

**To: Planning and Property Policy Board**

**On: 8 November 2016**

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**Report by: Director of Development and Housing Services**

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**Heading: Johnstone Town Centre Strategy**

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**1. Summary**

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Planning and Property Policy Board approved a Draft Town Centre Strategy for Johnstone as the basis for consultation with local communities and key stakeholders.
- 1.2 A summary of the representations received from the consultation was presented to the Board on 26 January 2016 and the comments made have been considered and a finalised strategy for Johnstone is now presented to the Board for approval.
- 1.3 Centre strategies for Erskine, Renfrew, Linwood and Braehead will be reported to future meetings of the Board.
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**2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board:-
- (i) Approves the Town Centre Strategy for Johnstone
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### 3. **Background**

- 3.1 The Draft Town Centre Strategy for Johnstone was the basis for consultation with local communities and stakeholders in Johnstone and reflected Scottish Planning Policy to promote the principle of 'Town Centre First'.
  - 3.2 The Finalised Strategy attached at Appendix 1 reflects the opinions and representations submitted during the consultation exercise and outlines the role of Johnstone Town Centre, its strengths and the potential for future enhancement. The document also identifies priorities for action and opportunities for change, setting out a vision for a successful, sustainable centre which supports economic growth and provides a commercial, social and cultural focus for the local communities that use Johnstone.
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### 4. **Next Steps**

- 4.1 The delivery of actions identified in the Johnstone Town Centre Strategy will require actions and activity by a range of partners including local community representatives, key stakeholders, Community Planning Partners and external funding bodies. Within this context the Council will identify opportunities and seek to use relevant mechanisms to ensure the implementation of the actions.
  - 4.2 Delivery of action within the strategy will be monitored and reported to Board as appropriate and the strategy document will be reviewed on a two yearly cycle.
  - 4.3 Finalised strategies for Erskine, Renfrew, Linwood and Braehead will be presented to the Board through 2017.
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### **Implications of the Report**

- 1. **Financial** – None
- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
- 3. **Community Planning** –  
**Jobs and the Economy** – The town centre strategy promotes Renfrewshire as one of the best locations in Scotland to invest as well as encourage successful town centres through regeneration that contributes positively to local communities and economic growth.
- 4. **Legal** - None

5. **Property/Assets** – None
  6. **Information Technology** - None
  7. **Equality & Human Rights**
    - (a) The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.
  8. **Health & Safety** – None
  9. **Procurement** – None
  10. **Risk** – None
  11. **Privacy Impact** - None
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## **Appendix 1**

Town Centre Strategy for Johnstone.

### **List of Background Papers**

None

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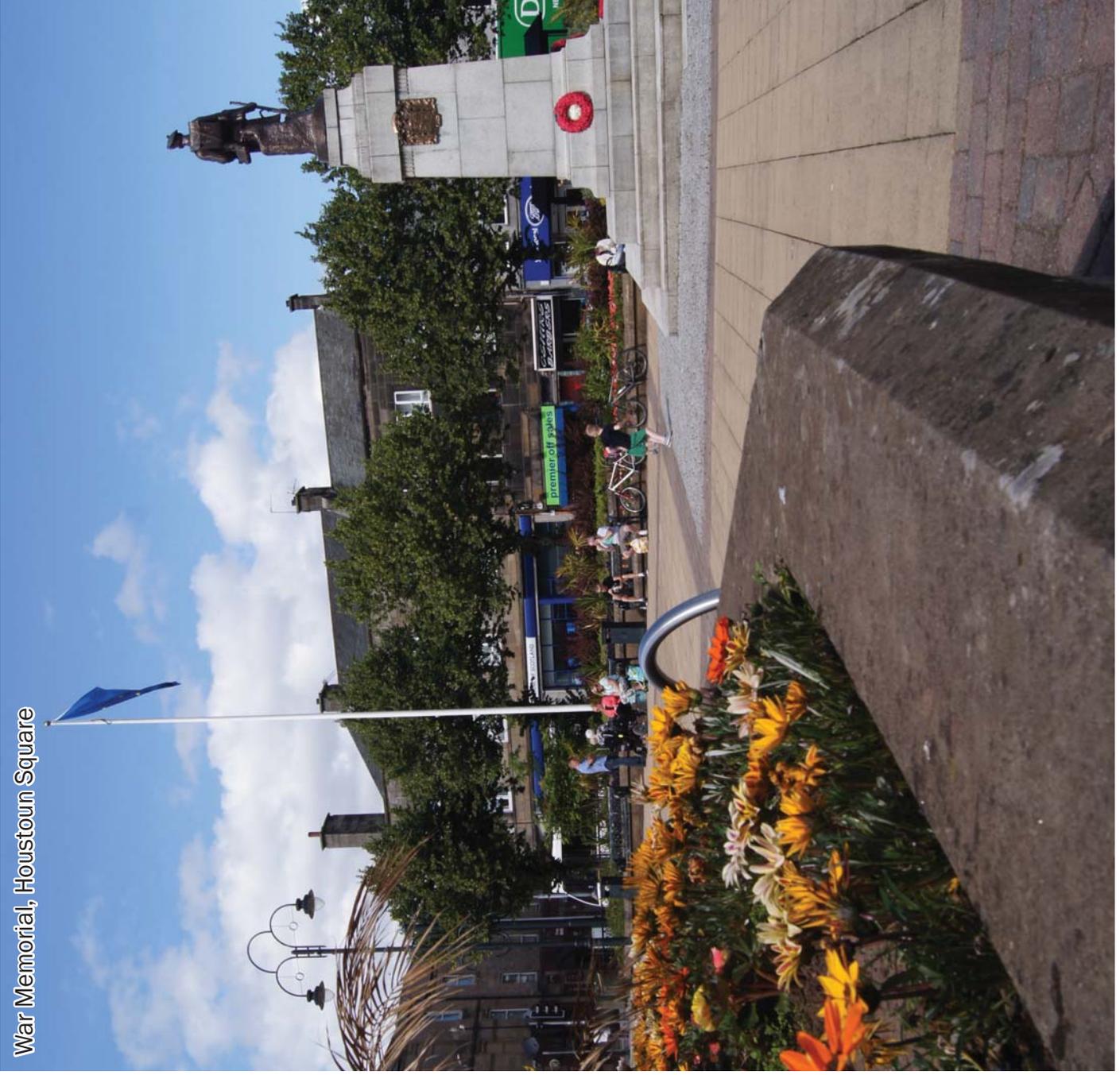
Renfrewshire centres strategy

# Johnstone

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War Memorial, Houstoun Square



# 1. Introduction

This strategy is a framework for the future growth of Johnstone town centre. It considers the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the centre and sets out a range of actions which will enhance its role as a retail, employment, social and cultural hub.

The strategy has been prepared to reflect Scottish Planning Policy, in supporting the

health of Renfrewshire's centres and delivering proposals set out in the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan.

The key objective of the strategy is to enable the town centre to grow, ensuring that it is fit for purpose and can adapt to changing markets, needs and demands.

The strategy identifies a number of actions to deliver future growth in Johnstone:

- Ensuring the town centre is more accessible by walking, cycling and public transport
- Improving traffic management
- Introducing new and complementary uses to support economic activity and increased footfall within the centre
- Targeting public realm investment to improve key gateways and strengthen pedestrian links to the town centre
- Supporting public, private and community partners to deliver new uses, activities and events
- Working with landowners and developers to bring forward vacant sites for development, contributing to economic activity and improving the environment of the centre
- Delivering an attractive, clean and secure town centre



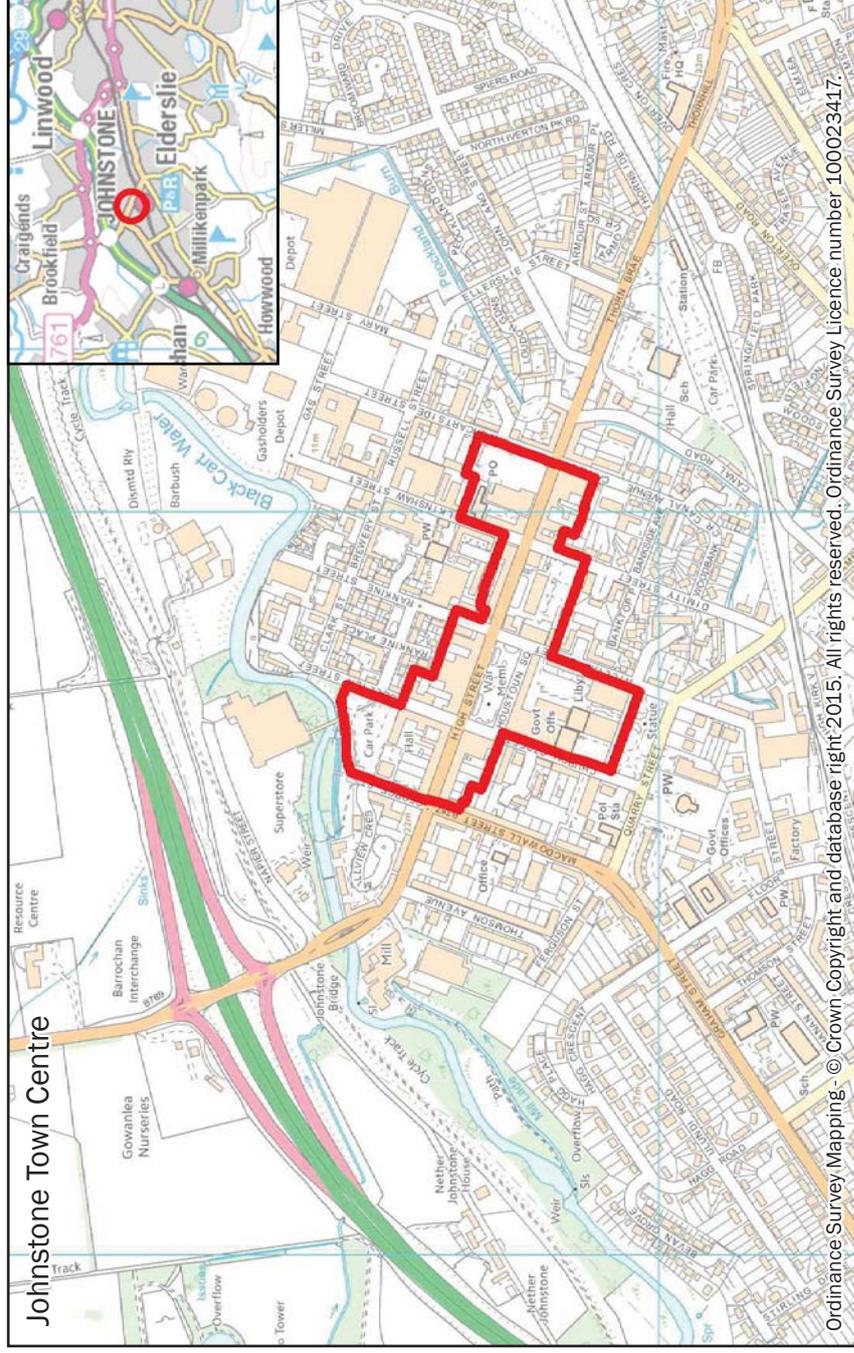
Actions within the strategy have been developed in consultation with local residents, community groups, businesses and Community Planning Partners. Their continuing support will be crucial for successful delivery. Actions will be taken forward in close partnership with these groups along with all of those who have an interest in Johnstone.

## 2. Johnstone Today

Johnstone lies 3 miles west of Paisley and is the largest settlement in West Renfrewshire with a population of just under 17,000.

The town has strong transport links to Glasgow and the wider central belt both through road and rail. The A737 lies immediately to the north and provides links to the M8 motorway, while Johnstone rail station lies less than half a mile east of the town centre and provides a frequent service to Glasgow and Ayrshire. Extensive bus services provide connections to surrounding settlements and Glasgow. The town is also supported by strong walking and cycling links, with National Cycle Routes 7 and 75 to the west and north of the centre.

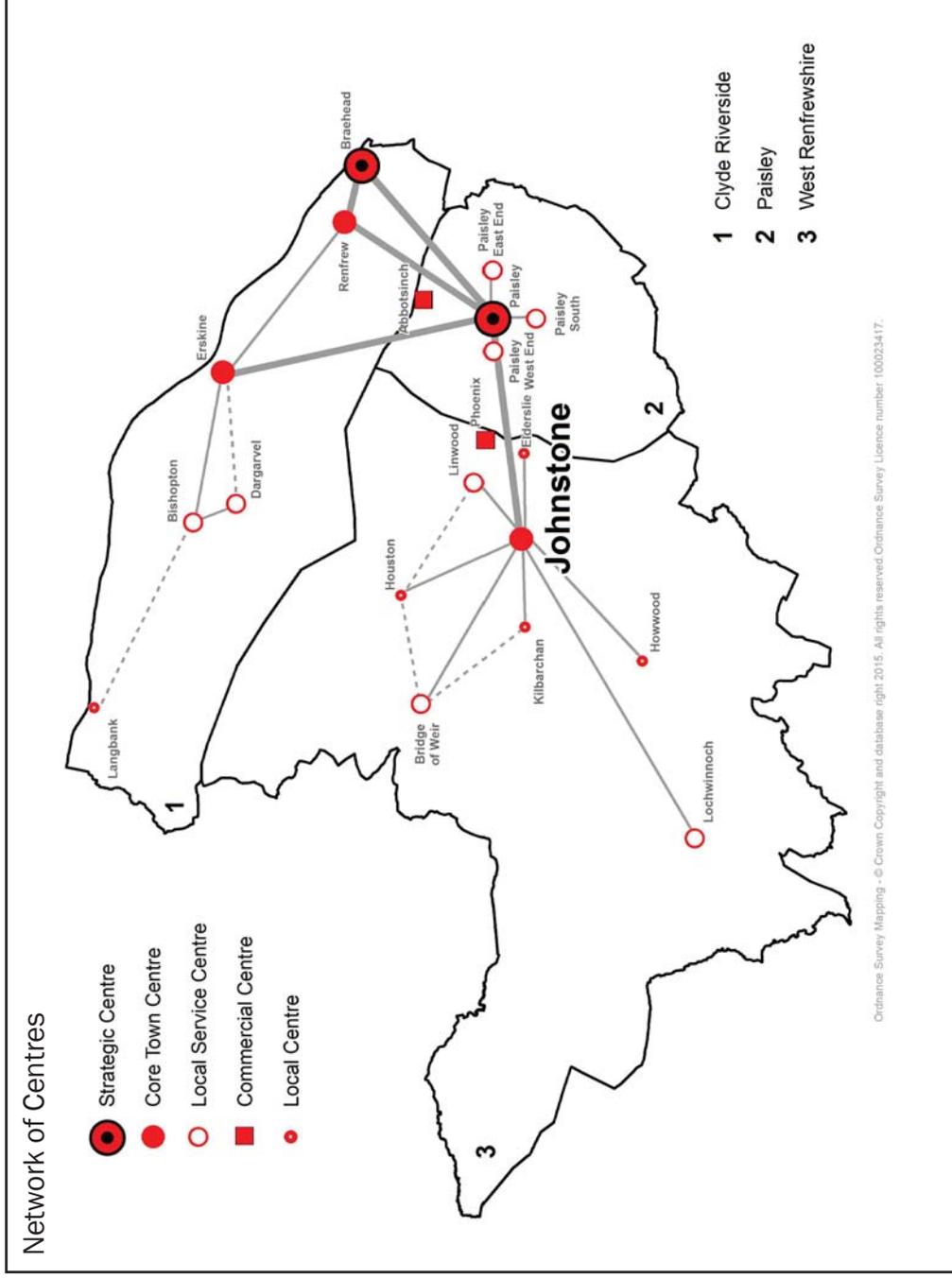
The town centre lies to the northern edge of Johnstone. It has a distinctive, historic character with rich industrial heritage as well as strong civic, cultural and retail functions.



## Role

The mix of uses within the centre and strong transport connections establish Johnstone as a Core Town Centre in the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan (2014).

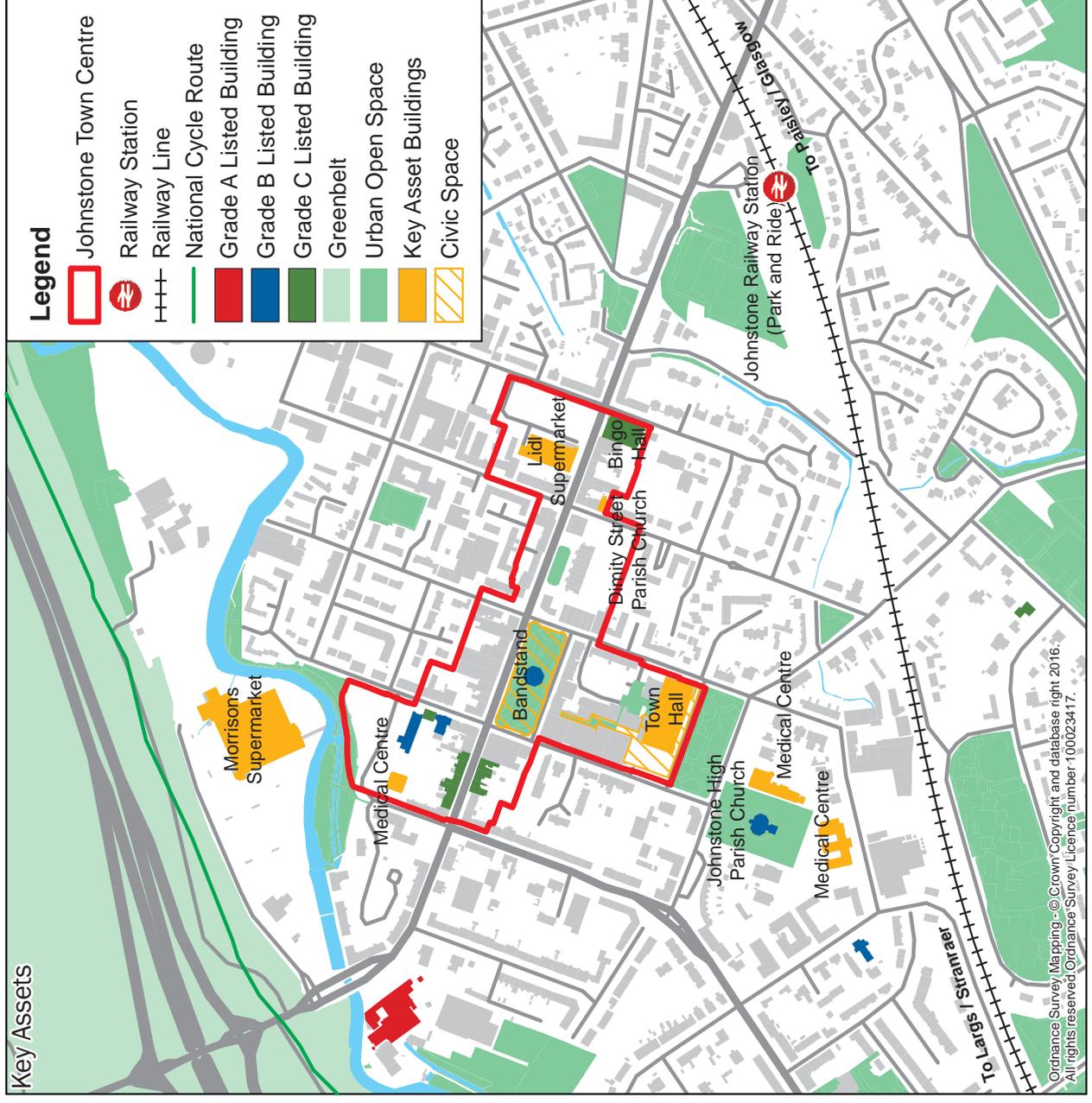
The centre is recognised as having an important role in providing key services for both the local population and settlements across West Renfrewshire.



## Town Centre

The town centre is focussed around the core civic spaces of Houstoun Square and Ludovic Square. The Town Hall lies immediately adjacent to Ludovic Square and is the key civic building within the town, with a library, theatre and community space, as well as a Community Police office and cluster of Council services.

The retail core of the town is located on streets surrounding the civic squares, particularly on and around the High Street. A mix of office and residential uses are located within upper floors of properties.



## 3. Health Check

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) identifies the need to monitor the performance of town centres to support their future growth. Health Checks are used to collect a range of indicators which create a 'picture' of a town centre, to show how it is performing.

The indicators below have helped to shape the actions within the Town Centre Strategy and will be used to monitor progress moving forward.

### *Population*

Data from the 2011 census indicates that the town has a population of just under 17,000 with some 8,000 households.

The demographics of the town largely reflect those of Scotland as a whole. The key differences from national averages are that Johnstone has:

- More residents aged 5-16 (Johnstone 12.7% of people, 11.8% Scotland)
- More residents in employment (Johnstone 72%, Scotland 69%)
- More one person households (Johnstone 41.6% of households, 34.7% Scotland)
- More residents without access to a car (Johnstone 45%, Scotland 30.5%)



## ***Built Environment***

The form of the town centre reflects Johnstone's industrial heritage and is set out in a planned grid pattern around the public spaces at Houstoun Square and Ludovic Square. Houstoun Square is characterised by a civic feel with the historic bandstand as a focal point. Ludovic Square has a more reflective, parkland character.

The central location of the spaces provide a strong focus for a variety of uses and events. As such they play an important role in supporting the economy of the town centre as a destination and encouraging visitors to stay for longer periods.

## ***Key Buildings***

The centre is characterised by buildings which include traditional sandstone tenements at Collier Street to new flatted development west of High Street at Barochan.

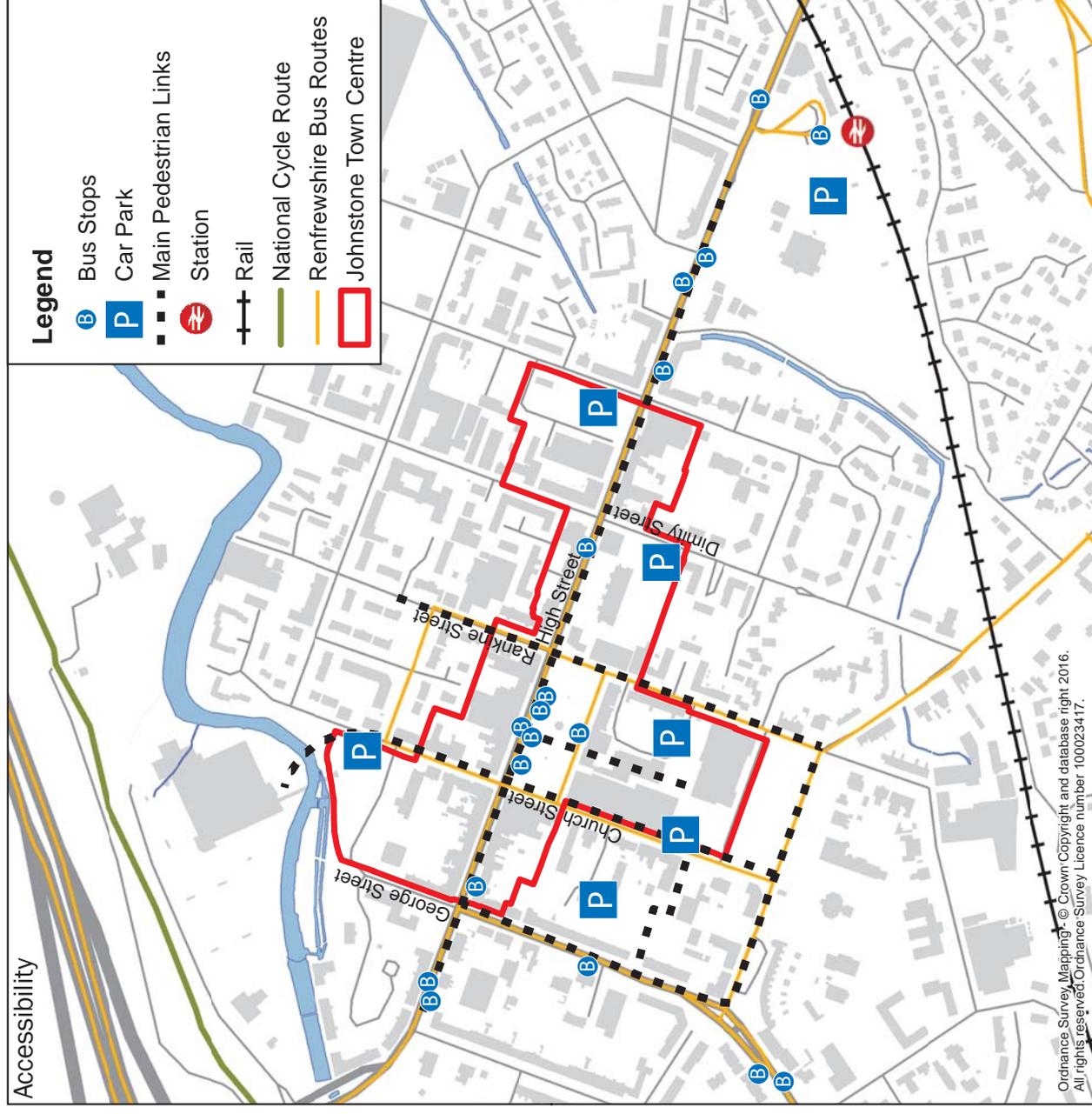
There are a number of listed buildings within the centre, including the historic bandstand and High Parish Church. These are assets which reflect the distinctive identity of the town and contribute to a sense of place. The buildings also positively influence perception of the centre and its attractiveness as a destination.



## *Pedestrian Environment*

Key pedestrian routes within the centre are largely of high quality, particularly around the civic squares and new Town Hall. Outwith the town centre core potential exists to deliver further improvements to key routes which would help to enhance the connectivity of the centre, increase dwell time and support the local economy.

Key gateways lie at either end of High Street (B789) which runs east/west through the town centre, as well as Thorn Brae to the eastern edge of the town. Opportunities exist to consider improvements at these key locations which create a sense of arrival and enhance the visitor experience. Improvements would also provide an opportunity to consider enhanced traffic management.

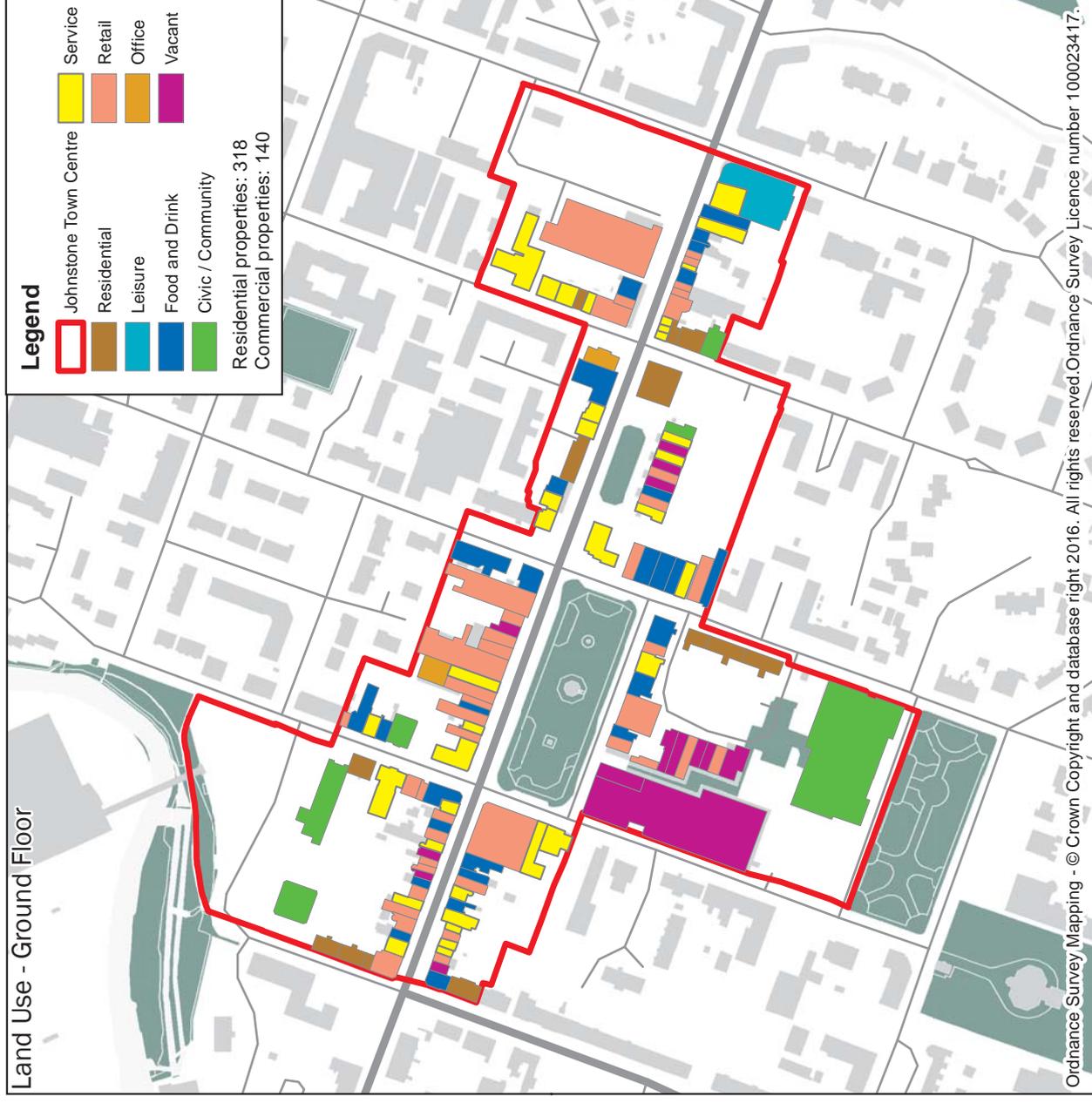


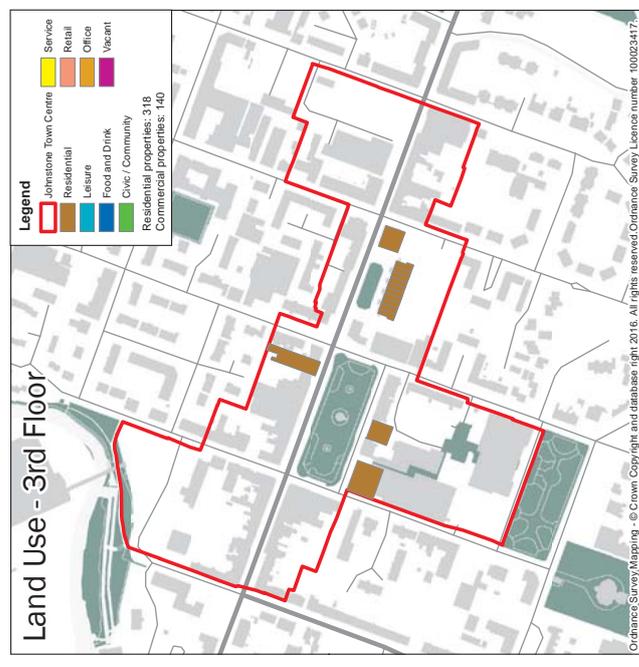
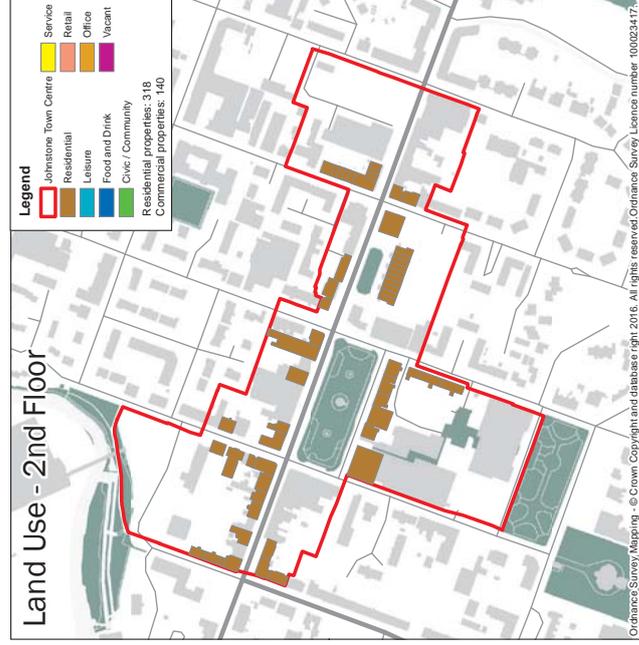
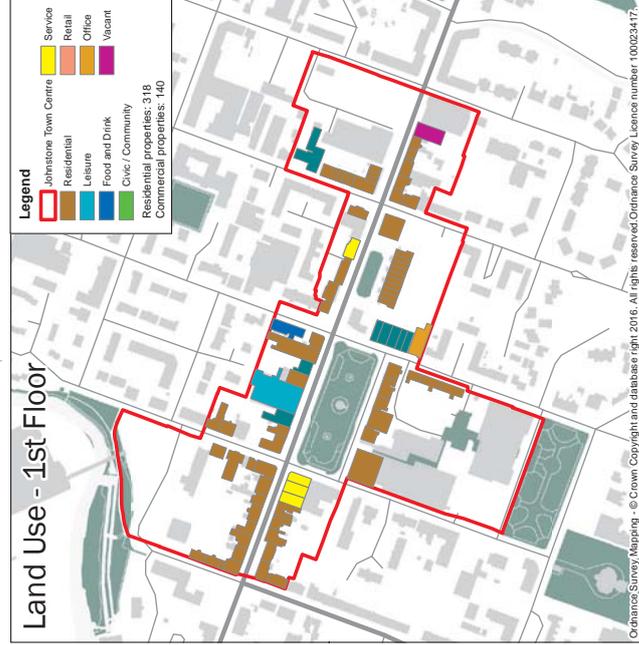
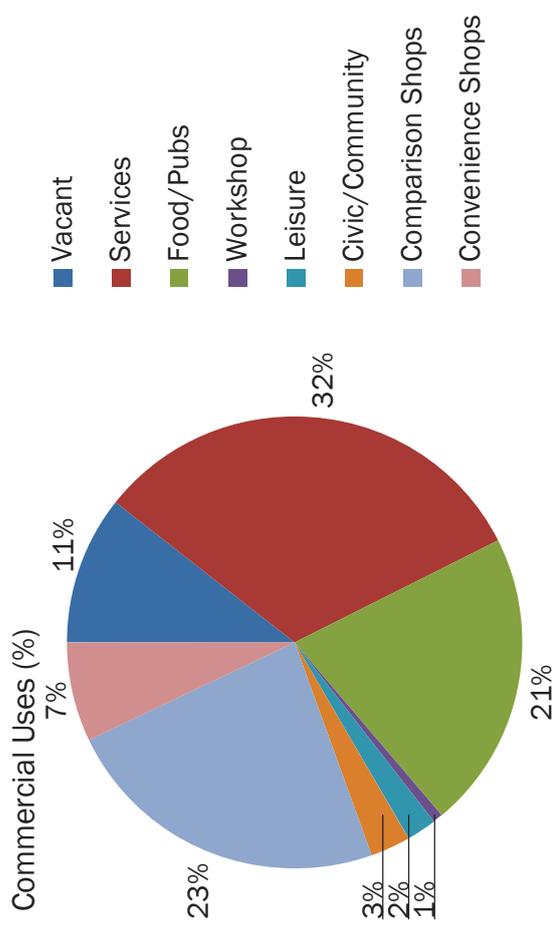
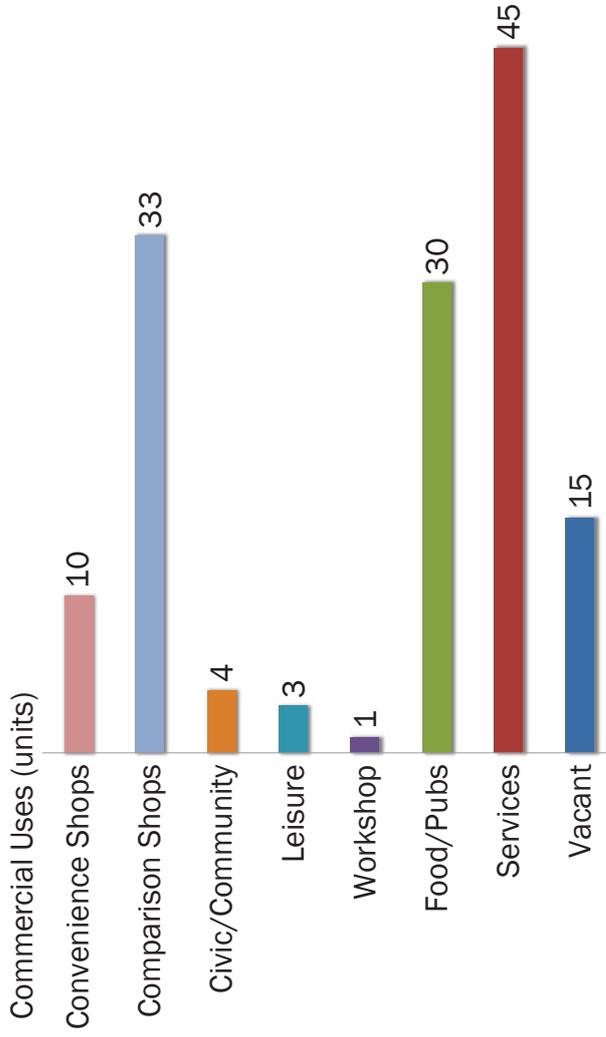
## Land Use

Johnstone has a buoyant and diverse retail mix which reflects the strategic role of the town as a centre for both local residents and those in West Renfrewshire. The centre comprises of over 17,000 square metres of floorspace across a range of uses.

Retail is concentrated mainly within High Street, with pockets at Church Street, William Street and Collier Street. The town has a strong foodstore offer and is anchored by Lidl to the east and Morrisons to the north. The new Town Hall provides a focal point for community and civic uses.

Vacancy levels within the centre (12 units, 11%) are relatively low and have reduced over the last five years, but are above the Scottish average (7.5%). The majority of vacancies are located within the Houstoun Court precinct, with a small number at Provost Close.





## *Development Activity*

Some 34 planning applications were approved over the period 2012-2015. The most significant of these related to the construction of the new Town Hall, with the remainder focussed on works such as changes of use, extension or improvement to existing premises.

The Council's Retail Improvement Scheme supported 15 businesses to improve retail frontages within the Town Centre over the 2013-2015.

## *Parking*

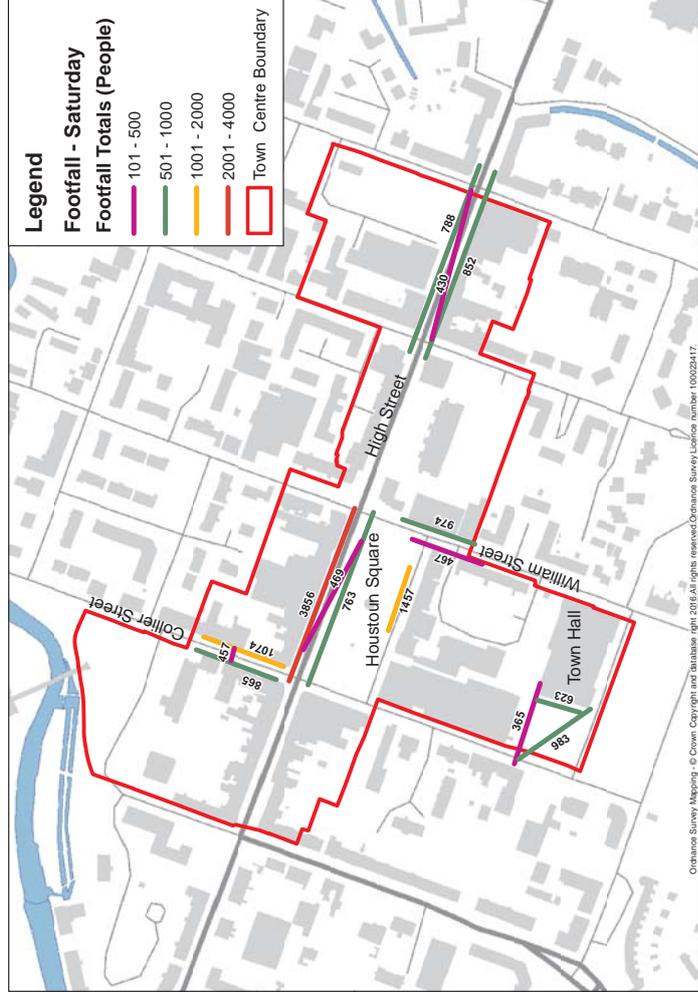
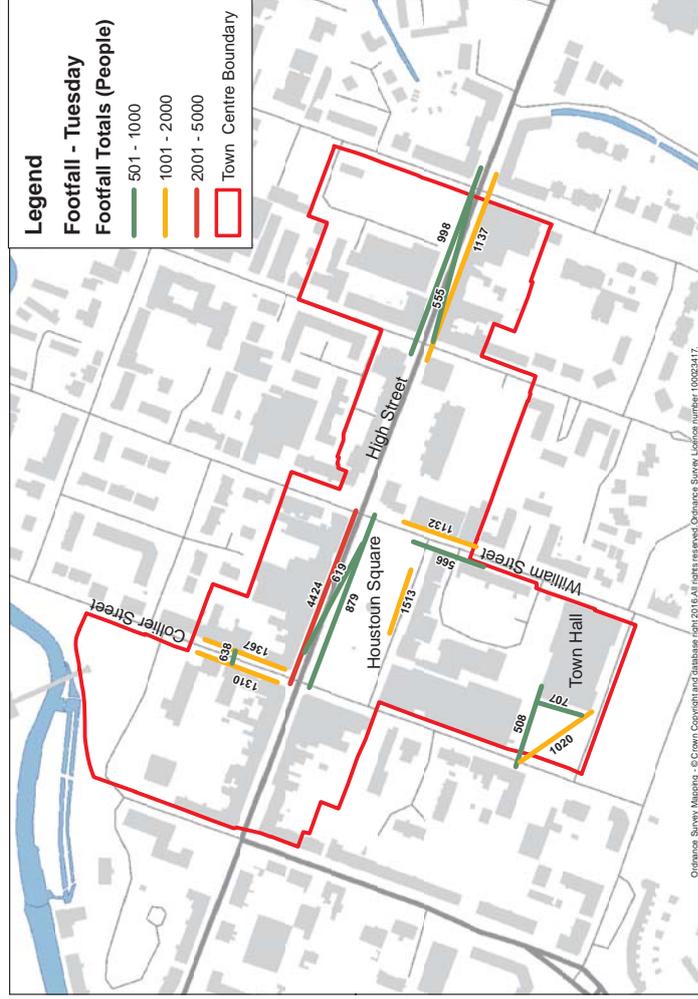
There are eight car parks within Johnstone Town Centre, offering a capacity of 620 spaces. In 2015 a new car park was constructed adjacent to the Town Hall at Parkers Way, offering an additional 50 spaces. The Park and Ride facility at Johnstone Station was also recently extended to provide 423 spaces. 'On street' parking is also available in areas around the town centre. Temporary parking is available at Craigdonald Place and the former Floorsburn House.



# Footfall

A footfall survey was commissioned as part of the town centre Health Check. The results are based on an analysis of footfall between 7am and 9pm on both a weekday and a weekend.

The outcomes of the survey indicate that footfall locations vary between the working week and the weekend. The highest levels of footfall can be identified at the High Street/Collier Street junction to the east, Houstoun Court and the western edge of High Street at Walkinshaw Street.



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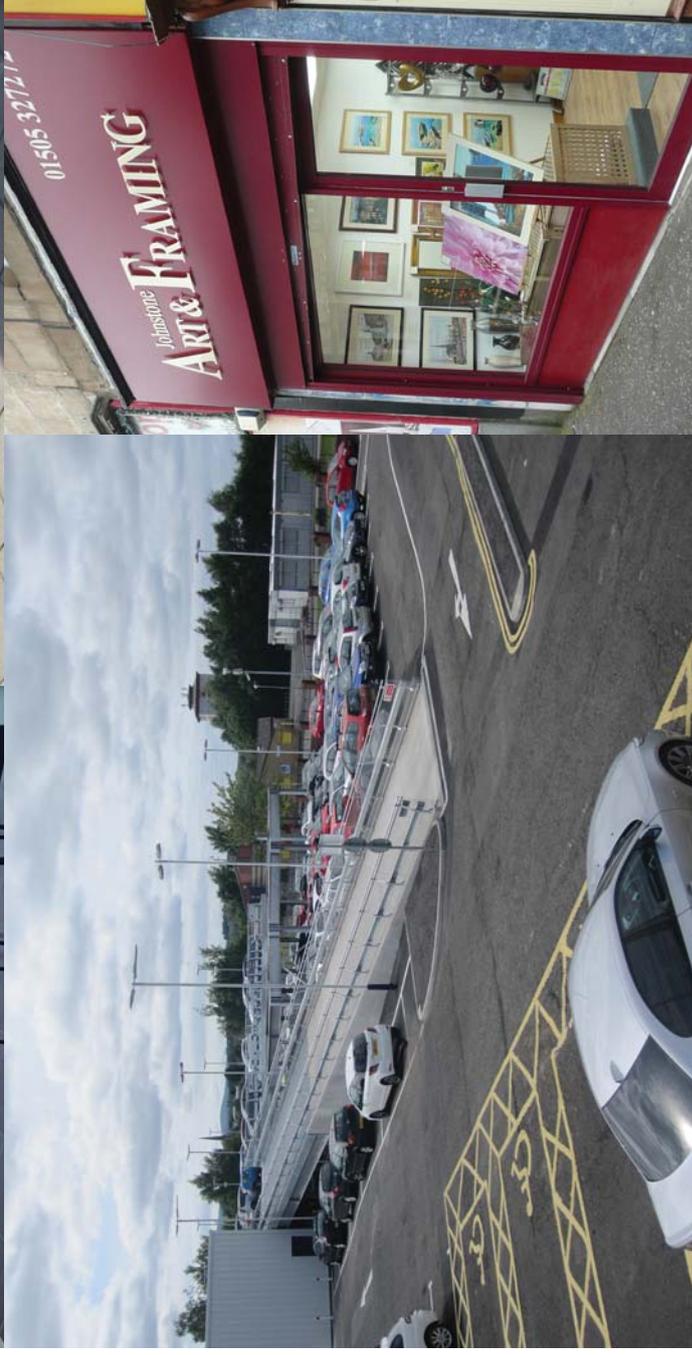
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## 4. Key Opportunities

### *Action and Investment*

Johnstone town centre has performed well in recent years with relatively few vacancies. Major investment in the centre has strengthened community and cultural attractions, encouraged private sector investment and significantly improved the town centre environment. This has delivered:

- A new £14.5M Town Hall including theatre space, marriage suite, conference space and community meeting rooms;
- New community facilities including a Police Office, Library, Housing Office and Registry Office;
- Investment in the key civic spaces at Houstoun Square and Ludovic Square, including street furniture and lighting improvements;
- A new town centre car park, offering 50 additional spaces at Parkers Way;
- Temporary town centre parking facilities at Craighonald Place and the site of the former Floorsburn House, ahead of future development;
- Expanded park and ride facilities at Johnstone Rail Station, providing for a further 83 spaces;
- Support for town centre businesses through the Retail Improvement Scheme.



## Opportunities

Further investment is planned over the coming years. Refurbishment of the Houstoun Court precinct is a key priority, with early phases of work complete and plans for place for additional public realm improvements in 2017.

Opportunities exist to unlock the potential of underused and vacant land within the town centre and to consider the future mix of uses. Proposals for the former site of Paton's Mill are being progressed by the private sector and opportunities for the delivery of affordable housing will be considered in the context of the Council's Strategic Housing Investment Plan.

Potential also exists to deliver further improvements to public spaces and pedestrian entrances to the town. Improvements to traffic management have a key role to play in supporting the growth of the centre.

Actions within the strategy make the most of these opportunities in ways that deliver positive physical, social, cultural and economic outcomes for the town.



# 5. Consultation

Actions within the strategy have been developed in consultation with local residents, businesses and stakeholders.

A draft Town Centre Strategy was prepared by the Council as a basis for consultation over three months in late 2015. This included:

- Meetings with local organisations including Johnstone Business Consortium and Johnstone Community Council
- One to one contact with local retailers, businesses and residents
- Online consultation, using the Council’s website and social media pages to gather views
- Publicity including the main page of the Council’s website, social media and local press



The responses to the consultation outlined issues and opportunities as priorities for action. In summary, these were:

- Better management of traffic to improve access to and flows through the centre, particularly within the High Street corridor and to/from the A737 Barochan Junction;
- Improvements in parking provision and management;

- Improvement of key pedestrian routes to and from the town centre, including MacDowall Street, Church Street and the Houstoun Court precinct;
- Reuse of vacant land and buildings within the town centre;
- Better use of the key civic spaces at Houstoun and Ludovic Squares for activities and events.

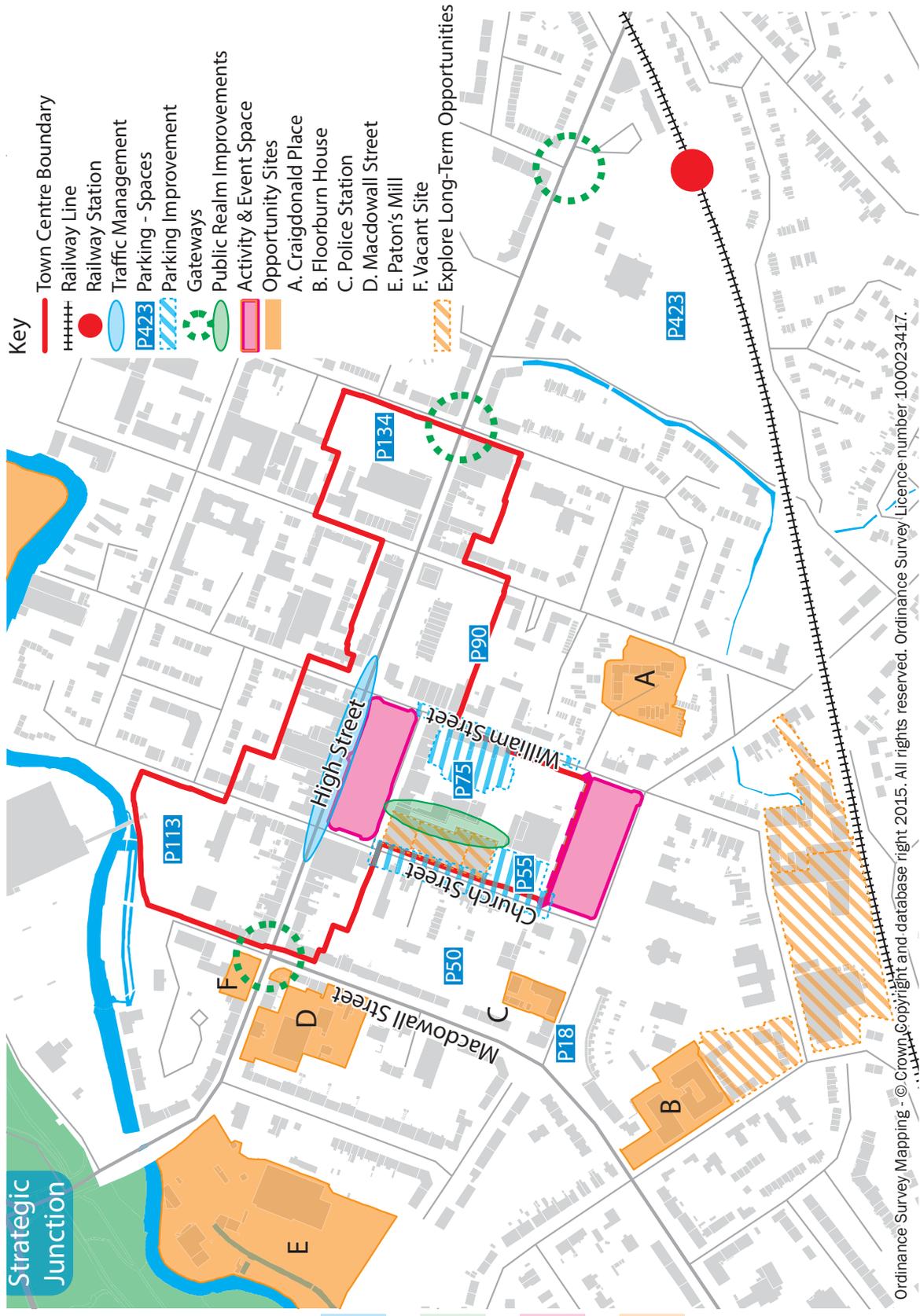


# 6. Proposals

Through consultation a range of proposals have emerged which will support the physical, social and economic growth of the town centre. The key actions are identified in the Key Diagram and are grouped into four themes as follows:

- Theme 1: Transport and Parking
- Theme 2: Town Centre Environment
- Theme 3: Local Economy
- Theme 4: Opportunity Sites

## Key Diagram



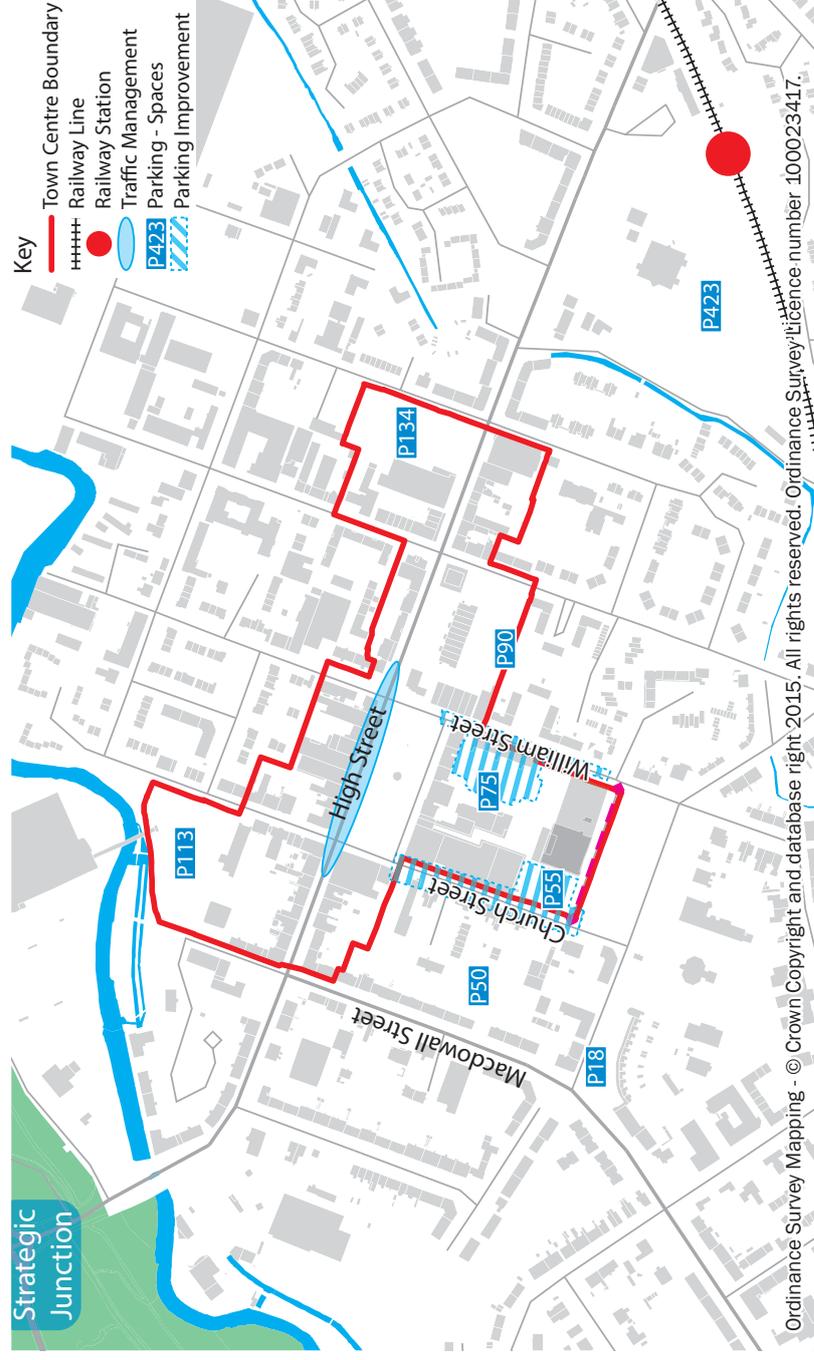
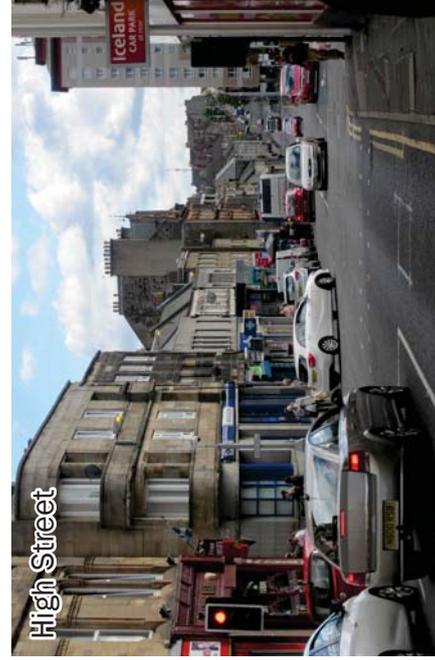
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# Theme 1: Transport and Parking

Access to the town centre and flows of traffic, particularly along the High Street corridor and A737 Barochan junction, require some adjustment. Opportunities to manage traffic more effectively were identified as a priority by the local community. Additional parking and improving signage would encourage more visitors to the centre.

Early action has already been delivered, with temporary additional parking at Craigdonald Place and the former Floorsburn House, ahead of development. Further works will be delivered in 2017, including adjustments to traffic management within High Street which focus on removing physical barriers to improving flows, as well enhancements to bus shelter provision.

New signage and lining will also be delivered to assist in the operation of the car parks at William Street and Church Street, adjacent to the Town Hall.



## Key Actions

- Develop and deliver plans to improve traffic management within the town centre, focussed initially on the High Street Corridor;
- Deliver improvements to parking provision within the town centre, initially at the William Street and Church Street car parks to assist in operation of the Town Hall;
- Review parking operations and signage within the centre to improve and enhance provision and availability of spaces for the benefit of residents, shoppers and local businesses;
- In the longer term, explore opportunities for improvements at the A737 Barochan Junction, recognising the important role of the strategic junction to the trunk road network, the town centre and Johnstone as a whole.

# Theme 2: Town Centre Environment

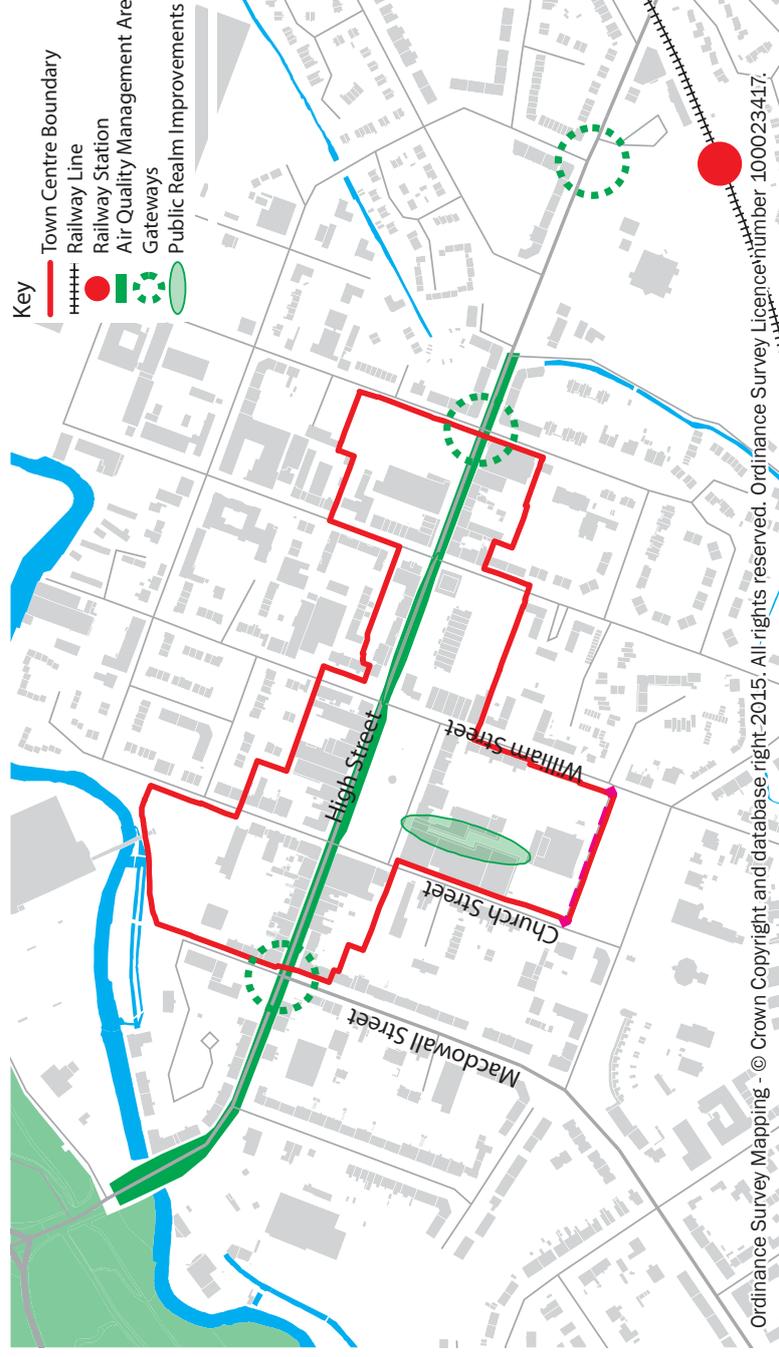
It is important that Johnstone's town centre looks good, feels safe and attracts visitors, residents and businesses.

The public realm around the civic squares is of high quality and has benefited from significant investment in recent years. Opportunities exist to further improve the environment of the town centre at key 'gateways' and pedestrian routes. Early action has already been delivered, with initial works to improve the Houstoun Court precinct complete and further phases proposed in 2017.

To ensure the quality of the centre is maintained to a high standard, the Council delivers a regular programme of street cleaning, grass cutting and litter picks. Johnstone High Street has recently been designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), supporting the preparation of an action plan and delivery of actions which improve air quality within the town centre and in turn the wider environment.

Community wardens patrol the town centre daily, responding to community safety and environmental concerns. Town centre locations are covered by manned CCTV.

Further investment will be delivered in 2017 to improve the environment at Provost Close, with enhancements to entrances and foyer areas of the building.



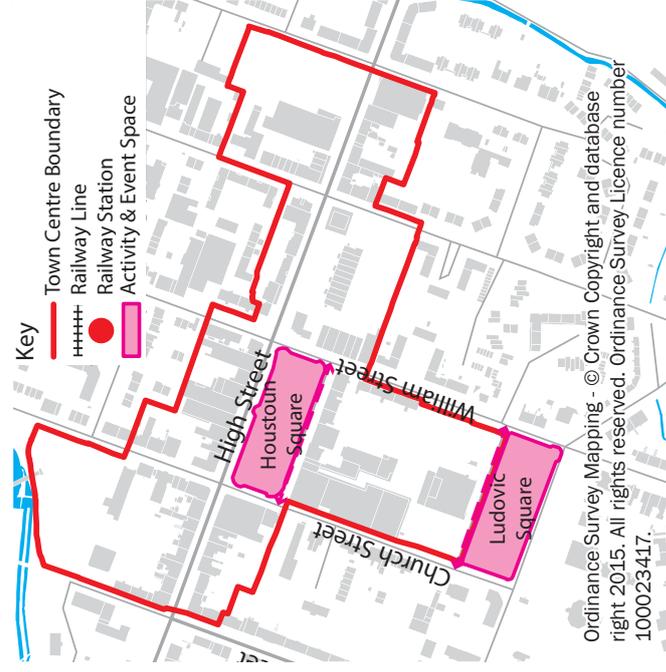
## Key Actions

- Deliver public realm improvements within Houstoun Court precinct;
  - Explore opportunities to further improve key pedestrian routes – to increase footfall within the town centre and create economic benefits for existing retailers and businesses;
  - Explore opportunities to improve entrance 'gateways' to the town centre – particularly Thornbrae, High Street and from the A737
- to create a sense of arrival and link to key pedestrian routes;
  - Continue to invest in a regular programme of town centre maintenance including street cleaning, litter picks and grass cutting;
  - Deliver enhancement to Provost Close; and
  - Prepare action plan in support of AQMA and deliver action to improve air quality in the town centre.

# Theme 3: Local Economy

The key objective of this strategy is to support the future growth of Johnstone town centre. To deliver this, there is an opportunity to develop activities and uses which expand the 'offer' of the centre and enhance its role as a destination. This includes making better use of existing spaces and considering the most appropriate location for new development, such as commercial uses within Houston Court precinct or residential uses within vacant sites.

A key element of actions under this theme is working with the private sector and community groups such as Johnstone Business Consortium to deliver new uses, projects and events which support the local economy.



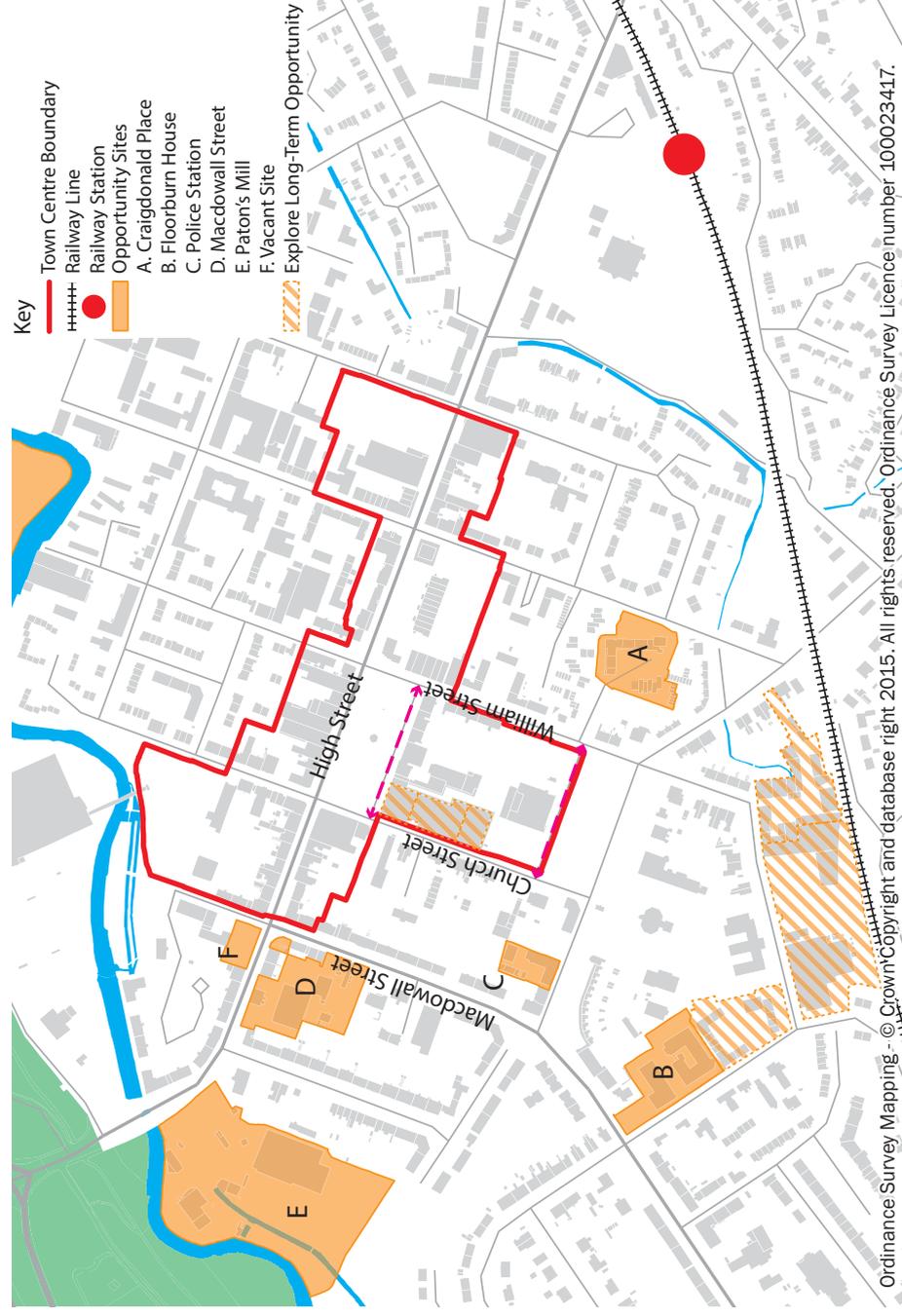
## Key Actions

- Work with public and private sector partners to support new retail, office and residential uses within the town centre. New uses will be encouraged where appropriate throughout the centre, particularly key locations such as the Houston Court precinct;
- Support local community groups such as Johnstone Business Consortium and Johnstone Community Council to deliver new projects and events for Johnstone which support town centre activity and the local economy;
- Use Retail Improvement Scheme funding to support the improvement of shopfronts within the town centre. Funding will also be used to encourage the creation of new business and support existing businesses throughout the town centre;
- Promotion and support for the maintenance and improvement of town centre properties.

# Theme 4: Opportunity Sites

Vacant and underused sites within the town centre present a great opportunity to introduce new uses, particularly residential, which support the local economy and help to grow the town centre. Pockets of land such as Paton’s Mill lie in key locations. Successful redevelopment would also improve the environment of the town centre and the positive image of the town as a place to invest, visit and live.

Early action is being delivered in relation to key sites, with proposals for the former site of Paton’s Mill being actively progressed by the private sector. Opportunities for early delivery of affordable housing within the town centre will also be considered in the context of the Council’s Strategic Housing Investment Plan.



## Key Actions

- Prepare and implement development briefs which support redevelopment and changes of use at opportunity sites;
- Work with owners and developers to bring forward proposals for opportunity sites such as Paton’s Mill;

- Where appropriate, consider use of legislative powers to facilitate site delivery;
- Where appropriate, explore opportunities for delivery of affordable housing within the centre, in the context of the Council’s Strategic Housing Investment Plan;

- In the longer term, explore future opportunities for change across the town centre, for example the Floors Street area, working with the local community and businesses.

# Opportunity Site - Key Example

MacDowall Street, High Street & George Street

Indicative Housing Layout



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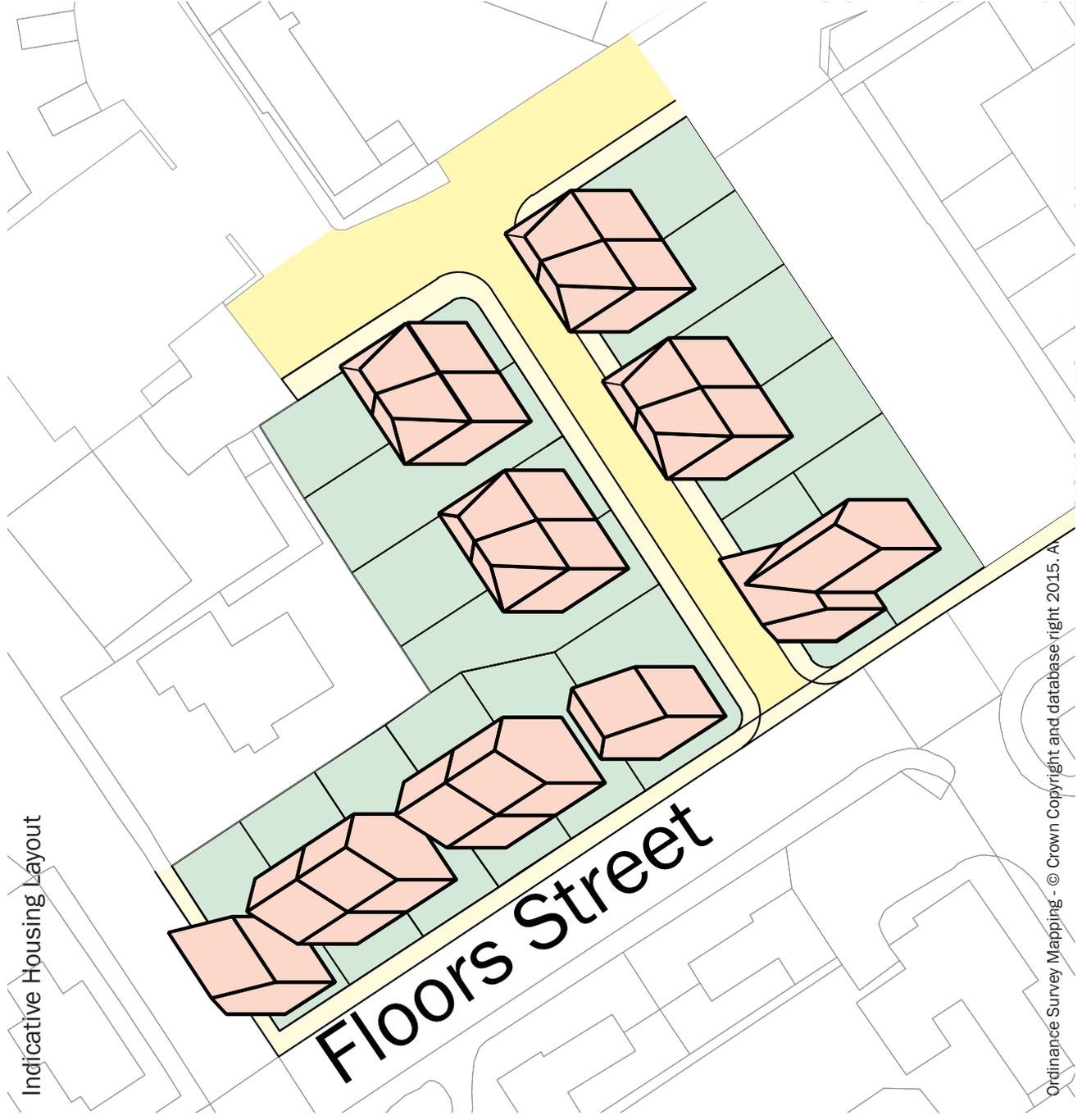
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# Opportunity Site - Key Example

Floorsburn House



Indicative Housing Layout



## 7. Making it Happen

### *Implementation*

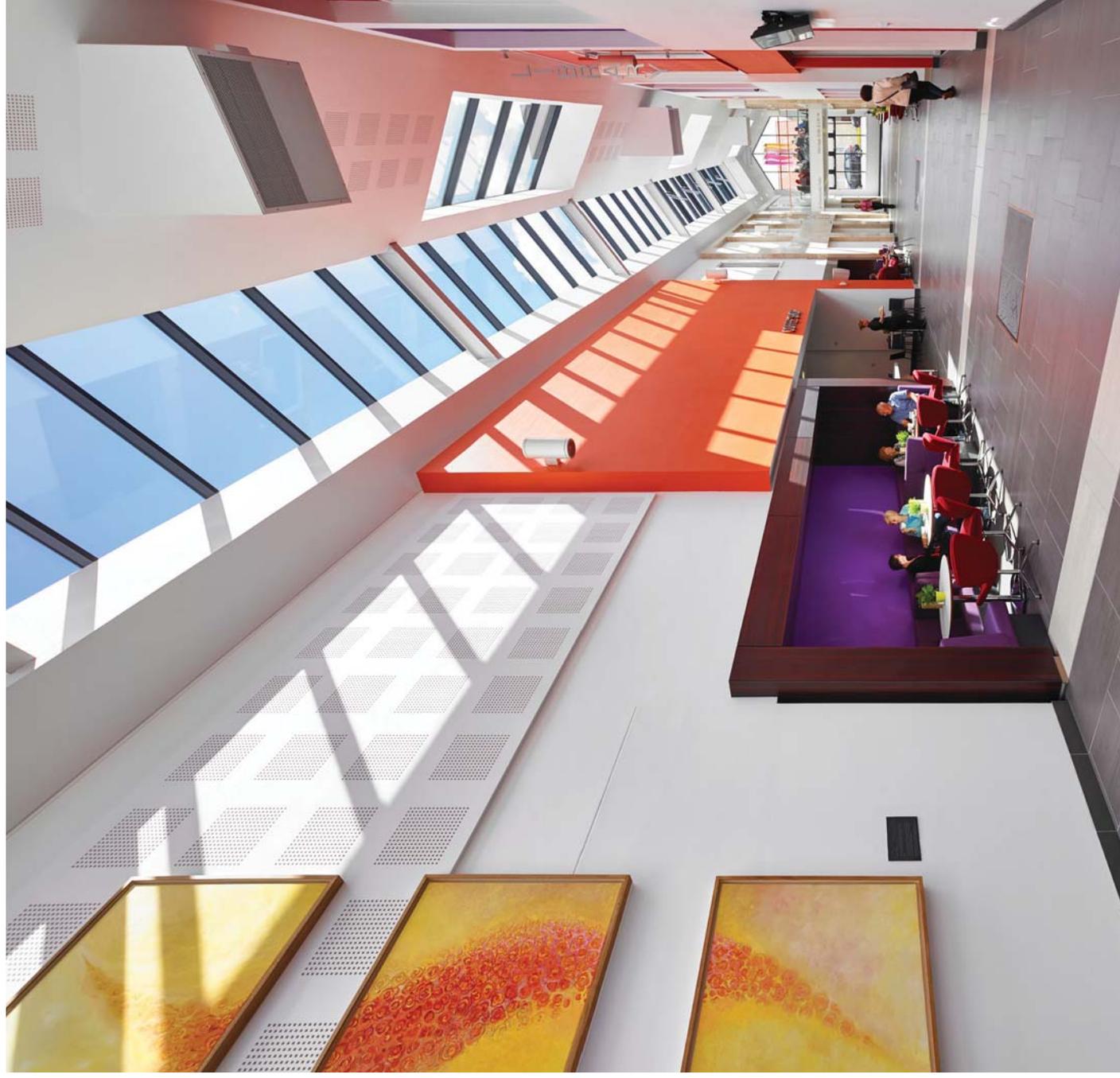
Delivery of proposals identified in the strategy will be achieved through joint working between the public, private and community sectors. Timescales for delivery will require detailed discussion with partners however to help inform progress short and long terms actions are identified below.

The support of local residents, community groups, businesses and Community Planning Partners will be crucial in successful delivery of the strategy. Actions will be taken forward in close partnership with these stakeholders and all of those who have an interest in the future of Johnstone.

### *Staying on Track*

This strategy is non-statutory supplementary planning guidance to deliver proposals set out in the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan. The delivery of actions within the strategy will be monitored annually and progress reported to the Johnstone and Villages Local Area Committee. If progress is not as expected, a review will consider new approaches to achieving results.

The strategy will be updated every two years.



# Key Action Summary

Location/Project		Timescale
<b>Theme 1: Transport and Parking</b>		
Traffic Management	Develop and implement proposals at High Street	0-2 years
Parking Provision	Deliver parking improvements at William Street and Church Street	0-2 years
Parking Operations	Review parking operations and signage	0-2 years
Barochan Junction	Explore opportunities for improvements at the A737 Barochan Junction	5-10 years
<b>Theme 2: Town Centre Environment</b>		
Houston Court	Deliver improvements to public realm at pedestrian precinct	0-2 years
Pedestrian routes	Explore opportunities to further improve key pedestrian connections	2-5 years
Gateways	Explore opportunities to improve town centre gateways: Thorn Brae and High Street/A737	2-5 years
Town Centre Maintenance	Continue to invest in programme of town centre maintenance	0-2 years
Air Quality	Prepare Action Plan in support of Air Quality Management Area	0-2 years
Community Safety	Continue programme of environmental enforcement and improvement activities	0-2 years
<b>Theme 3: Local Economy</b>		
Activity and Events	Work with local community groups to deliver new activities and events	0-2 years
Diversify Uses	Work with partners to deliver new retail, offices and residential uses	2-5 years
Shopfront Improvements	Use Retail Improvement Scheme funding to enhance retail shop fronts	0-2 years
<b>Theme 4: Opportunity Sites</b>		
Development Briefs	Prepare and implement development briefs to support reuse of opportunity sites	0-2 years
Vacant Sites	Work with owners and developers to deliver reuse of vacant sites	2-5 years
Supporting Delivery	Consider use of legislative powers to assist in delivery of sites where appropriate	5-10 years
Opportunities for Change	Explore opportunities for change at Floors Street and Provost Close	5-10 years

If you would like information in another language or format please ask us.

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

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