



**Staveley Town Centre Draft Vision  
Masterplan  
2021-2031**

**Independent Review Report  
For Chesterfield Cabinet Meeting -  
April 2022**

**Date: 29 March 2022**

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## **1. Executive Summary**

### **1.1 Purpose of Report**

IntoPlaces Ltd, an independent town centres consultancy working to successfully support and revitalise a range of towns, was commissioned to assist with the process of developing an updated Masterplan for Staveley town centre. We were asked to provide an independent review of the four key elements of the December Consultation draft 2021-2031 Town Centre Vision Masterplan, subject to any amendments which will incorporate the December consultation responses for a final Vision and Masterplan document and ongoing additional consultation with young people and wider stakeholders.

This report will provide the following:

- A summary of external trends, challenges and opportunities affecting towns nationally and relevant examples of best practice elsewhere
- An overview of the four proposed elements of the Masterplan (Market Square, High Street Improvements, Utilising Underused and Vacant Buildings and Movement & Connectivity), taking into account the consultation responses and linking to the other Town Investment Plan projects to achieve transformational change for Staveley
- Potential outcomes on adoption of the Staveley Town Centre Vision and 2021-2031 Masterplan to create sustainability and vibrancy for Staveley town centre and for local people and businesses

### **1.2 Conclusions Summary**

Having reviewed the proposals against national best practice regarding high street revival and the Town Deal criteria, Intoplaces Ltd believes that the physical enhancements outlined in the 2021-2031 Masterplan have the capacity to transform Staveley town centre into a vibrant town centre hub for its catchment area, with the support of the Town Deal and the other Town Investment Plan projects. A robust approach to working in partnership with town centre stakeholders in the short, medium and longer term will bring the proposals to life, providing additionality, new and diverse uses.

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Context

A Steering Group was formed, comprising Council Officers from Economic Development, Planning, Highways and BDP who were commissioned to refresh the Vision for Staveley and develop an updated Masterplan in light of the many challenges and significant changes to town centres since the original 2009 Masterplan was created.

This refreshed Vision and Masterplan would also build on the regeneration and growth focused in the Staveley area over the next 15 years. With a growing population and more people working in Staveley there is potential for the town centre to have an increasingly important role.

The 2021-2031 Masterplan would support the aspiration for Staveley town centre to transform itself into a vital and vibrant hub for local people and visitors, with links to the other Town Deal Town Investment Plan projects within its catchment area.

IntoPlaces provided an input and feedback to the Steering Group on the potential options for a refreshed Vision and Masterplan. This was supplemented by an independent Town Tour Observations Report (see Appendix 1), further desk research and national research data relating to town centres (see Reference List of Documents on the end page).

The diagram below illustrates the strategic links that will enable Staveley to revitalise and reinvent itself through its refreshed Masterplan and connections to the other Town Investment Plan projects.



### 2.2 Review of the Four Key Masterplan Elements: Approach and Methodology

This included reviewing the baseline data collected both prior to and whilst developing the refreshed Masterplan for any updates, as documented in the October Cabinet Report on the Masterplan.

Intoplaces provided input into the development of the Masterplan process, reviewing the options, the Consultation version of the draft Vision and 2021-2031 Masterplan as well as the consultation strategy/responses. We also provided Information Sheets on specific aspects of town centre regeneration,

based on experience of successful interventions and projects elsewhere and national best practice examples.

Regular Feedback Summaries discussed at the Steering Group meetings and recommendations were reviewed and incorporated into the refreshed Masterplan proposals.

The Masterplan's links to the Council's Local Plan, Corporate Priorities and other Town Investment Plan projects were also reviewed and should support the town's transformation and ensure its long term sustainability as the vibrant hub of a growing, confident town; a great place that delivers a better quality of life for all.

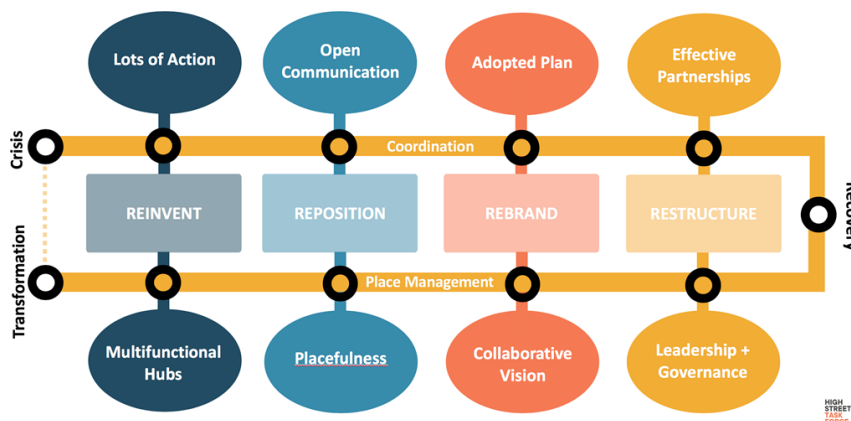
### 3. External Factors Influencing the Masterplan Development

#### 3.1 Specific Town Centre Challenges

These were highlighted in the October Cabinet Report and referenced to more detailed Chesterfield town centre health checks and IMD information reports. In addition, the HS2 related projects for Staveley need to be revisited.

#### 3.2 National Themes and Visioning for Places

The well documented decline of town centres across the country caused by changing shopping habits, online retailing, out of town competition and high overheads has shaped the way town centres are viewed and need to adapt to remain relevant and sustainable in the long term. This has been further hastened and informed by the Coronavirus pandemic and its huge impacts on businesses, communities and town centres. Based on extensive research from the Institute of Place Management/High Streets Task Force into the development of vibrant, sustainable town centres, the following High Streets Task Force diagram summarises the different phases of development to create vibrant and sustainable town centres, fit for the future.



#### 3.3 Changing Roles of Towns

**Opportunities Being Taken Forward through Staveley's Masterplan Proposals** - National research by the Institute of Place Management (IPM), the national High Streets Task Force and its partners has indicated that consumers no longer want the traditional model of a predominantly retail focused, large floorplate offer. They want inspiration, uniqueness, experience and social interaction as well as all the things that cannot be bought online whilst still linked to digital connectivity and technology.

The High Streets Task Force, commissioned by the government in 2019 to support the transformation of England's high streets and with lead partner, the Institute of Place Management (IPM), analysed footfall from 154 towns and found that 44% provide a wide range of different types of services to their communities and can be classified as 'multifunctional' and this is set to rise. The lifting of Covid-19

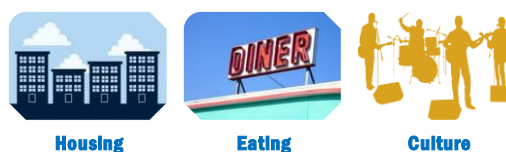
restrictions at various times since March 2020 and finally completely in March 2022 also showed that people were willing to return to their local centres for non-food retail, leisure and eating out.

**The refreshed Staveley Vision Masterplan incorporates these trends within the overarching objectives to create a vibrant, multifunctional hub. The Market Square proposed elements also reflect these, looking to increase and diversify the offer, potentially attracting new unique enterprises and additional independent businesses.**

There is also a growing trend to incorporate community hubs and spaces with activities which can increase social cohesion and a sense of wellbeing. **The proposed improvements to public space within the Market Square proposals should bring an enhanced social experience.**



### **A desire for nonretail things**



An increasing awareness of the environment is also leading to the development of enhanced public realm, pedestrian and cycle routes in towns as well as EV charging points and digital connectivity. **The proposed improvements to public realm and linkages across the town should bring an enhanced social experience and digital connectivity, as well as encouraging active travel and positive environmental impacts.**

In addition, **Staveley's Masterplan proposals regarding the repurposing of vacant buildings and underused land within the town reflects the national recommendation and trend to utilise town centre brownfield sites and vacant buildings. This should help to recreate vibrancy with new uses such as shared office space, smaller bespoke units and sympathetic refurbishment of heritage buildings to retain character and uniqueness.**

**Threats to Address** - The demand for housing and changes in National Planning Policy (which came into effect in August 2021) will also see more vacant units in towns being developed to meet the need for additional residential accommodation. IPM and High Streets Task Force research and other national organisations involved in revitalising town centres indicate that it is still important to keep active ground floor uses (such as retail, leisure and service) in primary town centre zones to maintain vibrancy, increase footfall, time and money spent in a town. This is evidenced by a number of successful mixed use developments with active ground floor uses and should be addressed through the Council's planning process. Care should be taken, however, to mitigate the effect of any negative Night-Time Economy impacts on adjacent residential developments. There should also be adequate measures in place for deliveries, waste storage and removal so these do not conflict with the creation of attractive social space and public realm.

The trend to online shopping can divert spend away from town centres but a combination of increased digital activity support for businesses and to promote and create linked town trips for Staveley's catchment area with offers for instore purchases and experience related activities can help to mitigate this.

## **4. Consultation Strategy and Summary Findings**

### **4.1 Public/Stakeholder Consultation**

An initial consultation about the Towns Fund in Summer 2020 showed that people had many positive things to say about the town's rich heritage, its strong community spirit and rural setting. However, people also said that its full potential was untapped, it did not have the appeal or offer to attract them into Staveley and that investment was required in the town centre.

A comprehensive consultation programme was put in place in November 2021, taking into account the challenges posed by COVID-19 impacts and offering a range of online, face to face and exhibition events and attracted responses from local residents and businesses, Councillors and stakeholder organisations.

Key findings in the Town Centre Masterplan Survey Report suggest that the proposals for Market Square were the most popular for respondents. 90% of respondents would be much more or more likely to visit the town centre if there were more social or community activities/events with 84% wanting to see more Markets, 84% wanting Seasonal Events and 67% highlighting Arts & Culture. Creating more community/family-friendly public spaces featured highly in Comments along with making the Market Square area more visible, refurbishing the old cinema and a lack of demand for further residential in the town centre.

#### 4.2 Ongoing Engagement

- **Businesses** - It is important to continue the town centre business engagement/consultation undertaken to clarify issues/concerns and work together to create a vibrant, transformed hub for businesses, local people and the wider community. Businesses can be important ambassadors and information sources as the Masterplan elements develop.
- **Young People** – As current and future potential adult users of the town, it is important to foster their active involvement. Engaging and involving them in a variety of town centre projects can help to gain their commitment, enthusiasm and understanding of the role of the town for the economy, health and social wellbeing as well as heritage, culture and connectivity.
- **Wider Local Community/Key Stakeholders** – Equally important is to continue involvement of the wider community and key stakeholders in contributing to the development and delivery of the Masterplan's four key elements.

### 5. Assessment of the Four Key Staveley Town Centre 2021-2031 Masterplan Proposals

#### 5.1 Outcomes Relating to Town Deal Criteria

The Town Deal criteria includes the setting up of a Town Deal Board to oversee the development of a Town Deal and its implementation, and a Town Investment Plan setting out plans to increase economic growth. Recommendations are for targeted interventions focused on the town centre, gateway areas, or key employment sites, with projects related to regeneration, improved transport, better broadband connectivity, skills and culture. The plans should be clearly evidenced and linked to existing local and regional strategies and initiatives.

The 2021-2031 Staveley Town Centre Masterplan proposals form one of the Town Investment projects and encompass all the aspects above, addressing IMD ratings for Staveley and relating to the following outcomes:

**Economic** – including employment, skills and training, encouraging diversity of offer

**Social** – including housing, health and wellbeing, social cohesion and inclusion, culture and arts

**Environmental** – including reducing negative environmental impacts, improved infrastructure and connectivity, digital access, creating sustainability

**Heritage** – increasingly important in retaining uniqueness and local character as well as increasing civic pride

## 5.2 Summary Table of Masterplan Proposals and Outcomes Assessment

Masterplan Proposal	Outcomes for the Town	Assessment of Outcomes of Masterplan Proposal
<p><b>Market Square Proposals</b> Prioritised in the consultation, the Market Square proposals contain significant elements of recognised good practice that have helped transform other places. With a robust plan to curate the market offer, sitting alongside the necessary physical enhancements, the Market Square proposals can help to drive transformation in Staveley.</p> <p>Summary of proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose built covered/indoor Market Hall space</li> <li>• New retail, leisure and community/workspace building</li> <li>• Community/events space and landscaped links to wider town/Canal</li> </ul>	<p>Economic, social, environmental, heritage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retains the original purpose of the space that can act as a catalyst for further economic growth and regeneration</li> <li>• Creates opportunities for a more diverse retail/food &amp; drink offer and pop up stalls, nurturing new and existing businesses</li> <li>• Pavilion building hub creates an eco-building for mixed uses that can complement the Market Hall offer and encourage skills development and entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Creates more visibility to a larger enhanced public/events space, improving perceptions and encouraging people to stay longer and reconnect with businesses in the wider town</li> <li>• Creates an opportunity to attract and retain footfall, boosting the local economy</li> <li>• Creates an opportunity to capture more of the visitor market to the surrounding countryside, canal and historic attractions</li> <li>• Links well to the wider Connectivity Masterplan project, other TIP projects as well as providing opportunities to link to the town's Healthy Living Centre community uses and activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>High Street Proposals</b> The High Street proposal contains significant elements of recognised good practice that have helped transform other places. It complements the other Masterplan proposals as well as the wider regeneration plans and TIP projects:</p> <p>Summary of proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved wayfinding and town centre signage</li> <li>• Improved cycle parking</li> <li>• Improved street furniture and greening</li> <li>• Shopfronts and building improvements</li> </ul>	<p>Economic, social, environmental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates improved perceptions of Staveley by residents/businesses/visitors</li> <li>• Makes it easier to access the town centre and encourages increased dwell time</li> <li>• Creates the opportunity for increasing social interaction and cohesion</li> <li>• Improves health and wellbeing by improving active travel options for local people</li> <li>• Supports business aspirations to improve their shopfronts and provide a more attractive trading environment</li> <li>• Encourages active engagement and involvement by landlords to support the Masterplan proposals, creating a better ROI and land value uplift</li> </ul>
<p><b>Utilising Vacant Buildings and Underused Land</b> The Development Projects proposal contains suggested uses for potential development sites that have helped transform vacant buildings and underused town centre sites elsewhere. The different elements would need to be done in conjunction with landowners, highlighting good</p>	<p>Economic, heritage, social, environmental</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages active engagement and involvement by landlords/landowners</li> <li>• Maintains the unique character of the town through sympathetic refurbishment and re-use of heritage buildings at key gateways</li> <li>• Creates an improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that fits with national trends for experience related town centre hubs</li> <li>• Repurposes vacant buildings for modern day requirements and trends</li> </ul>



<p>practice examples and taking account of heritage aspects.</p> <p>Summary of proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible redevelopment of Duke Street car wash into modern business units</li> <li>• Regal Cinema refurbishment, taking account of heritage aspects and potential as an independent cinema with a variety of culture/arts activities</li> <li>• Elm Tree Pub refurbishment for either residential, commercial or mixed use</li> <li>• Devonshire Close garages redevelopment and some areas of surface car parking for residential and a new pedestrian link to High Street</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revitalises underutilised space into high-quality, affordable and sustainable commercial spaces</li> <li>• Creates opportunities for start-ups and/or scaleups to utilise business incubation, acceleration and co-working spaces</li> <li>• Supports skills updating, innovation, ideas generation and information sharing amongst businesses</li> <li>• Creates opportunities for businesses to engage locally by providing work experience placements and apprenticeships</li> </ul>
<p><b>Movement and Connectivity</b> The Movement and Connectivity proposals contain significant elements of recognised good practice that have helped transform other places. They provide much needed public realm and digital infrastructure improvements, can help to reconnect people within the local catchment area to the town centre, capitalise on the visitor market to the surrounding countryside and heritage attractions and increase dwell time.</p> <p>Summary of proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town centre Wi-Fi that delivers free ultra-fast broadband for businesses and visitors</li> <li>• Enhanced pedestrian and cycling routes and landscaping linked to the development of the Chesterfield to Staveley Regeneration Route and Canalside improvements</li> </ul>	<p>Economic, environmental, social</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improves internet links and opportunities for businesses to attract new and support existing customers</li> <li>• Creates additional opportunities to promote the town to visitors</li> <li>• Supports smart ticketing and contactless payments</li> <li>• Encourages additional electric vehicle users, cyclists and pedestrians and lessens negative environmental impacts</li> <li>• Promotes health, fitness and wellbeing</li> <li>• Provides better access to the town and prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians</li> <li>• Reduces congestion within the town</li> <li>• Enhances the whole town centre experience</li> <li>• Creates opportunities to reduce carbon footprint and congestion and improve air quality</li> <li>• Creates opportunities to improve access routes from surrounding residential area into the town centre and the Canal</li> </ul>

## 6. Conclusions

- The refreshed Staveley Town Centre 2021-2031 Vision Masterplan with its five established principles for change that underpin the Masterplan proposals reflect national trends adopted by successful places elsewhere. These include a vital mix of uses, creating a strong sense of place and community, easy connectivity with attractive, sustainable linkages/routes, complementing heritage with new innovations and experiences, adapting to a low carbon, digital future to continue to be relevant to the people it serves.
- Based on our experience, the Staveley Town Centre Vision and 2021-2031 Masterplan contains the components that work in other places referenced in Section 3 of this report and should help to transform Staveley into a vibrant town centre hub for its catchment area, with the support of the Town Deal and the other Town Investment Plan projects, subject to the amendments following the December consultation, the outlining of delivery methods/timescales and continuing engagement work suggested.
- A working Partnership/Taskforce that is town centre focused should be established in order to refine the Vision to encompass Staveley's unique characteristics, actively progress the agreed final Masterplan elements and attract new businesses/enterprises, provide added value and maximise the development opportunities.
- It will be important to continue engagement work with the wider community, stakeholders and young people in particular to ensure that their requirements as current and potential future users of the town align with the Vision and Masterplan proposals.

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## **Appendix 1 – Reference Documents**

The following documents were researched to inform this review:

### **Local/Regional**

1. Derbyshire County Council documentation
2. Chesterfield Borough Council's Local Plan July 2020
3. Staveley Draft Vision Masterplan 2021-2031 Consultation Boards
4. Town Deal Board Membership and Terms of Reference
5. Staveley Town Investment Plan- December 2020
6. Staveley Town Centre Masterplan Steering Group documentation

### **National**

1. National High Streets Taskforce Research and Webinar Information - <https://www.highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/>
2. Institute of Place Management Research Papers/Covid 19 Support Webinars - <https://www.placemanagement.org/>
3. Association of Town Centre Management Resources - <https://www.atcm.org/>
4. Centre for Retail Research website – <https://www.retailresearch.org/retail-forecast.html>
5. Office for National Statistics retail information – <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/retailindustry/bulletins/retailsales/>

## Appendix 2 – Staveley Independent Town Tour Feedback Report



### STAVELEY INDEPENDENT TOWN TOUR ON THURSDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2021 – FEEDBACK REPORT

As part of our Critical Friend approach, IntoPlaces undertakes a town tour to contextualise potential regeneration proposals and gauge how a town currently operates. The summary findings are outlined below. These need to be put into the wider context of the proposed Masterplan Vision and Objectives so that a cohesive Plan is developed.

#### 1. Staveley Approach Routes/Access

##### 1.1 Road

Staveley has good road access being close to main arterial routes from the M1 and nearby Chesterfield as well as being in close proximity to nearby industrial parks/key employment sites. This does, however, cause congestion and leads to air quality issues so will benefit from the proposed new infrastructure scheme which will also need to include digital infrastructure. Parking access and availability is excellent and free at both Morrisons and the High Street car parks. In addition, there are electric car charging points at Morrisons (although these may need to be increased in time). There is also adequate disabled parking provision in the car parks and main shopping street. A limited number of electric charging points are available.



##### 1.2 Bus

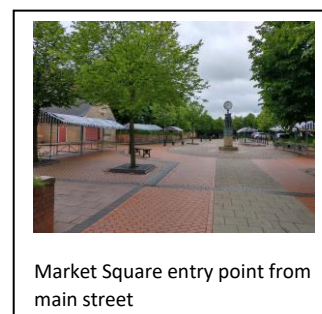
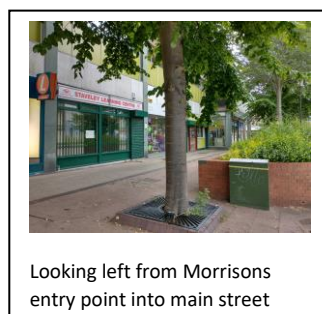


Staveley's small bus station benefits from a modern electronic business information display. It provides the main connecting link to the railway station at Chesterfield which in turn links to the main rail network via Sheffield (Staveley itself currently has no train station).

The bus station needs to provide a more welcoming gateway through improved public realm, signage and pedestrian links into the main town centre area and from the Healthy Living Centre.

#### 2. Gateway Sites

The entry point/signage from the main Morrisons car park into the town centre and Market Square is not that obvious or welcoming although the paving has benefited from a previous upgrade and the lamp posts have been styled to be in keeping with the heritage of the town. Some quick wins to improve the town centre environment to encourage people to stay longer could include an enhanced maintenance schedule



for planters and street furniture, perhaps in conjunction with a local environmental group and sponsored by Morrisons/some of the larger discount stores in the vicinity.

### 3. Landmark Buildings

#### 3.1 Elm Tree Inn, High Street

A key gateway building is the derelict Elm Tree Inn which is part of the conservation area. This could potentially be turned into a sympathetic heritage led mixed use or residential development with associated parking. It would also have the advantage of encouraging footfall linking into the main shopping area and from any proposed nearby cinema development.



Elm Tree Inn Gateway

#### 3.2 Miners Welfare Building, Market Street

In conjunction with the Miners Welfare Social Club, part of this building could be opened up to link with Market Square and the main shopping street. The upper floor could provide additional private space for Club members or be available to hire to suit.

#### 3.3 Market Square Buildings, Market Square

Enhancing the public realm, graffiti removal and planter renewal/maintenance is required to show that Staveley town centre is on the start of an improvement journey.



Welcome to Staveley Market

The Market Square is a greatly underutilised public space currently, only housing markets on Friday and Saturday with empty fixed stalls the rest of the time. It could be an opportunity to try out themed markets, such as artisan and food festivals to see if there is demand from the surrounding catchment area for these that would attract people back into Staveley and reactivate the town. Improvements to Market buildings may have a domino effect on other areas of the town, especially if done in conjunction with business support schemes for tenants which could also encourage a better quality offer that appeals to the wider and growing professional catchment area.

The Market Square could also incorporate a covered multi-functional area for events (which could spill out into the rest of the town) and stalls in inclement weather whilst the building could house a business training/shared workspace hub.

### 4. Permeability/Greening

The immediate surrounding residential buildings do not present Staveley's uniqueness as being close to the countryside/canalside. There are urban design examples which could be investigated to green up these buildings and their surroundings, creating a more pleasing environment for residents and emphasising one of Staveley's unique selling points. The pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre and improved canalside towpath/basin need to be much better signposted and are currently totally missing when you visit Staveley's main car park or many of the other main access points.

### 5. Digital Connectivity

There didn't appear to be any town centre WIFI which is an increasingly important requirement along with superfast broadband connectivity for businesses and visitors.