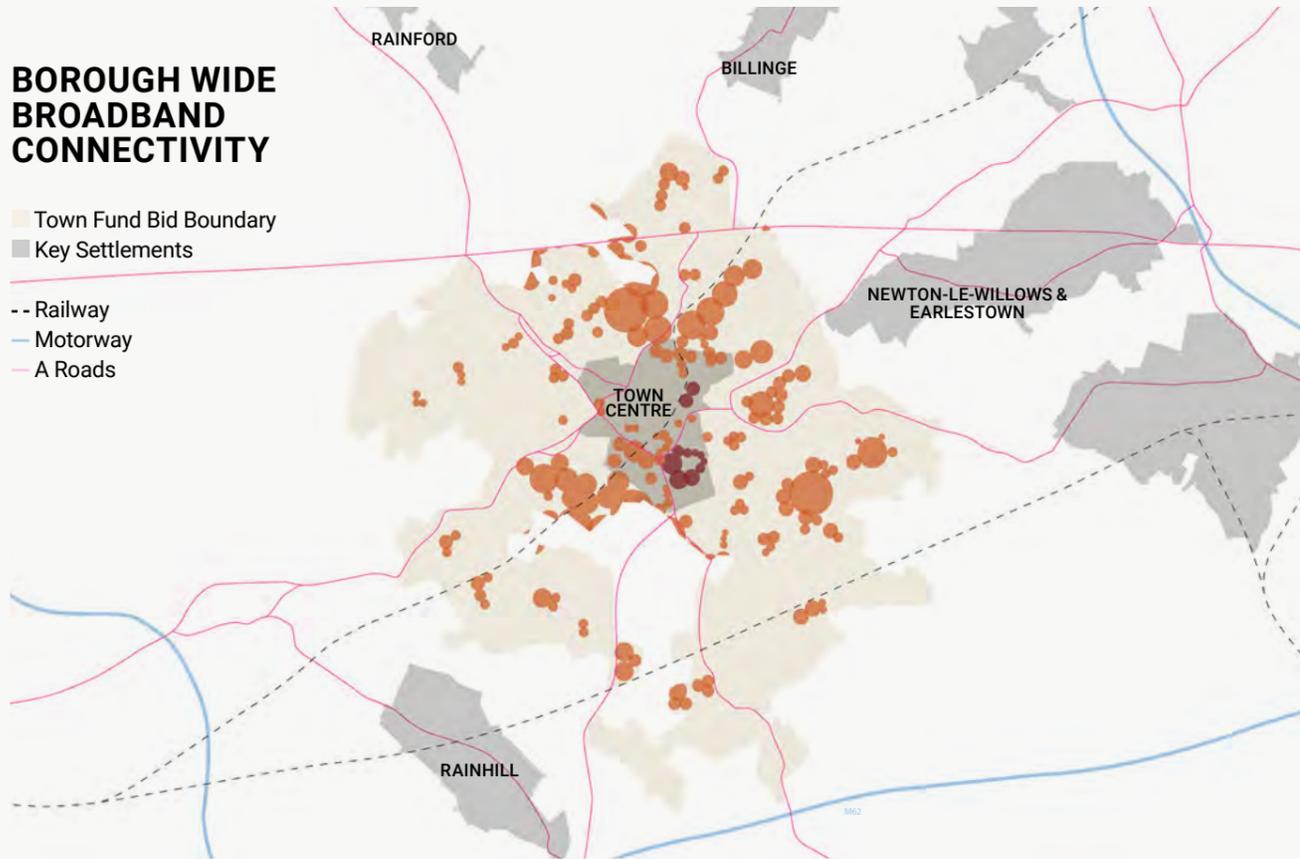
 No Broadband Cover

 No Broadband Cover on Development Site

BOROUGH WIDE BROADBAND CONNECTIVITY

 Town Fund Bid Boundary
 Key Settlements

-- Railway
— Motorway
— A Roads



07

ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY



07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

Stakeholder engagement has been integral to the preparation of our TIP. Consultation and engagement have been ongoing since 2016 (Figure 20)⁹⁸ and a wide range of methods have been used including online surveys, focused workshop discussions and 1:1 engagement.

Engagement specifically for the Towns Fund programme⁹⁹ has been supplemented with consultation for our Town Centre Strategy, Draft Local Plan and emerging Borough Strategy #sthelentogether, and consultation undertaken by key partners, for example, the Big Conversation, led by the faith sector.

The identification of the key issues, challenges and opportunities, development of the proposed vision, and the Towns Fund projects set out within this TIP have all been informed by engagement.

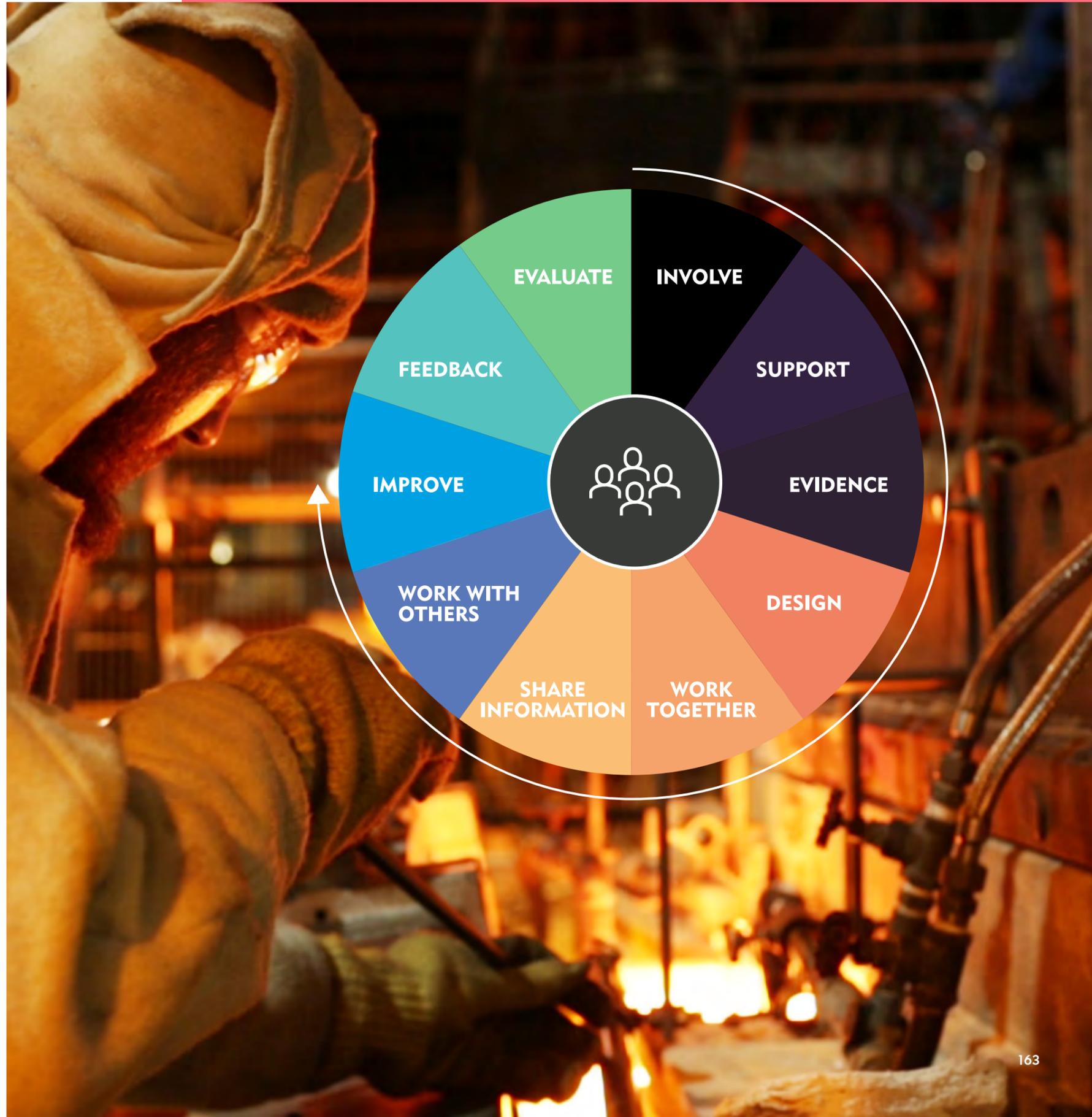
Aligned to the guidance in the Towns Fund Prospectus, we have prepared a Stakeholder Engagement Plan which details the engagement undertaken to date and comprises our plan for future engagement, in recognition that discussions will be ongoing as the Full Business Cases are prepared (Figure 19).



⁹⁸ <https://www.investsthelens.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/St-Helens-Storybook-Final.pdf>

⁹⁹ This included a series of 1:1 discussions, workshops and focus groups and was undertaken between August and October 2020, led by thinkingplace on behalf of the Council to develop the St Helens Story

Figure 19: Our approach to Stakeholder Engagement



07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

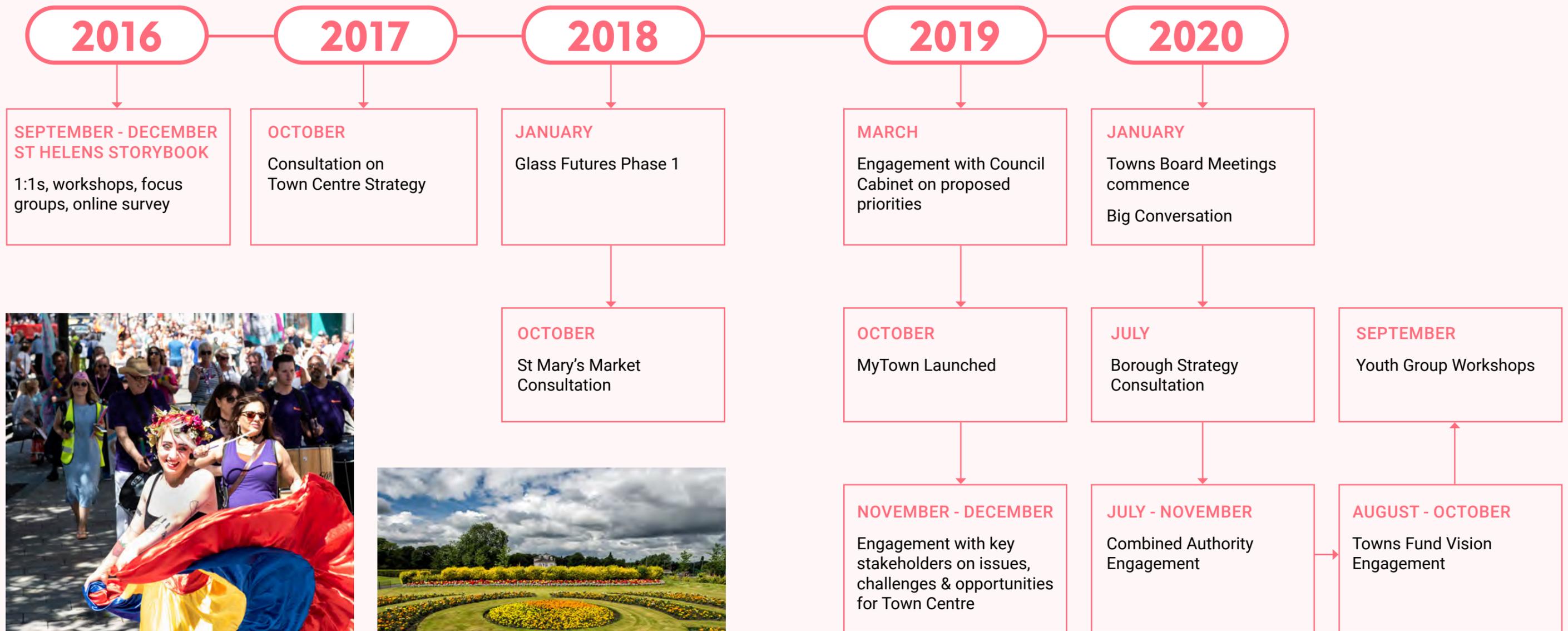


Figure 20: St Helens Stakeholder Engagement process

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW



Figure 23: Emerging themes distilled from St Helens Together: Borough Strategy engagement (July & August 2020)

1. Vibrant & Attractive Town Centres	(140 respondents, 72%)
2. More job opportunities	(130 respondents, 67%)
3. Raising aspirations/ambition in young	(119 respondents, 61%)
4. A more green and clean environment	(77 respondents, 39%)
5. Affordable & available housing	(50 respondents, 26%)
6. An exciting cultural/arts/heritage offer	(32 respondents, 16%)
7. Better transport connections to cities/towns	(26 respondents, 13%)

Figure 24: Feedback from St Helens Together: Borough Strategy when asked 'what are your top 3 dreams for St Helens Borough over the next 10 years?' (engagement undertaken between July and August 2020)

Previous engagement has been collated alongside Towns Fund specific consultation¹⁰². Results are provided in Appendix C.

PROJECT THEMES

URBAN REGENERATION & LAND USE



- Need for significant town centre regeneration
- Currently a lack of night-time economy and music venues particularly emphasised by respondents
- Improvements to community health and provide mental health services
- Need for investment in a youth zone and activities to discourage antisocial behaviour
- Housing for the elderly and community hubs to reduce loneliness and isolation

CULTURE AND HERITAGE



- Attract leisure facilities and promote more cultural and community activities
- Reopen the Library
- Embrace St Helen's Industrial Heritage (using canal glass museum and heritage industry)
- Improve green areas and improvements to existing parks
- Canal Restoration to attract residents and visitors to use this asset and improve connectivity

TRANSPORT CONNECTIVITY



- Improvements to public transport
- Improve accessibility around the Town Centre

EMPLOYMENT & SKILLS



- Attract new businesses and support growth of existing businesses (small/medium sized)
- More support for tackling unemployment
- Educational courses for adults and training to develop specific industries

Figure 25: Overview of MyTown engagement responses

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

DEVELOPING THE TOWNS FUND VISION (AUGUST-OCTOBER 2020)

Thinkingplace held a series of one-to-one conversations with 20 stakeholders including the business community¹⁰³, group workshops and focus groups to establish if the issues identified in 2016/17 were still relevant. This was used to develop a place-narrative (Appendix C) which informed the Town Investment Plan's vision. Feedback is summarised in Figure 27 and 28.

- St Helens attributes

- Pros and Cons and Key Descriptors

- St Helens positioning

- Business in St Helens

- St Helens Town Centre

- The Future for St Helens

Figure 26: Topics discussed during Towns Fund focused engagement in August-October 2020 (thinkingplace)

¹⁰³ Including businesses, voluntary sector and those representing 'hard to reach' groups



Figure 27: Feedback from stakeholder engagement (August-October 2020) (Source: thinkingplace)



Figure 28: Feedback from stakeholder engagement when asked to describe a vision for the town centre in the future (August-October 2020) (Source: thinkingplace)

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Engagement with young people included focus groups with the Youth Council, Youth Parliament and Children in Care Council¹⁰⁴ and an online survey. Feedback has shaped the vision and priority projects.



<https://twitter.com/YouthServiceSTH/status/1314256948322349059/photo/1>

"You don't need to go to Venice to blow glass, you can do it right here on your doorstep! We need to shout about these initiatives and opportunities"

YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBER
STEFAN WILKINSON-HILL (AGE 16)

"I am honoured and privileged to be the MYP for St Helens, representing young people across the Borough. I am delighted that St Helens Youth Council have been given the opportunity to share our views and help shape the vision for the Town Investment Plan. I am really pleased to see so many of our ideas and suggestions reflected in the plan and look forward to the next stage of the journey for St Helens."

BEN LOMAS
ST HELENS MEMBER OF YOUTH PARLIAMENT AND CHAIR
ST HELENS YOUTH COUNCIL

¹⁰⁴ September 2020



"We must be active, bold and aggressive in our growth strategy. In a changing environment, businesses and St Helens as a whole, need to do things differently to get the outcomes we aspire to. We need a renewed way for the public, private and third sector to work together and joint resources to compete nationally and internationally like never before.

New developments are transforming St Helens and creating new opportunities. Such as major town centre transformation and major development on the M6 corridor – the time to act is now!

We can't be a mere observer. We must all participate, contribute, and benefit from what should be a long period of economic outperformance for this region"



EAMONN MCMANUS
CHAIRMAN, ST HELENS RFC

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW

“Make it attractive for business, businesses aren’t connected enough”

“Warrington Base has attracted similar businesses into a space good for networking – St.Helens needs something similar.”

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT

Engaging with businesses as stakeholders has been critical to shaping our TIP. Alongside those businesses represented on the Board, we have had 1:1 discussions with 8 business leaders, undertaken focus groups with St Helens Chamber members, engaged with the Ambassadors Programme (153 businesses represented).

PROJECT-SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENT

Specific stakeholder discussions have also taken place to scope out individual projects:



COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT

Council officers and members engagement has been crucial too. Cllr McCauley, Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Planning sits on the Board and Executive Group, and the TIP has been taken through the Council’s approval processes, being endorsed by Cabinet on 27th January 2020.

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

DELIVERY PLAN

The Council recognises that to deliver on its strategic priorities it needs to adapt and redesign both its operating model and resource base; A process that is underway through the introduction of a new leadership structure that reflects the strategic importance of delivering growth directly and in partnership.

A Growth Department has been established within the Place Directorate, where the skills and services are clustered to create an effective, high performing and market-facing regeneration function. The Department, which includes capital programme and project management, planning, economic development, skills and property represents a significant investment in new resources.

The potential for growth in St Helens is regionally and nationally significant and the council has invested heavily to translate the potential into delivery through its Growth Department and its partnership with ECF.

A successful Town Investment Plan submission is a pivotal milestone in the regeneration journey for St Helens. The Council, with partners, has created the conditions to deliver the economic prosperity it deserves.



07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY



OUR DELIVERY PARTNER THE ENGLISH CITIES FUND

The Council has entered a Borough-wide 20-year partnership to transform the borough, with an initial focus on the town centre. ECF will provide direct delivery, investor and development-management support, where appropriate, to deliver the Towns Fund priorities. ECF has directly inputted into this TIP to ensure proposals are deliverable within the Towns Fund programme.

ECF will support the Council in delivering its growth and regeneration programme and will prepare a town-centre masterplan/ development framework in early 2021 ensuring that opportunity sites are spatially linked.

The Council, with support from its partners, is confident it can effectively manage the Towns Fund programme. The projects are capable of being delivered independently, there are no inter-dependencies between them.

BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT

In parallel to securing Towns Fund investment, the Council, Towns Fund Board and our delivery partners will prepare the Full Business Cases for each project adhering to latest guidance¹⁰⁵. This will include a more detailed financial, strategic, economic, commercial and management case. The Council and Towns Fund Board will appoint a professional team to support them alongside development expertise in ECF and our proposed delivery partners.

Initial appraisals for the economic and strategic case have already been undertaken for the TIP and we are confident that each of the projects are capable of delivery and incurring the capital funding sought by March 2026. Delivery leads are working alongside the TIP preparation to ensure project readiness – this includes undertaking further feasibility work (where relevant), procurement of professional team, development of RIBA Stage 2 Design and preparation of relevant planning and other statutory consents.

TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN

An integral part of the Towns Funding programme is the preparation of an overarching masterplan for the Town Centre. This work is being prepared by the Council and ECF with consultation due to commence in Spring 2021. This will ensure the package of towns funding priorities are spatially aligned and appropriately phased over the next 6 years.

¹⁰⁵ Towns Fund Guidance (stage two): Business Case Development, 16th December 2020

“St Helens’ Town Investment Plan is a great opportunity for the area to prosper, to grow and we’re proud to support the council in helping them realise their vision for a brighter borough.”

“We’re on a journey with our partners at St Helens Council, bringing our unique business model to enable them to repurpose a number of exciting projects, including the town centre, transforming them into vibrant new mixed-use destinations that’ll attract inward investment, create opportunities for local people and drive community wealth at a time it’s needed most.”

“St Helens is a proud borough steeped in history, but with a real aspiration to bring innovative spaces and to benefit the community, which is in the fund’s DNA. We look forward to further strengthening our partnership with the council as we move forward, together.”

PHIL MAYALL
REGIONAL DIRECTOR
THE ENGLISH CITIES FUND.

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

GOVERNANCE

The proposals in this Towns Fund bid are commended by the Board and have political support.

Council budget approval for 'match funding' will be sought through Cabinet following confirmation of "in principle" Towns funding support. The Council and delivery partners will seek match funding through the sources already identified.

As the accountable body the Council will:

- ✔ Provide support to the Towns Fund Board through the negotiation on the Heads of Terms Agreement
- ✔ Ensure compliance with the Heads of Terms Agreement once formally signed
- ✔ Oversee and ensure the Towns Fund Board is compliant and adheres to agreed protocols within the Terms of Reference, and the Heads of Terms Agreement once signed
- ✔ Ensure transparency and good governance is adhered to
- ✔ Work alongside key delivery partners and stakeholders to prepare a comprehensive Towns Fund Programme, establish monitoring and review procedures (including identifying risks and mitigation) and ensure delivery of KPIs.
- ✔ Support the development of the Full Business Cases

There is external accountability through the Towns Fund Board and will also be kept regularly informed of progress by the SRO, reporting back through the Strategic Executive Board and sub-boards.

PROJECT READINESS

Projects have been selected on the basis of their deliverability and feasibility work is ongoing, in parallel to the Towns Funding outcome.

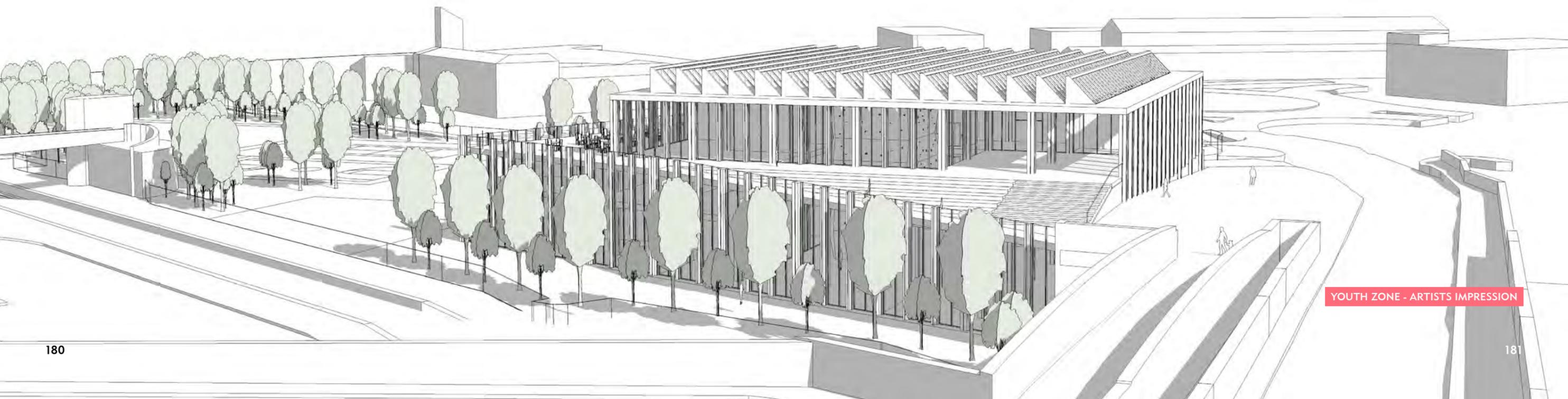
There is limited risk that the Towns Fund will not be spent by 31st March 2026. Each project and the programme overall will be carefully monitored and reviewed, risks identified and mitigated swiftly to ensure timescales can be achieved and outputs delivered.

The Council has relevant in-house expertise to manage a programme of this nature.

Once funds are committed, the Council/ project lead will proceed to the next stage of the project programme - procuring contractors/ developer partners, concluding agreements, advancing planning applications, and resolving any land assembly issues.

The project programmes incorporate allowances for slippage and provide sufficient float to ensure that the Towns Fund programme can still be achieved.

The projects will be progressed by a suitably qualified professional team managed through an experienced external development manager reporting to an internal Council project manager on a weekly basis and senior officers on a monthly basis. Where relevant, suitably resourced and experienced private sector development partner(s) will be selected, to deliver the schemes, where necessary, through an OJEU competitive tender process.



YOUTH ZONE - ARTISTS IMPRESSION

07. ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY

PHASED DELIVERY OF OUR PRIORITIES

2020/21

- Formal Exchange of ECF/ St Helens Council Partnership (December 2020)
- Preparation of masterplan/ Development Framework for Town Centre & Earlestown
- Consultation on Town Centre masterplan & Earlestown
- Preparation of masterplan for Glass Futures/ Foundation Industries
- Completion of Accelerated Funding package – Demolition of Chalon Way Car Park (March 2021)
- Procure professional team for project delivery
- Preparation of Full Business Cases for each identified TIP project
- Secure DCMS funding for proposed youth zone (Healthy Communities)
- External works commence on The Gamble (March 2021)
- Preparation of Meanwhile Use Strategy and Events Programme for Town Centre

2021/22

- Agree Heads of Terms for Town Deal with Government
- Continue to finalise Full Business Cases including securing match-funding & submit to BEIS
- Drawdown first tranche of funding
- Finalise Town Centre Masterplan
- Detailed feasibility and secure BEIS funding for Glass Futures Ph 2
- Resolve site assembly
- Secure outline planning applications.
- Detailed design for all projects
- Secure Reserved Matters/ Full Planning consents
- Procure developer/ contractors
- Commence infrastructure works/ de-engineering
- Procurement of digital infrastructure provider

2022/23

- Construction works commence (Heritage World)
- Resolve site assembly/ VP
- Procure additional developer/contractors

2023/24

- Demolition works commence (Town Centre Living)
- Construct new residential blocks (Town Centre Living)
- Construction works commence (Healthy Communities)
- Connected Places work commences

2024/25

- Construction of projects continues
- Connected Places scheme completed

2025/26

- Towns Fund Projects complete – all funding incurred



PROPOSED MARKET HALL - CGI





ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL