



## Sheffield City Centre Vision consultation response

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### Introduction

This document is a response by Joined Up Heritage Sheffield (JUHS) to the Sheffield City Council's consultation on their City Centre Strategic Vision (CCSV), including the three plans for key central sites.

Joined Up Heritage Sheffield seeks to bring together organisations and individuals interested in heritage, in all its variety, to promote better understanding, a strategic approach and a better-resourced and better-connected presentation of heritage. JUHS has published a Heritage Strategy that establishes a vision for Sheffield's heritage. This has the support of Sheffield City Council.

The vision of the Heritage Strategy is that within ten years Sheffield will come to:

1. Understand and celebrate its heritage
2. Champion a diverse heritage reflecting diverse Sheffield
3. Exploit the economic potential of heritage
4. Support the educational value of heritage
5. Recognise the social, wellbeing and environmental benefits of heritage.

These are the Aims of the Heritage Strategy.

JUHS believes that there is an urgent need to ensure that these Aims are built in to and maximised by the CCSV.

The Heritage Strategy can be found at: <https://www.joinedupheritagesheffield.org.uk/heritage-strategy>.

## Summary

The CCSV represents a much-needed start on ensuring that the City Centre stays relevant to the needs and aspirations of Sheffield people. It draws together existing initiatives, firms up the main areas for new homes, and recognises the value of Sheffield's unique heritage. It establishes a number of important Principles and Ambitions with potential to improve the City Centre as a place to live, work, relax and invest. It addresses the question of how a large number of additional residents can be accommodated, and pays welcome attention to the need for a liveable environment, mixed communities and housing types, local facilities and distinctive identity.

The CCSV now needs to expand and clarify the thinking on heritage, expanding it well beyond the limited scope of industry, focusing on the total historic environment rather than a few prominent buildings, greatly improving the detail of its Neighbourhood characterisations, and recognising the importance of the many Conservation Areas that cover much of the City Centre. This is essential to delivering the wide range of substantial benefits that heritage can bring to the economy, health and wellbeing, and the environment.

The Council is a supporter of the aims and intentions of the Heritage Strategy, and a member of the Heritage Partnership with representation on the Board. Before the CCSV can be considered a working document that truly reflects the needs and aspirations of the city, it needs to integrate all the Aims of the Heritage Strategy into its Principles and Ambitions and show how these will be delivered. It must also set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, and show a clear understanding of how this will be used to stimulate and strengthen the economy, ensure inclusivity, reduce and conserve carbon, and improve health and wellbeing.

The Heritage Strategy aligns strongly with the Ambitions of the CCSV, and heritage has a significant role in delivering the vision in accordance with the CCSV's Vision and Guiding Principles. All these are analysed in the relevant sections below.

Overall, heritage offers a set of unparalleled opportunities, and the CCSV would be greatly improved by embracing these in full:

- Ensure that heritage and its benefits are enjoyed in full now and guaranteed for future generations by fulfilling statutory and policy requirements – by creating a positive strategy for heritage as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, and protecting the City Centre's 8 Conservation Areas;
- Maximise benefits by expanding the vision for heritage to the whole historic environment – through a much better-informed appreciation of Sheffield history and heritage and better characterisation of neighbourhoods;
- Put building re-use, retrofitting and conserving embodied carbon at the forefront of tackling the climate emergency – adopting a "re-use first" strategy and developing marketable skills and technologies;
- Deploy Sheffield's history and heritage as a strategic force in the local economy and to bring businesses and visitors to the city – using heritage to attract the most creative and product businesses, grow an innovative heritage business sector and underpin a thriving visitor economy, to ensure that Sheffield receives its full share of both the £2.4bn GVA contributed annually to the economy of Yorkshire and the Humber by the heritage sector, and the £1bn spent in the wider economy by heritage tourists;
- Unlock additional human resources and funding through collaboration with the voluntary sector, local and national expert organisations and grant awarding bodies – making best use of local and national knowledge and expertise;
- Make Sheffield a Learning City with the City Centre a place and resource for learning – a key element of previous City Centre Masterplans;
- Use all available resources to deliver health and wellbeing for all, including heritage, culture, open space and the green and blue environment – and their contribution to the NHS' Five Ways to Wellbeing.

These are analysed more fully in the **Vision Enhancement Opportunities** section below.

## Summary - continued

While the CCSV is a positive starting point, there are many omissions and improvement areas:

- The Heritage Strategy, which the Council has endorsed, is not mentioned, and does not appear to have informed the CCSV, despite obvious synergies;
- There is scant recognition of the economic potential of heritage, which is mainly limited to its role in tourism;
- There are occasional references to the need for building re-use and retrofitting, but it is not clearly understood just how dominant this will need to be in tackling climate change and how large a contribution is made by conserving embodied carbon;
- Consideration of heritage is largely restricted to Sheffield's industrial heritage, with a brief mention of football. "Iconic" buildings are seen in isolation, rather than as part of the total historic environment, and there are notable absences, such as the Old Town Hall;
- The City Centre's 8 Conservation Areas are not mentioned, and there appears to be no awareness either of the substantial benefits that they bring or of the Council's statutory duties regarding them, including in proposals such as the CCSV;
- Neighbourhood characterisation needs to have significantly more detail, and more attention to heritage value, especially regarding building heights, which are extremely vague. This should be done by updating the already very comprehensive Urban Design Compendium;
- Continuity needs to be restored with the previous City Centre Plan of 2018. It is hard to see how the CCSV represents a step forward from that;
- The focus on the Outdoor City carries the risk that presenting it as a brand becomes a priority over the benefits that it delivers. It should be part of a portfolio of approaches;
- Areas for residential growth are identified, and important principles laid down. It is vital that density is not delivered through unfettered high-rise building, that clear and deliverable plans for creating mixed, well-connected communities with their own facilities are followed through, and that clear design policies are enforced to ensure character is not diluted;
- The relationship between the Vision Principles and the Guiding Principles is unclear. There is duplication, and no clear distinction between the vision of what Sheffield wants to be and how it achieves that vision;
- The funding of projects in Castlegate is a major achievement, but a vision for Castlegate needs to be presented that extends beyond the delivery of these;
- Future High Streets extends Sheffield's superb track record on public realm, builds on an already strong cultural and events offer, and begins the work of re-activating underused assets. A vision is now needed for how these improvements will be spread into High Street itself, and how to realise the potential of the area's side streets;
- The challenges and benefits of the three options for John Lewis are not presented fairly, and are potentially misleading. In particular, the removal of asbestos is cited as a challenge only for retention, when it applies equally to the two demolition options; and the demolition options are wrongly presented as having a lower carbon cost, ignoring the carbon cost of providing space for replacement economic activity elsewhere.

These need to be resolved if the CCSV is to be made fit for purpose. As it stands, the document falls far short of the standard of analysis, detail and deliverables laid out in the City Centre Plan of 2018. Without these, it does not spell out a compelling vision, and cannot realistically be seen as strategic.

## Vision Enhancement Opportunities

The historic environment offers a set of unparalleled opportunities, and the CCSV would be greatly improved by embracing these in full.

Opportunities	Next steps
<p>Ensure that heritage and its benefits are enjoyed in full now and guaranteed for future generations by fulfilling statutory and policy requirements.</p>	<p>Set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, to realise its wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits and contribution to the character of place.  <b>N.B.</b> This is required to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 190.</p> <p>Commit to ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All proposals give priority to the preservation of listed buildings and their settings;</li> <li>• All proposals give priority to preserving the historic character and appearance of Conservation Areas;</li> <li>• All appropriation, disposal and development of Council land gives priority to preserving any features of special architectural or historic interest.</li> </ul> <p><b>N.B.</b> This is required to comply with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 s66 and s72.</p>
<p>Maximise benefits by expanding the vision for heritage to the whole historic environment.</p>	<p>Using local knowledge obtained from the voluntary sector and the public, extend the focus of the vision beyond industry, football and “iconic” structures to incorporate all aspects of Sheffield’s heritage, including physical and intangible assets and all structures that illustrate Sheffield life and culture, regardless of status.</p> <p>Create complete characterisations for each of the 22 neighbourhoods, including the character and significance of the historic environment, by updating and formally adopting as policy the Urban Design Compendium, with clear and detailed requirements for building design, form, style, height and materiality.</p> <p>Update the appraisal and management plans for the 8 City Centre Conservation Areas and incorporate these into the neighbourhood characterisations and design parameters.</p> <p>Bring forward proposals for new Conservation Areas, including Castlegate and the Portobello/West Street/Devonshire area (incorporating the Devonshire Green and Portobello Areas of Special Character).</p> <p>Refine proposals for open space creation or improvement to acknowledge and maximise the contribution of the structures that delineate the space.</p> <p>Review the potential for the Cathedral neighbourhood to accommodate a concentration of small independent upmarket retailers, based on similar areas in other cities with high densities of historic domestic buildings.</p> <p>Update the characterisation of the Castlegate neighbourhood to reflect the importance and centrality of the Old Town Hall.</p> <p>Bring forward proposals for further improvements to the Future High Streets area, including improvements to High Street and side streets, design guidance for distinctive shopfronts, and the reinstatement of shopfront canopies.</p>

**Vision Enhancement Opportunities - continued**

Opportunities	Next steps
<p>Put building re-use, retrofitting and conserving embodied carbon at the forefront of tackling the climate emergency.</p>	<p>Adopt a “re-use first” policy for all buildings, to maximise the conservation of embodied carbon, minimise the carbon cost of new build, and prioritise short-term carbon savings to meet the immediate crisis.</p>
	<p>Develop a retrofitting and conservation skills and technology strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train local resources and evolve the next generation of technical solutions to meet the city’s needs and serve growing external markets;</li> <li>• Create and maintain a retrofitting and conservation supplier directory;</li> <li>• Audit the city’s building stock to quantify the requirements to bring to an appropriate standard;</li> <li>• Build capacity through startups, diversification and community initiatives.</li> </ul>
	<p>Require proposals for demolition to use fair comparisons with building re-use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole-of-life carbon cost including re-provision of space elsewhere;</li> <li>• Cost and impact of removing hazardous materials (e.g. asbestos);</li> <li>• Wider economic and social benefits of conserving historic character.</li> </ul>
	<p>Compile a list of opportunities to bring vacant or underused historic buildings, especially those at risk, into full use, and encourage owners to bring forward and deliver proposals consistent with their conservation.</p>
	<p>Update and publicise the assessment of the options for John Lewis, including the need for asbestos removal in all options and the carbon cost of providing alternative space for the options involving demolition.</p>
<p>Deploy Sheffield’s history and heritage as a strategic force in the local economy and to bring businesses and visitors to the city.</p>	<p>Develop a strategy for business relocation and startup in collaboration with the business community to use the historic environment as an attractor:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out research into how existing businesses’ locations have been or will be guided by heritage and identity, and the impact that a historic building or neighbourhood identity has had on their business and how it is perceived;</li> <li>• Identify case studies of business relocation to or startup in historic buildings;</li> <li>• Build a profile of the number and types of businesses needed to serve the additional residential communities, provide the diversified City Centre uses, increase productivity and the density of creatives and independents;</li> <li>• Create and deploy business relocation and startup marketing showcasing the historic environment, citing case studies and existing business experiences, with a target of attracting more and better businesses.</li> </ul>
	<p>Develop a strategy for growing the heritage business sector, including construction, architecture, engineering, conservation, marketing, events and historic collection management, with targets for share of regional/national GVA.</p>
	<p>Develop a strategy for the visitor economy, building on our strong cultural offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify key narratives from the city’s history, people and culture to create a coherent set of city identities complementary to the Outdoor City brand;</li> <li>• Gather data on visitors’ reasons for coming to Sheffield (including historic character, festivals such as Heritage Open Days, as well as specific events or destinations), their perception of city identity, and their response to suggested key narratives;</li> <li>• Research how other cities use heritage and culture to attract visitors and quantify visitor spending in the wider economy;</li> <li>• Collaborate with the business and voluntary sectors to set up, maintain and staff a physical Visitor Information Centre;</li> <li>• Identify existing heritage and cultural resources within and beyond the City Centre such as trails, tours, courses, community-based venues or hands-on experiences and collate these into a single platform for visitors;</li> <li>• Explore the scope for co-operative marketing across the City Region.</li> </ul>

**Vision Enhancement Opportunities - continued**

Opportunities	Next steps
<p>Unlock additional human resources and funding through collaboration with the voluntary sector, local and national expert organisations and grant awarding bodies.</p>	<p>Set an expectation with the private sector of meaningful community involvement, including making use of local expertise and knowledge.</p>
	<p>Establish relationships and regular contact with national expert organisations and grant awarding bodies, e.g. Historic England, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England etc., to benefit from funding opportunities, expertise, and up to date research, using a heritage strategy to appeal to these partners.</p>
	<p>Facilitate collaboration between the public, private and local voluntary sectors to ensure that the design, location, identity and marketing of developments take full advantage of heritage significance.</p>
<p>Make Sheffield a Learning City with the City Centre a place and resource for learning.</p>	<p>Promote the use of the historic environment for learning by schools, colleges, the universities and other formal learning institutions; and by lifelong learning organisations (e.g. Sheffield U3A, WEA).</p>
	<p>Encourage the development by the voluntary and private sectors of City Centre-based educational resources such as self-guided exploration (e.g. Sheffield Adventures), visiting speakers, and artefact loan schemes.</p>
	<p>Collaborate with the universities and other institutions on research programmes to extend and diversify the understanding of heritage, to improve its attractiveness and relevance to business, residents and visitors.</p>
	<p>Ensure University Campus Master Plans are enabled to contribute to public realm improvements and heritage conservation, while remaining consistent with neighbourhood identity and characterisation and opportunistically developing retrofitting and conservation skills and technologies.</p>
	<p>Incorporate modules on local history and the economic, social and environmental role of heritage into university courses and school curricula (where consistent with the National Curriculum) to maintain connection with the historic environment and understanding of its strategic importance in rising and future generations.</p>
<p>Use all available resources to deliver health and wellbeing for all, including heritage, culture, open space and the green and blue environment.</p>	<p>Enable heritage, open space and the public realm to work in synergy to improve health and wellbeing using the NHS' Five Ways to Wellbeing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserving and reactivating the historic environment to foster a shared sense of connecting and belonging;</li> <li>• Creating integrated and accessible routes, trails and exploration opportunities highlighting heritage to encourage active travel;</li> <li>• Providing historical information in physical and virtual form to promote “taking notice” and learning;</li> <li>• Promote volunteering opportunities, e.g. in conservation and restoration projects, historical research, ambassadorship and student and visitor meeting and greeting.</li> </ul>
	<p>Collaborate with the private and voluntary sectors to create opportunities in the City Centre to use personal histories and shared enjoyment of heritage for inter-generational and inter-community learning and for encounters to decrease social isolation.</p>
	<p>Create a programme for using heritage exploration and learning as a non-medical intervention (“social prescribing”).</p>

## **The Five Ambitions and the Heritage Strategy**

### **1. Building a resilient City Centre that supports a strong economy and offers a diverse range of employment opportunities for all.**

*Aim 3 of the Heritage Strategy is that Sheffield will exploit the economic potential of heritage.*

Heritage underpins a strong economy in a number of ways.

As an economic sector in its own right: the business of heritage, including heritage-related construction, retrofitting and conservation, contributes GVA of £2.4bn p.a. to the economy of Yorkshire and the Humber and supports 48,000 jobs. Its contribution to the national economy is greater than Arts and Culture, Aerospace, Defence or Security. Between 2011 and 2019, heritage employment grew at nearly twice the rate of employment in general. It is important that Sheffield not only receives its full share of this but also uses it as an opportunity for growth.

By a direct positive impact on other business: the historic environment is a key factor in decisions about business location, and attracts the most creative and productive businesses. The majority of businesses see historic buildings as improving their businesses and creating a positive image to customers. The greater the density of heritage assets, the higher the local concentration of firms. Investing in the historic environment has been shown to increase footfall, reduce vacancy rates and increase spending. Properties in well-maintained Conservation Areas are in significantly greater demand, reflected in substantial price premiums.

Through the visitor economy: heritage is a major reason for day trips, domestic overnight stays and international tourism, visitors to Yorkshire and the Humber making 19 million trips and spending £1bn, most of it in the wider local economy. A majority of domestic tourists give heritage visits as a sole or very important reason for both day trips and holidays, and across England the number making heritage visits increased by two thirds between 2005 and 2020, to 40 million – 73% of the adult population. Visits to specific attractions are complemented by an unquantified number of visitors attracted by historic character.

The heritage ambition for a strong City Centre economy is that a high quality historic environment will be conserved and maintained to attract the most creative and product businesses, an innovative heritage business sector will make a significant contribution to prosperity, and a holistic view of heritage will underpin a thriving visitor economy.

### **2. Creating a clear sense of place for the city by shaping distinctive and inclusive neighbourhoods in which people can live, work and play.**

*Aim 1 of the Heritage Strategy is that Sheffield will understand and celebrate its heritage. Aim 2 is that the city will champion a diverse heritage reflecting diverse Sheffield.*

Most of the City Centre already has a clear sense of place defined by existing buildings, street patterns, and open spaces. Distinctiveness is created by the whole historic environment, as much by groups of buildings, the relations between them, and characteristic form, scale and materials as by stand-out individual structures. Sense of place also stems from historic uses and associations. This existing distinctiveness is an asset that costs nothing to provide.

People feel included in their environment where it has a familiar character to which they can relate. A familiar and meaningful environment feels safer, creating spaces which people feel that they own and belong in, and is actually safer, being legible and navigable.

The heritage ambition for distinctiveness and inclusivity in the City Centre is that historic character and narrative will be the foundation of place identities that reflect the full diversity of Sheffield people.

### **The Five Ambitions and the Heritage Strategy – continued**

#### **3. Delivering enhanced connectivity and accessibility for the City Centre through integrated and sustainable transport.**

*Aim 1 of the Heritage Strategy is that Sheffield will understand and celebrate its heritage. Aim 2 is that the city will champion a diverse heritage reflecting diverse Sheffield. Aim 5 is that it will recognise the social, wellbeing and environmental benefits of heritage.*

The historic environment provides landmarks already familiar to all ages and easily introduced to visitors and new residents. Historic street patterns contain a store of legibility, and are usually laid out in intuitive patterns or on long-standing desire lines. Places are also made familiar through associations with people, events and uses, supporting memorability through narrative.

New developments need to learn from the mistakes of the previous developments. Obstacles have arisen through modern attempts to manage the flow of traffic of all modes or large buildings placed so as to sever old routes. Loss of older buildings has removed landmarks and their associated meaning, with their replacements often lacking distinction.

Heritage provides for the familiarity and rootedness that make movement and travel a pleasurable and comfortable experience rather than a chore.

The heritage ambition for connectivity and accessibility in the City Centre is that both physical and intangible heritage will provide the familiarity and meaning that enable people to navigate and engage with the city's places.

#### **4. Establishing a sustainable and environmentally friendly City Centre.**

*Aim 5 of the Heritage Strategy is that Sheffield will recognise the social, wellbeing and environmental benefits of heritage.*

The historic environment provides a much-needed opportunity for conserving embodied carbon. Carbon emissions stemming from construction, even using up-to-date carbon-limiting techniques, range from 35% to 51% of lifetime emissions. RIBA, the European Academies Science Advisory Council, and most recently the Royal Academy of Engineering have all advocated a "re-use first" approach, one of the authors of the RAE report saying that knocking down buildings is "our biggest failure". Government policy requires buildings to follow the principles of whole life carbon assessment and the circular economy.

Historic England research shows how retrofit of historic buildings can outperform demolition and rebuild. In the most challenging projects involving buildings of unique design and heritage value, new build may gain a marginal advantage by the end of the standard 60-year design life, but re-use still achieves the immediate carbon savings needed to slow down climate change today. In more common types of building, re-use brings a carbon advantage. Adding the economic, health and wellbeing benefits of historic buildings mandates a "re-use first" strategy.

Retrofitting skills and technologies are not only a requirement, but very marketable. Conservation skills required for historic buildings add another lucrative dimension. Sheffield companies acquiring these skills will find a national and international market. Sheffield's track record in engineering and materials puts the city in a strong position to develop, implement and market future generations of retrofitting technologies.

The heritage ambition for a sustainable City Centre is that the existing historic environment is seen as providing an irresistible opportunity to conserve embodied carbon and to develop skills and technologies for retrofitting.

## **The Five Ambitions and the Heritage Strategy – continued**

### 5. Bringing the outdoors to the City Centre, creating attractive high quality spaces and places that facilitate wellbeing for all.

*Aim 5 of the Heritage Strategy is that Sheffield will recognise the social, wellbeing and environmental benefits of heritage.*

Sheffield has created some of the best public realm on the planet. It is something of which the city is rightfully proud. Great places require high quality spaces, but also high quality in the structures that delineate them. Some of the city's best open spaces get their character from the surrounding built historic environment complemented by imaginative public realm design. It is an unbeatable partnership. Others are historic spaces in their own right. Some city streets are entirely characterised by their historic buildings, and these are also part of the outdoors.

An outdoor strategy has to be inclusive in providing for different levels of activity, diverse accessibility, and most importantly, refuge from the elements. Its success relies on connectivity with and relevance to the adjacent indoor environment. The built environment as seen from outside is a vital part of the outdoor experience; and the availability of an attractive outdoors increases the pleasure of being indoors.

Being outdoors is just one of a number of factors that combine to facilitate wellbeing. Heritage also has a recognised value as a non-medical health intervention, sometimes called "social prescribing". It supports all five of the NHS's Ways to Wellbeing: connecting to people, being active, living in the moment, learning and participating. These can be achieved through visiting heritage sites, walking in historic environments, volunteering or empowered participation. It also contributes to a familiar and meaningful environment that provides a sense of belonging and security, essential as we struggle to find our feet amongst the economic and social fallout of a global pandemic.

The heritage ambition for facilitating health and wellbeing in the City Centre is that heritage will be a key enabler for people to connect to others, be active, take notice of their environment, and volunteer in their community.

To the five stated Ambitions of the CCSV, one more should be added: for Sheffield to become a learning city, and the City Centre a place and resource for life-long learning for all.

*Aim 4 of the Heritage Strategy is that Sheffield will support the educational value of heritage.*

We want to be a learning city because that is how we obtain and develop the skills and knowledge that make us employable, productive, innovative and entrepreneurial. It keeps us mentally active, engaging with our environment and with other people, which promotes our mental health and well-being. It also helps us to be collaborative, understanding how others see the world and sharing our knowledge, a sum that is greater than its parts.

There is a firm foundation for learning in the City Centre, with the two universities, colleges including University Technical College, Freeman College and The Sheffield College, and schools including Springfield, Netherthorpe and All Saints. The city's learning organisations include Sheffield U3A and Workers' Educational Association.

A dramatic increase in the number of residents will require more school places. The CCSV should also maintain, improve and make accessible learning resources, such as libraries, and in particular a well-appointed Central Library. The environment, especially the historic environment, is also a resource from which to learn and in which to learn, which can be enriched with physical and virtual information to serve an increasing trend for outdoor learning.

The heritage ambition for City Centre learning is that an information-rich historic environment will be conserved and celebrated as both a resource and a location for education.

## The role of heritage in the Vision Principles

There is a significant role for heritage in delivering all elements of the vision, as outlined below.

Vision Principle	Heritage role
An Outdoor City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The historic environment is largely experienced outdoors.</li> <li>• The focus on creating open space and public realm needs to expand to include the vital role of the structures that delineate these.</li> <li>• The city’s rivers are important and distinctive heritage assets which should be restored and made accessible.</li> </ul>
Distinctive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The centrality of heritage to distinctiveness is acknowledged.</li> <li>• Vernacular buildings, group value and community value are just as important as the “most distinctive” assets, and need to be given equal status in the vision.</li> <li>• A high quality, well-maintained historic environment is an expression of a distinctive local culture, and an important driver of the visitor economy. An over-reliance on “iconic” public buildings is unlikely to deliver the full potential.</li> </ul>
Liveable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The familiarity and resonance of the historic environment, including built heritage, street layout, scale and architectural style are critical to liveability. Good homes of the right sort in the right place also require a homely context.</li> </ul>
Productive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage provides significant opportunities to create jobs and growth, in areas including retrofitting and conservation skills.</li> <li>• Historic buildings in a well-maintained historic environment attract the most creative and productive businesses.</li> </ul>
Innovative and Resilient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A “re-use first” approach is imperative to conserve as well as reduce embodied carbon, with the added benefit that historic buildings are retained.</li> <li>• Historic buildings provide challenges and case studies to develop a comprehensive skill-set which can be re-applied and marketed.</li> <li>• Built heritage has proven flexible and adaptable over a long period and is well placed to support change and diversification.</li> </ul>
Collaborative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration could and should embrace the knowledge, creativity, expertise, experience and dedication of the heritage voluntary sector.</li> <li>• Working with the voluntary sector and national bodies such as Historic England can unlock funding not available to local authorities or business.</li> <li>• Masterplanning needs to be done in partnership with all stakeholders to ensure heritage benefits are fully realised.</li> </ul>
Connected and Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The familiarity, landmarking and continuity provided by the historic environment improve legibility.</li> <li>• An environment that contains a depth of historic interest is an incentive to active travel and an engagement and personal investment in the journey environment.</li> </ul>

## The role of heritage in the Guiding Principles

As with the Vision Principles, the Guiding Principles are served by giving heritage a key role and pursuing the Aims of the Heritage Strategy. In some cases they realise only some of the potential, and would benefit from a wider scope.

There is substantial duplication between the Vision and Guiding Principles, and it is not entirely clear what differing purposes they serve or how they relate to one another. In some cases, the latter simply repeats the former; for example, the city will become connected and accessible by improving connections and accessibility. It is also unclear how the Guiding Principles translate into an actionable plan. The Vision should express what Sheffield wants to be, while the Guiding Principles should describe how this can be achieved.

Guiding Principle	Heritage contribution
1. Create jobs that will attract the likely future City Centre residents and wider population to create a City Centre that is rich in employment opportunities, talent and young wealth creators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This can best be done by creating an environment that will be the first choice for relocations and startups, especially in the most creative and productive sectors. The historic environment is a major attractant for these.</li> <li>• Historic settings, including waterfronts, have been pivotal in the development of business districts, and this successful approach should be continued.</li> <li>• Retrofitting and conservation skills will be needed at scale. These sectors should be encouraged directly.</li> </ul>
2. Improve connections and accessibility to and between areas in the City Centre to remove the perception of distance and topography challenges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route identity and character should be established by conserving and celebrating the historic environment.</li> <li>• Historic information can be built into physical signage and virtual route planning to establish mental maps for users and encourage exploration.</li> </ul>
3. Use existing iconic architecture to define unique places and play on the City’s heritage assets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This principle should expand to include all heritage, from structures to historic uses and associations.</li> <li>• Where “iconic” architecture exists (e.g. the Old Town Hall) this should be given a central role.</li> <li>• However, “iconic” structures are only one dimension of heritage significance. Too much reliance on these ignores the impact of the wider historic environment.</li> </ul>
4. Diversify the retail core to create a new role for the centre of Sheffield and curate a culture, leisure and events strategy that creates vibrancy across the City Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This requires a portfolio of varied and interesting spaces, internal and external. Built heritage provides a ready-made source for these.</li> <li>• Spaces that have fallen from use, such as former department stores, need to be seen as challenges to think creatively about new types of use, and opportunities to provide affordable space for local enterprise, rather than problems to be solved.</li> <li>• Restoring historic buildings to former uses that remain desirable today should be preferred. Examples include pubs, apartments and small retail units.</li> </ul>
5. Develop the City Centre ‘groundscape’ i.e. the activity at ground floor in ways that reflect the identity of each area, such that it provides a compelling and enticing place to live, work and play. Use the groundscape to embody the ‘Outdoor City’ to improve the experience of the streets for all users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ground floors, especially shopfronts, of all buildings, new and old, are critical to “groundscape” identity.</li> <li>• A radical alternative is needed to uniform frontages of frameless glazing. Historical restoration and contemporary decorative arts should both be encouraged and built into area design guides.</li> </ul>

**The role of heritage in the Guiding Principles - continued**

Guiding Principle	Heritage contribution
<p>6. Create a differentiated offer in identified Neighbourhoods to target a variety of market types to create an attractive, inclusive, self-sustaining City Centre market for commercial, residential, retail &amp; leisure offers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The historic environment can inform what is offered in each Neighbourhood, including type, scale and target customer group.</li> <li>• Uses should be guided by existing character and layout, with no arbitrary allocation of uses to sites.</li> <li>• Unmet needs can be served by developing areas where identity is bland or badly eroded.</li> </ul>
<p>7. Repopulate the City Centre with 20,000 new homes over the next 18 years to bring a permanent critical mass of people using the City Centre and its facilities to create vitality and vibrancy. Use the re-population of the City Centre once the neighbourhoods are established to set the base layer for long term economic multipliers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities to create homes in existing buildings should be exploited to maximise variety.</li> <li>• Creating enduring character by celebrating heritage (both physical and intangible) and requiring new design to be sympathetic will be the best ways to ensure new residents become personally invested in their homes and neighbourhood, promoting long-term residence and reducing transience.</li> </ul>
<p>8. Require all future development and activities to help achieve the City Council’s Net Zero Carbon targets, reducing embodied and operational carbon of all buildings and activities. Encourage the adoption of new technologies to accelerate carbon reduction strategies and invest in infrastructure which facilitates the adoption of low carbon lifestyles.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserving embodied carbon must be prioritised, as this provides the most immediate carbon savings and is often better over a typical 60-year design life. This requires a “re-use first” policy, in line with up-to-date expert advice.</li> <li>• Carbon assessments must not only be whole-of-life, but also measure global impact, not just per-site.</li> <li>• The greatest impact and largest requirement will be from retrofitting and conserving existing buildings. Excellence in this will create jobs and marketable skills and technologies, all re-applicable to new building.</li> <li>• A proactive approach to bringing unused or underused buildings into productive use is also required.</li> </ul>
<p>9. Anticipate and use the cross cutting themes affecting Cities to implement innovative solutions to respond to the challenges, without needing to wait for the market to react (such as, Digital, Net Zero technology and Future of work).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This anticipatory, ahead-of-the-market approach must extend beyond technological solutions to innovations in applying human and cultural resource – including heritage – to the challenges of inclusivity, the economy, education, health and wellbeing and the environment.</li> </ul>
<p>10. Encourage public and private sector collaboration by implementing new governance arrangements for decision making and investment opportunities. Encourage collaboration between City Centre occupiers, across sectors to maximise the benefits of locating together in the City Centre. Utilise existing areas of strength, including health and research, knowledge and SME and makers industries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration must be between all stakeholders, including as equal partners city residents and the voluntary sector. This is especially so for decision making and investment opportunities.</li> <li>• Both businesses and residents should be encouraged to collaborate in conserving and maintaining their chosen environment, ensuring continued benefit from historic character and good design.</li> <li>• National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, Arts Council England, philanthropic funders and other sources of investment should be actively sought via collaboration with the voluntary sector. Imaginative use of heritage will appeal strongly to these partners.</li> </ul>

## **Neighbourhoods: consultation response**

Sheffield City Centre covers a large area, including the commercial and retail core, residential areas resembling suburbs and student villages, industry and university campuses. There is a well-established principle of breaking this down into smaller areas of distinct character and predominant use.

The CCSV continues in the same tradition, although it adds little to previous plans (to which it does not refer), and is considerably less clear and comprehensive than it needs to be. The 22 neighbourhoods (rather than 23 mentioned in the text) are grouped into 6 areas, although the neighbourhood boundaries are only shown clearly in two of these. There is a single statement of identity for each area, although the neighbourhoods within them are often completely disparate; for example, Area 5 spans Heart of the City and Hanover Street, Area 3 Sheffield University and the Cathedral. Each area has an estimated capacity for new homes and some indication of what type of homes might be built where. Five neighbourhoods are identified for significant residential growth.

The identity statements are vague and nonspecific; for example, Area One is an “outdoor” destination, although the Outdoor City is a theme running through the whole City Centre; Area Two is “international” with “inclusivity at its heart”, characteristics which it is hoped would apply everywhere. Heritage plays only a small part in the characterisations of Areas One and Two, and none at all in the others, not even in the Heart of the City. There is some indication of potential building heights, but these are not useful as they cover the relatively large areas, with nothing to show how they might vary in detail. Area Two has two different building height proposals.

A significant proportion of the CCSV area is covered by 8 different Conservation Areas. These bring important benefits, and are subject to statutory requirements regarding all activities under the Planning Acts, including plan making, land acquisition and disposal, and planning decisions. The fact that they are not mentioned at all is a surprising and disappointing omission.

There is an opportunity for the Council to work in partnership with stakeholders to develop a vision that includes the required characterisation, clarity and detail, and it is hoped that will happen quickly.

Each neighbourhood needs a full characterisation of the inherited physical environment, including its heritage value; architectural form, style, scale and materiality; opportunities for building re-use; and historic buildings at risk. The history up to the present day of each neighbourhood also needs to be examined, to identify opportunities to express its identity by re-telling its stories. The Urban Design Compendium already includes much of the required detail, and substantial work to update it has already taken place. This should be completed, and the UDC adopted as policy, without further delay.

It will also be necessary to ensure that policies and processes are in place to oblige developers to deliver the desired mix of housing. Without these, the aspirations of the CCSV are essentially meaningless.

## **Sites: consultation response**

The information provided in the CCSV and on the consultation website is minimal, and regrettably it is necessary to consult both sources to obtain all the detail, rather than it all being available in the CCSV. As a result, it is only possible to provide a brief and high-level response to proposals for the three major sites. Further detail and a more in-depth consultation with all stakeholders are needed.

### *Castlegate*

The concrete proposals that have emerged are positive, including the conservation and interpretation of the Castle Remains, the deculverting and renaturalisation of the Sheaf, extension of Grey to Green, conversion of Canada House for Harmony Works and the S1 Art Space at Park Hill. The aspiration for a green link and sculpture trail and further improvements to accessibility and connectivity are also welcome, although all these need to be fleshed out through further consultation and work with stakeholders.

The historic nature of the area is acknowledged, and there is a positive intention to showcase the riverside location and historical context, in particular the castle remains. There are some notable omissions. The Old Town Hall, a major landmark and Grade II\* listed building at significant risk, is not mentioned at all. There needs to be a coherent vision for the built environment, including how the many historic buildings in the area will be brought into their most productive use. There is also no mention of the creation of a Conservation Area, which is a surprise given that Castlegate has previously been identified as meriting designation, creating a statutory duty for the Council to proceed to designate it.

### *Future High Streets*

The proposals outlined in a limited way in the CCSV and on the consultation website are very welcome. Plans for Fargate are already fairly mature and include very positive elements, including the Events Central building, public realm that builds on the city's excellence in this field and, of particular importance, the re-opening of upper floors in the important historic buildings.

The CCSV and consultation site could usefully provide more detail of the proposals, including the public realm improvements in High Street and Castle Square already considered by the Council.

The vision for the area needs to go beyond the work funded by Future High Streets, in particular with proposals for the "groundscape" (see Guiding Principle 5), for example by setting out design standards and improvements in shopfronts and signage, a proposal for reinstating canopies, and more ambitious improvements to High Street, side streets and passages.

**Sites: consultation response - continued**

*John Lewis*

The CCSV provides three very general options for what to do with the former John Lewis building, without providing any detail for how the existing building, any replacement, or any new open space might be used. Without this, the criteria for making a judgment are very limited.

The existing building is a heritage asset and an important landmark. It is one of the best 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings in the City Centre, and complements and defines Barkers Pool, a very high quality and well-proportioned public space which focuses attention on the cenotaph. The building makes a positive contribution to the streetscape in general and the character and appearance of the City Centre Conservation Area in particular. It has been a central feature of Sheffield life for over half a century, associated with the memories and experiences of thousands of Sheffielders. It is capable of re-use, and that should be the preferred option, with demolition only considered as a last resort and to deliver substantial benefits which could not otherwise be achieved.

Unfortunately, the information provided on the consultation website is misleading in two important ways, tending to support the two demolition options. Firstly, only for building retention is the presence of asbestos mentioned as a challenge. Demolition also requires the expert and safe removal of asbestos, so in this respect all three options face an identical challenge.

Secondly, the demolition options are represented as creating lower carbon emissions than retaining the building. This requires the measurement to be confined to the carbon emissions that take place on the site. The existing building provided space for employment and economic activity, and if it is not re-used, this space will have to be re-provided elsewhere. Sheffield cannot afford not to replace the economic activity, and in fact seeks economic growth. If the building might have been re-purposed to provide homes, the need to provide alternative space is even more urgent. In the absence of existing surplus zero-carbon space, the carbon cost of demolition without complete replacement on-site is at least as much as for retrofitting the existing building, and potentially as much as the prohibitive carbon cost of total replacement. The Arup report acknowledges this, and chooses to discount it only because no assessment has been made as to how the space would be re-provided in practice.

Both of these matters could easily lead to responders giving a different preference to that which they might have expressed had they had accurate information. Information on the website should be updated and clarified in a public statement, and responders contacted and given the opportunity to update their feedback.