

Regeneration Strategy

Coalville, Leicestershire





“This kind of public transport-oriented development is fundamental to achieving the ultimate goal of a ‘low carbon community’, and it is very likely that such communities, far from being austere, will actually become the sought-after places where people will choose to live and spend their time.”

“It is hardly an exercise in nostalgia to recognize that traditional architecture, particularly our unrivalled domestic vernacular, represents a pragmatic response to limited resources and limited energy reserves from which we can still learn today, even as we incorporate the best of appropriate and contemporary ‘green’ technology. Equally, the traditional town was entirely walkable, while early suburbs were served by trams and trains, an example of science contributing to cohesive society. The present domination of the car over the pedestrian, in planning and engineering terms, is of course a complicating factor. We must surely be able to organize ourselves — as the Victorians did — in ways in which we are not dependent on it to such a great extent for our daily needs. This kind of public transport-oriented development is fundamental to achieving the ultimate goal of a ‘low carbon community’, and it is very likely that such communities, far from being austere, will actually become the sought-after places where people will choose to live and spend their time. This principle has been implemented in practice at Poundbury and it is heartening to see the real community that has now emerged as a well-mannered extension of Dorchester, one of our great English towns. I can only hope its lessons are emulated for the benefit of generations yet to come.”

HRH The Prince of Wales on
low carbon communities

Foreword

COUNCILLOR MATTHEW BLAIN,
DEPUTY LEADER OF NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL.

The publication of this Regeneration Strategy is the culmination of two years work. Last year we published 'Imagining our Future' which achieved its purpose of stimulating local discussion about the town's future and helped us to secure funding from the East Midlands Development Agency for this Strategy.

I have been thoroughly impressed with the approach of The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment to the challenges our town is facing. The 'Enquiry by Design' process engaged a broad range of stakeholders and began with an 'open shop' consultation day in the town centre where representatives from both the Foundation and the Council listened to our residents' thoughts and aspirations.

Whilst there were many comments relating to what the town does not offer, we were pleasantly surprised to hear that many residents have a strong sense of pride in the town, but feel frustrated that it is not realising its full potential.

We know that Coalville is failing to fully meet the needs of residents and visitors and that many residents choose to shop further afield. The town needs to offer a high quality, pleasant town centre experience appropriate to its size, re-building itself as a distinctive, contemporary market town. Coalville should be retaining a much greater percentage of local spend, not only for economic and social but also environmental reasons.

As we become increasingly aware of the impact of our lifestyle and travel choices on the environment we must ensure that where possible we reduce the need for people to travel (particularly by car which will become increasingly expensive) by offering quality goods and services close to

“a simple, yet effective concept of developing the town around four squares, linked by vibrant streets”



Imagining our future document cover

where our residents live. The regeneration of our town will in turn become an exemplar of the lifestyle principles we encourage through our 'Green Footprints Challenge' initiative.

To achieve this, we need to make the town centre an attractive and pleasant place to be, with well designed buildings, streets and squares. We need to build a town with a stronger sense of identity, rooted in the town's rich heritage and capitalising on its location at the heart of the National Forest.

Our Regeneration Strategy is based upon a simple, yet effective concept of developing the town around four squares, linked by vibrant streets. Two of these squares, Memorial and Marlborough, already exist, with two additional squares proposed. The street network to link these four squares exists in places, but needs to be either repaired or created in others.

It is essential that we now focus on realising this strategy, ensuring that each scheme we undertake as a Council and every planning consent we grant helps us to deliver the four squares and the vibrant street network that will connect them. I am confident that if we all commit ourselves to realising this concept we can, step by step, change Coalville into the place we all want it to become.



Councillor Matthew Blain, Deputy Leader of North West Leicestershire District Council.

Councillor Blain is also Coalville Champion and a Design Ambassador

Councillor Blain is pictured beside the former art deco Rex Cinema in Marlborough Square, originally opened in 1938 and described by the Prince's Foundation as one of the town's 'hidden gems'.



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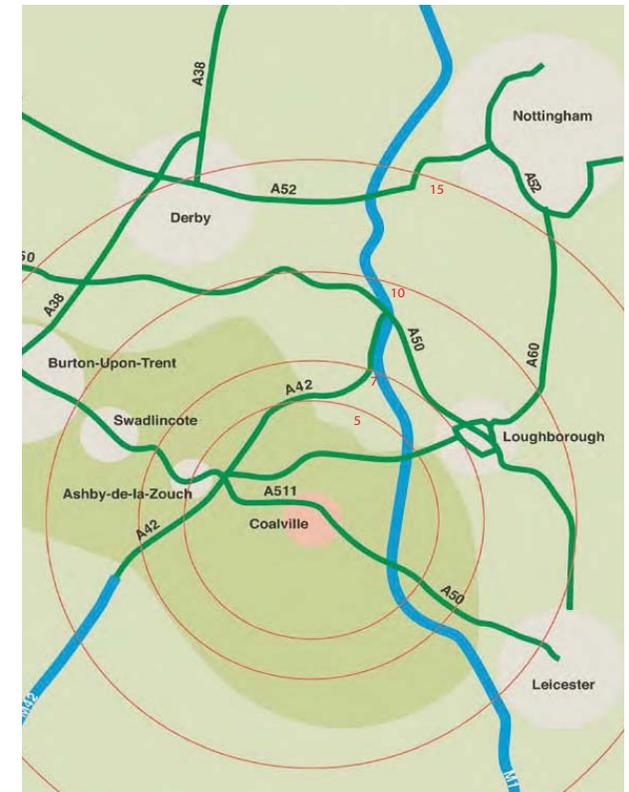
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A brief introduction to Coalville

Coalville is located in the centre of England, within easy reach of the region's three cities: Leicester, Derby and Nottingham. Coalville is the administrative centre for North West Leicestershire and is located within the East Midlands, with strong road connections afforded by the M1 and the A42. The District is also home to East Midlands Airport, Donington Park and is located at the heart of the National Forest.

- ◆ The population of the Greater Coalville Area is 33,011.
- ◆ The Regional Plan has allocated a target of 12,200 new homes for the District by 2026, with the majority of growth expected to be centred around the Greater Coalville area.
- ◆ 41% of North West Leicestershire's residents are CACI (a marketing and information systems company) classified as either 'secure' or 'flourishing' families (compared to a GB average of 24%), offering a strong base on which the economic growth of the town can be based.
- ◆ Mean annual household income is £31,730 for North West Leicestershire, above the wider County average.
- ◆ Visitor attendance to the town's main attraction—Snibston Discovery Park is increasing year on year, with the attendance during 2008/9 reaching 98,043 visitors (up from 71,221 in 2005/6). Peak attendance is during July and August.
- ◆ Coalville Library attracts over 3000 visits per week, and is a major generator of pedestrian footfall within the town.
- ◆ The town centre's last major investment was the construction of the Belvoir Shopping Centre in the 1960s/70s.



- ◆ The number of events hosted in the town centre has doubled in 2009, with a series of major events encouraging higher levels of footfall.
- ◆ Annual shop vacancy rates have remained below the national average between 2007–2009

Data sources: *Coalville Town Centre Key Performance Indicators 2008-9* and *BDP/Donaldsons*.



The Prince's Foundation's Core Design Principles

Three compounding factors are changing our lives: by the year 2050, the global population will have risen from six to nine billion; the average temperature will have risen by between 2 and 6°C; and, without a technological breakthrough, depletion of oil and gas will have brought an end to cheap energy. Buildings and transportation make up more than half of carbon emissions, so finding practical solutions to this global catastrophe through sustainable development is essential.

The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment (PFBE) fundamentally believes, that by structuring towns in a logical and simple manner, many of these challenges may be overcome.

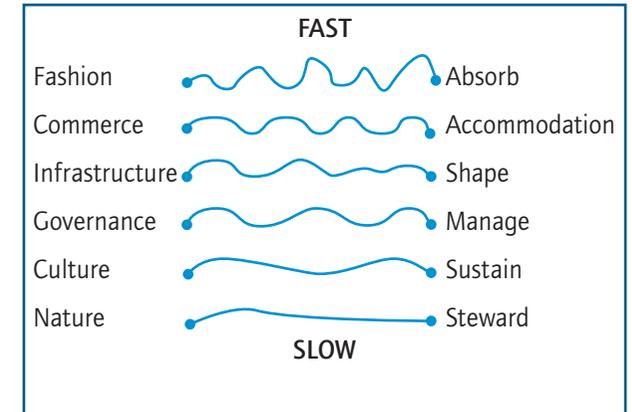
This section presents PFBE's core principles which have informed the team's examination and diagnosis of the town centre.

PFBE believes in Sustainable Growth

Twentieth-century cities suffer from various forms of growth composed of single uses (i.e. large housing areas, office parks, etc). These zones are often over-expanded to become monotonous zones devoid of activities which support life. This creates chaos in terms of their structure, use and appearance. These over-expansions cause serious imbalances between town centres and outlying residential areas, forcing many to rely heavily upon the car as the major mode of transport. This is highly unsustainable.

PFBE has developed an idealised town structure diagram which shows how towns can grow as self sustaining neighbourhoods (please refer to Idealised Town Structure Diagram, opposite page). This includes:

- ◆ For a neighbourhood to be walkable, many daily needs should be supplied within a five-minute walk.



- ◆ Towns and neighbourhoods should have clearly identifiable centres.
- ◆ Residents of these towns should have easy access to greenways which are natural landscaped corridors used for sustainable modes of transport (i.e. for pedestrians, bicyclists, etc) and recreational purposes.

PFBE believes that Towns Should Stand the Test of Time

Nearly all traditional and sustainable urban settlements exhibit similar characteristics in terms of both their form and growth. One of the ways in which towns were formed, was at a crossroads or intersection of two principal thoroughfares - this was how Coalville was established and grew.

FOOTFALL AND THE HIGH STREET

To capitalize on the footfall at this intersection, streets were formed by the linear arrangement of buildings on both sides of these streets which sold goods to people moving through the area; one of which became the town's high street. At the intersection, where there was the highest level of footfall, it is usual to see a market space or square. Streets then turned corners to create blocks and

...if we are to create places that are designed to stand the test of time, activities that sit on faster changing frequencies do not dictate the form of slower changing frequencies such as a town's streets and spaces

logical secondary arteries for movement.

Most English and other European towns follow the same evolutionary principles. Healthy towns therefore consist of a logical network of streets, squares and blocks which shape spaces to create the public realm. However, towns need to accommodate change and growth over time while maintaining their underlying structure.

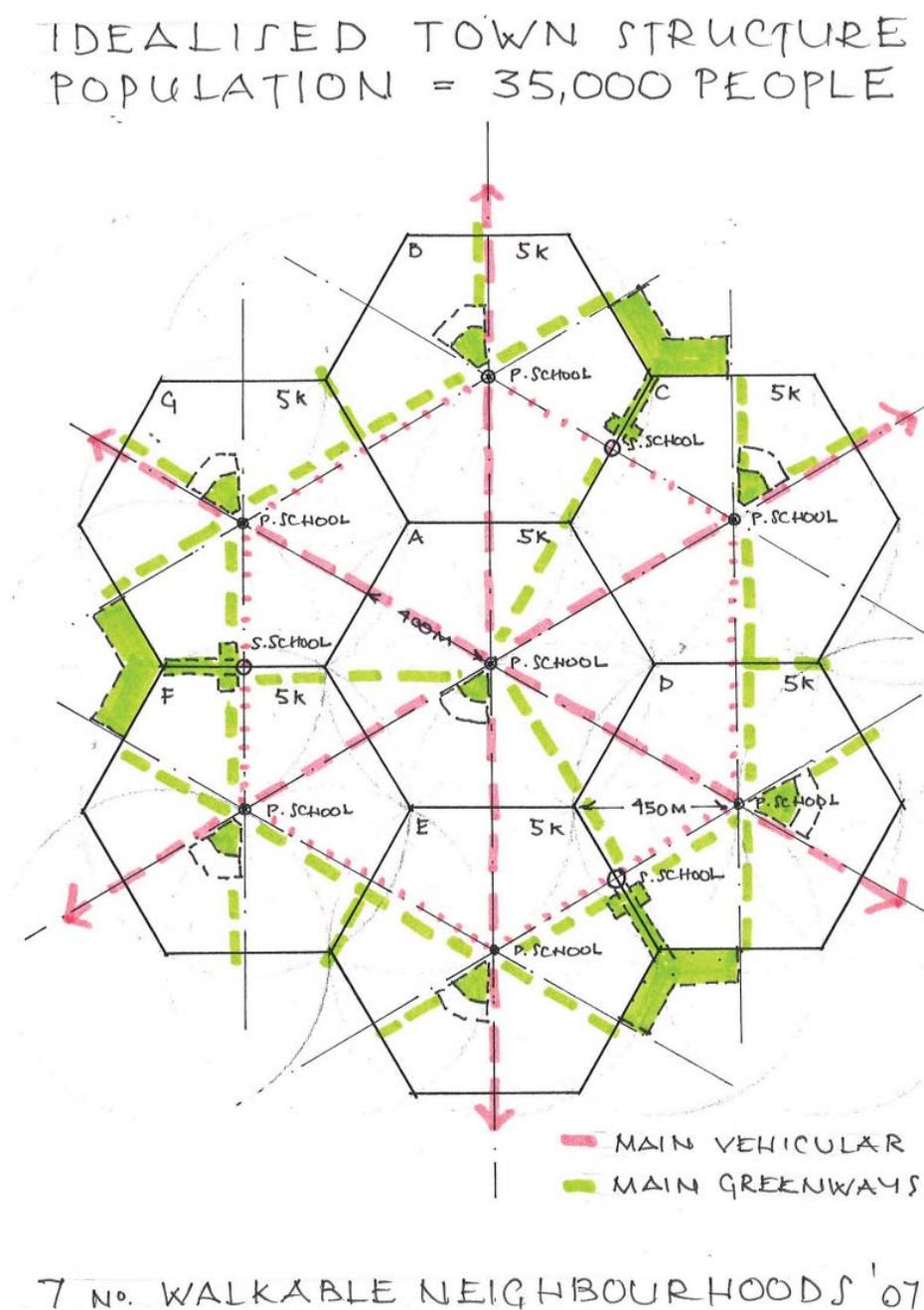
From the 'Rates of Change' diagram (see previous page) it is important to understand that fast changing trends such as retail which might have a 10–15 year cycle should not affect the road infrastructure which might be on a longer 500-year cycle. For example, a development by a single or multiple retailers would sit on the 'fashion frequency' on the 'Rates of Change' diagram. This therefore sits on a more rapidly changing frequency than 'infrastructure', with the infrastructure being a town's streets and spaces. It is therefore important to ensure that if we are to create places that are designed to stand the test of time, activities that sit on faster changing frequencies do not dictate the form of slower changing frequencies such as a town's streets and spaces.

A Logical Network of Streets

A logical network of streets makes it easy for people to find their way through town by foot. A permeable network of

PREVIOUS PAGE: Rates of Change Diagram adapted from Stewart Brand's book *How Buildings Learn*

RIGHT: Idealised Town Structure: composed of walkable neighbourhoods, identifiable centres and access to green infrastructure.



streets also makes it easier for cars to move around town by dispersing traffic rather than congesting it at major intersections.

Additionally, all towns should have a variety of street types to cope with the different movement patterns in a town. A high street has traditionally been the highest receptor of movement, which is why one would find the most amount of retail activity here to capture local spending.

Clearly Defined Blocks

Clearly defined blocks create a distinction between the public and private realm. This is achieved when buildings conform to a building line which fronts onto a public space. This can be described as 'place-making'.

Squares

A town square is an open area commonly found in the heart of a traditional town used for community gatherings. Squares may take on different functions in relation to each other. For example, some squares may act as civic hubs and other as market spaces. In all cases they should be activated by the uses of the buildings which surround them.

Sustainable Urbanism

The model of 'Sustainable Urbanism' is typified by places with a mix of uses, where within a short walking distance of people's homes there are educational, employment, shopping, leisure and cultural opportunities. The PFBF has created a town where such opportunities exist at Poundbury in Dorset.

The 'Contemporary Suburban Model' is characterised by single use areas, with residential estates geographically separated from educational, employment, shopping, leisure and cultural areas.

Healthy towns therefore consist of a logical network of streets, squares and blocks which shape spaces to create the public realm.

CONTEMPORARY SUBURBAN MODEL

Isolated pods of single use accessed from collector and arterial roads



Traditional main/high street incorporating:

- mixed use office & retail
- residential areas of flats & houses
- secondary school

... bus route

SUSTAINABLE URBANISM

Integrated mixed use town

WHERE CAN I SEE AN EXAMPLE OF SUSTAINABLE URBANISM?

The older parts of many settlements exhibit the qualities of Sustainable Urbanism, although in many cases, the local shops, schools and public houses have closed. Coalville historic core is an example of Sustainable Urbanism, as are the surrounding villages such as Whitwick and Ravenstone (albeit at a smaller scale). Another local example is the historic core of Ashby de la Zouch.

WHERE CAN I SEE AN EXAMPLE OF THE CONTEMPORARY SUBURBAN MODEL?

Coalville's growth (and that of Ashby de la Zouch) towards the latter half of the 20th century and early 21st century feature characteristics of the contemporary suburban model, with out of town retail developments and business parks such as Bardon 22, Nottingham Road Retail Park and Flagstaff Park off the A42.

Whilst the circumstances that created such places are symptomatic of the changes in national Government planning policy over the years, it is envisioned that as cost of travel increases the principles of sustainable urbanism will become more important to people.

The lower half is a more efficient model for energy and infrastructure and makes better public spaces.

LiDL in Coalville which is an example of an out of town retail development
Halfords on Thornborough Road
An example of an out of town retail development

As cost of travel increases the principles of sustainable urbanism will become more important to people.





BELVOIR SHOPPING



WILKINSON

Community Consultation Process

The first thing we did was listen

The Community Consultation process was a vital tool used to gather and understand key information related to the town centre. The process played an essential part in developing the Regeneration Strategy. A key component of our consultation was the Enquiry by Design (EbD).

The EbD process is one of the PFBE's key planning tools, and the framework by which our values are disseminated to influence future development of the built environment. A collaborative planning approach devised and promoted by PFBE, the EbD process is often used for substantial sites. A single event held over several days assesses a complex series of design requirements of a new or revived community.

The process brings key stakeholders together around the same table, where problems can be aired as they arise and every issue tested by being drawn. It can be used for the regeneration of existing communities or the planning of wholly new developments. The EbD process also has an educational component, introducing the participants to the concepts of traditional urbanism and helping to ensure that the project is not only sustainable but relates well to the locality.

By its nature, the EbD process approaches each brief as a new design problem, and tailors a response appropriate to the dialogue between stakeholders. PFBE is a leading exponent of this aspect of practice, and has successfully brought into a single forum a broad spectrum of participants, to include, critically, the local community, engaging them at the heart of the design process.

SCOPING WORKSHOP

In May 2009, the PFBE team and North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) held a scoping workshop at Christ Church Hall in Coalville. A number of individuals and stakeholders took part, ranging from elected members, representatives from the National Forest Company, the Coalville Heritage Society, Coalville Town Centre Partnership, Snibston Discovery Park and Leicestershire County Council. The purpose of the scoping workshop was in effect a 'fact-finding' exercise and was used to gather a broad range of information and detailed insight into the town's history, evolution and current situation within a short space of time.

The scoping day also offered the PFBE team the opportunity to explore the town on foot and start to understand the place. The PFBE team was comprised of Ben Bolgar leading the staff for the Prince's Foundation, supported by specialists in retail, highways design, brand identity and spatial analysis. The PFBE team was also joined by Noel Isherwood, Poundbury representative. Poundbury is recognised as a national exemplar of sustainable urbanism (refer to the Sustainable Urbanism Diagram on page 6).



'OPEN SHOP' CONSULTATION

Following the scoping workshop, representatives from the PFBE and NWLDC held an Open Shop Consultation Day at the Belvoir Shopping Centre. Over 100 residents from Coalville and its surrounding villages participated in the consultation. The day was extremely valuable in gathering people's thoughts and aspirations for the town. These thoughts and aspirations have been reflected in the 'Recommendations for Change' section of the Regeneration Strategy. Full details of the consultation event are offered within Appendix: Community Consultation (page 62).

THREE DAY ENQUIRY BY DESIGN (EBD)

In June 2009, the PFBE team returned to Coalville and held a three day EbD workshop with representatives from NWLDC and the various individuals and specialised consultants in highway design, brand identity and spatial analysis.

Over the course of these three intensive days, the PFBE team identified, explored and developed a series of proposals for the town whilst also considering the town's future growth. The PFBE team also met with stakeholders in the town centre to identify buildings and places of value which could be built upon in shaping Coalville's identity. The final recommendations were presented on the evening of the third day at Christ Church. The public presentation was extremely well attended by over 100

residents. The contents of the presentation are reflected in the Regeneration Strategy. To view the presentation visit: www.coalvilleschanging.com

Involving Young People

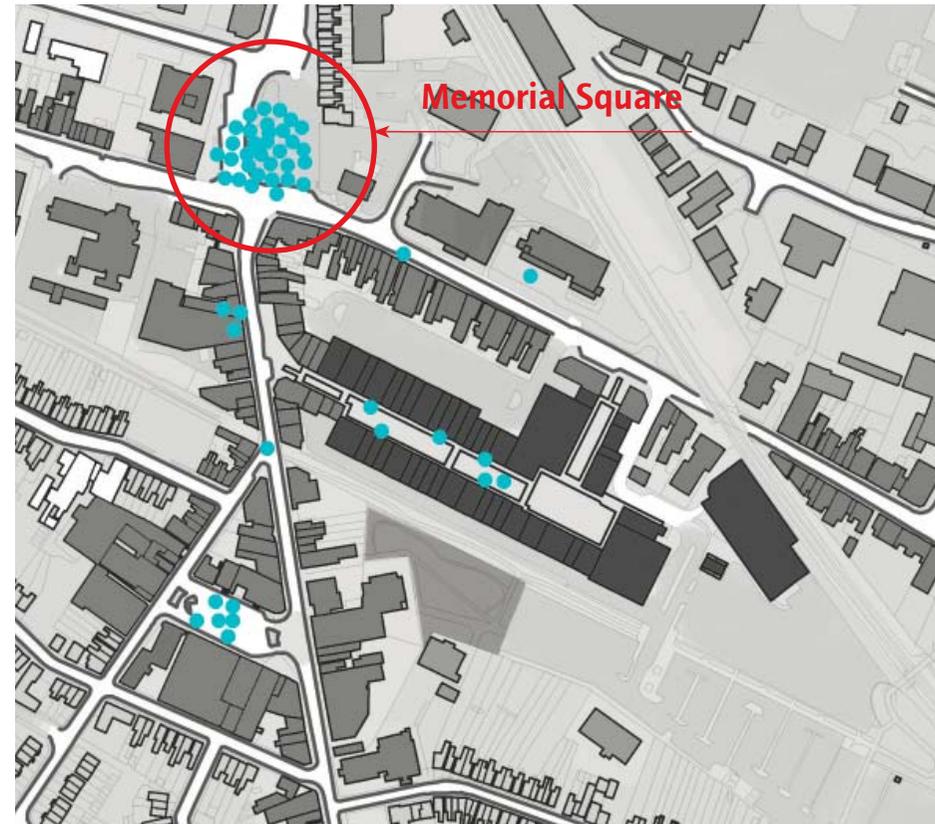
With support from Leicestershire County Council's Youth Development Team, PFBE met with younger Coalville residents. The opportunity to meet younger people was extremely valuable in capturing their aspirations for their town. Key aspirations were for more entertainment venues such as a cinema, bowling alley, etc.

Further details of the consultation are offered within the Appendix: Community Consultation (page 62).

Right: The EbD workshop was a hands-on exercise involving PFBE staff, elected members, Council officers and other stakeholders. All those participating were actively encouraged to explore, test and develop ideas



Far right: result from one of the mapping exercises which shows where people feel the centre of Coalville is



Coalville's Hidden Gems are symbolic of a series of principles by which the town grew. They are also places which need enhancement and building upon as each element of the Regeneration Strategy occurs.

What was discovered?

By taking the time to listen to the public we discovered an enormous amount about people's thoughts of and aspirations for the town.

PRIDE

Many people expressed a sense of pride in the town, in particular its history and features such as the Memorial Tower, Marlborough Square and the Council Offices building facing London Road.

POTENTIAL

People expressed a frustration that the town was not realising its full potential, with plenty of opportunities to create a place that would not only encourage visitors but attract local residents to shop and spend their leisure time in the town centre - and stop for longer.

IDENTITY

Many residents who participated in the consultation were from the villages surrounding Coalville and it was clear that they were passionate about keeping their villages' identities as the town grows.

HIDDEN GEMS

People identified a number of 'hidden gems' in the town that could be improved and enhanced; these included buildings and spaces such as the former Rex cinema, a good example of an Art Deco styled building.

KEEPING MORE MONEY LOCAL

Many residents expressed concerns about people travelling further afield to shop. Whilst many recognised that the town could never attract some of the retailers that are based in the city centres within the region, people did feel that by improving the town centre 'offer' more people could be encouraged to shop locally more often.

CULTURAL AND LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES

It was clear that people wanted more cultural and leisure opportunities for all ages in the town centre. Comments ranged from a cinema to more simple suggestions, such as improving the town's public spaces with places to sit where you could watch the world go by.



1. Civic Pride & ambition: Clock Tower



2. Memory & settling: The Red House



9. Hard work together for change: Coal Miner Statue



3. Community: Margaret Street



4. Entertainment & gathering: Rex Cinema



5. Connecting beyond: town centre greenway



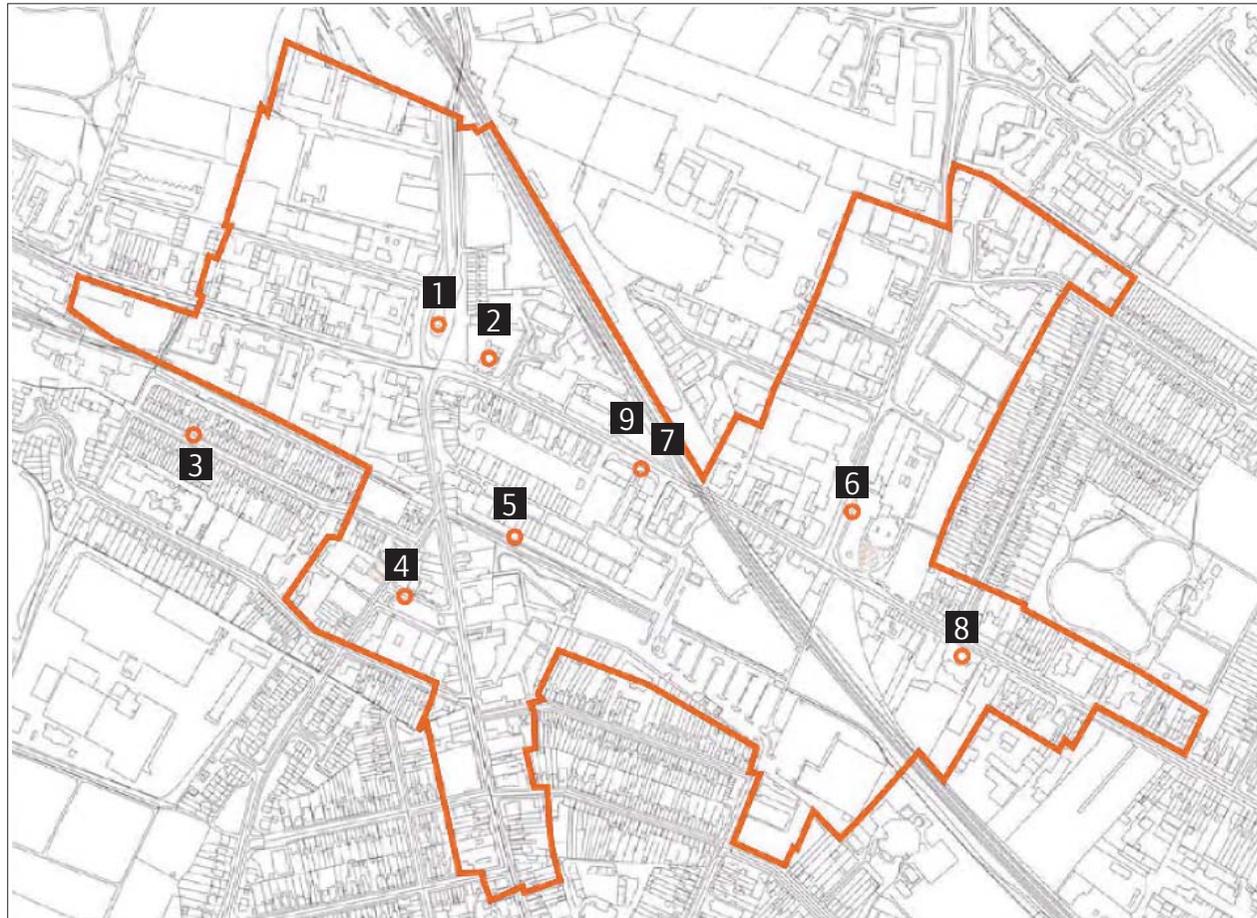
6. Leadership & promotion: NWLDC's offices



7. Opportunities for change: Belvoir Shopping Centre



8. Inspiration & Inventiveness: Christ Church





Examination & Diagnosis

Using the Enquiry by Design (EbD) Process

History and Development

FROM SMALL ACORNS DO OAK TREES GROW

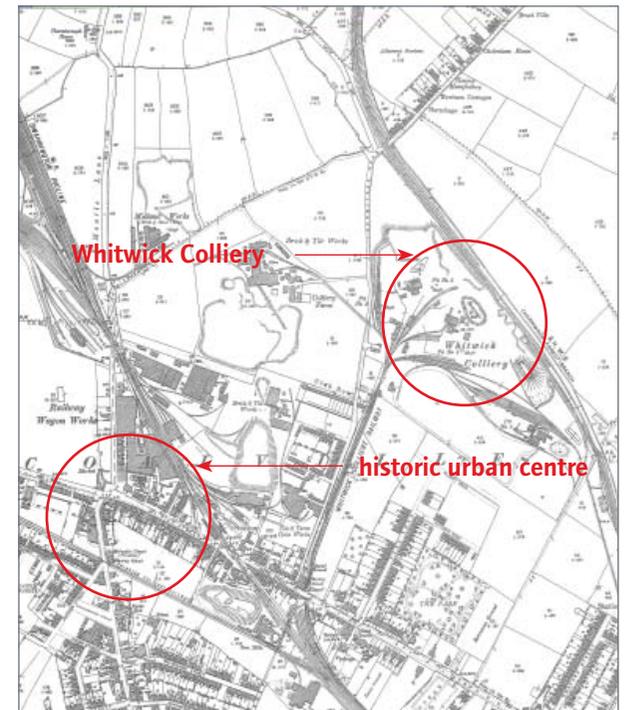
Coalville was established in the mid 1820's when William Stenson sank what was to become the town's first mine. This was a pivotal moment in the growth of what was to become Coalville. As Denis Baker of the Coalville Heritage Society explains "*this act sparked the evolution of the Victorian town of Coalville on a desolate area of land comprised of the four distant corners of adjoining parishes of Whitwick, Hugglescote, Snibston and Swanington*" (see Appendix: History and Development of Coalville, page 58).

THE MAKING OF A TOWN

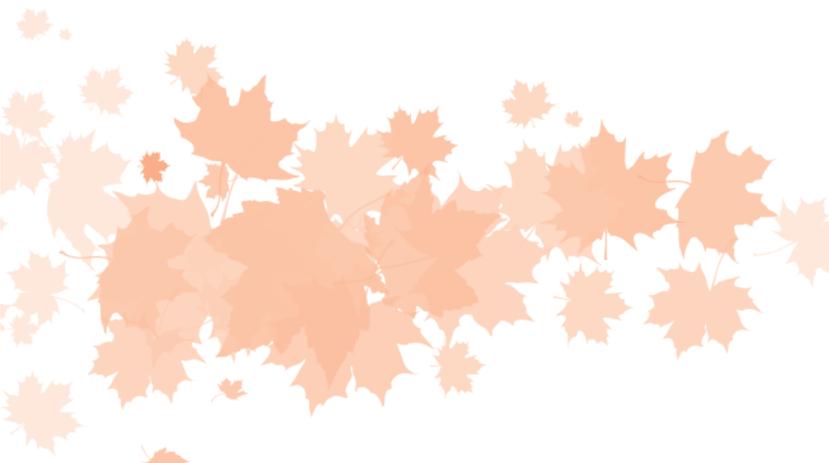
With the need to house colliery workers and support new trade in the area, workers terraced houses were built along present day High Street and Margaret Street (more housing followed). Later, an irregular network of streets formed around industries in town.

A CENTURY OF CHANGE

By the mid 1950s Coalville's mining industry was rapidly declining. The closure of its rail station (on the Leicester to Burton line) in the 1960s and the growth of private



FROM TOP: Historic centre of Coalville Mantle Lane and Long Lane; Historic map of Coalville, 1901: Whitwick Colliery and the urban centre marked





Clockwise from top left:
 Historic photo of Hotel
 Street before redevelopment
 of its northern side;
 Existing High Street with
 only one-sided retail and
 no parking; Pedestrianised
 Memorial Square



car ownership (encouraged by the Government's road building and rail closure programmes) influenced a more dispersed form of town growth, resulting in the expansion of suburban areas. This trend continued through to the end of the 20th century, and together with the growth of out of town centre retail developments, Coalville began to move away from 'Sustainable Urbanism' towards a 'Contemporary Suburban Model'.

As previously discussed in the Prince's Foundation's Core Design Principles Section (page 4), the model of 'Sustainable Urbanism' is typified by places with a mix of uses, where within a short walking distance of people's homes there are educational, employment, shopping, leisure and cultural opportunities.

Coalville in the 21st century

As fuel prices continue to rise and fossil fuels become more scarce it is conceivable that places that are developed consistent with the Sustainable Urbanism model will become more desirable. As Coalville enters the 21st century, the planning framework for the District (called the Local Development Framework) is seeking to establish how best the town should grow and where new housing should and could be located. How this can be done, whilst still retaining the special characteristics of the place, such as the separate and distinctive villages that surround the town?

A FAILING TOWN CENTRE

As the retail offer has increased around the edge of the town, and as car usage increased the town began to struggle as a result of decreasing footfall and increased congestion. The town's original High Street still features many independent businesses, such as a butchers, toy store and specialist cake shop, however increased levels of traffic have resulted in an unpleasant shopping environment. The lack of on street parking provision (as seen in Ashby de la Zouch) makes it harder for people to do 'quick' visits to the town centre which would be of significant benefit to High Street traders.

The rebuilding of the northern side of High Street and the creation of a stand alone library building has not only weakened the enclosure of the street but created a High Street with a 'one sided' retail offer.

LOSING SPACES TO THE CAR

Over the years, more space has been afforded to the car, with spaces such as Memorial Square becoming dominated by traffic despite efforts to part pedestrianise the space.

LOSS OF MARKET SQUARE

Memorial Square was once a bustling market place which hosted a wide variety of activities including concerts by the town's brass bands, an open air market, and other events which celebrated the town's civic pride. In 1926 the Clock Tower was built as a war memorial in memory of Coalville residents who gave their lives in World War I. The names of those who died in World War II were subsequently added. Unfortunately, the square has suffered as a result of the loss of the town's industries and has also struggled with properly regulating increased traffic flows into town; by developing a roundabout with an overburdened

Walkable neighbourhoods are those that are easy to get around on foot and where the places you need to get to are ideally a five minute walk away – or at most, a ten minute walk away.



Potential walkable neighbourhoods study from the EbD design workshop



Right: Space Syntax model of existing accessibility within the town centre. Red shows good accessibility

intersection. The pedestrianisation of one side of the square has been useful in creating a safe shelter for people on foot, however it has not been properly designed for people who wish to use the space for leisure. The square lacks proper enclosure and no active frontages or uses on the north and west side.

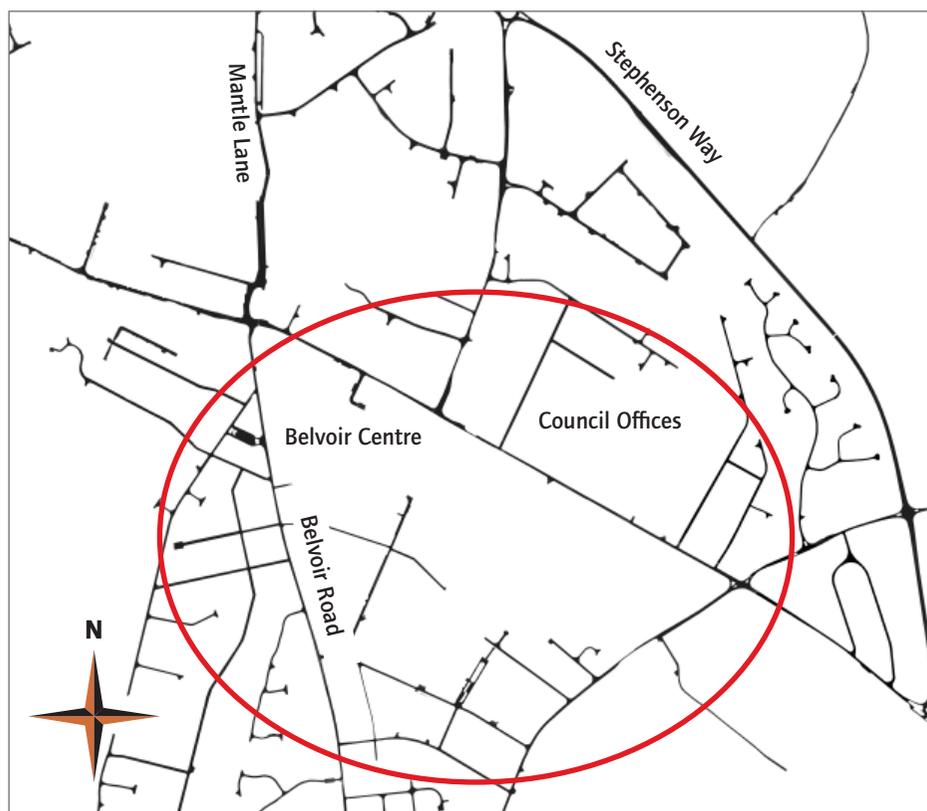
Movement

STREETS ARE CRUCIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF A PLACE

A healthy town needs a network of streets and spaces that allow people to easily get around the town. At the heart of the town where most of the movement takes place,

there need to be more streets to allow people to get to the places they want to get to quickly and easily.

A 'Space Syntax' model of the town has been developed. Space Syntax conducts space modelling analyses which allow road engineers and urban designers to understand transport related problems. Routes highlighted in red have a good level of accessibility, with routes highlighted in blue having the weakest level of accessibility. A healthy town centre needs not only a network of routes, but a network of red coloured routes (see Appendix: Advanced Spatial Analysis of Coalville, page 64).



“Coalville suffers from ‘blocked arteries’ (streets)”

The existing street network is severely fragmented

BLOCKED ARTERIES – COALVILLE NEEDS ‘SURGERY’

We can look at the health of a town as we do a human body. If we were to consider the streets of a town to be its arteries, we can see on the opposite page that Coalville not only suffers from blocked arteries (i.e. routes that do not connect to one another) but has a number of places where arteries are needed but do not yet exist.

In terms of both pedestrian and vehicular access within this is not only problematic for people who live in Coalville but also for those from the surrounding villages who experience traffic congestion when entering the town centre. Residents of these villages should support a strategy that remedies the blocked arteries in the town centre but also promotes the growth of Greater Coalville as composed of sustainable, walkable neighbourhoods and villages. The potential walkable neighbourhoods study on the previous page, identifies existing centres and potential new centres for growth structured around five minute walkable neighbourhoods (Refer to PFBE’s Idealised Town Structure diagram on page 5).

PFBE therefore encourages both NWLDC and local residents to adopt the principles of Sustainable Urbanism as a way of not only creating more environmentally friendly ways of living, but creating places with distinctive identities that are highly desirable places to live, work and spend leisure time.

PARKING

To address the need to support a large number of cars which enter Coalville during peak hours, an effective parking strategy must be developed which will not have an impact on the quality of public space in the town centre. This can be achieved most effectively with structured parking and surface parking on the periphery of the Town Centre, from which, people can easily walk into town.



Recommendations for Change

Overview

The preliminary work in the development of a Regeneration Strategy is contained within the preceding four sections of this document. This section of the Regeneration Strategy is composed of six parts: a set of Principles for the development of the town centre, a recommendation for growth in the Greater Coalville Area, a framework for development of the town centre, a place-making concept for the town centre, and development briefs for specific areas in the town centre.

Five Regeneration Principles

Ensures that the new development will be in accordance with the town's vision.

A Series of Linked Villages

Recommendation for the sustainable growth of Greater Coalville as a whole including the surrounding villages.

Green Infrastructure

Establishes a complete network of greenways and green spaces through the town centre which connect the town to its wider environment.

The Framework Plan

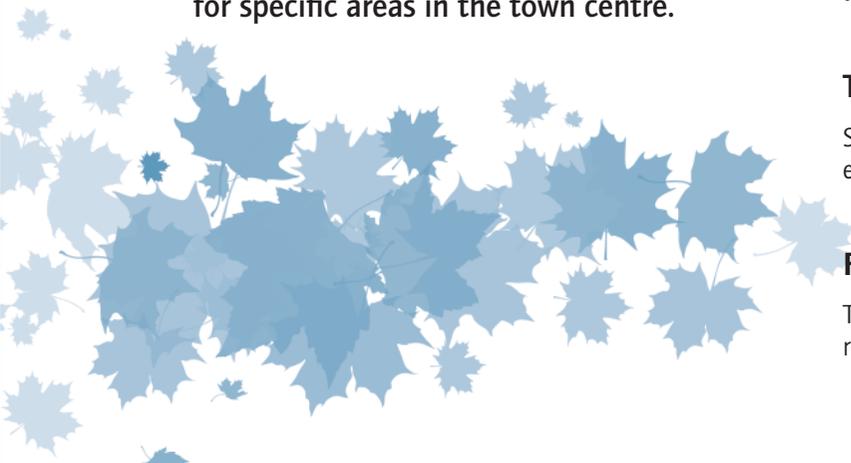
Sets an overall context for new development with the establishment of new building lines.

Four Squares Linked by Vibrant Streets

The principal design concept for the town centre's regeneration.

Development Opportunity Areas & Development Briefs

The framework plan is divided into nine areas. This will allow NWLDC to refer to specific design recommendations for key areas in the town centre when development opportunities arise. At this time NWLDC will also be able to expand upon these recommendations in further detail.



Five Regeneration Principles

Five fundamental regeneration principles will ensure that new development will be in accordance with the town's vision.

These principles represent a set of values that decision-makers in Coalville will be able to refer back to in order to take the necessary actions to obtain the town centre vision.

- ◆ Coalville must maximise its strategic advantage as a sub-regional centre for North West Leicestershire in the heart of the National Forest.
- ◆ Coalville should grow in a way that enhances existing historic centres while providing new communities on a coherent movement network.
- ◆ Coalville must repair its main movement arteries in the town centre to attract inward investment and capture global spend.
- ◆ The community must actively encourage development compliant with a series of development briefs.
- ◆ New development must contribute to physical and social enhancement as well as have economic benefit for the town as a whole not just within the individual plot.

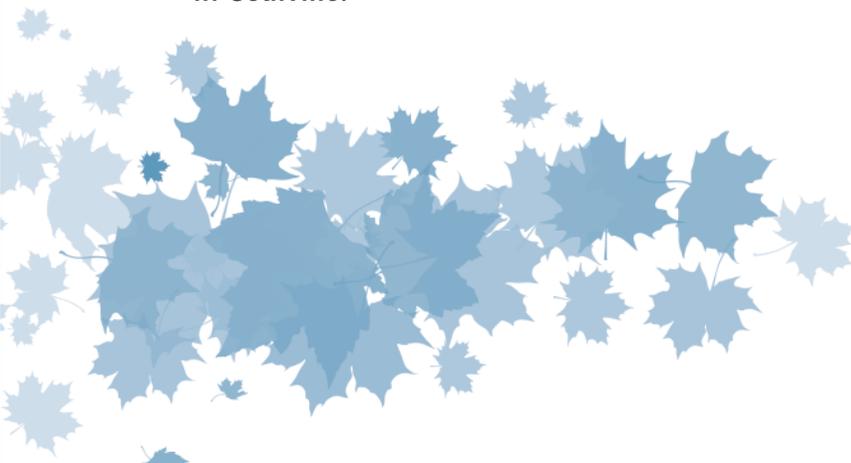
A Series of Linked Villages

Green infrastructure & growth plan

The Urban Design Compendium was published by English Partnerships (now the Homes & Communities Agency) in 2000 to “inform and assist all those involved in new development and regeneration and contribute to the improvement of housing-led regeneration and the promotion of sustainable new developments.” It should therefore be used as a guide for the implementation of new development in Coalville.

The Compendium proposes a growth diagram at the scale of the neighbourhood unit, with the city core as the central unit of growth and minor neighbourhood units separated by green corridors. It recommends that both the city core and individual neighbourhoods should provide a mix of uses with daily goods and services being located within walking distance for all residents of any given community. This distance is typically measured at 400–500 metres from urban edge to urban centre and comprises a development density of around 55 units per hectare to maximise location and energy efficiency.

During PFBE’s initial ‘Open Shop Consultation’, which is expanded upon in the Community Consultation Section (page 10), a common theme which emerged was that residents of the surrounding villages would like to retain their existing identities. In addition, they stated that they would not like to see new growth in the Greater Coalville Area merge existing distinct villages into one urban conglomeration. This aspiration can be achieved if green corridors are coherently structured to physically separate Coalville’s surrounding villages from each other and from Coalville Town centre; like the Idealised Town Structure diagram on page 5.



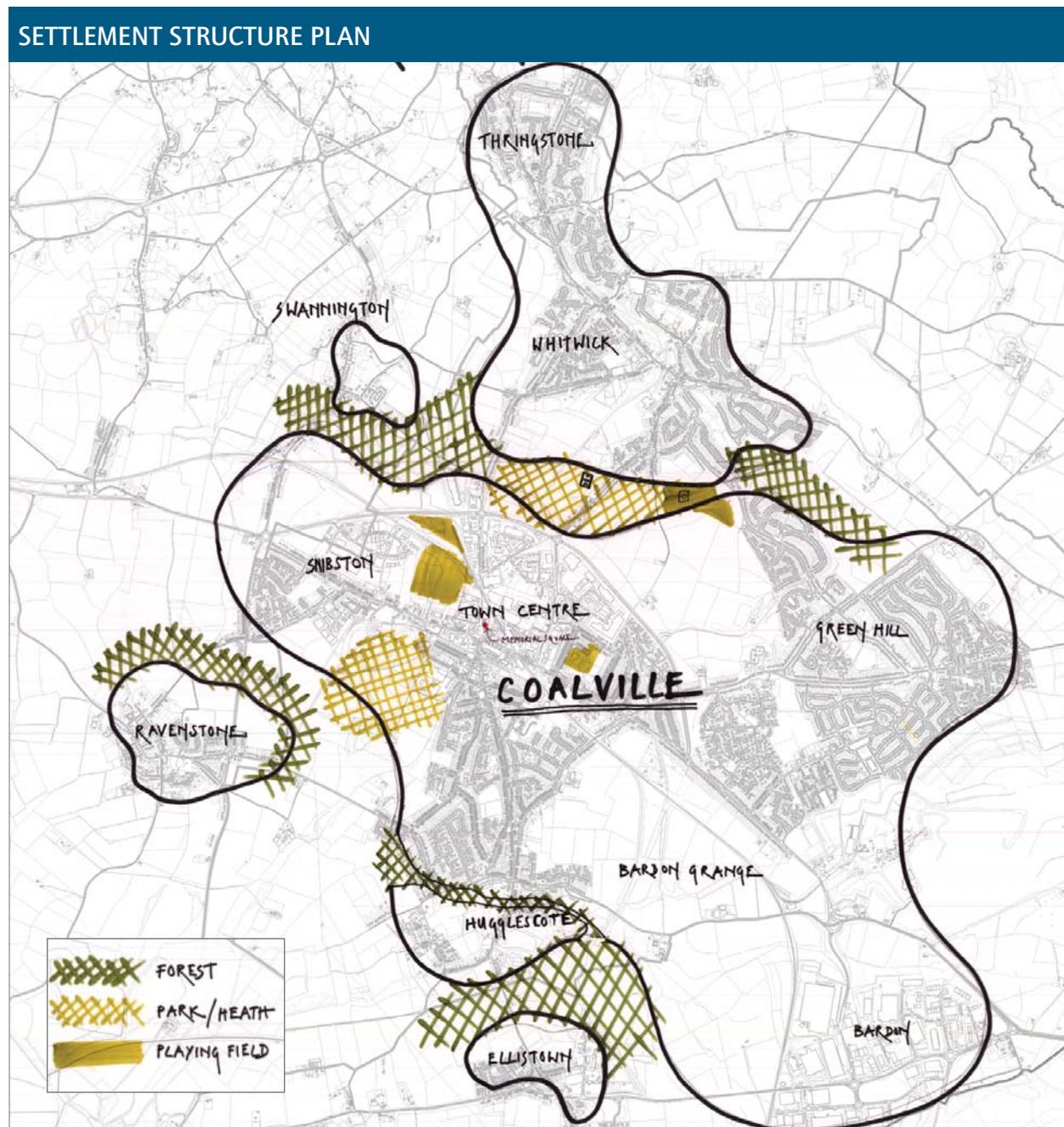
A Settlement Structure Plan was therefore drawn during the workshop to reinforce the centres of Thringstone, Whitwick, Swannington, Ravenstone, and Ellistown with new centres also proposed based on an existing and proposed network of streets. A growth boundary around Coalville and each of these villages was then drawn with a greenways network woven throughout, connecting places to each other and the countryside beyond.

In some instances, where greater distinction is desirable, greenways can be designed as separators (such as new woodlands) and in other instances where adjacent communities can benefit from a shared heritage, greenways can be designed as integrators (such as parks, allotments and playing fields).

PFBE recommends that when considering Coalville's development as part of the revised Core Strategy, NWLDC;

- ◆ identifies clear neighbourhood structures for existing and proposed neighbourhoods
- ◆ plans for a greenway network
- ◆ considers the physical distance between people's homes, village centres and Coalville town centre
- ◆ plans for a series of 'integrators' and 'separators', such as:
 - New woodlands
 - Parks
 - Playing fields
 - Allotments
 - Nature reserves
 - Heathland

Whilst PFBE is not currently commissioned to advise on such issues, the team undertook an initial assessment of how existing settlements might be developed and where new settlements may be located and formed in order to maximise efficiency of movement and walkability. A clear understanding of the opportunities and possible form of growth is essential in understanding the importance of links in and out of the town centre.



Green Infrastructure

The provision of high quality accessible green infrastructure within a town has the ability to relieve the problems associated with increased urbanisation. It does so by providing shared leisure and relaxation areas where people often want to spend their time. Well-designed green infrastructure can enhance the quality of urban living and thereby attract investment in terms of housing, jobs, and skills.

Sustrans, the UK's leading sustainable transport charity, have been pro-actively implementing a number of greenways and trails in Coalville; however the network is not complete. During the EbD the team studied the town centre to make connections to repair the gaps in the network. The team also began to understand how the network could be designed to enhance specific public spaces and in turn add value to nearby properties.

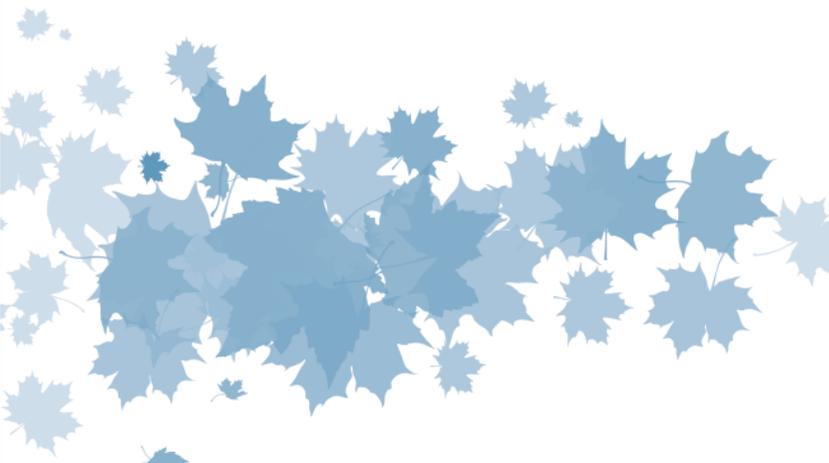
Open Space Network

During the EbD, an Open Space Network was proposed primarily to increase pedestrian and bicycle accessibility within the town centre and out to the countryside, thereby linking up with district wide greenways and trails. The network was also proposed as a way to build upon the vision of Coalville as a market town set within the context of the National Forest. One of the ideas discussed was to use some of the existing rail lines to create greenways linking to larger open spaces like Snibston Discovery Park, the open countryside and future new settlements.

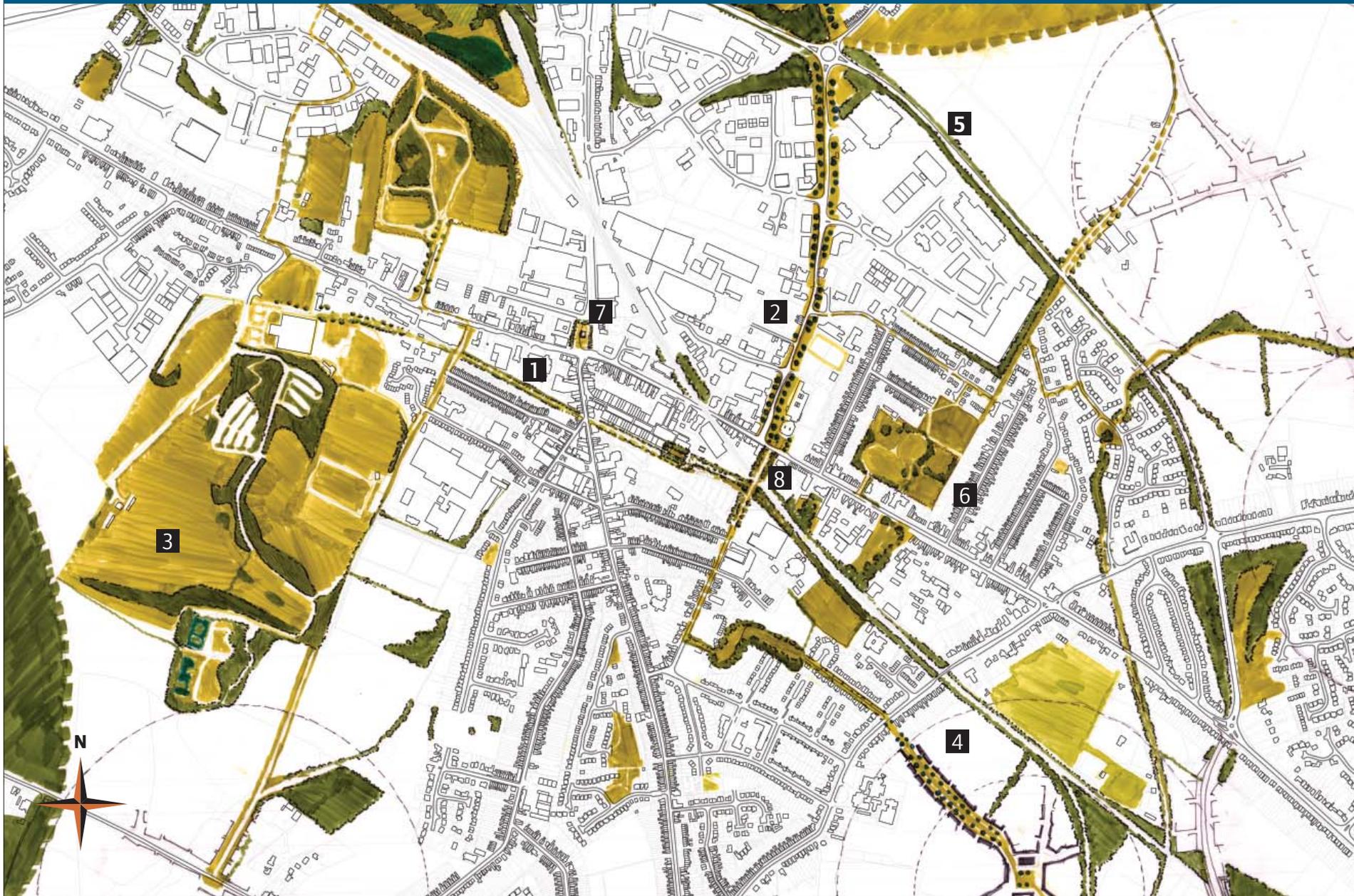
Below is a list of potential new greenways and spaces which can connect to the existing green network. The list below comprises the complete network which will complete the greenways corridors throughout the town centre.

GREENWAY/CORRIDOR

1. Snibston Greenway
2. Whitwick Boulevard
3. Snibston Discovery Park
4. Bardon Grange Scenic Way
5. Stephenson Way
6. Coalville Park
7. Memorial Square
8. Stenson Green



GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN



Framework Plan

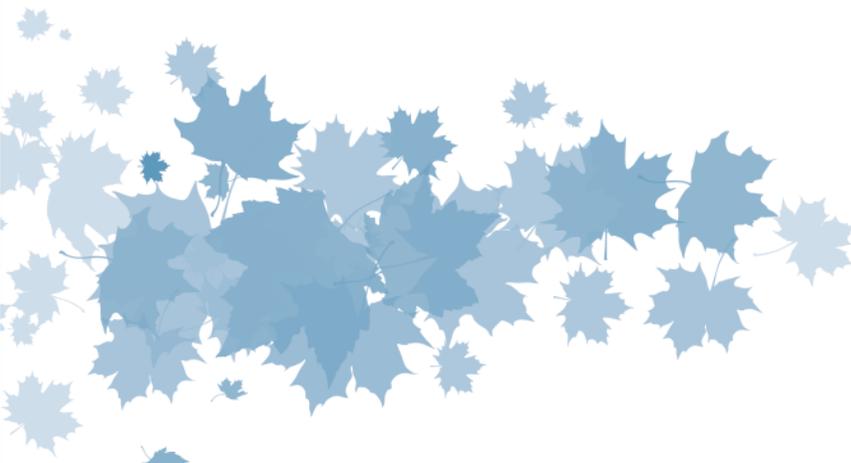
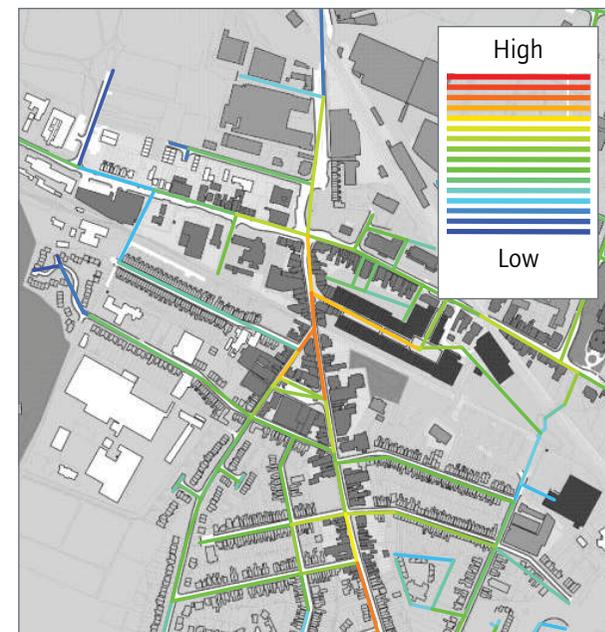
Improving Spatial Accessibility

The Framework Plan used by the PFBE sets out urban blocks to define the framework of a town, with streets and squares linking and separating the blocks. A new series of pedestrian and vehicular links is proposed in order to improve the overall movement network within the town. The drastic improvement in localised access can be seen from the 'before and after' diagrams to the right.

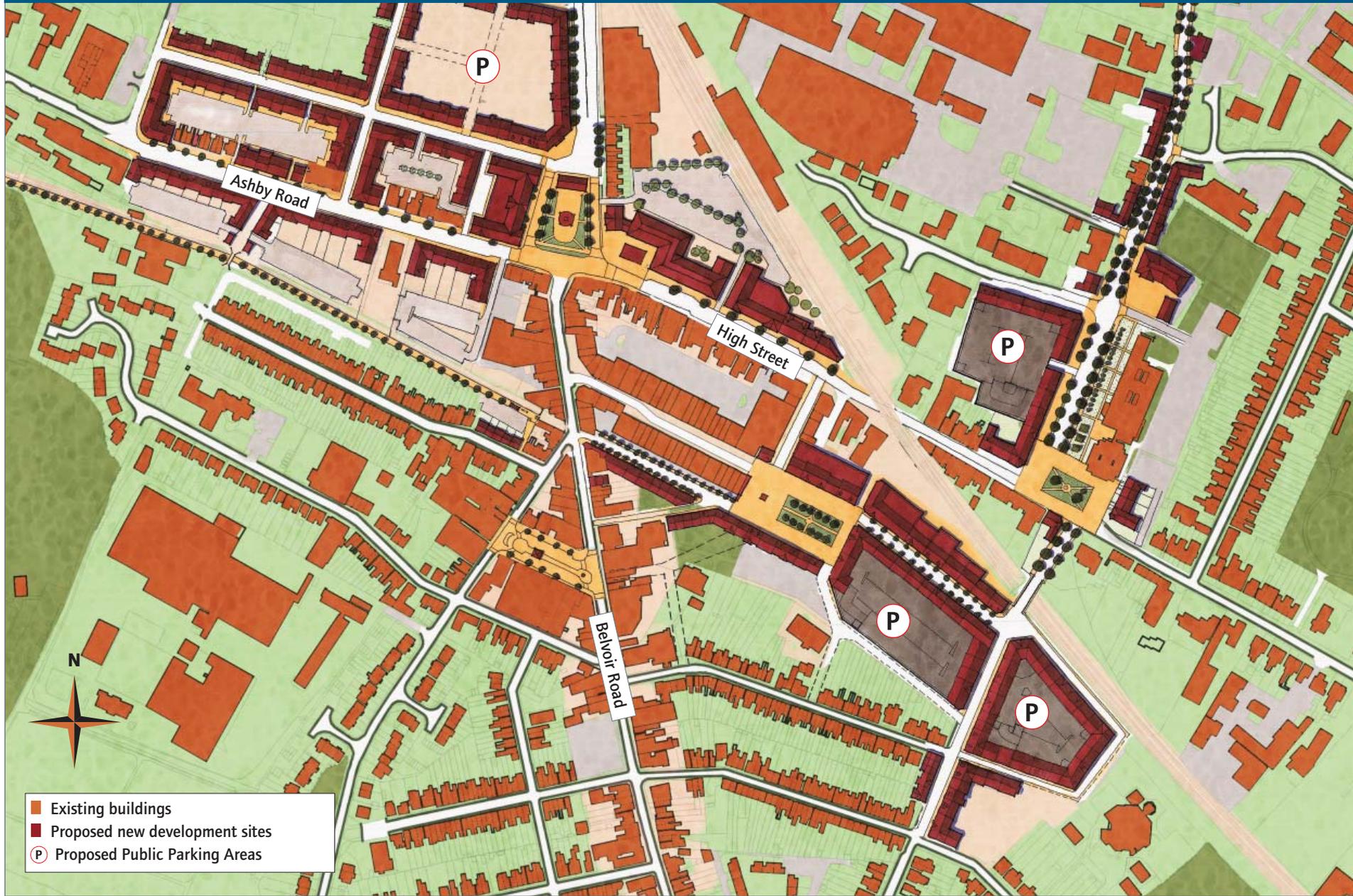
Repairing blocks

The Framework Plan was developed to ensure that new buildings in the town centre create a uniform building alignment for each street and square to clearly define public spaces. It establishes a clear physical framework through which strategic initiatives may be carried forward when funding arises. The Plan was developed from the Hidden Gems exercise which formed part of the EbD process. The Plan ensures that each new development will contribute to the physical and social enhancement of the town centre as well as have economic benefits for the town as a whole and not just within each development opportunity area (see Development Opportunity Areas and Development Briefs, page. 34)

Top: Before; Space Syntax model of existing accessibility Below: After; Space Syntax model accessibility with the Framework Plan, note the increase in red and orange routes. Overleaf: The Framework Plan shows the urban block structure with buildings creating public frontages to streets and squares and private rear courts for servicing



FRAMEWORK PLAN



Four Squares Linked by Vibrant Streets

The Four Squares Proposal:

Two improved squares and two new ones

The Four Squares Linked by Vibrant Streets Concept addresses, within the context of the Framework Plan, the need for a more defined legibility of public spaces within the town centre. Two of the squares already exist and simply require, in some cases, refurbishment of existing buildings and, in other cases, a clearer definition and containment of space through the construction of entirely new buildings and improvements to infrastructure.

The variety of public spaces within the town centre will be enhanced through the implementation of four distinct squares, each with their own specific role in relation to the others.

Each of the squares must have a pedestrian bias to work successfully, with the prominence of highways and vehicles both reduced and as discreet as possible. It is essential that the buildings forming the spatial enclosure of the square have the opportunity to positively contribute to the social life of these spaces, with active ground floor uses and the ability for human activity generated by these uses to permeate across the space. It is therefore imperative that when planning for vehicle access to and movement through these spaces, the impact of highways support the creation of these social spaces. It is encouraged that in the case of Stenson Square and Memorial Square that if necessary alternative streets are created to relieve the vehicle pressure on these spaces.

1. Market Place (new)

Stakeholder and community feedback revealed that residents of Coalville desire more modern shops including a new cinema, a bowling alley, an arcade, and larger retailers. The footfall generated from these uses warrants

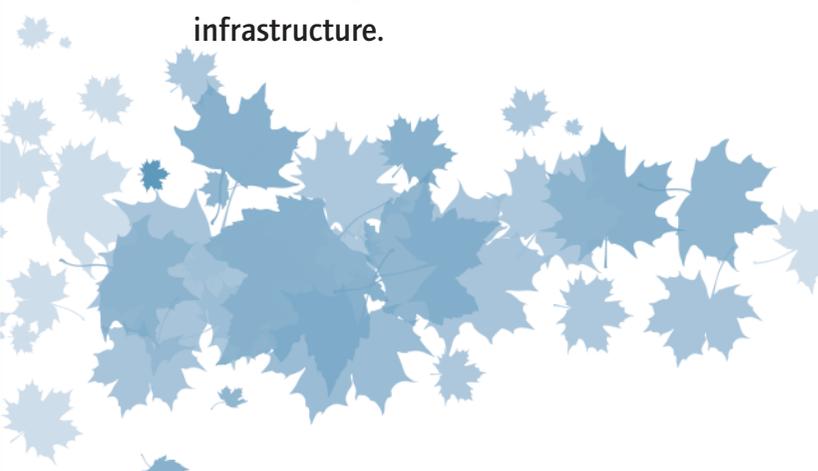
the creation of a new square, marking the anchor between new vehicular links through the town centre.

2. Memorial Square

In 1974 Coalville's strategic role in the Region changed when it became the seat of North West Leicestershire District Council. During the EbD, it was proposed to utilise Memorial Square as the foreground for the creation of a civic hub which would include the Council's Offices and a new library. Another idea proposed was to build or provide space for a tourist information centre and museum which would inform those interested in visiting nearby attractions like the National Forest and Snibston Discovery Centre.

3. Marlborough Square

Marlborough Square hosts a number of restaurants and pubs alongside the Emporium, the town's club, and the Rex Cinema, the town's former cinema. Given the relatively small scale of the square, its intimate setting, tucked away off Belvoir Road, and clues from its existing and former businesses, it seems appropriate to utilise Marlborough Square as the town's entertainment area. To do so, some existing shop fronts must be repaired, Rex



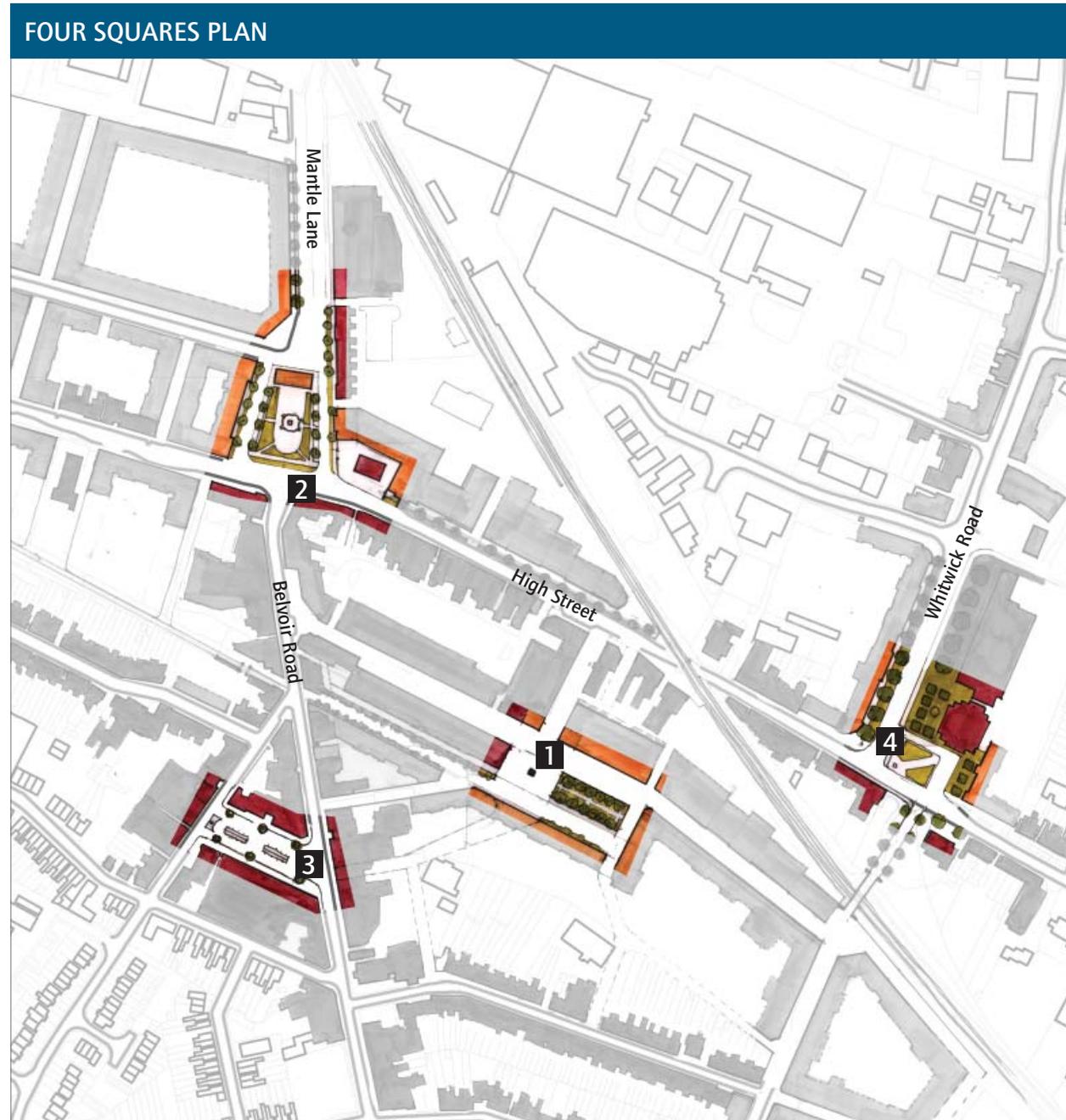
Cinema refurbished, and the public realm tidied up by providing more space for outdoor seating and regulating traffic through the replacement of the roundabout with a signalled light.

4. Stenson Square (new)

To support and enhance the public space network, a further fourth square should be created. However this is conceived as a more modest and passive space, offering a new gateway to the town (located at a key intersection between London Road, Hotel Street and Whitwick Road) and a sense of spatial relief within the townscape.

Improvements should be focused on both hard and soft landscaping, pedestrian access (in particular crossing points across Whitwick Road, Hotel Street and London Road) and the opportunity to explore creating a new (residential) building on the current London Road car park site. As the 'lowest order' square within the town, activity is focused and directed to the 'higher' order squares.

Such a square would be dependent on the redevelopment of the Council Offices site. The old Council Office building is a building worthy of retention and any future development on this site should seek to reinstate the main entrance as a point of public entry, in order to help enliven the space and reinstate the building's traditional entrance.



Making Vibrant Streets

The Framework Plan, in response to the Examination and Diagnosis section (page 18) also proposes an initiative to create improved vehicular and pedestrian links throughout the town centre whilst building upon existing “hidden gems”. New streets are proposed to free up some of the “blocked arteries” as a way to improve the accessibility within and to the town centre.

Some streets, like Hotel Street will need a clearer definition of public space by setting buildings back from the street at a distance to give the feeling of an outdoor room. For other streets, like Whitwick Road, a more legible green link connecting to Stephenson Way and the wider natural landscape will require public realm and infrastructure improvements.

1. HIGH ST: NEW SIDE – CIVIC HUB & RETAIL

The creation of a proper high street will require the construction of new mixed use retail and civic functions to the north side of what is currently called the High Street. The street itself will need to be widened to make way for on-street parking, widened pavements, and landscape features. Existing buildings south of High Street should refer to Appendix 'How to improve Coalville's shopfronts' (page 78) to enhance their appearance.

2. UNLOCKING THE BELVOIR CENTRE

Delivering new vehicular and improved pedestrian links through the Belvoir Centre will alleviate most of the problems associated with traffic congestion, poor accessibility within the town centre, and public safety at night (providing that the scheme is mixed use, preferably with residential accommodation).

This will require the construction of new medium size shops, the opening up of the centre for a new street, the provision of retail space for larger chain stores, the reconfiguration of the existing pedestrian area for vehicular movement and on-street parking, and the replacement of lost car park spaces to be moved further east into a multi-storey car park off Bridge Road.

3. NEW BRIDGE

A new vehicular crossing over the freight rail line, through the extension of Bridge Road connecting with Hotel Street will require permission from Network Rail to upgrade the pedestrian bridge.

A new link will increase town centre accessibility both by foot and by car. The design of any new bridge should be carefully considered with opportunities to improve the crossing experience, particularly after dark. Due to changes in level from north to south, it will be necessary to ensure that any future development of the Belvoir Centre offers pedestrians easy and inviting access down to lower levels of the site.

It is strongly recommended that a key test of any proposals is to design for the most vulnerable and least mobile in the community. For example, how would a mother with a pushchair and two children negotiate the changes in level after dark – would access be easy, inviting, safe and direct? It is strongly recommended that access is designed 'open air', i.e. without resorting to 'urban' lifts or isolated ramps.

4. MARLBOROUGH WAY

As a way of breaking down the large block structure and improving vehicular and pedestrian movement within the town centre, the existing pavement, north of Emporium, should be reconfigured and widened to create a new street with car access. Another possible connection, pending negotiations with property owners, might also be made just south of Emporium.

5. WHITWICK BOULEVARD

With the potential construction of new development alongside the west of Whitwick Road and the opportunity to build on the existing landscaped area on the east side, Whitwick Road must be enhanced to improve the quality of the pedestrian and cyclist experience, reinforce its spatial enclosure and strengthen the prominence of this route into and out of the town.

Key areas of focus should to ensure that building setbacks and building heights serve to spatially enclose

the street. Improved pavements and crossings and street lighting are recommended to enhance the pedestrian experience.

6. GEORGE SMITH WAY

With potential new development on the current Mitchell Grieves site, Market Street now has the potential to become a proper vehicular link west and south back to Ashby Road which will create a legible block and open up development opportunities to the north.

7. SNIBSTON GREENWAY

Whilst the Heritage Trail Line has opened up new links from the town centre to Snibston Discovery Centre, it is infrequent and cannot be considered as either a mode of public transport or a pedestrian link to the countryside. The construction of a safe pedestrian walk way along the rail line to Snibston and the reconfiguration of the existing greenway behind the Belvoir Centre to open to vehicular traffic will improve accessibility from the new Market Place out to the countryside. It is also proposed that the current gates to the rail link are set back to form a small space adjacent to the existing Da Vinci's restaurant. This space would be able to accommodate some outdoor space for the restaurant.

VIBRANT STREETS



Development Opportunity Areas & Development Briefs

The team established nine development parcels within the town centre, each with its own design brief/code to guide future development and public realm enhancement as funding comes forward.

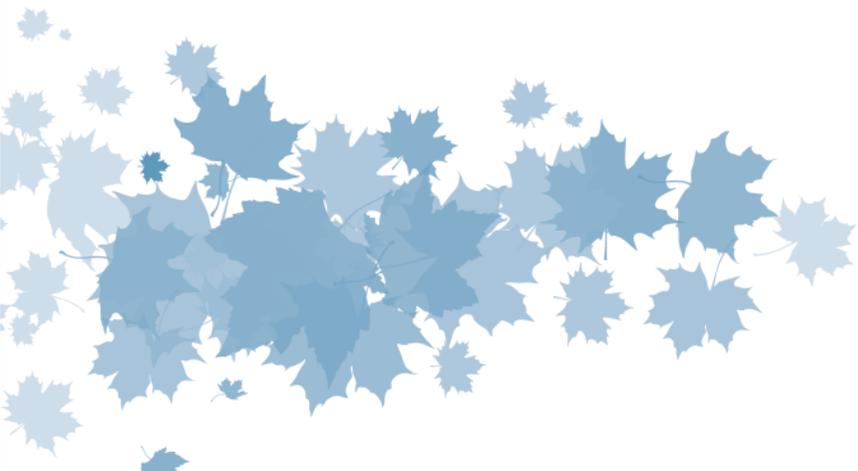
When the opportunity for a development arises within a parcel, the stakeholders in the area should be convened by NWLDC to refine the development brief in more detail. This can happen in two ways.

- ◆ When proactively approached by the workstream leads
- ◆ Or by an approach from a developer/3rd party.

It is proposed that a one to two day design workshop is convened to develop the plan based on the development opportunity area using the pertinent development brief included in the following pages. Detailed planning applications would then be considered in the context of the refined development brief.

Development Opportunity Areas

1. A New Heart for the Town
2. High Street
3. Bridge Road
4. Emporium
5. Ford Garage Site and Council Offices
6. Marlborough Square
7. Memorial Square and Mitchell Grieves
8. Snibston Discovery Park Greenway
9. Ashby Road South



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AREAS



1 A New Heart for the Town

Key Observations

The lack of vehicular movement through the Belvoir Centre is putting increased pressure on Belvoir Road to move traffic through the area to High Street.

There is not a public meeting point in the town's main shopping area. The existing space is not clearly defined as a square to differentiate it from the pedestrian area.

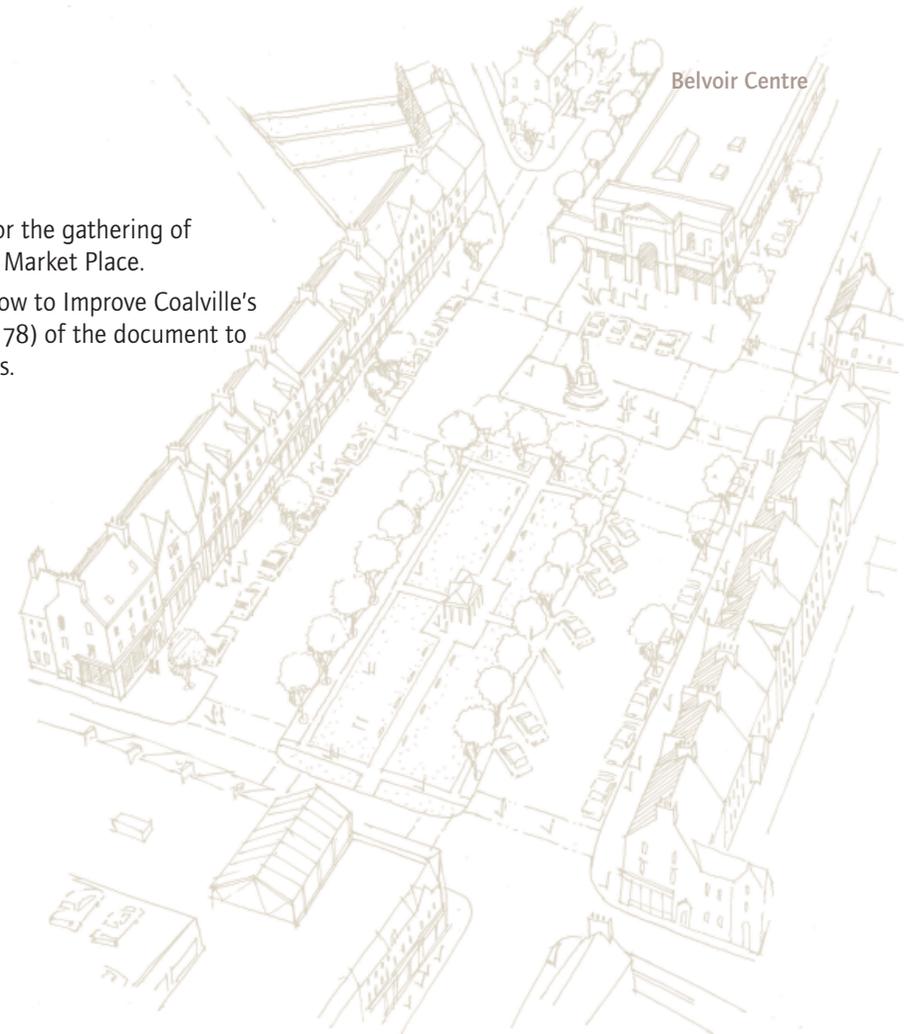
The space is cluttered because of poor shop front designs which are distracting.

The area is dead at night because it is closed to both pedestrians and cars. It is closed because it is impossible to monitor by police in patrol cars.

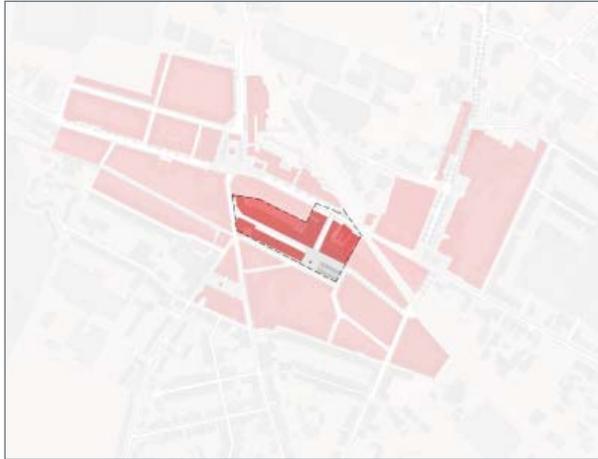
Specific Measures

- ◆ Open the pedestrianised zone to allow access for vehicular movement east-west and north-south to High Street. This will involve creating space for a small carriageway and parallel parking on both sides of the street.
- ◆ Demolish the building currently occupied by Wilkinsons to make way for a new through street.
- ◆ Remove steel colonnade to make way for traffic.

- ◆ Design a proper square for the gathering of people in the town's new Market Place.
- ◆ Refer to the Appendix: How to Improve Coalville's Shopfronts section (page 78) of the document to repair existing shop fronts.

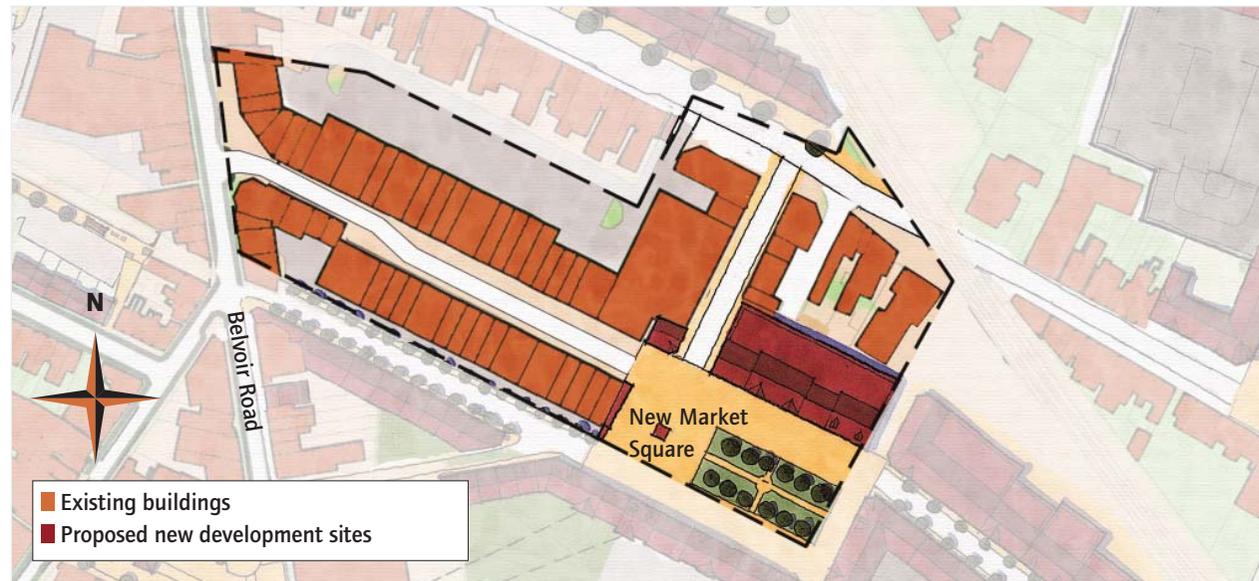


Aerial perspective of proposed Market Place; from the west looking towards the Snibston Discovery Park



Entrance to Belvoir Centre

Development Parcel		
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	Secondary
	Surface Treatment	cobbled road with flagged pavement
	Street Furniture	benches, rubbish bins, street lights, street trees
Block Structure	Block Size	70x100m recommended if possible
	Access	pedestrian to front, vehicular to rear
	Parking arrangements	street parking/ rear car park
	Servicing	Rear
	Setbacks	None
Grain Structure	Plot Width	varies
	Plot Depth	varies
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	N/A
	Residential Mix	Mixed-use scheme preferred
	Scale	2-4 storeys
	Height	Eave height: 7-15m
	Typologies	
Uses		Mixed use



2 High Street

Key Observations

- ◆ One-sided High Street creates weakened sense of space and retail experience.
- ◆ Poorly designed library and nursery.
- ◆ Poorly designed shop fronts are distracting to streetscape.
- ◆ No on-street parking.
- ◆ Few pedestrian crossings make it difficult to cross street.
- ◆ Small pavement on both sides of street creating uncomfortable pedestrian environment.

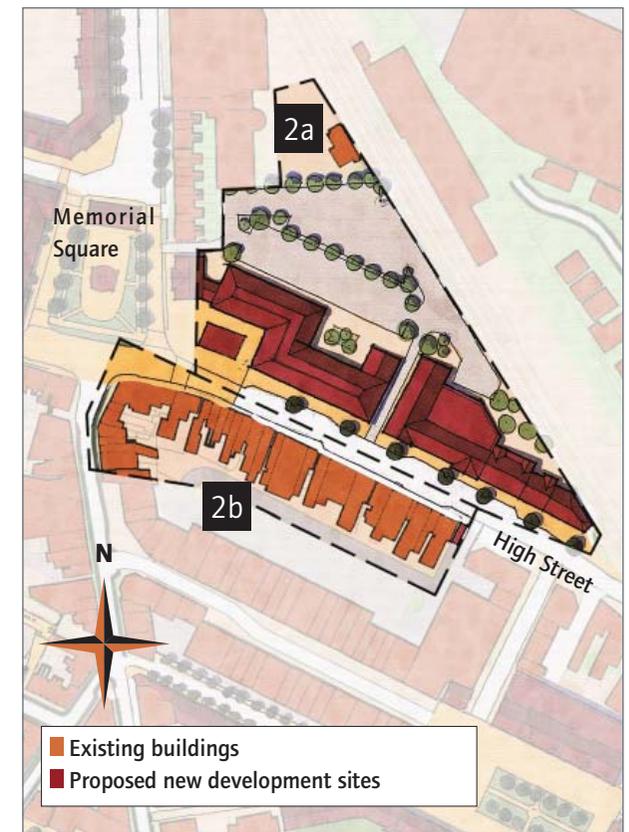
2A High Street North Measures

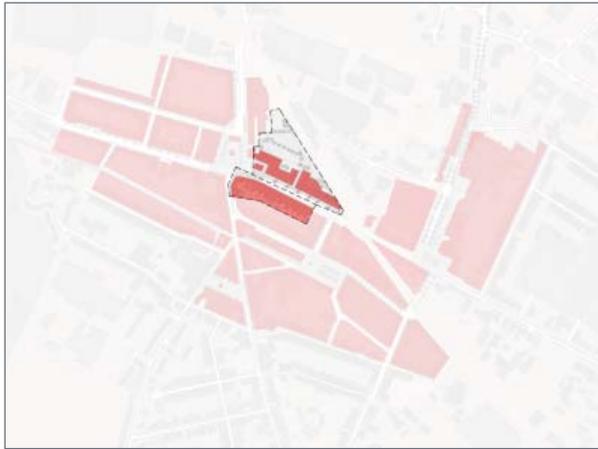
- ◆ Build new 2 to 3 storey mixed use/civic buildings with active uses on the ground floor, fronting High Street will create sense of place.
- ◆ Build new mixed use or civic building wrapping the Red House will create a better sense of enclosure along High Street whilst allowing the Red House pub to remain a prominent building within the town.
- ◆ Widen right of way to provide space for a larger carriageway including space for increased traffic, parking, and widened pavements.

2B High Street South Measures

- ◆ Improve shop fronts of existing buildings. Refer to Appendix: How to Improve Coalville's Shopfronts (page 78) for more information.

High Street North and
South Development Parcel





Development Parcel		2A	2B
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	Primary	Primary
	Surface Treatment	cobbled road with flagged pavement	cobbled road with flagged pavement
	Street Furniture	benches, street lights, flower boxes, litter bins, street trees	benches, street lights, flower boxes, litter bins, street trees
Block Structure	Block Size	300m × full depth	150×75m
	Access	Pedestrian to front and vehicular to rear	Pedestrian to front and vehicular to rear
	Parking arrangements	On street parking and rear car park	On street parking and rear car park
	Servicing	Rear	Rear
	Setbacks	None	None
Grain Structure	Plot Width	5–30m	4.5–10m
	Plot Depth	full depth	15m
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	potential council offices and police station near Memorial square	N/A
	Residential Mix	Mixed Use scheme	Mixed Use
	Scale	2–3 storeys	2 storeys
	Height	Eave height: 6–10m	Eave height: 5.5–10m
	Typologies		
Uses		Mixed Use	Mixed Use



Above top: Development Parcel Locator Plan;
 Above: Existing High Street looking east from Memorial Square.
 Right: Perspective of proposed High Street with new development on the North Side of the street.

3 Bridge Road

Key Observations

- ◆ Area is dominated by a massive car park turning the space into a place for youth to pursue unwanted activities at night.
- ◆ The large Co-op building is not integrated into the urban network and is dominated by a car park in front.
- ◆ Significant changes in grade have the potential to make for an interesting development of the site.
- ◆ Site is a vehicular barrier between Bridge Street and High Street.

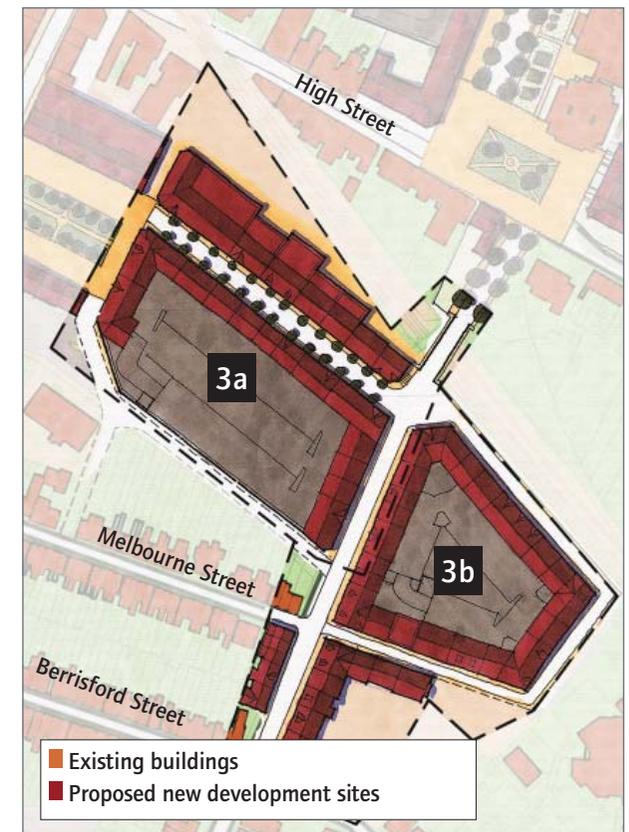
Specific Measures

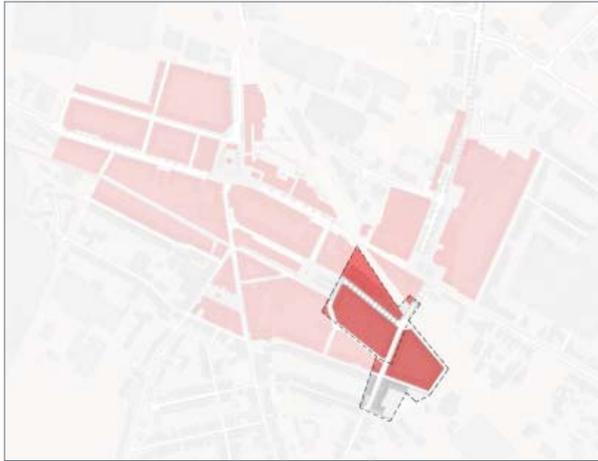
3A

- ◆ Re-develop site of Coalville Market to make way for new mixed-use buildings. New Market can provide space for all the activities which occur in the existing Market.
- ◆ Build a new vehicular and pedestrian bridge over train tracks in place of the existing pedestrian bridge.

3B

- ◆ Re-develop site of Co-op building into a multi-storey parking building with mixed-use buildings around the perimeter to activate the street with people during all hours of the day. .





Above Top; Development Parcel Locator Plan;
 Above: Coalville Market which is not integrated into the urban fabric;
 Right: Photo of pedestrian bridge to Bridge Street which could become a vehicular bridge

Development Parcel		3A	3B
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	Secondary	Secondary
	Surface Treatment	tarmac with stone flagged pavement	Tarmac with stone flagged pavement
	Street Furniture	street lights, street trees, rubbish bins	street lights, street trees, rubbish bins
Block Structure	Block Size	80x150m (south block large enough for large retail)	varies
	Access	pedestrian in front, vehicular in rear	pedestrian in front, vehicular in rear
	Parking arrangements	on street parking with potential structured parking in rear	on street parking with potential structured parking in rear
	Servicing	Rear	Rear
	Setbacks	0-2m	0-2m
Grain Structure	Plot Width	varies	varies
	Plot Depth	varies	varies
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	N/A	N/A
	Residential Mix	residential units (terraces, paired villas, detached)	residential units and possible Mixed Use scheme
	Scale	1.5-2 storeys	2-3 storeys
	Height	Eave height: 3.5-7m	6-8m
	Typologies		
Uses		Residential	Residential/Mixed Use



4 Emporium

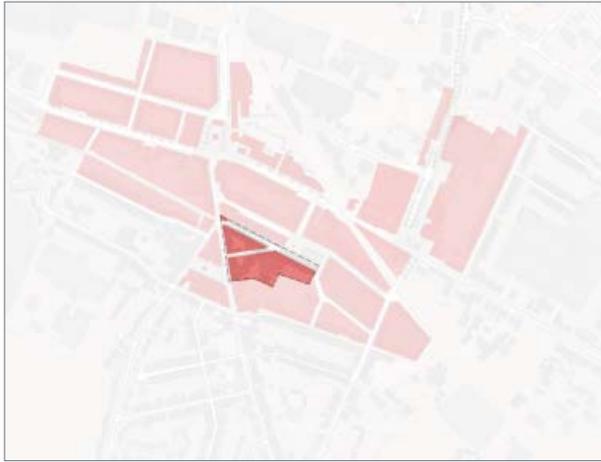
Key Observations

- ◆ Existing greenway is pleasant to walk along, however it dead ends into a car park to the east and Belvoir Road to the west.
- ◆ The area can become quite dangerous in the evenings. This is due to the orientation of the buildings which have their backs to the space.
- ◆ There are no residents to keep an eye on the space.
- ◆ The service area for the Belvoir Centre dead ends before it reaches Belvoir Road. Not allowing traffic through this area, especially at night, causes more problems related to youth loitering and delinquent activities.
- ◆ As a pedestrian, it is inconvenient to walk north-east from Marlborough Square.

Specific Measures

- ◆ Connect the service road to Belvoir Road. Move the road slightly south to make way for a landscaped green.
- ◆ Connect the greenway to the proposed New Market. This new link is intended to connect to a proposed greenway along the freight line through town.
- ◆ Build residential terraced or duplex houses on the southern edge of the space facing the new landscaped green to make it safer.
- ◆ Make a new street north of the Emporium from Belvoir Road to link pedestrians moving from Marlborough Square north-east to the New Market.
- ◆ A new pedestrian or vehicular link just south of the Emporium should also be considered as a second option for making this same connection.





Above Top: Development Parcel Locator Plan:
 Above: Existing greenway;
 Top Right: Perspective showing greenway as a lane with housing to the south to act as a natural security measure at night

Development Parcel		
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	Primary, secondary and tertiary
	Surface Treatment	tarmac with stone flagged pavement (cobble preferred on tertiary street)
	Street Furniture	Street trees, street lights
Block Structure	Block Size	40–70m/varies
	Access	pedestrian to front and vehicular to rear
	Parking arrangements	on street parking allowed on secondary street and rear parking for retail and residential units
	Servicing	rear
Grain Structure	Setbacks	Primary street: none, secondary street: 1–2m, tertiary street: 0m
	Plot Width	5–10m
	Plot Depth	maximum of 30m
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	N/A
	Residential Mix	Residential units to rear of Belvoir Centre, Mixed Use along New Market
	Scale	1.5–2 storeys for residential and 2–4 storeys for Mixed use
	Height	Residential eave height
Uses	Typologies	
		Residential and Mixed Use

5 Ford Garage Site & Council Offices

Key Observations

- ◆ Ford Car Dealership is an eye-sore at one of the key entrances into the town centre.
- ◆ NWLDC's office building is of high architectural value to the town centre. The public space in front of the building could be enhanced to be more than just a car park drop off.
- ◆ The landscaping along Whitwick Road is not cohesive or clear as to what the green space is used for.
- ◆ The pavement along Whitwick Road could be enhanced to become a proper greenway linking to Stephenson Way's greenway link.
- ◆ There are poor pedestrian links across London Rd, making it difficult to develop a green network through Coalville north to south.

Specific Measures

5A

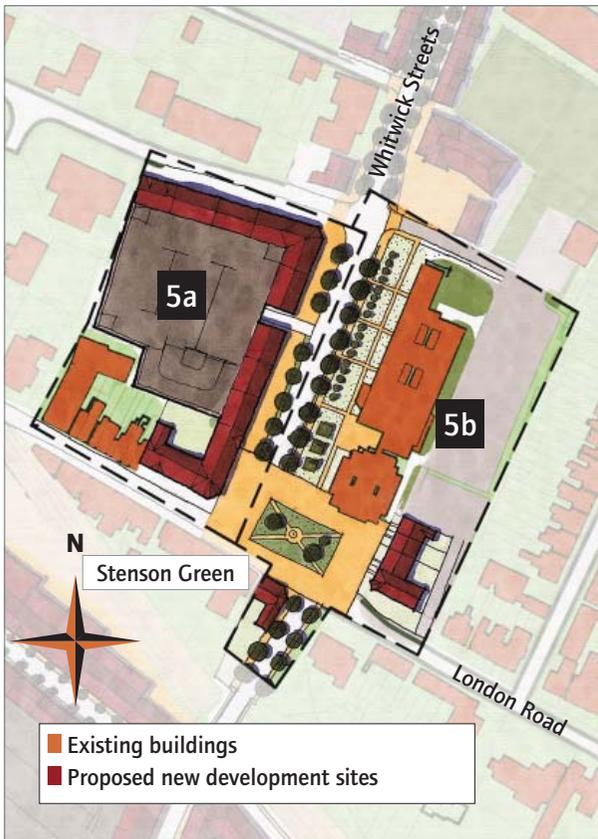
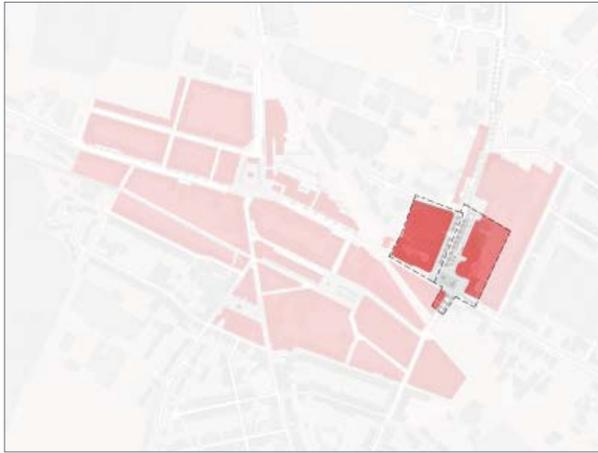
- ◆ Develop the Ford Car Dealership as an anchor store at the end of the high street with residential flats or offices above. The character of this building should be in keeping with the scale and character of the other buildings in the town centre.



5B

- ◆ Redevelop NWLDC's offices into a Hotel and residential flats or apartments. If Memorial Square will house the town's public services buildings, then this site could become a residential square with a retail anchor building on the site of the Ford Car Dealership.
- ◆ Develop a cohesive shared space for both 5A and 5B to unify the space into a proper square to create Stenson Green.
- ◆ Make a landscaped vehicular and pedestrian connection to the existing pedestrian bridge to give legibility to the greenway proposed for the town centre.
- ◆ Build residential flats to the east of the existing Council Office building to frame the space of the proposed square and to hide the entrance to the car park.

LEFT: Whitwick Road looking towards Hotel Street; RIGHT: Development Parcel Locator Plan;
Top right: Perspective of proposed Stenson Green



Development Parcel		5A	5B
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	secondary	secondary
	Surface Treatment	cobble road with flag stone or softscape pavement	cobble road with flag stone or softscape pavement
	Street Furniture	benches, street lights, rubbish bins, street trees	benches, street lights, rubbish bins, street trees, bus shelter
Block Structure	Block Size	80x150m	80x150m
	Access	pedestrian to front, vehicular to rear	pedestrian to front, vehicular to rear
	Parking arrangements	on street parking with rear car park or structured parking	on street parking with rear car park
	Servicing	rear	rear
	Setbacks	0-2m	minimum of 15m
Grain Structure	Plot Width	varies	varies
	Plot Depth	varies	varies
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	N/A	Possibly retain Council Offices
	Residential Mix	Mixed Use scheme	conversion of council offices to flats and bed and breakfast
	Scale	2-3 storeys	N/A
	Height	eave height: 6-15m	eave height: 18 maximum
	Typologies		
Uses		Mixed Use	residential and possible civic uses

6 Marlborough Square

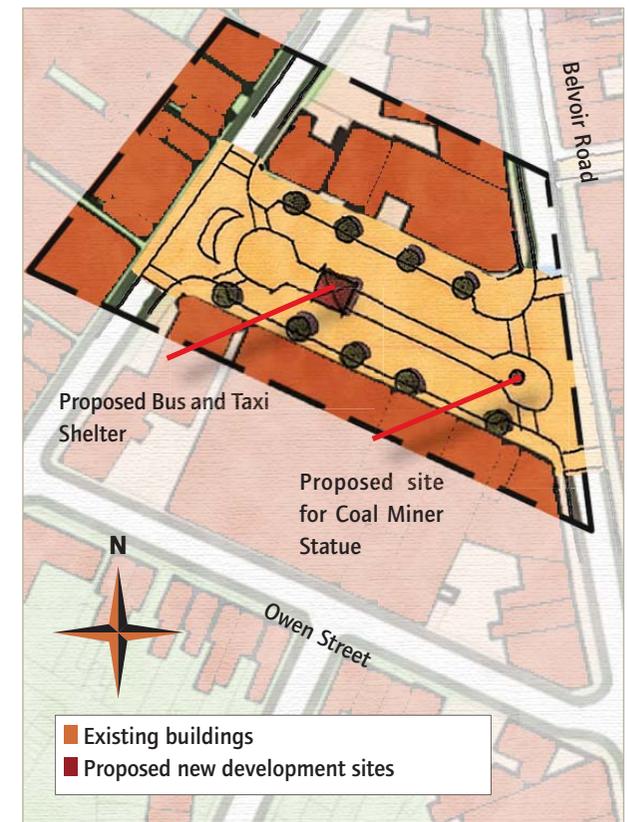
Key Observations

- ◆ Space is cluttered by poor shop front signage.
- ◆ Space is not conducive to public gathering due to the amount of vehicular activity which has been packed into a relatively small space. This includes; a taxi waiting area, bus drop offs and turn-around movements, and a large amount of parking.
- ◆ It is difficult for pedestrians to move from one side of the Square to the other during peak hours.
- ◆ It is difficult to cross Belvoir Road into the Square.
- ◆ The round-a-bout does very little to slow traffic along Belvoir Road.

Measures

Refer to the Appendix: How to Improve Coalville's Shopfronts (page 78) of the document to repair existing shop fronts.

- ◆ Create new pedestrian walks across the square (north-south).
- ◆ Move diagonal parking to the edge of Square as parallel parking on both sides to create a buffer between vehicular movement and pedestrians. Only a few parking spaces will be lost.
- ◆ Plant trees on edge of pavement to act as another buffer between pedestrians and cars.
- ◆ Integrate the bus shelter with the taxi loading zone to de-clutter space. A new bus shelter could act as a visual focal point and unify the space.
- ◆ Move the Coal Mining Statue in front of the Coalville Library to eastern edge of Square to give more visual prominence to the town's heritage. Marlborough square is an appropriate space to relocate this statue.





ABOVE TOP: Development Parcel Locator Plan;
 Above: Marlborough Square which is cluttered with distracting signage.
 Top RIGHT: Perspective of uncluttered Marlborough Square

Development Parcel		
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	primary and tertiary
	Surface Treatment	cobbled road with flagged pavement
	Street Furniture	benches, rubbish bins, bus/ taxi shelter, street lights, street trees
Block Structure	Block Size	varies
	Access	pedestrian to front and vehicular to rear
	Parking arrangements	on street and rear employee parking
	Servicing	Rear
	Setbacks	None
Grain Structure	Plot Width	5-15m
	Plot Depth	varies
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	bus/taxi shelter
	Residential Mix	Mixed Mse scheme
	Scale	2-3 storeys
	Height	Eave height: 6-10m
Typologies		
Uses		Mixed Use

7 Memorial Square & Mitchell Grieves

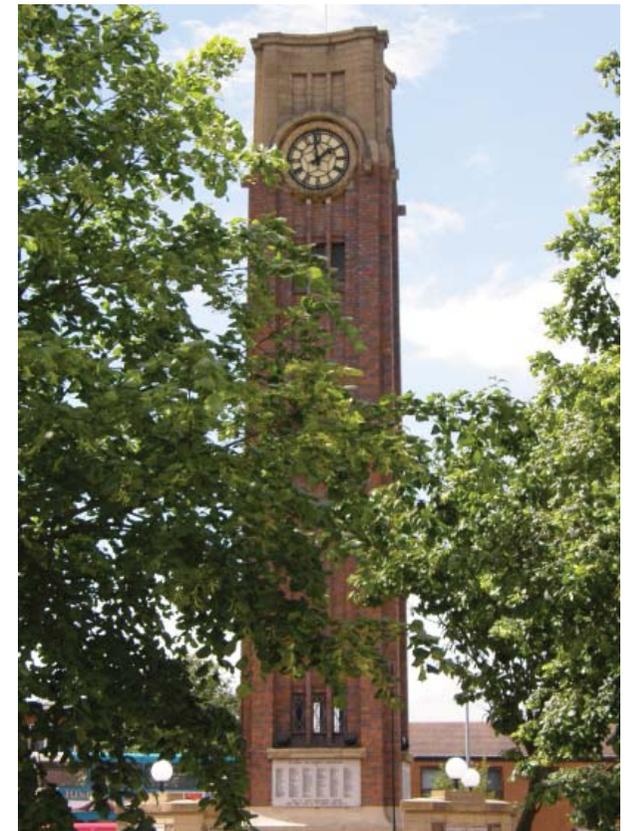
Key Observations

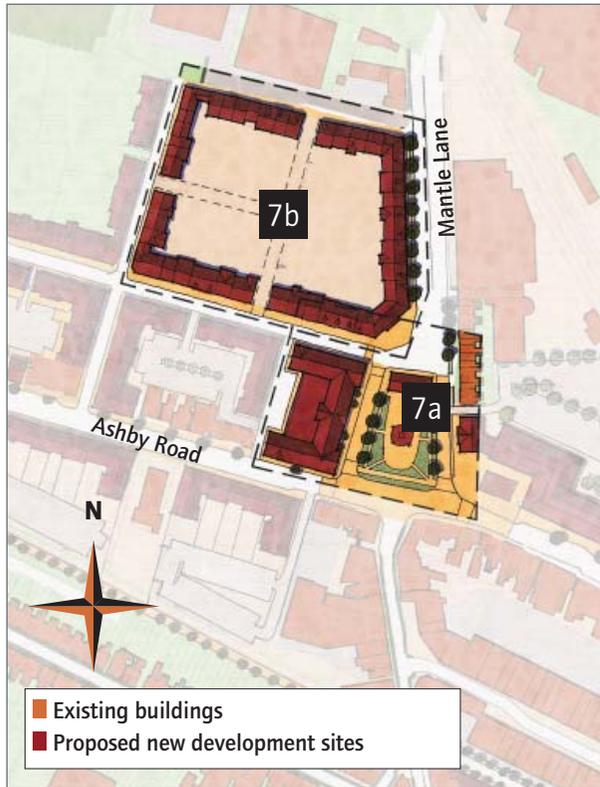
- ◆ Overburdened intersection due to increased traffic flow at town's main intersection.
- ◆ Poorly designed pedestrianised area of Square does not create shelter or leisure areas within square.
- ◆ Poorly defined space from lack of enclosure of buildings at the perimeter.
- ◆ Town's main Square is not activated due to lack of retail and civic amenities/facilities.
- ◆ Dangerous pedestrian environment with poor or non-existent cross walks.
- ◆ Lack of civic presence within Square with exception of Clock Tower.
- ◆ Under-utilized Mitchell Grieves Factory site.
- ◆ Dangerous vehicular and pedestrian underpass of train tracks.
- ◆ Poor bus hub shelter.
- ◆ The community consultation mapping exercise revealed that the centre of Coalville is Memorial Square (see page 11).

7A Memorial Square Measures

- ◆ Make into a civic hub by enclosing the poorly defined space with prominent civic buildings
- ◆ New civic building immediately north of Clock Tower will create a sense of enclosure within the Square.
- ◆ New civic building on existing health care facility site with a more civic presence will also create a better sense of enclosure and enliven the use of the space.
- ◆ New mixed use or civic building wrapping the Red House will create a better sense of enclosure within Square whilst allowing the Red House to remain a prominent building within the town.
- ◆ New or improved crossings at intersection of High street, Belvoir Road, and Ashby Road.
- ◆ New street furniture and light posts
- ◆ New landscaped green within Square to give National Forest a heart within the town.
- ◆ New paving within Square to calm traffic.

Above: Development Parcel Locator Plan;
Right: Clock Tower in Memorial Square





7B Mitchell Grievs Measures

- ◆ A new road north of site linking Mantle Lane with Ashby Road, behind Mitchell Grievs Factory will alleviate traffic burden at Memorial Square intersection.
- ◆ New active frontage along Mantle Road on existing Mitchell Grievs site will enliven the entrance into town.
- ◆ Enhanced pedestrian and cycle link along eastern side of Mantle Lane.
- ◆ New road link off Market Street to Ashby Road.
- ◆ New bus shelter with more civic presence.

Development Parcel		7A	7B
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	Primary	Primary
	Surface Treatment	Cobbled road & stone flagged pavement	Tarmac streets, softscape pavement
	Street Furniture	benches, street lights, litter bins, touristic information, street trees, bus shelter	benches, street lights, litter bins, street trees
Block Structure	Block Size	approx. 30×70m	approx. 130×110m
	Access	pedestrian to front & vehicular to rear	pedestrian to front and vehicular to rear
	Parking arrangements	on street parking and rear employee parking	rear car park
	Servicing	rear	rear
	Setbacks	none	0–3m
Grain Structure	Plot Width	6–20m	up to full width
	Plot Depth	10–20m	up to full depth
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	police Station, council offices, library	N/A
	Residential Mix	potential for mixed-use scheme	potential for mixed use scheme
	Scale	2–3 storey/civic scale	1–3 storey
	Height	eave height up to 15m	eave height up to 12m
	Typologies		
Uses		Mixed Use with recommended civic/cultural uses	Commercial with recommended Mixed Use
Uses		Mixed Use with recommended civic/cultural uses	Commercial with recommended Mixed Uses



Right: Perspective of possible re-design of Memorial Square activated as a new civic hub. An information centre immediately north of the Clock Tower will frame the square to give a sense of enclosure

8 Snibston Discovery Park Greenway

Aerial perspective of proposed Snibston Greenway with outdoor seating north of Da Vinci's

Key Observations

- ◆ Non-existent pedestrian link along train tracks to Snibston Discovery Park.
- ◆ Under-utilized public space next to Da Vinci's Italian pizzeria.
- ◆ Poorly designed shop fronts are distracting to streetscape.

Specific Measures

- ◆ Create an elevated pedestrian walk along train tracks to connect town centre with Snibston Discovery Park.
- ◆ Build a train shelter for train service to Snibston Discovery Park.
- ◆ Improve shop fronts of existing buildings. Refer to How to Improve Coalville's Shop Fronts in the Appendices.
- ◆ Create new crossings across Belvoir Road





Above Top Development Parcel Locator Plan ;
 Above: High Street North and South Development Parcel;
 Existing Snibston Greenway; better use of the area at the
 end of the train; line from Snibston could be made through
 outdoor seating and al fresco dining

Development Parcel		
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	Secondary
	Surface Treatment	tarmac with flagged paving
	Street Furniture	benches, street lights, litter bins
Block Structure	Block Size	part of existing block
	Access	pedestrian to front parking to rear
	Parking arrangements	rear car park
	Servicing	rear
	Setbacks	none
Grain Structure	Plot Width	5-8m
	Plot Depth	up to 25m
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	Heritage Trail Shelter
	Residential Mix	Mixed Use/ terraced houses
	Scale	2-3 storeys
	Height	eave height: 5-8m
	Typologies	
Uses		residential, mixed use, civic



9 Ashby Road South

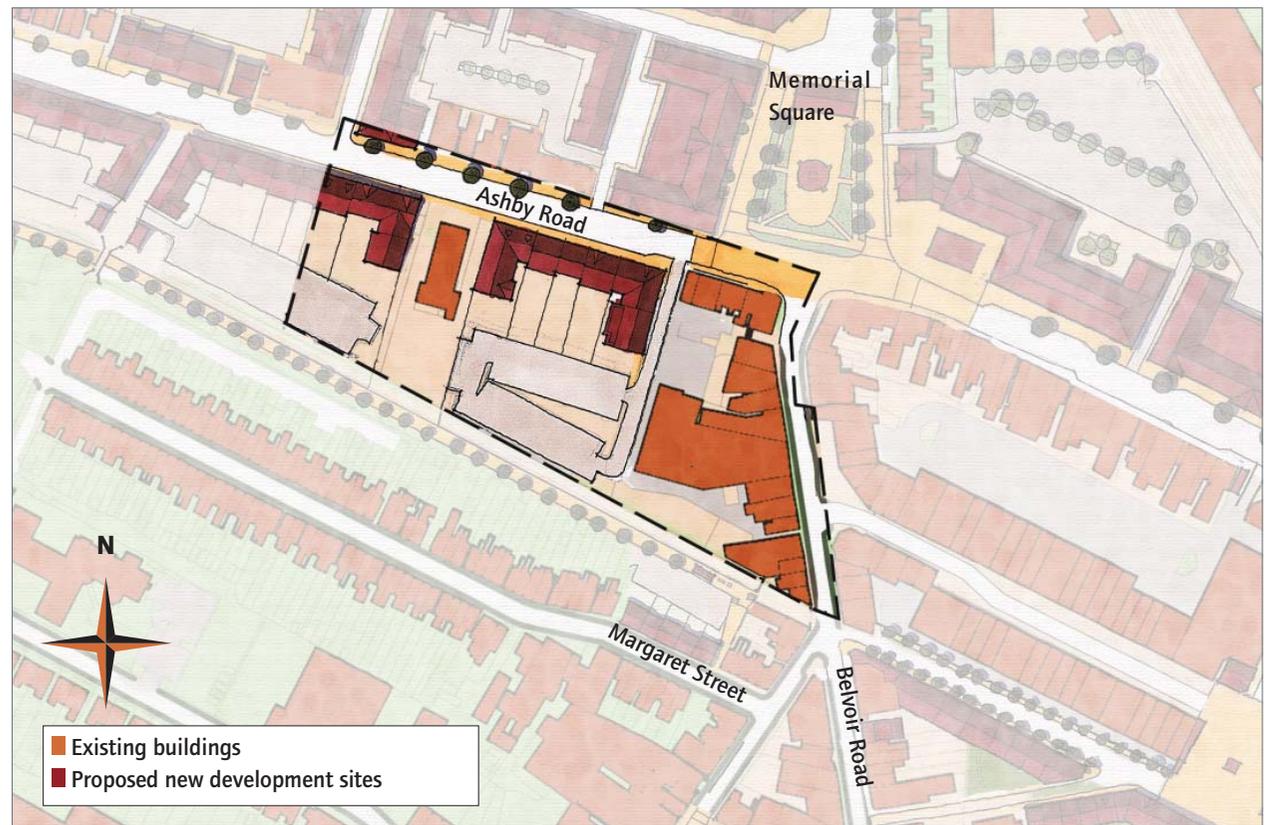
Key Observations

- ◆ Frontage along Ashby Road is weak due to irregular urban edge.
- ◆ Space should be simplified by moving buildings closer to street and pushing parking to the rear
- ◆ Some shop fronts in need of repair

Measures

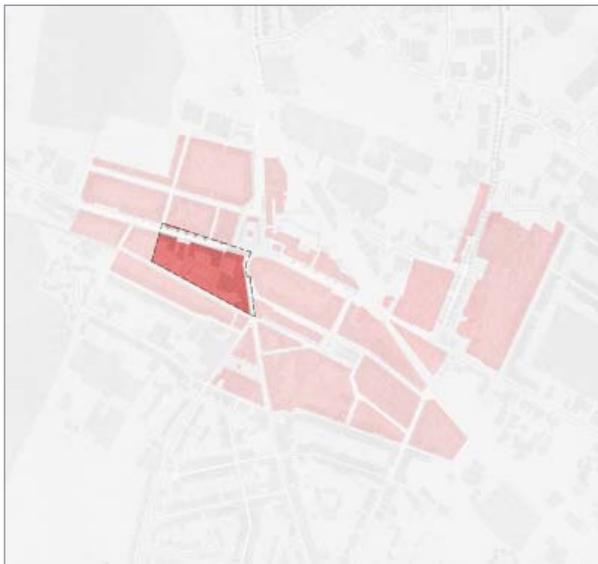
- ◆ New active mixed-use frontage along Ashby Road to create sense of place along one of town's main thoroughfares.
- ◆ Create new vehicular and pedestrian bridge at existing pedestrian bridge to link Margaret Street with Ashby Road (which will alleviate traffic congestion at High Street/Belvoir Road intersection). Bridge will be greenway link to the town.

Ashby Road South
Development Parcel



Below: Development Parcel
Locator Plan;
Bottom Right: Ashby Road
looking west from Memorial
Square

Development Parcel		
Circulation Strategy	Street Hierarchy	Primary
	Surface Treatment	cobbled road with flagged pavement preferred/ tarmac optional
	Street Furniture	benches, street lights, rubbish bins, street trees
Block Structure	Block Size	full width and depth with breaks for parking access
	Access	Pedestrian to front parking to rear
	Parking arrangements	on street parking and rear car park
	Servicing	Rear
	Setbacks	0-2m
Grain Structure	Plot Width	5-40m
	Plot Depth	full depth
Building Types & Massing	Public Buildings	retain police station
	Residential Mix	Mixed Use scheme/ residential flats
	Scale	2-3 storeys
	Height	Eave height: 5.5-10m
	Typologies	
Uses		police station, mixed-use



Next Steps

Realising the vision for Coalville town centre will require investment of considerable time and resources, and both public and private sector involvement.

The Prince's Foundation hopes to continue to support the regeneration of the town centre, acting within an advisory capacity to the Council.

Since the adoption of this Regeneration Strategy by the Council, the Council has also produced and adopted a 'Four Squares and Streets Investment Plan'. This document adds further detail to suggestions made within this Regeneration Strategy and highlights Marlborough Square as a priority project, with a view to securing capital funding for works to commence 2011.

The current economic climate, in particular the pressures on public sector finances will present challenges for the realisation of those elements of the project (such as public realm investment) that are heavily reliant on public sector resources. However, the Council is seeking to secure external sources of funding, principally Section 106 contributions.

Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, July 2010



History & Development of Coalville

DENIS BAKER, COALVILLE HERITAGE SOCIETY, 2009

In the mid 1820s mine engineer William Stenson returned to Leicestershire to sink a mine into previously unexploited coal measures and to arrange for one of the world's earliest railways to be built to carry the coal. This sparked the evolution of the Victorian town of Coalville on a desolate area of land comprised of the four distant corners of adjoining parishes of Whitwick, Hugglescote, Snibston and Swannington. These were separated by two ancient road tracks; one called Long Lane (or more descriptively Ditching Lane), gave its name initially to Stenson's mine and to the emerging settlement.

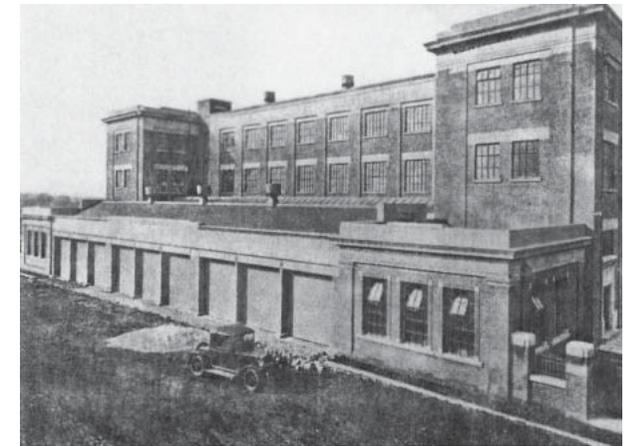
Agriculture provided most employment in the area but Whitwick also had its framework knitting and Swannington its coal mining.

Mining to the north west of Swannington had developed over six centuries, first in seams at or near the surface but then deeper as technology evolved. South east of Swannington coal, which Stenson had successfully proved was deeper and overlaid by bedded clay

Prior to 1830 the undeveloped land was crossed from south to north and east to west by two country tracks, which were unsuitable for transportation of coal in bulk but by 1833 Stenson had persuaded George and Robert Stephenson to build the Leicester and Swannington Railway. While doing this George recognised the business potential and, together with Liverpool to Manchester Railway associates, founded the Snibston Colliery Company.

Miners from the local coalfield supplied Stenson's workforce but there was none available for Snibston Colliery Company which had to recruit its labour from more distant mining areas. Since both mines used advanced technology, specialists from other coalfields had to be recruited.

In order to house these newcomers each pit erected its own settlement adjacent to the mines: Long Lane Colliery providing 34 cottages in two rows, later called "Coalville Place", and Snibston Colliery building a small village of



about 120 cottages in seven rows. These settlements were separated by the L&S Railway, which had branches to each mine and a "Station Hotel" sited on Long Lane. Entrepreneurs quickly built additional rows in the embryonic town for the railway workers and other artisans.

The first residents came from many of the country's coalfields and brought with them their own dialects, traditions, problems and values. Unusually their children were not employed in the mines and were given free, education at either Stenson's Baptist chapel and day-school or at the Snibston Company's school, which was used by Methodists on Sundays.

The industrial growth of the town was quite rapid. Support industries for the mines, the wagon works and the railway were quickly established and brick and tile yards opened to exploit the local good quality clay. In 1846 the new Midland Railway Co. took over the railway operation, erected a new Station and significantly expanded its locomotive workshops. A large wagon works developed and by 1900 employed 1000 men and boys to become a world leader making oil tankers for sale around the world.

The brick yards provided welcome second family incomes by taking on children and young females but "George Smith of Coalville", disturbed by the terrible conditions in which small children and young women



were forced to work, gained fame as a Victorian social reformer, who as a private individual successfully fought to bring children and women of the brick and tile yards under the protection of his Brickyard Act of 1884. His success initially put children and women out of work but they soon found better employment with the consequent opening of factories making shoes, shirts and particularly narrow elastic web fabric. The widening of the employment base gave a massive push to the further development of Coalville.

The skills and experience gained in manufacturing elastic web fabric encouraged two companies to invent cutting edge technological improvements and they became world leaders in the business.

An iron foundry producing modular brick making systems gained world acclaim for quality and service. Then Cascelloid, utilising World War 1 surplus nitrocellulose to produce thermoplastics, successfully manufactured toys and eventually the "Action Man" range. During World War 2, Coalville's factories reportedly produced every piece of landing suspension gear for "Spitfires" and "Seafires".

These developments led a progressive need for housing for the new comers. By the mid-century the town had developed mainly on or close to Long Lane, but then housing was introduced first in the Hugglescote part, then

the Snibston part and finally the Whitwick part. Much of this was carried out by local entrepreneurs in response to industrial need: e.g. James Gutteridge, an early general dealer, constructed an estate of excellent rows of cottages at the end of the century.

From the earliest days general dealers were supplying all the goods needed, from butter and bread to black powder and shovels. It became easy to travel to Leicester by train on market days until Coalville's own market developed so well that customers came by rail from Leicester.

The front rooms of houses on the main roads were converted into a variety of shops, which supplied almost everything one needed. Several of these developed into high quality suppliers of goods for the better off.

However miners' and labourers' wages were never high and during the depression years they were often on short time or out of work. To meet their needs Coalville Working Mens' Cooperative Society was inaugurated in 1884 and continued to develop impressively, providing a firm financial base for the town's trade, which was owned by the people. Even in the dark days of the Battle of the Somme members had sufficient confidence to erect a modern Department store and 25 years later to build a state of the art bakery to supply its 19 branches. By 1930 it had 14,000 shareholder members, capital and investment reserves of £700K and an annual turnover of £500K.

Many of the town's entrepreneurs emerged from its hard working population and a number of these repeatedly earned and reinvested their resources in the town. The chapels provided excellent early education and a musical tradition. Up to 15 competent choirs, seven brass bands, two full size orchestras, and an operatic society provided excellent training and entertainment. The Co-op strongly supported further education of its member's families.

Towards the end of the mining era the workers were for the first time well rewarded for the hazardous conditions in which they worked but the closure of the mines came as a tragedy in which they laboured. The peculiar sense of humour and comradeship of those workers still prevails. The beneficial gifts to the town of the Miners' Welfare Organization in the form of the Public baths, Snibston

Miners' Welfare Centre and the Technical Institute have been demolished and with the exception of the Snibston Museum almost all evidence of our once famous mining and engineering heritage has been erased.

Coalville was perhaps fortunate in having one of the first coalfields to close for it benefitted from government funding to encourage the arrival of new and varied hi-tech industries and some redevelopment resources. Coalville even benefited from investment with the arrival of a new shopping centre, Belvoir Centre. Sadly the promised arrival of major chain stores was never fulfilled and the town's infrastructure and shopping base was critically affected by the closure of a number and variety of small and medium shops.

The town was noted for its real sense of friendly human support throughout its community. This began to disappear both when the early rows of cottages and shops were demolished taking disparate groups on to new housing estates on the town's outskirts and when the town began to lose its successful historical structure. The cinemas, theatres, skating rink, some working men's clubs and many sports grounds have disappeared leaving an apparently exhausted town which seriously needs revival. Hopefully this is about to happen.

The District Council must be commended in having the courage to give careful consideration to the future total regeneration needs of the proud town of Coalville. The community awaits the expected signs to show that a finer town fit for the twenty first century will evolve unhindered by outside pressures of any kind.

Many residents remember the hard but good times of the past but can look hopefully forward to a future 175 years of progress being as good as or better than the last for their descendents.

Devis W Baker

The National Forest

SOPHIE CHURCHILL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, THE NATIONAL FOREST COMPANY

Coalville in The National Forest: iconic buildings, pathways from the front door to woodland, well-loved forest sites and a healthy population.

Coalville is not so much surrounded by The National Forest as a vital part of it. 200,000 people live in The National Forest, many in its main towns, including Coalville. How those towns develop to reflect the sustainability and beauty of a growing forest is crucial for them and for the forest itself.

The National Forest was an exciting idea for England in the late 1980s: to demonstrate on a large scale all the benefits that forestry can bring to the country. Planting began in the mid 1990s and forest cover is now at 18% across its 200 square miles, compared with around 6% at the outset. Almost 8 million trees have been planted; recovery from the loss of major coal extraction has been accelerated and a new economy based on land and forestry management can now emerge. Tourism across the forest is now worth around £270m a year, with the YHA National Forest at Moira a recent addition to the visitor's options.

The forest remains to be completed: the aim is to achieve around a third forest cover across the whole area. Increasingly, woods will be linked up and there will be a focus on making the forest accessible to where people live. Alongside further planting, a key priority is to make the most of what has been created already.

Coalville, with its industrial heritage, a traditional retail offer, potential new investment and an increasingly aspirational population, reflects many of the qualities

of the forest as a whole. It is well situated, modestly disposed, full of assets and opportunity and on the cusp of a new era.

A strong partnership has been forged between the National Forest Company and North West Leicestershire District Council to achieve maximum synergy between The National Forest and the District. We share a similar understanding that the forest is not just about trees and Coalville is not just about the built environment. We share also an ambition for national standards to be met, and even surpassed, in the quality of everything we do. Christine Fisher (Chief Executive, North West Leicestershire District Council) and I were both on the platform to receive the Sustainable Development UK award for the transformation of Ashby Woulds, in 2008.

Therefore the National Forest Company is delighted to see the vision being developed for Coalville, taking into the 21st century what is good from the past and giving the strong message that Coalville will be there, thriving, in the 22nd century: robust economically, socially and environmentally; a town understanding and loving its setting in the maturing forest, demonstrating a high quality of life, a low carbon economy, an attractive, functioning and green centre and uniformly desirable residential areas.

Having been engaged in the Prince's Foundation work and having strong links with colleagues and leaders in the

Council, the National Forest Company asks its partners to take imaginative town centre masterplanning forward into an integrated long-term plan to secure the future of the town within The National Forest. In particular, we have these priorities, offered as questions to our partners:

Can we build one iconic public building within Coalville, expressing the highest standards in sustainability and the use of forest-appropriate materials, efficiently providing services and leading the way in low carbon performance? This will be a building to sing out that Coalville has a new and proud identity as a high quality, sustainable place in the heart of The National Forest. It should be followed as a standard by many further buildings.

A route into The National Forest's sites for every resident: when a resident opens the front door, how does he or she know they live in this major green asset; how can they find their way from the house progressively to forest sites for adventure, tranquillity and health?

Housing growth and green infrastructure: can we continue to work together to make sure that development gain supports the continuing creation of The National Forest, making the District an exemplar of how to have growth without a loss of quality of life, green space and sustainable living? We are confident that the Council will continue to be a lead authority in enacting green

infrastructure guidelines for The National Forest.

The A511 is the spine of The National Forest: how can it express this better through the District and be traversed more easily in Coalville, so that green sites are used more, either side of it?

Young people: what activities and learning opportunities for them can be developed through having The National Forest on their doorstep? As with all similar towns, Coalville needs to work hard to offer enough to the next generation.

All sites beautiful, all looked after: given that Coalville has a good amount of green space near its centre, how can the sites be made more accessible? How can the long-term upkeep of green space and Forest sites be built into budgets and Section 106 agreements from the outset and the right organisations, including residents' and community groups, be engaged to maintain sites to the highest standards?

It is my pleasure to have been invited to contribute to this publication. I look forward, with colleagues and partners from the Council and beyond to the implementation of the leadership's inspiring vision for Coalville in The National Forest.

Sophie Churchill

www.nationalforest.org



Community Consultation

Mapping Exercise and Questionnaire Results

Most Common Responses from the Questionnaire

GOOD QUALITIES

History, location, affordability, transport

PRIDE

Clock tower, council offices, none, Snibston

CHALLENGE

Attitude, transport, jobs, affordability

Change

Belvoir Centre, Memorial Square, vacancies, parking

IMPROVE

Belvoir Centre, Mitchell Grieves Factory, Memorial/Clock Tower, shop fronts, library

WOULD LIKE

Cinema, modern shops, more green areas

CHARACTER

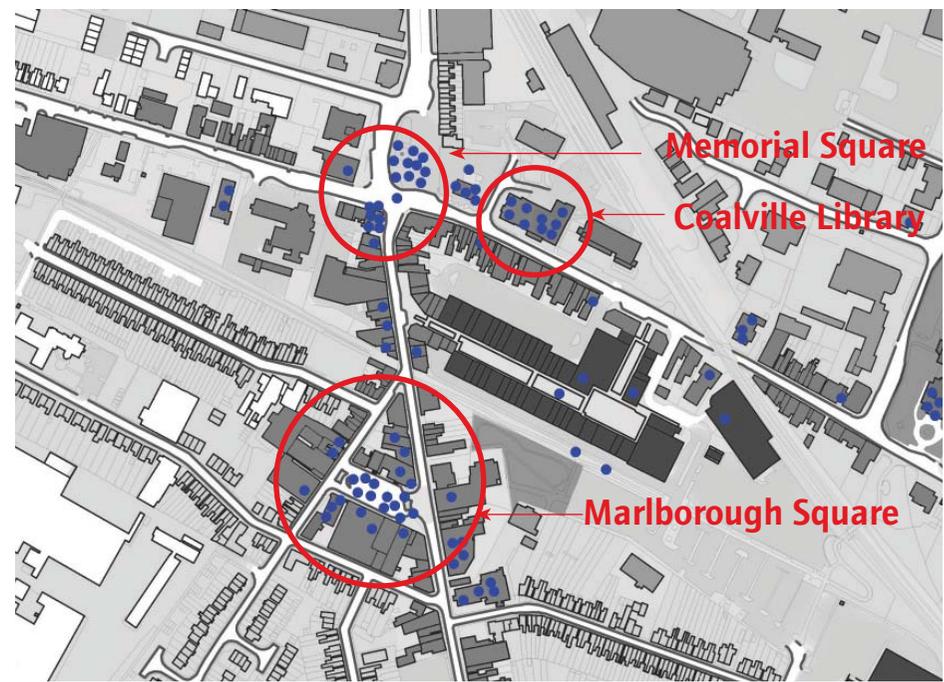
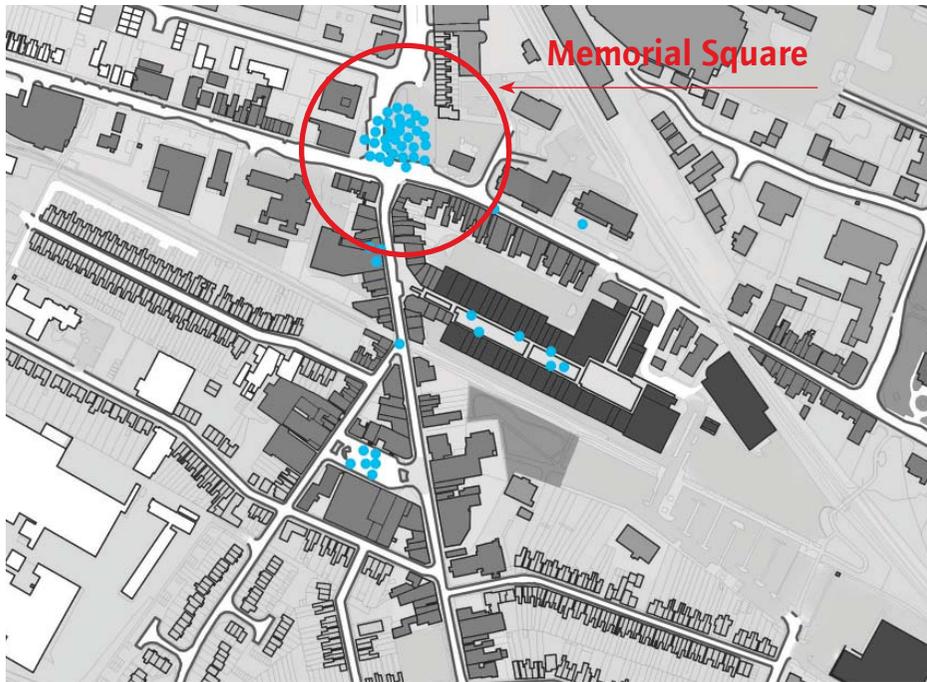
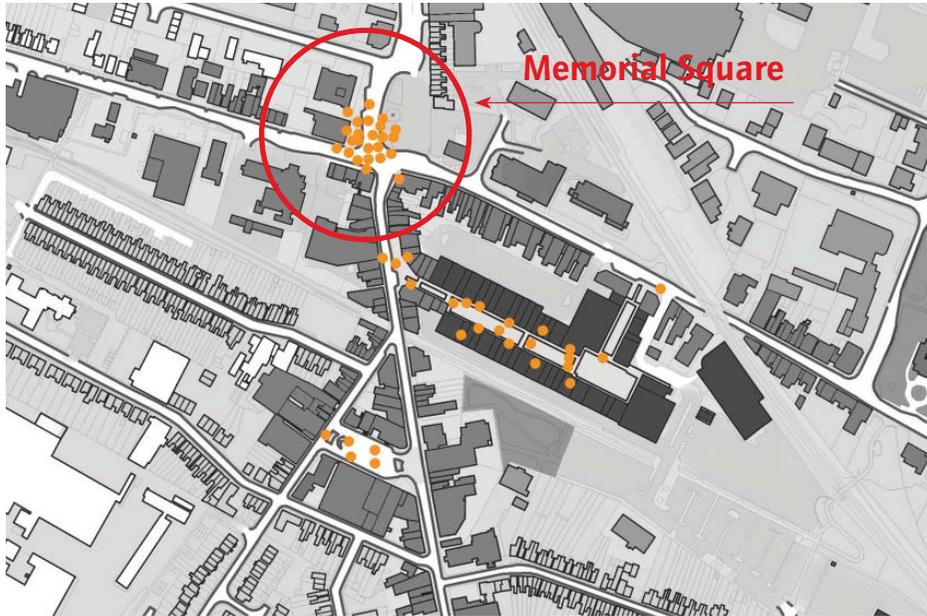
History (mining), forest, countryside, friendly

IN 20 YEARS

A town with easy access to the countryside, Memorial Square (improved).

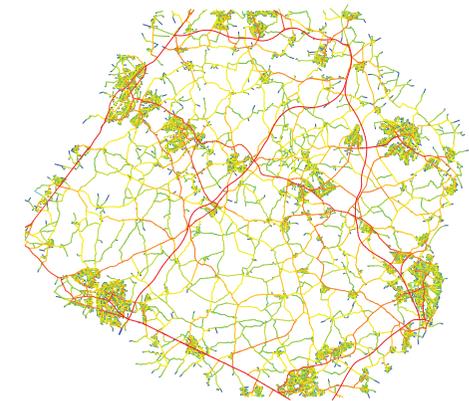
Following the scoping workshop, representatives from PFBE and NWLDC held an Open Shop Consultation Day at the Belvoir Shopping Centre. Over 100 residents from Coalville and its surrounding villages participated in the consultation.

The PFBE team helped residents with a mapping exercise. The results from which indicate information which was useful in formulating the Regeneration Strategy.



Advanced Spatial Analysis of Coalville

SPACE SYNTAX



Coalville Enquiry by Design

15th to 17th June 2009

Space Syntax summary report

Space Syntax

Coalville EbD Executive Summary

Background

Space Syntax Ltd were asked by the Princes Foundation to assist in the Enquiry by Design Process for Coalville.

The Foundation were asked to produce innovative and sustainable design solutions for the redevelopment and expansion of Coalville's town centre and advise on the spatial planning of housing growth proposed for the greater Coalville region.

To aid this delivery, Space Syntax have used advanced spatial analysis software both to understand the character of the existing town and forecast the implications of development.

Approach

Space Syntax provides an independent, expert and objective assessment of the physical qualities of urban environments.

By understanding the way in which the spatial structure of urban environments impacts upon the movement of individuals we are able to explain the distribution of all modes of movement and the implications this has for a variety of socio-economic indicators including retail vitality, land value, land use distribution, crime patterns and energy consumption.

In Coalville, Space Syntax worked with the Foundation to ensure the proposed development solutions would be socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.

To this end we assessed the degree to which the spatial structure of design proposals support local economic growth, reduce commuting dependence and maximise the amenity associated with pedestrian trips.

Key Findings – strategic context

Coalville is to a degree an imposed spatial environment. The town has a relatively short history in relation to the agricultural villages surrounding the town, it did not emerge from a network of local market trade routes and therefore struggles to capture surrounding passing trade from local villages. Instead the town's growth was based on the strategic industrial access required to export the mineral wealth on which the town was founded.

This distinction between the industrial heritage of Coalville and the agricultural origins of surrounding communities is reflected in the opinion of surrounding village residents that see their communities as being culturally and functionally distinct from Coalville.

With a need for expansion in the region the challenge is to allow the communities of the greater Coalville region to evolve as distinct communities but with a common agenda of enhanced sustainability and economic innovation.

Key Findings – town centre consolidation

Through successive wholesale redevelopment and industrial clearance, the town centre of Coalville has become spatially fragmented with different locations emerging as focal points for different scales of pedestrian trip (see appendix pp 12-16). This is partly a result of some of the major retail concentrations being offset from the town's major global through routes (Belvoir Road and the High Street).

As a result the centre lacks coherence and fails to capture the benefits of potential trade that passes through the town.

To remedy this, the design proposals have sort to refocus activity on these major through routes and shift the town's commercial centre of gravity back to the intersection of these connections at Memorial Square.

Achieving this will not only reinforce the distinct identity of the town but will also support local economic growth and reduce the need for more distant shopping trips.(p4)

Coalville EbD Executive Summary

Key Findings – sustainable expansion

A need for an additional 12,000 homes in the greater Coalville region sets the context for an ambitious expansion plan, one that will need to be planned carefully if it is to integrate sensitively with existing communities.

The foundation's approach to urban expansion is to develop new village communities rather than expand existing settlements; polycentric rather than mono-centric growth.

New village communities need to be supported by particular spatial qualities. Local economies develop by simultaneously building on the value of passing trade and local trade so by interfacing local housing and retail developments with larger scaled movement a village community can build more amenity than it would be able to support in isolation.

To generate this interface the spatial structure of the expansion plan must ensure existing communities remain discrete entities and that new villages focus development at the intersection of a larger scaled road network that links the villages together and with the wider region.

The Foundation's initial application of this approach in Coalville can be seen on p7&8

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

Recommendations

1. Change in the town centre should not be seen as discrete from planned housing growth. The region will gain most from an integrated approach that ensures that new residents are able to reinforce the strength of the existing centre. Only a combined and integrated plan for retail and housing growth will maximise investor confidence in the future potential of the local commercial centres.

2. The relations of settlements in polycentric spatial systems can be extremely difficult to understand intuitively.

The degree of amenity available to any local community will be influenced by the internal spatial configuration and quantum of development associated with each individual settlement but also the settlement's position within a larger scaled movement network between centres. This means that expansion in Coalville may create a hierarchy of amenity between settlements even if their internal configurations are very similar. (See fig.1&2).

The design of Coalville's expansion should therefore consider the impact of each phase of growth on existing communities available amenity and the influence of expansion in general on the commercial vitality of Coalville's existing centre.

Fig 1: Polycentric spatial system of five identical settlements with near equal amenity

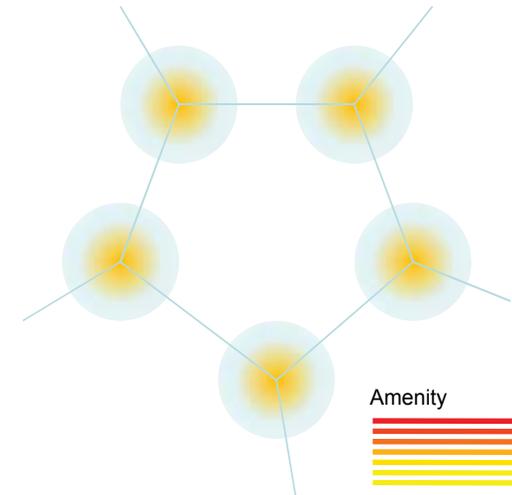
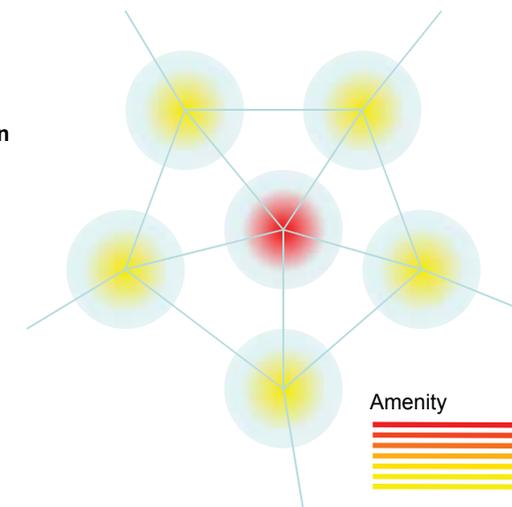


Fig 2: Polycentric spatial system of six identical settlements with variation in available amenity



Coalville EbD Executive Summary



Coalville is situated in an enviable location in terms of strategic access. The greater Coalville region benefits from easy access to both the M1 and M42 motorways and lies within easy commuting distance of Loughborough, Leicester and Derby. Consequently the area has a high prevalence of affluent and elderly residents who have moved out from the nearby towns and cities. The spatial model of the region highlights the importance of the motorways but also the strength of the A511 that traverses Coalville and provides an important east-west connection between the M42 and M1.

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

The Princes Foundation
© Space Syntax 2009

Coalville EbD **Town Centre Consolidation**

The block size (top) and centrality measure (bottom) of the existing town show how the permeability of the street system and associated clustering of development has created a particular pattern of advantage for commercial activity within the town. Currently this is very weak and is restricted almost entirely to Belvior Road. The town is clearly retracting from the dominance of the A511 rather than drawing upon the potential passing trade it represents.

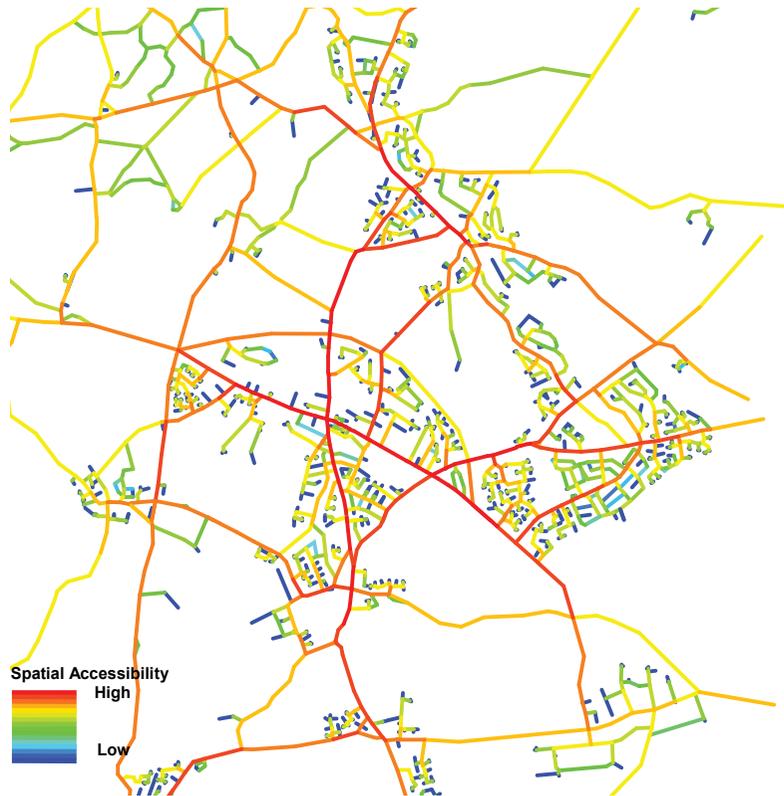


Coalville EbD **Town Centre Consolidation**



The proposed block size and centrality measure show how the consolidation of development around memorial square and the re-focusing of activity along the High Street would have a highly beneficial affect on the local movement economy in general, drawing in movement from the major through routes further into the town.

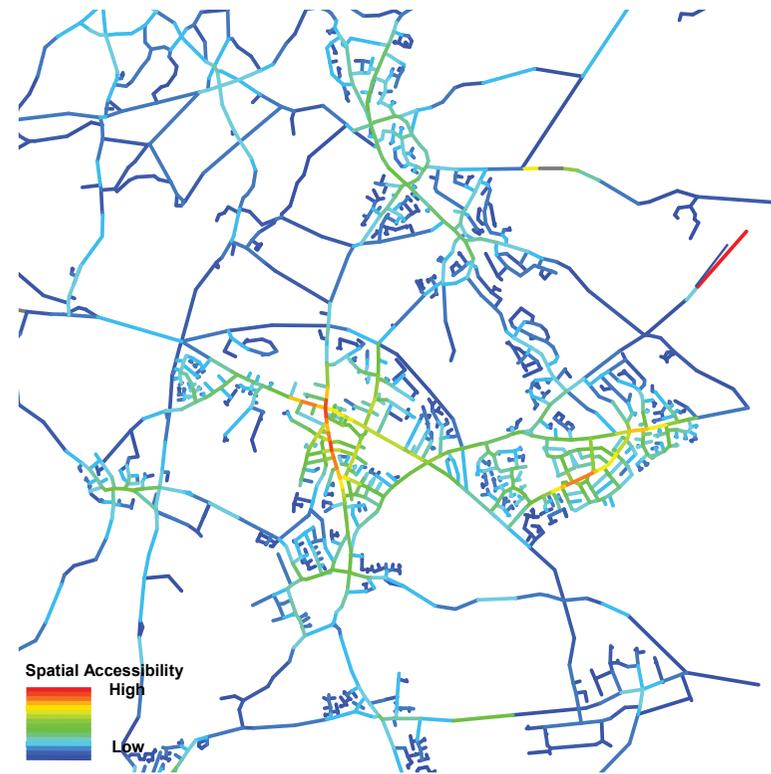
Coalville EbD **Sustainable expansion**



Strategic accessibility 4,800 metres

The above image shows the structure of strategic through routes in the greater Coalville region. It is clear that the by-pass is not as convenient a through route as the original alignment of the A511 that passes through Coalville High Street. This may explain the continued presence of heavy goods vehicles in the High Street. The image also shows how much of the region's residential developments are grown from this strategic movement skeleton and it is only the modern housing estates that are separated from it.

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

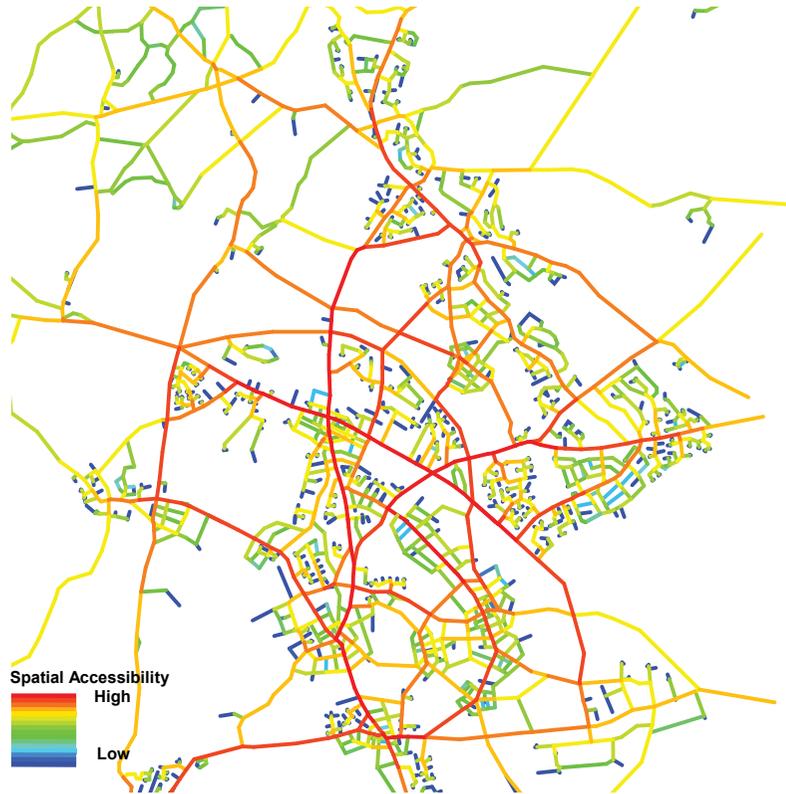


Local accessibility 600 metres

Looking at the existing spatial centrality pattern at this regional scale it is possible to see how Coalville emerges as the primary commercial centre of the region. The model also picks out the parade shops along Cropton Drive.

The Princes Foundation
© Space Syntax 2009

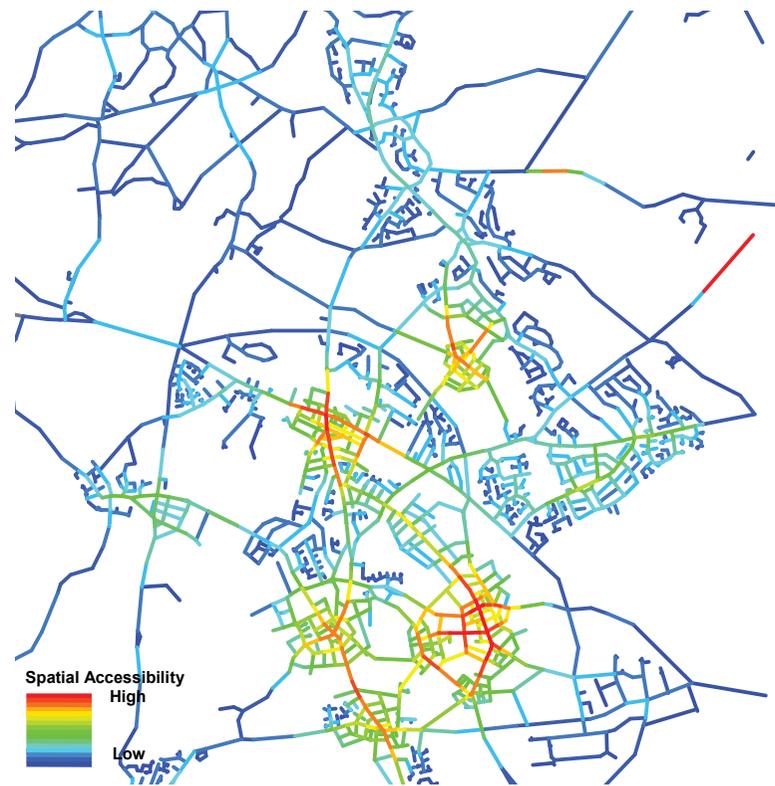
Coalville EbD Sustainable expansion



Strategic accessibility 4,800 metres

To ensure any planned housing growth minimises energy hungry commuting behaviour, maximises local economic growth and creates new distinctive villages, the new developments must ensure housing focuses on the passing trade routes of the strategic movement grid. To ensure that new population growth reinforces Coalville's commercial centre, the route structure should focus on ease of access to the Coalville and local village centres rather than to any existing or proposed by-pass.

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design



Local accessibility 600 metres

The proposed global route structure (above left) and the local centrality measure (above) show how the Foundation's overall growth plan creates this interface between large scale movement between villages and local movements within them. This will ensure each village retains its own identity but that they all benefit from trade with each other.

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Coalville EbD **Metric Proximity - 12 minute walk Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Coalville EbD **Metric Proximity - 12 minute cycle Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Coalville EbD **Legibility - 5 minute walk Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

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Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Coalville EbD **Legibility - 7 minute walk Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

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Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Coalville EbD **Legibility - 10 minute walk Existing**



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Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Coalville EbD **Legibility - 12 minute walk Existing**



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Coalville EbD **Legibility - 12 minute cycle Existing**

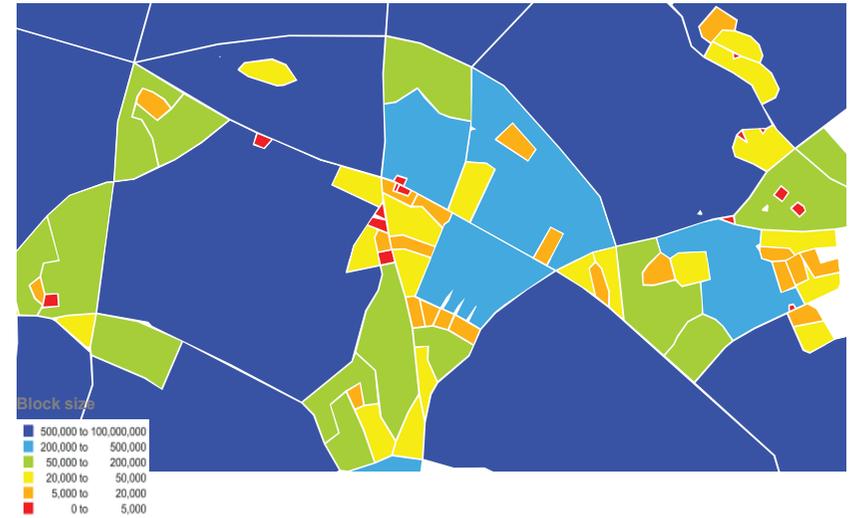


Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Appendix

Coalville EbD Existing block size Existing



Coalville EbD Proposed block size Existing



Coalville EbD Existing Centrality Existing



Coalville EbD **Metric Proximity- 5 minute walk Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Coalville EbD **Proposed Centrality Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

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Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Coalville EbD **Metric Proximity - 7 minute walk Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

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Coalville EbD **Metric Proximity - 10 minute walk Existing**



Spatial Accessibility
High
Low

Space Syntax
Coalville Enquiry by Design

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Brand Identity for Coalville

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Report
by small back room

Who is this report for?	Ben Bolgar, Director of Design Theory and Networks, The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment
What is the subject of the report?	Place branding for Coalville, Leicestershire
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Date?	18 th June 2009
Version No.	V1

Place branding for Coalville Page 1 of 5 © 2009 Small Back Room

1 Introduction

Creating an effective brand identity for Coalville is an important part of regenerating the place. Recent research carried out by Small Back Room and LGcommunications concluded that place branding was a critical part of place shaping. A place brand that genuinely engages, inspires and involves the people of that place is more likely to support successful place shaping. And getting the place brand right in the first instance will provide a competitive framework for future marketing and communications activities.

In developing a brand for Coalville it is also important to recognise the difference between the Coalville place brand and the brand of North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC). Whilst NWLDC will be a stakeholder in the place brand for Coalville, it will be a brand for the place, and not for the council.

This means, for example, that ownership and stewardship of the brand is an important factor in the brand's development and application. There will be a close relationship between the place brand and promoting Coalville through marketing and communications activity. The Coalville Town Partnership, for example, might be considered as a candidate for being the 'owner' of the Coalville place brand; as an organisation that brings together key partners which will actively promote the place to residents, visitors and businesses.

2 Background

As the Council's 'Coalville Champion' and Deputy Leader, Councillor Matthew Blain has set out a vision for Coalville as a place where people and businesses feel they belong and are proud to call home.

One of NWLDC's corporate priorities is the revitalisation of Coalville through the sustainable:

- Realisation of its economic potential
- Attraction of inward investment
- Setting of high benchmarks in design and environmental performance
- Creation of a town with a clear identity drawing on the National Forest

As set out by Steve Bambrick, Director of the Environment, NWLDC, related to these aims is the need improve the town centre; leading to a considerable increase in footfall, business turnover, profitability and public perception.

Further considerations are halting the spending or wealth leakage from Coalville to other places including Leicester, Derby and Nottingham, and an increase in housing with over 12,000 new homes by 2026.

All of these factors and aims are important influences on developing a brand for Coalville.

3 Developing a place brand for Coalville

3.1 Our place brand model

An important factor when creating place brands is discovering the truths of a place. We speak of 'ownable' truths and 'competitive' truths – the things that can be evidenced about a place and its people. Ownable truths define and unite the people of the place. Competitive truths are used to build a brand that projects and attracts a place to external audiences.

When developing a place brand we draw on multiple sources of information and data and distil and filter that information to find the insights and truths that provide the basis for the brand model. Typically we create a brand model that has three components, with the aim of articulating that place in a clear and direct way. The agreed brand model then drives the creation of the brand identity, and subsequently, marketing and communications strategy.

With the time available it has not been possible to fully develop a brand model for Coalville, but there are aspects that can be proposed as a 'first draft'.

3.2 Some truths about Coalville

Coalville's development has been based on a synergistic relationship between the place's location and its people. The town's location combined with entrepreneurial activity has enabled several phases of exploitation of natural or man-made resources: coal; clay; rock for quarrying; motorways and the availability of land for business development; and particularly building warehouses.

Coalville has successfully rejuvenated itself following the closure of the coal mines – a major achievement. The communities that comprise Coalville remain proud of their mining heritage and a character that embodies pride, strength and being hard working.

The area does not currently have a truly competitive edge. It has factors that could be combined and developed to create a more defined identity for the place that would be more attractive to visitors, residents and businesses. These factors include the town's location in the National Forest, proximity to road links and Snibston Discovery Park.

A revitalisation of the retail offer and creating new public spaces in the town centre is core to making the area more attractive for current and future residents and businesses, housing development, providing a closer link between Snibston and the town centre and 'uncovering' the 'architectural gems' in the town.

Issues related to achieving this include overcoming public cynicism following previous consultations on development and reconciling existing residents with growth in housing in the area.

An ambition for the place would be one of proud communities living around a vibrant and historic centre in an expanding forest.

4 A draft brand model for Coalville

Any brand model for Coalville would need consultation with key partners and representatives of the community for agreement. Agreement on a brand model should precede the development of a brand identity

Based on our understanding of the vision for Coalville, drivers for change and some of the place's 'truths', the following give shape to a brand model for Coalville:

The Organising Principle – the single unifying idea which defines the brand. The overarching principle governing how the brand thinks, behaves and acts.

Discovery.

Discovery would underpin a building of the brand from the inside, encouraging people to discover more about the town and its assets: its heritage; its architectural gems; Snibston; the National Forest; it's local industries; future opportunities, etc. It also supports messaging for inward investment and attracting new residents

Competitive Proposition – What the brand delivers to its customers. The key factor which gives differentiation against competitors, and attracts client and market needs.

Rejuvenation.

Coalville has been through several significant changes as it has adjusted to or exploited new relationships between its people and its location / resources. The town needs to do this once again. This requires rejuvenation to build competitiveness against other local towns, and more widely. Rejuvenation means to give back youth or vitality. The town needs both vitality and a greater role for its young people in its future.

Living character – How the personality of the brand is expressed through all communications and activity.

Pride. Ambition. Illumination. Resourcefulness.

This draft model support the encouragement of change in Coalville in a way that recognises and links the strengths of the town's heritage and its vision for the future.

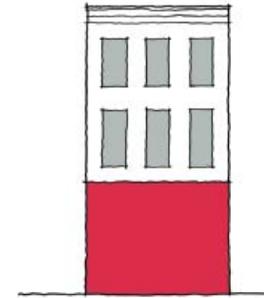
It would also support engaging people in discovering and illuminating aspects of Coalville as a way of beginning to build the brand from the inside out.

How to Improve Coalville's Shopfronts

A return to the unique and crafted character of traditional towns is the future of the built environment. A first step towards restoring culture into the places we live is to carefully shape the centres and high streets back into places that local residents can be proud of, as well as places they can walk to. The necessary tools are at hand to rebuild the tradition of the shopfront, which is vital to walking culture, and therefore to towns in general. By cultivating beauty at eye-level where the people naturally pass-by, the resulting character is shared by the local population and adds cultural value and lasting beauty to the place.

SHOPFRONT

One element of the mixed-use building's composition



A shopfront is first an element of a building's composition. Although often made of different materials than the other stories, subtleties of detailing and proportion should be in-tune. This is especially important when considering re-modelling or re-building the shopfront of a historic building.



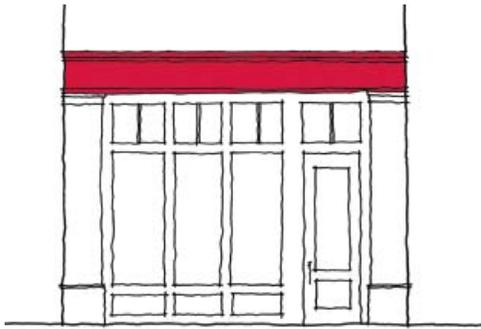
This shopfront fits its building well



This shopfront abuses its building

BEAM

The shop's first impression and finest advertisement



The uppermost and crowning element of a shopfront marks the edge of the public realm, and should reflect the highest level of refinement. This 'shopfront beam' area is an ideal place for elegant lettering and lights, as it is the largest horizontally-oriented element in a good shopfront.



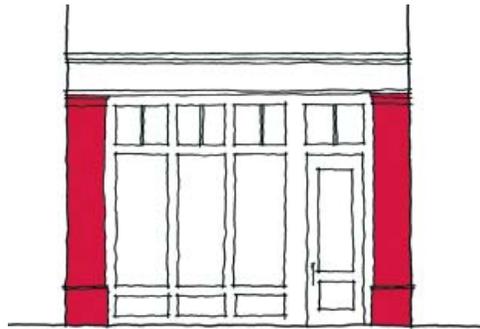
An elegantly detailed shopfront beam



Doomed from the start: no beam to use

COLUMN

Provides visual strength and definition of shopfront



The edge of a shopfront is vitally important to get right. Made of masonry, wood, or shaped metal, columns can provide literal and aesthetic structure to the shopfront. The shopfront column holds up the shopfront beam, and is a good place to put lights, signs, and information.



Massive edge complements finer muntins



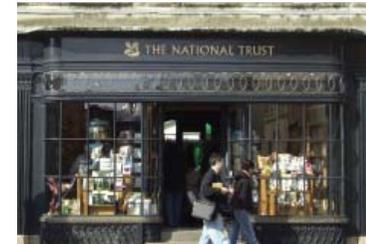
Poor beam-to-edge ratio: signs too big

WINDOWS

Proportions and glazing size are key



A good composition of shopfront windows is perhaps the element most commonly missed. Instead of using gigantic single-plane surfaces, add texture and compose windows with smaller glazings and good muntins. Proportions are key, and should be vertically-oriented like a person.



People are drawn to small glazings



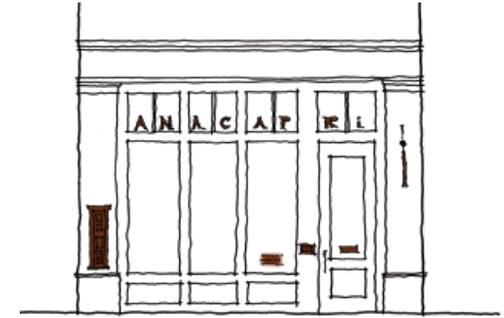
Wide sheets of glass, not enough frame

Good shopfronts

A good shopfront has properties which can be understood and designed to be pleasing to pedestrians. From general to specific, large and alienating surfaces on buildings must be broken down. This includes wall spans of glass or concrete that vastly out-scale a human, and shortcut factory-made signs and materials. An orderly composition with elements that harmonize with the needs and desires of people inhabiting the street will make a successful and beautiful shopfront.

SIGNS

Should be placed so as to compliment shopfront architecture



Signs can be attached to the structure of a shopfront; flush with the wall or elegantly hung from above. Care must be taken to reflect the architecture and craft of the building in the sign's makeup, using artistic representation instead of flashy marketing. Lettering can be tactfully placed on glazings.



Textured, complimentary character



Desperate colour, disparate with its use

LIGHTS

coordinate with shop elements like signs and architecture



Lights can be a perfect complement to a well-made shopfront, highlighting the important character elements and revealing where to enter. Don't ruin a good storefront by using cold or utilitarian lights, or by ignoring where they are placed. They should accentuate and compliment architecture.



Light should splash onto sign & building



Bad colour, brightness, and placement

STREET PRESENCE

Take steps to engage pedestrians before they enter



Shops and cafes should step outside when possible, engaging people on the street. Honest advertising is the display of actual products that shoppers can see up-close. At the very least place goods in beautifully composed display areas so that they are easily viewed, even accidentally when walking past.



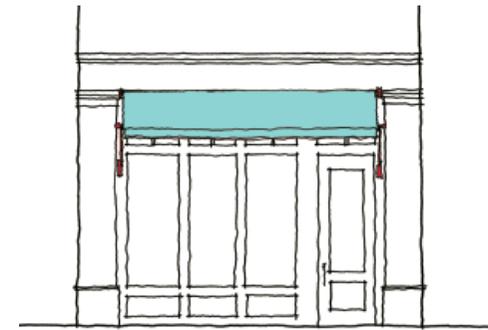
Proudly presented wares attract



Even when open, this building rejects

AWNINGS

Protect pedestrians with elegant compliments to the shopfront



Awnings are pieces of architecture. They should always be sensitive to context, proportion, and material. For movable awnings, use natural materials and quality mechanisms. For permanent ones, avoid unshapely aluminium frames and bright graphics. Crafted glass and metal is exemplar.



Be sure to get solid awnings right



This awning is clunky and insensitive

Special elements

Most town centres share a common problem in their general makeup; the public realm is specifically arranged for automobile convenience, disregarding pedestrians. In order to be seen by speeding vehicles, shopfronts must use signs that are gratuitously large, with screaming colours and giant imagery.

The solution to this town-cluttering is to create fine-grained urban fabric that not only is comfortable for people to live in, but one that entices visitors to stop and spend time. Fill streets with well-made and crafted materials with an appropriate amount of detail and spatial depth to interest pedestrians.

WALLS

Use choice materials sensibly, so they are easiest to sustain



It is sensible to reserve the finest-grain wall materials for the front. This is practical, in that small brick and tile or even wood members are easiest to repair and maintain (at the point of highest use and wear). This contrasts with the use of larger spans of material like concrete (ugly & unsustainable).



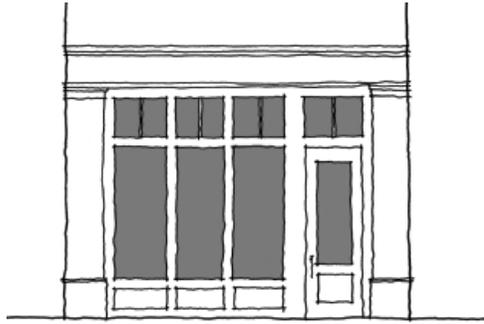
Lasting material, consistent throughout



Cracked marble slab: expensive repair

GLAZING

Avoid tinting and single, big members; use muntins to divide



The fine-grain principle applies to glazing too; small panes are easier and cheaper to replace, and are more appealing to the senses. A fine pattern of glass and dividing muntins, with an hierarchy of sizes (usually smaller transoms at top) will produce a more pleasing daylighting experience.



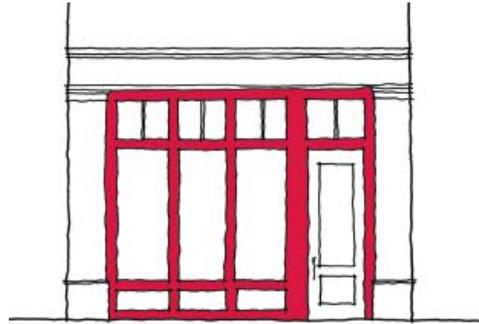
Good hierarchy of glazing & muntins



Used as structure, high-tint, low payoff

FRAMEWORK

Use structural hierarchy to provide practical, lasting support



There must be a smooth hierarchy in place concerning the integration of structural members and the glazing they hold in place. Moving parts like doors should get the strongest framing members, while small glazings should have dainty muntins. With this in place, an elegant composition emerges.



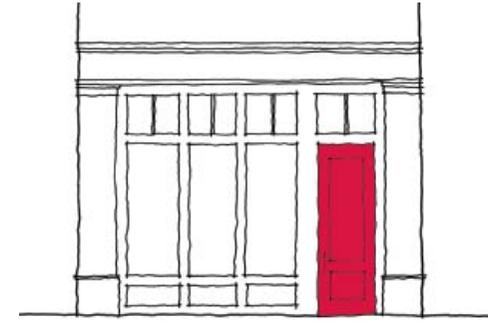
Mass allocated as framing members



All members are ubiquitous and flat

ENTRY

Graceful details transform an entry into the jewel of the storefront



The storefront entry is important because it is used and viewed more often than any other part of the whole composition. It is also the element of a storefront that people will be closest to and touch the most. Therefore if any extra flourish or expense is to be made in the whole design, it should be here.



Place quality at the door, to attract



Cheap details are off-putting

Involving Young People

Meeting with Helen Bakewell

A return to the unique and crafted character of traditional towns is the future of the built environment. A first step towards restoring culture into the places we live is to carefully shape the centres and high streets back into places that local residents can be proud of, as well as places they can walk to. The necessary tools are at hand to rebuild the tradition of the shopfront, which is vital to walking culture, and therefore to towns in general. By cultivating beauty at eye-level where the people naturally pass-by, the resulting character is shared by the local population and adds cultural value and lasting beauty to the place.

Youth Development

BACKGROUND

In any community there must be a desire to create a positive 'public idea' about youth – challenging negative attitudes towards young people and replacing them with a vision for young people as thriving members of communities. Understanding adolescent development is crucial in informing the design and structure of 'developmentally appropriate' programmes, activities and settings for work with young people.

It is generally understood that young people require places in which they can actively challenge themselves; either physically or mentally in their development. Youth services hosted by youth centres or high schools with structured programmes geared toward enhancing youth development include after school swimming, ice-skating, football, cricket, dancing, painting, and drama courses. Of course, there exist many other programmes which fulfill the same purpose.

In addition, it is also understood that young people must develop socially to become active members of the community. Social development tends to occur more passively in the sense that it takes place naturally, either through playing games, chatting, gossiping, or dating. Any community should recognize that there must be places

or spaces in which this form of passive development can occur and in a safe and appropriate manner.

Youth development is a combination of all of the people, places, supports, opportunities and services that most of us inherently understand that young people need to be happy, healthy and successful. Youth development currently exists in a variety of different places, forms and under all sorts of different names.

WHAT IS WORKING? YOUTH INPUT QUESTIONNAIRE

On July 10th, 2009 PFBE met with Helen Bakewell, from Youth Development, to visit Coalville's youth as a way of finding out, beyond the structured programmes already in place in Coalville, what opportunities might exist for improving youth facilities and "hang out" places in Coalville which would contribute to young people's social development. PFBE met with teenagers on their last day of classes before summer break at Coalville Park and visited Green Hill Youth Centre. In addition, Helen handed out over 120 questionnaires at Newbridge High School and to students on Friday evenings at Coalville Park. The findings revealed the following:

What is Working?

Coalville's "structured" programmes, aimed at active youth development, are well planned and sufficient in scope. For example, the Hermitage Leisure Centres facilities and courses are well attended and most are happy with their recreational experience there. The Newbridge Junior Youth Club caters to developing students in sports, and the arts & crafts and is generally well received. The Green Hill Youth Centre is also well attended and provides a safe place for young people to play games and sports after school.

What are the Challenges & Opportunities?

It is generally perceived by Coalville's youth, that there is nothing to do in town. It was revealed that most young people spend much of their time at home playing video games when they are out of school and on the weekends many young people travel to Leicester or Loughborough to shop, attend the cinema, or go bowling; all the more re-enforcing the spending leakage to neighbouring cities.

When young people do venture out of their home to "hang out" with each other, they will go to Coalville Park, walk the streets, loiter in the town's car parks, meet at Snibston woods or Scotland Fields. In nearly every instance, policing of these areas will eventually occur. With few people living in the Town Centre, no houses facing Coalville Park, Snibston Woods or Scotland Fields, there does not exist any form of self-regulating community enforcement.

What is Needed?

Coalville needs entertainment venues. The most popular responses from the questionnaire revealed that Coalville needs a cinema, an improved retail experience, a bowling alley, a night club for teens, and an ice skating rink.

When asked what a gathering place might look like, most agreed that the space should be landscaped and green. In addition, there should be places for people to sit, relax, and find shelter. Others suggested an ice-skating rink, food stands, play areas, a football and cricket pitch, and a bike track. Most agreed that this space should either

be located in the existing Coalville Park or located closer to the Town Centre; or both. Memorial Square seems a likely candidate for such a space.

This Regeneration Strategy for Coalville town centre has been produced in partnership with local residents and stakeholders.

The Strategy sets out a vision for the future creating a town that better meets the needs and aspirations of residents of the town and its neighbouring villages.



An innovative initiative that seeks to encourage more environmentally responsible lifestyles. The initiative secured a national Green Apple Award for Environmental Best Practice and Sustainable Development in 2009.



Ourplace seeks to encourage and inspire people to create and expect places that contribute positively to our everyday lives and support our natural, built and social environment.

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www.nwleics.gov.uk

The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment is an educational charity which exists to improve the quality of people's lives by teaching and practising timeless and ecological ways of planning, designing and building.

We believe that if we can understand and apply time-tested principles, building once more in a sustainable way, we will reap improvements in public health, in livelier and safer streets and in a more affordable lifestyle for families and individuals.

The Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment believes that building in a sustainable way will reap benefits for communities and result in neighbourhoods that accrue higher value over time.



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