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Grieff Charrette Report

September 2015

Crieff Today



Executive summary

This report sets out the outcomes of the Crieff Town Centre Charrette, undertaken in spring 2015 with members of the local community and representatives of Perth and Kinross Council.

The Charrette was initiated by Perth and Kinross Council with support from Crieff Community Council, Crieff Community Trust and Crieff & Upper Strathearn Partnership and formed part of the Scottish Government's Town Centre Charrette Mainstreaming Programme. It was facilitated by a team led by 7N Architects with Nick Wright Planning (urban planner), Jura Consultants (culture and heritage) and Steven Tolson (property surveyor). The team also worked with PAS (formerly Planning Aid Scotland) to run a session at Crieff High School.

A Charrette is essentially a collaborative way of preparing proposals for future change in a particular place with the local community and professionals working together to identify issues and aspirations leading to the development of design proposals in response. The work in Crieff focussed on the future of the Town Centre which had been highlighted in previous engagement initiatives and design studies as a key priority for the future wellbeing of the town.

In recent years, the local community has invested a significant amount of time and energy in developing ideas to improve Crieff. This has resulted in the development and implementation of excellent initiatives such as business and community surveys, the new Business Improvement District, the Crieff Highland Gathering and the Strathearn Artspace, but has had mixed success on other projects within the town due to challenging economic circumstances. The aim of the Charrette was to build on all work to date and to co-ordinate and prioritise physical projects and initiatives that would help to push the regeneration of the Town Centre forward.

Many of the key issues identified in the Charrette, such as the quality of the public realm, parking, and the number of vacant shops within the Town Centre, had been identified during previous consultations and studies, with the principal barriers to addressing these issues being defined as a lack of effective mechanisms, processes and resources to deliver initiatives. These common conclusions are a valid outcome, as one of the primary purposes of the Charrette is to reflect what the people of the town are saying and to facilitate initiatives and to reinforce issues and aspirations to generate positive change.

In times of limited resources, it is critical that ways are found to make progress even if there is limited scope to deliver ambitious projects. It is evident that Crieff has an extremely active and energised community who are focussed on and committed to improving the town but better co-ordination between the community groups and P&KC would significantly improve the pathway to the delivery of future initiatives. For this reason, one of the principal recommendations of the Charrette team is the establishment of a town forum space within the Perth and Kinross Council Area Office on James Square, to be shared by the community and the council as a collaborative working space, to channel the energies and resources of all parties towards the common goal of improving Crieff Town Centre.

This report is intended to facilitate such an initiative and to provide a flexible framework and vision for town centre regeneration as a resource to help community, business and public sector partners develop and progress individual projects within Crieff.

Charrette Workshop



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The Charrette

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The Charrette

The report, the Charrette approach, local issues and aspirations

01

Crieff Town Centre



The Charrette

Introduction

Key information Sources

Crieff Community Profile (PKC)
Crieff Conservation Area Appraisal (PKC)
Crieff Town Centre Vacancy Survey 2013 (CUSP)
Crieff Community Action Plan 2013-18 (CCT)
Crieff Community Survey 2010 (CUSP)
Crieff Community Survey: Recommendations for Action 2011 (CUSP)
Crieff Revitalisation Scheme 2009 (CUSP)
Crieff Succeeds BID Business Plan 2015-20
Crieff Succeeds BID Business Consultation Report 2014
Crieff Town Study by Dundee University 2012 (CUSP)
Perth and Kinross Employment Land Audit 2013 (PKC)
Perth and Kinross Housing Land Audit 2014 (PKC)
Perth and Kinross Local Development Plan 2014 (PKC)
Perth and Kinross Retail Study and Town Centre Review 2014 (PKC)
Rural Perth and Kinross LEADER Business Plan 2014-20

CCT: Crieff Community Trust
CUSP: The Crieff and Upper Earn Partnership
PKC: Perth and Kinross Council



Steven Tolson

Crieff and the Town Centre

Crieff lies at the heart of Strathearn, one of the gateways to the Highlands from the south and also a tourist destination in its own right. Local attractions include Crieff Hydro, the Famous Grouse Experience, Crieff Visitor Centre and the annual Crieff Highland Gathering. The town is within easy day-trip distance of Glasgow and Edinburgh and on Scotland's trunk road network.

With a growing population of currently around 6,500, Crieff enjoys a range of education, health and community facilities, including new schools, library and sports centre at the Campus on the southern edge of town. There are many active community groups.

Yet, there is concern that the town centre is not what it should be. A number of prominent buildings are derelict, there are more empty shops than people would like, and the High Street (the A85 trunk road) is dominated by vehicle space and traffic.

This report summarises the town centre Charrette held in spring 2015. The purpose of the Charrette was to develop a 20 year vision for the future of Crieff town centre, and an action plan of how to turn that vision into reality.

With such significant expansion, there is local concern about the capacity of town centre facilities and infrastructure (such as parking) to accommodate the additional demand – but also a desire to make the most of the opportunities offered by population growth for improving business and quality of life. The Community Council and Community Partnership are keen to ensure that the town centre is fit for the future, and have been considering parking improvements and options for new retail space and public square over the last couple of years. The Charrette offered an opportunity to consider these and other improvements to the town centre in the round.

The Charrette

This report sets out the outcomes of the Crieff Town Centre design Charrette, undertaken in spring 2015 with members of the local community and representatives from Perth and Kinross Council, in order to guide future change in the town centre.

Initiated by Perth and Kinross Council with support from Crieff Community Council, Crieff Community Trust and Crieff & Upper Strathearn Partnership, the Charrette was part of the Scottish Government's Town Centre Charrette Mainstreaming Programme. It was organised by a team led by 7N Architects with Nick Wright Planning (urban planner), Jura Consultants (culture and heritage) and Steven Tolson (property surveyor). The team also worked with PAS to run a session at Crieff High School.

A Charrette is essentially a collaborative way of preparing proposals for future change in a particular place. The local community and professionals work together to identify issues and aspirations, and then design proposals in response to those issues and aspirations. In this case, a limited timeframe and budget meant that the engagement elements of the Charrette were necessarily short and sharp, although well publicised, focussing on two public workshops a few weeks apart plus other complementary engagement activities.

Crieff town centre: what next?



Do you want to make your town centre better? Come and help us work out how. We'll be building on recent initiatives to decide future priorities and action. Young and old, residents and businesses: **everyone** is welcome!

Saturday 18th April
**Deciding the agenda:
ambitions & priorities**

Saturday 2nd May
**Making it happen:
from ideas to action**

2pm sharp to 4pm
Strathearn Artspace
Comrie Street, Crieff



The Charrette

Introduction

The Five Stage Charrette Process
February to September 2015

1. A range of discussions with key community groups, school pupils, businesses and Council departments, accompanied by site visits and desk-based research (see 'Key information sources').
2. First public Charrette workshop focussing on visioning and priority projects (Saturday 18 April).
3. Two week design studio period to produce draft proposals.
4. Second public Charrette workshop to agree and refine draft proposals (Saturday 2 May).
5. Finalise proposals.

The focus of the work was the future of Crieff town centre. There is considerable local concern about the state of the town centre, the number of vacant commercial premises being perhaps the most prominent symptom of the need for action. The Charrette process enabled those involved to agree a vision for what they want the town centre to be like in the future, and create a set of ideas and actions to make that happen. Those ideas and actions, and indeed the whole Charrette process, are framed in terms of the Scottish Government's newly published Town Centre Toolkit.

The local community has a track record in investing time and resources in excellent initiatives such as business and community surveys, the new Business Improvement District (approval of which took place after the main Charrette workshop sessions), Crieff Highland Gathering and Strathearn Artspace. The purpose of the Charrette was to build on these and other achievements to identify physical projects and initiatives that would help to regenerate the town centre.

This report focuses on placemaking interventions in the town centre in response to the issues raised during the Charrette. The proposals reflect the aspirations of the community at this point in time. They are not intended to an overall regeneration strategy for the town as a whole; rather, the report describes a menu of short, medium and long term placemaking actions that could be taken forward by the Council and the local community for the benefit of the town centre.

Section 1 of the report describes the issues and aspirations that emerged from the initial Charrette sessions, desktop research and site analysis. Sections 2 and 3 focus on the physical, placemaking interventions that were developed in response to the issues raised during the Charrette.

The proposals reflect the aspirations of the community at this point in time. They are not intended to an overall regeneration strategy for the town as a whole; rather, the report describes a menu of short, medium and long term placemaking actions that could be taken forward by the Council and the local community.

The sketches and plans in the report are intended to illustrate how the town centre could be transformed, but more detailed design work will be needed for each of the projects to be taken forward. The specifics of each proposal may change as they progress through more detailed design and consultation.

Similar Charrettes were undertaken simultaneously in Aberfeldy and Auchterarder town centres by the same consultant team. A number of key principles emerged from all three Charrettes that identify a need to:

- Support collaborative working between Perth and Kinross Council and community groups.
- Create more people-friendly streets and spaces.
- Improve access to the town centres.
- Improve the physical fabric of town centres.
- Connect with other initiatives to coordinate marketing and business support.

This report is intended to provide a flexible framework and vision for town centre regeneration in Crieff, and to be a resource to help community, business and public sector partners develop and progress individual projects.

Charrette Workshop at The Strathearn Artspace



The Charrette

Process

The Charrette Process

The Charrette team's approach to placemaking is based on the premise that the physical aspects of places are intertwined with their economic and social wellbeing, and strategies for change must take a holistic view of how places work well. This is the approach embodied in the Scottish Government's newly published Town Centre Toolkit. It aims to balance aspirational long term thinking for the town centre with pragmatism, and to help make the most of existing budgets and potential future funding.

Fundamental to this is creating an agreed vision and set of principles, so that every effort made by the community, local authorities and agencies is a step in the right direction towards delivering something on the ground that will make a difference.

Analysis of existing information, discussions with Crieff High School pupils and other local stakeholders, and the first public Charrette workshop provided a rich basis of ideas and information on which to build proposals.

Workshop One - 18th April 2015

This session formally opened the Charrette process with experts in placemaking, tourism, economics and development set out their thoughts on Crieff's challenges and opportunities, and gave examples of what had been achieved by other communities.

Attendees were asked to identify on a map of Crieff the places they like and those they felt need improvement and identify aspirations for the town based on completed projects in other communities. People were then asked to think 15 years ahead to 2030 and describe the town, how it looks, feels, and what people are doing, in order to shape a Vision for Crieff's future. The results included natural environment, townscape, social and economic issues and were collectively discussed around tables. The emerging Vision for Crieff was that it should become an active, accessible and attractive destination for residents and visitors.

Workshop Two - 2nd May 2015

The Charrette team presented draft proposals developed in response to the discussions at the first workshop. Facilitated discussion then sought community feedback, which assisted shaped the final proposals and recommendations in Sections 2 and 3 of this report.

Other Consultation

Before the Charrette, comprehensive surveys of the local community's concerns and aspirations had been undertaken in connection with the 2013 Community Action Plan and, in 2014, with the local business community to assist preparation of the business plan for the proposed Business Improvement District. This comprehensive information was taken as our starting point for the community perspective.

To supplement this, the Charrette team held a classroom session with students from Crieff High School (in collaboration with PAS, formerly Planning Aid Scotland); used part of the first public Charrette workshop to check and refine community concerns and aspirations; and held informal one-to-one discussions with town centre businesses.



Output from the Crieff High School Students, 5th March 2015

During Workshop One, people identified this image of a dynamic and varied Civic Space in Edinburgh as representing their aspirations for town centre development.



Charrette Workshops

Summary: Community Likes



Independent Businesses



Countryside Connections



Engaged Community



Diverse Activities



Town Heritage

1. Independent Businesses

Crieff benefits from a vibrant and varied range of independent shops, galleries and cafés. During the Charrette, this was highlighted as one of the town's greatest assets and should be encouraged and developed.

2. Community

It was made evident throughout the Charrette that Crieff has an engaged, creative and active community and numerous community groups, trusts and initiatives. The Charrette provided an opportunity for these groups to discuss future community engagement potential.

3. Countryside Connections

The quality of the surrounding natural environment was one of the key reasons identified for living in and visiting Crieff. An enhancement of connections and activities should be encouraged, with particular attention to the development of core paths and national cycle connectivity.

4. Diverse Activities

The community and visitors benefit from a broad range of activities throughout the surrounding area such as Drummond Park, The Famous Grouse Experience and The Community Campus. Suggestions came forward during the Charrette that public transport connections between these attractions needs to be improved in order to make the most of these assets.

5. Town Heritage

Crieff's historical significance as a market town, regional capital and tourist destination has resulted in an assortment of significant buildings and sites within the town. Proposals to encourage awareness and appreciation of this through a clearly marked, interactive and integrated heritage trail throughout the town was discussed.



Crieff's main community facilities and attractions are now hard to reach and disconnected from the Town Centre.

Charrette Workshops

Summary: Community Dislikes



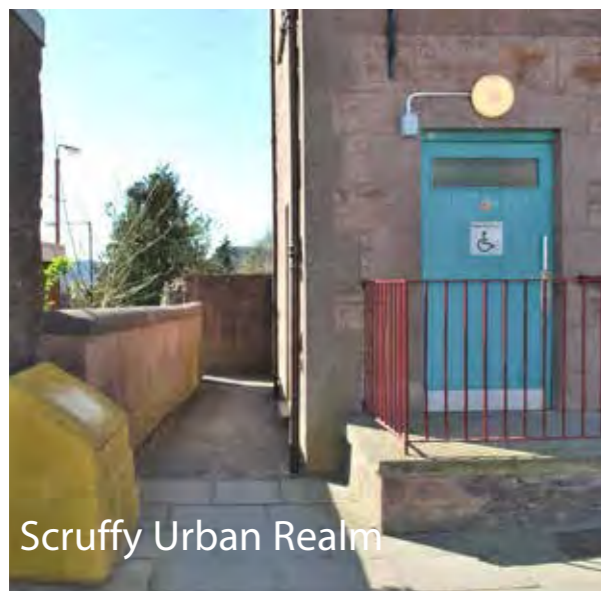
Poorly Connected Car Parking



Empty Shops



Poor Quality Pavements



Scruffy Urban Realm



Vehicle Dominated Town Centre

1. Car Parking

It was made clear that Crieff's community suffers from inadequate and inaccessible parking facilities within the town centre. Maximising the use of existing car parks, improve the connection between car parks and the town centre and establishing controlled parking zones were all discussed as options during the Charrette workshops.

2. Empty Shops

The prominence of vacant shops along the High Street was a key concern for the community. Various options were discussed during the Charrette, including increased effort with repainting shopfronts, using window displays as exhibition space for local artists and creating a vacant shop network to allow short term access to units for community use.

3. Scruffy Urban Realm

The community expressed concern over the quality of the urban realm within the town. An upgrade of shabby pavements, carriageway improvements and the repainting of buildings were considered to be priorities, with short term gains being achievable through the installation of community banners and the reduction in parking along the High Street.

4. Vehicle Dominated Town Centre

The impact of the A85 on Crieff is significant as vehicles dominate the town centre. One-way systems, temporary road closures, a town by-pass and peripheral car parks for visitors were all discussed during the Charrette, along with short term re balancing of the streetscape through shared surfaces and a variation of street materials.

Charrette Workshops

Key Principles for the Future

1. Culture

Crieff will become:

- A culturally enhanced, creative community, continuing to support and nurture the strong creative talent within the community to provide a cultural focus to the Town Centre.

2. Community

Crieff will become:

- A networked community;
- An inclusive community for all ages;
- Continue to support and nurture the strong existing community and support further initiatives.

Crieff needs:

- Appropriate community facilities;
- A community activity Hub;
- Superfast broadband.

3. Town Environment

Crieff will become:

- A destination at the heart of Strathearn;
- A centrally focussed, safe, clean and friendly pedestrian environment;
- An attractive well maintained town.

Crieff needs:

- A consistent identity and character for the town;
- Accessible local amenities.

People will know where Crieff is and where things are.



Diverse Activity



People Focussed



Cycle Friendly



Varied Streetscape



Town Identity

Charrette Workshops

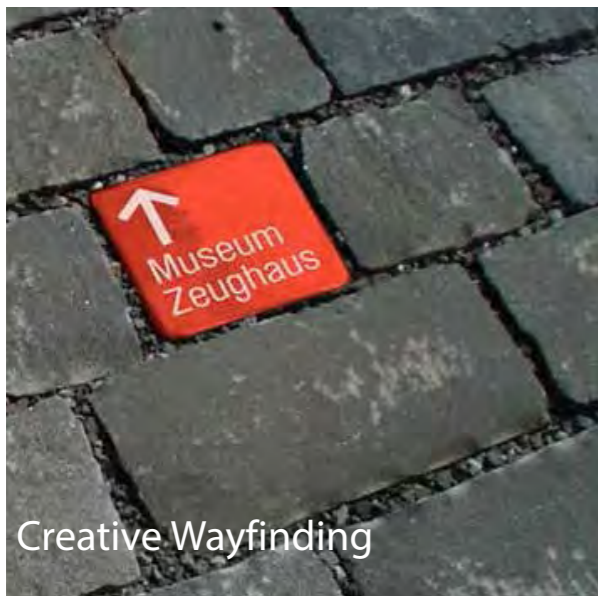
Key Principles for the Future



Engaged Community Partnerships



Accessible Town Centre



Creative Wayfinding



Practical Public Transport



Urban Realm Upgrade

4. Natural Environment

Crieff will:

- Encourage the enjoyment of the natural environment;
- Look after its natural surroundings and take a lead on promoting responsible use of natural places.

5. Tourism and Leisure

Crieff will be:

- A varied and attractive visitor destination;

Crieff needs:

- Leisure facilities for all ages;
- Visitor Activities within the Town Centre

6. Retail

Crieff will be:

- A retail, dining and leisure hub for the local people, surrounding area and tourists.

Crieff needs:

- A variety of choice in a quality retail environment, encouraging encourage local products and craft.

7. Transport

Crieff will have:

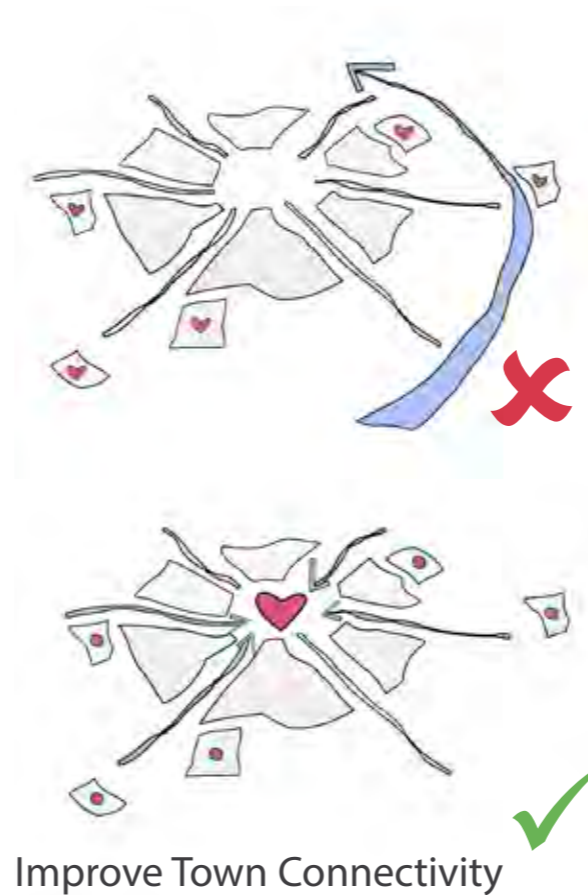
- Excellent connections, both within, and to and from the town, including walking, cycling and practical, affordable public transport for locals and tourists alike;
- A parking strategy for all users.

Charrette Workshops

Key Initiatives



People Centred Town Centre, Crieff in 1954



Improve Town Connectivity



Enhanced Parking



Community Hub



Civic identity/ Wayfinding

The Charrette proposals respond to the key issues identified in the first Charrette and were prepared by the Charrette team and presented at the second workshop to gain feedback and identify priorities. The outcome for this process is detailed in the following sections, but four, very clear priorities emerged.

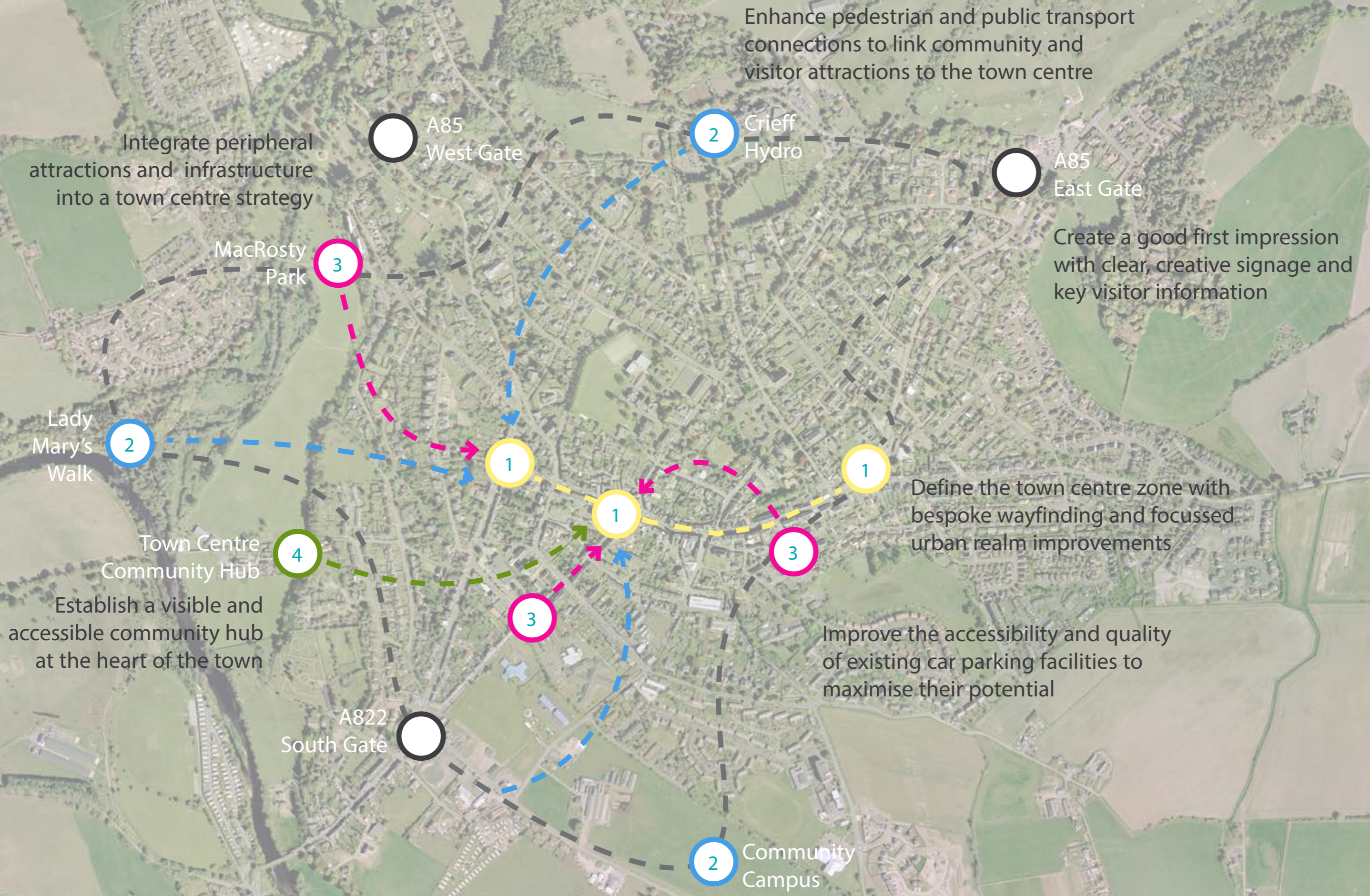
There was considerable consensus from across these different sources about the strengths and weaknesses of the town centre:

Key Initiatives

Considering these issues in the round at the first public Charrette workshop, four clear priorities emerged:

- 1 Improve the High Street: develop new uses, reduce parking and give greater priority to pedestrians.
- 2 Better Connection with peripheral activities such as Crieff Hydro, The Famous Grouse Experience, Drummond Park and the Community Campus,
- 3 Address Car Parking within the Town; establish good signage and an adequate number of spaces for locals and visitors.
- 4 Create a Community Hub within the town centre to encourage transparent, inclusive and networked community action, stimulating partnership working between community bodies and the council.

Key Initiatives Diagram



Charrette Proposals

Vision, strategy and design proposals developed in response to community issues and aspirations

02

Crieff needs to reverse the pull of development, trade and facilities away from the town centre



Prioritising the Town Centre

Strategic Approach



< Crieff from above © 2010 RCAHMS



Peripheral Visitor Centre
© Visit Scotland



Strathearn Creativity Hub
© 2015 George Logan and Ian Hardie



Crieff Farmers Market
© Explore Crieff

Strategic Initiatives

Proposal Developments

These are the key priorities arising from the Charrette that have informed the design proposals which are set out in this section

1 Enhance and upgrade the High Street



2 Improve connectivity in and around the town



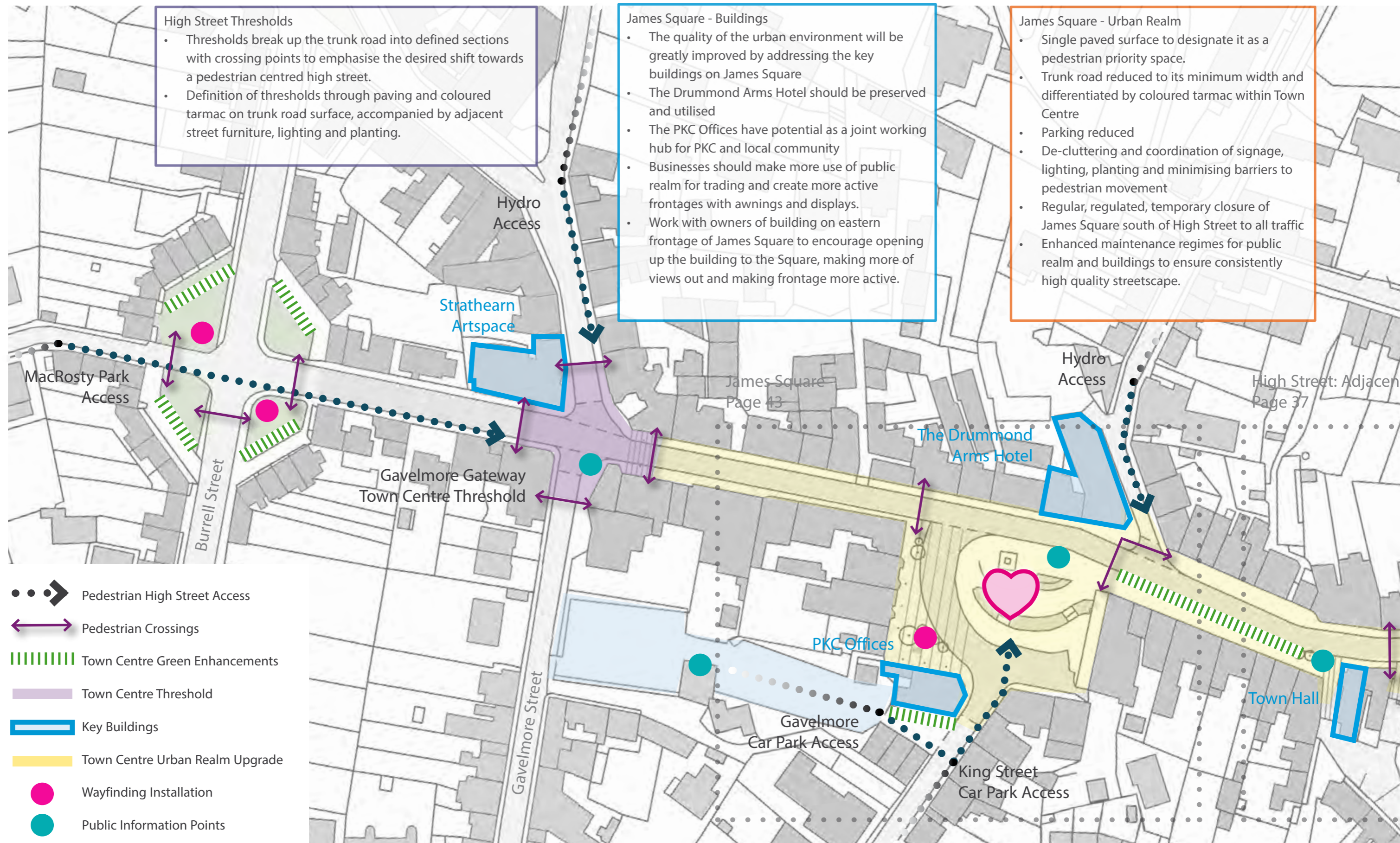
3 Optimise and integrate Car parking facilities



4 Establish a collaborative Community Hub



Crieff Town Centre Strategy



High Street Secondary Spaces

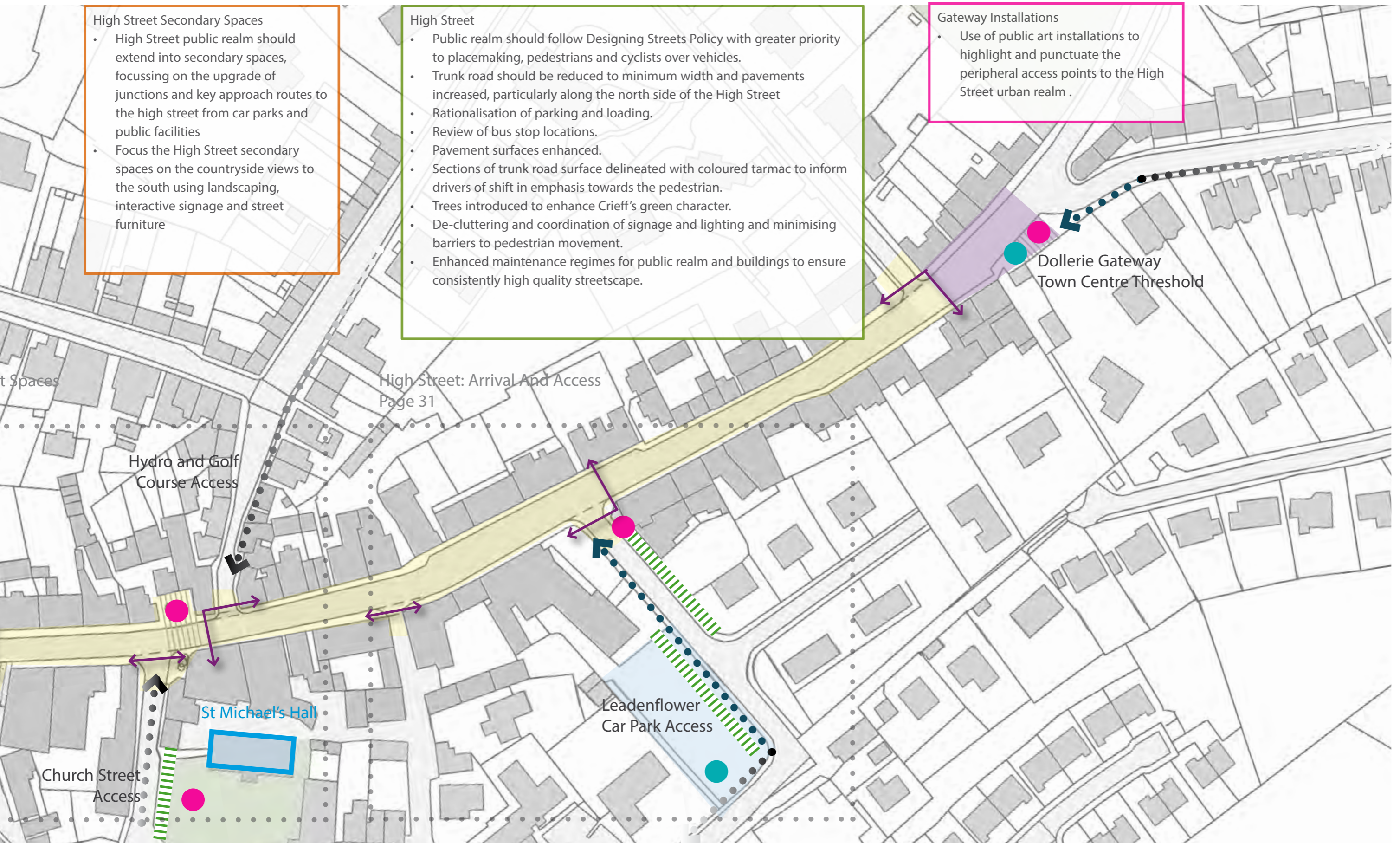
- High Street public realm should extend into secondary spaces, focussing on the upgrade of junctions and key approach routes to the high street from car parks and public facilities
- Focus the High Street secondary spaces on the countryside views to the south using landscaping, interactive signage and street furniture

High Street

- Public realm should follow Designing Streets Policy with greater priority to placemaking, pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles.
- Trunk road should be reduced to minimum width and pavements increased, particularly along the north side of the High Street
- Rationalisation of parking and loading.
- Review of bus stop locations.
- Pavement surfaces enhanced.
- Sections of trunk road surface delineated with coloured tarmac to inform drivers of shift in emphasis towards the pedestrian.
- Trees introduced to enhance Crieff's green character.
- De-cluttering and coordination of signage and lighting and minimising barriers to pedestrian movement.
- Enhanced maintenance regimes for public realm and buildings to ensure consistently high quality streetscape.

Gateway Installations

- Use of public art installations to highlight and punctuate the peripheral access points to the High Street urban realm .



High Street: Arrival And Access
Page 31



The High Street is Crieff's main commercial, civic and cultural artery, yet is dominated by vehicles and provides a poor user experience for pedestrians.

An accessible, navigable and people friendly High Street Urban Realm is imperative to the success of the Town Centre.

High Street: Arrival and Access

Crieff Connectivity



Crieff High Street
© 2013 CUSP



High Street

Key Principles and Initiatives

- Reduce the carriageway to a minimum width and remove parking (except for drop off, blue badge and service access) along the High Street
- Install a new, contrasting carriageway material within the High Street Town Centre zone to reflect pedestrian emphasis
- Upgrade the High Street Urban Realm to include co-ordinated lighting, street furniture, public information and creative wayfinding installations
- Develop temporary testing strategy for High Street interventions and bringing vacant shops back into use.

Easy Access

Crieff has ample parking distributed amongst council car parks and side roads in close proximity to the High Street. Clear indication of car parking facilities from approach roads, combined with the proposed metered parking zone, will reduce the strain of visitors parking on the High Street, where parking can be reduced to blue badge, service and drop off facilities only.

Simple Navigation

The installation of local information, wayfinders and good signage linking parking zones to the high street will create an accessible, interactive and user friendly experience.

Active High Street

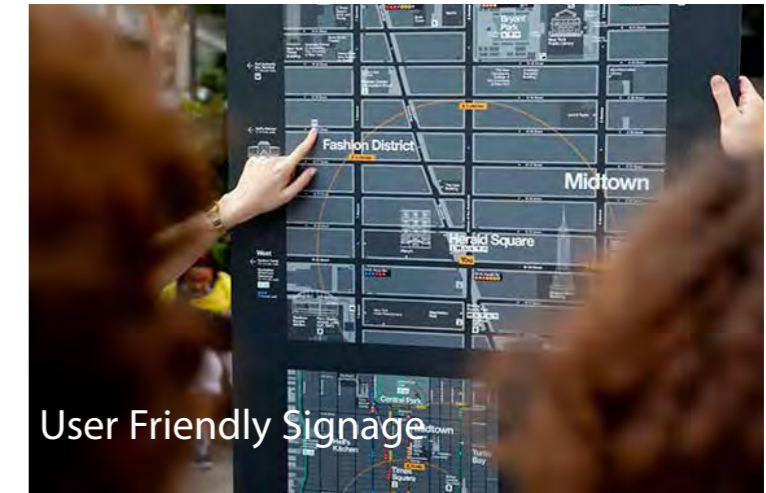
Vacant shops prevail on High Streets throughout the country, and Crieff is no exception. Tidying up and activating shabby shop fronts with art installations and window competitions, instigated through existing local community networks, can help to build momentum and increase the potential for more permanent, formalised solutions to reactivating the High Street.



Clearly Defined Parking Zones



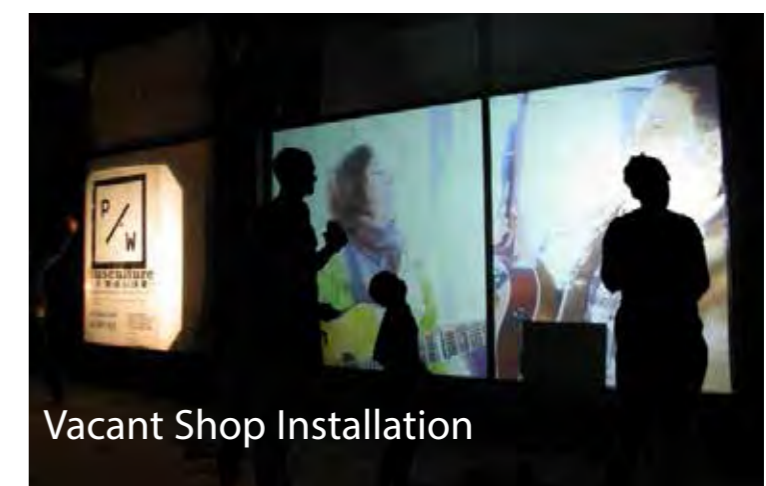
Attractive Streetscape



User Friendly Signage



Creative Wayfinding





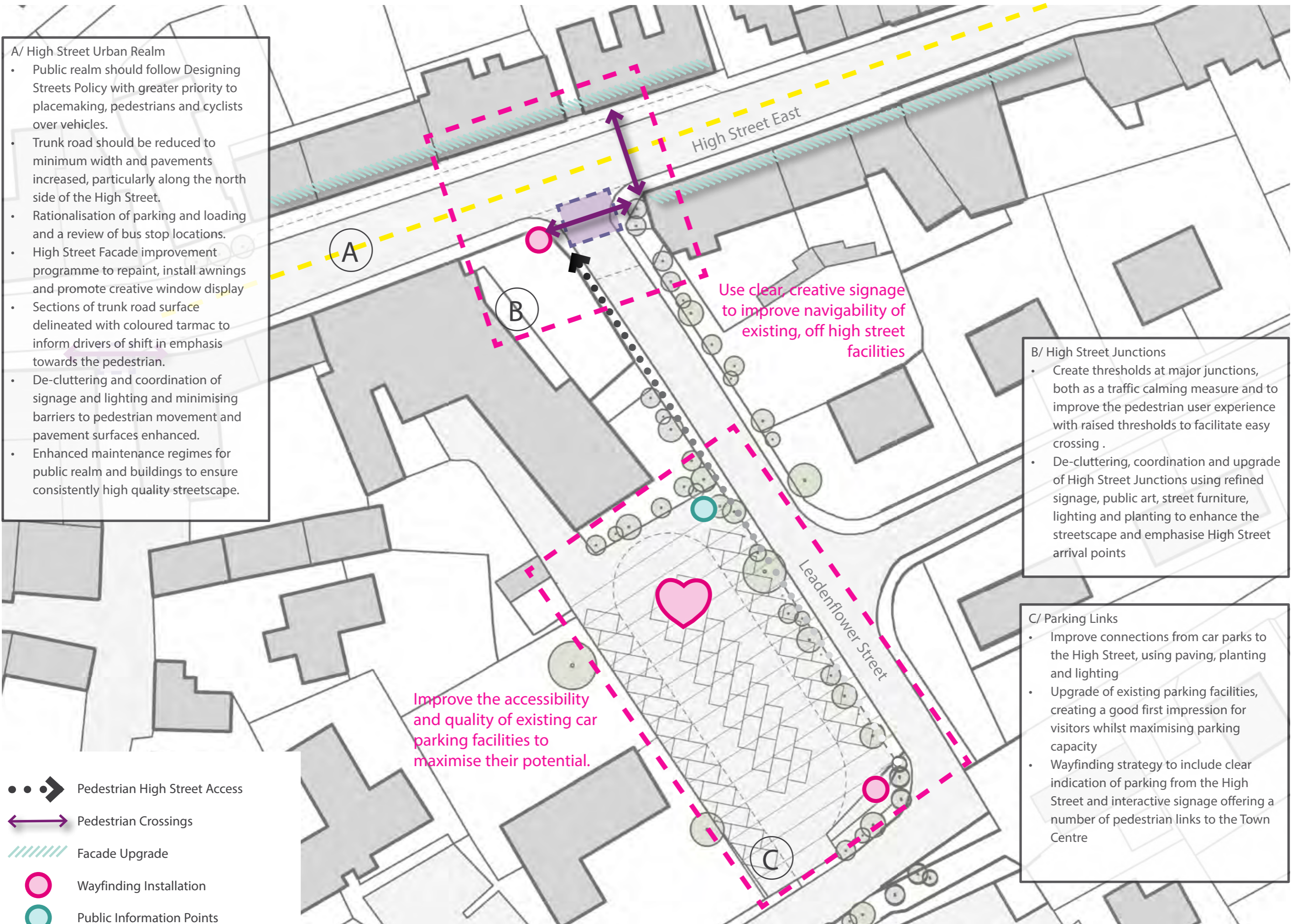
Vacant Shop Installation

- A/ High Street Urban Realm**
- Public realm should follow Designing Streets Policy with greater priority to placemaking, pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles.
 - Trunk road should be reduced to minimum width and pavements increased, particularly along the north side of the High Street.
 - Rationalisation of parking and loading and a review of bus stop locations.
 - High Street Facade improvement programme to repaint, install awnings and promote creative window display
 - Sections of trunk road surface delineated with coloured tarmac to inform drivers of shift in emphasis towards the pedestrian.
 - De-cluttering and coordination of signage and lighting and minimising barriers to pedestrian movement and pavement surfaces enhanced.
 - Enhanced maintenance regimes for public realm and buildings to ensure consistently high quality streetscape.

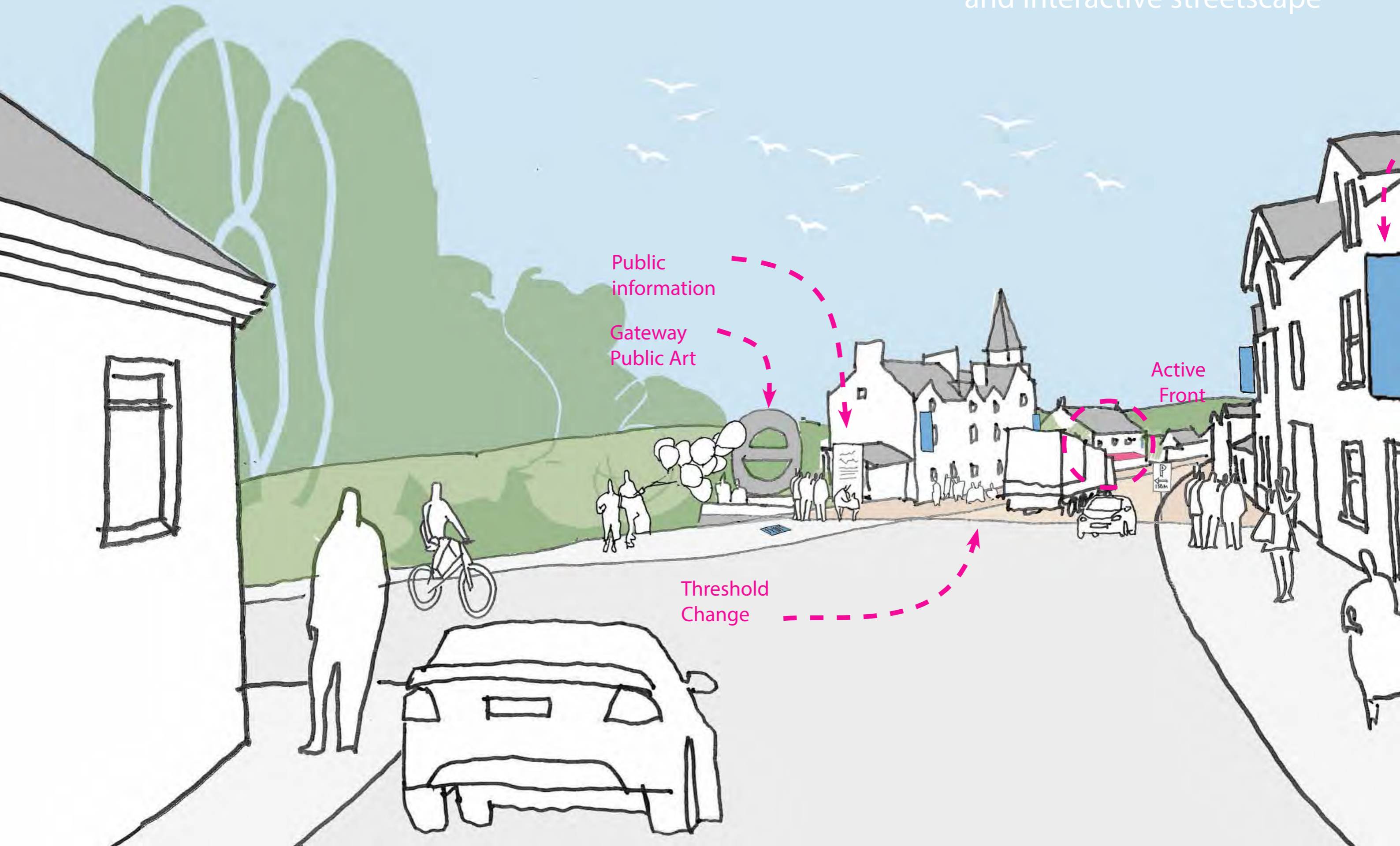
- B/ High Street Junctions**
- Create thresholds at major junctions, both as a traffic calming measure and to improve the pedestrian user experience with raised thresholds to facilitate easy crossing.
 - De-cluttering, coordination and upgrade of High Street Junctions using refined signage, public art, street furniture, lighting and planting to enhance the streetscape and emphasise High Street arrival points

- C/ Parking Links**
- Improve connections from car parks to the High Street, using paving, planting and lighting
 - Upgrade of existing parking facilities, creating a good first impression for visitors whilst maximising parking capacity
 - Wayfinding strategy to include clear indication of parking from the High Street and interactive signage offering a number of pedestrian links to the Town Centre

-  Pedestrian High Street Access
-  Pedestrian Crossings
-  Facade Upgrade
-  Wayfinding Installation
-  Public Information Points



Eastern High Street approach showing an enhanced, colourful and interactive streetscape





Community
Banners

Wayfinding
Trail



The High Street benefits from an elevated position with fine views across Strathearn, but viewing opportunities from the Public Realm are limited.

These viewing opportunities should be emphasised to strengthen the connection with the surrounding landscape and bring more sunlight into the High Street.

High Street: Adjacent Spaces

Crieff's breakout and viewing spaces



Adjacent Spaces

Short/ Medium/ Long Term

Key Principles and Initiatives

- Extend the High Street Urban Realm upgrade to include High Street junctions with secondary roads and adjacent spaces
- Install seating, public information and interactive viewing opportunities into secondary spaces

Upgraded Urban Realm

The specification of high quality materials in both primary and secondary public spaces, improves the feel of the town. Street furniture, pavement finishes and public art should be coordinated to create a strong brand for the town and clearly define the primary public spaces within the town.

Embrace Viewing Opportunities

One of Crieff's major assets is its connection with the surrounding countryside, both visually and physically. Crieff's principal public spaces offer glimpses of distant hills. These should be maximised and emphasised within the public realm.

Enhanced Secondary Spaces

Where Crieff High Street is bustling with life and activity, it's side streets are static, abruptly colliding with the high street and dominated with parking. Extending the High Street Urban Realm into these secondary spaces with street furniture and an upgrade to both pavement and road treatment will allow the High Street to breathe and create a variety of spaces for diverse activity with enhanced visual connection to the surrounding countryside.

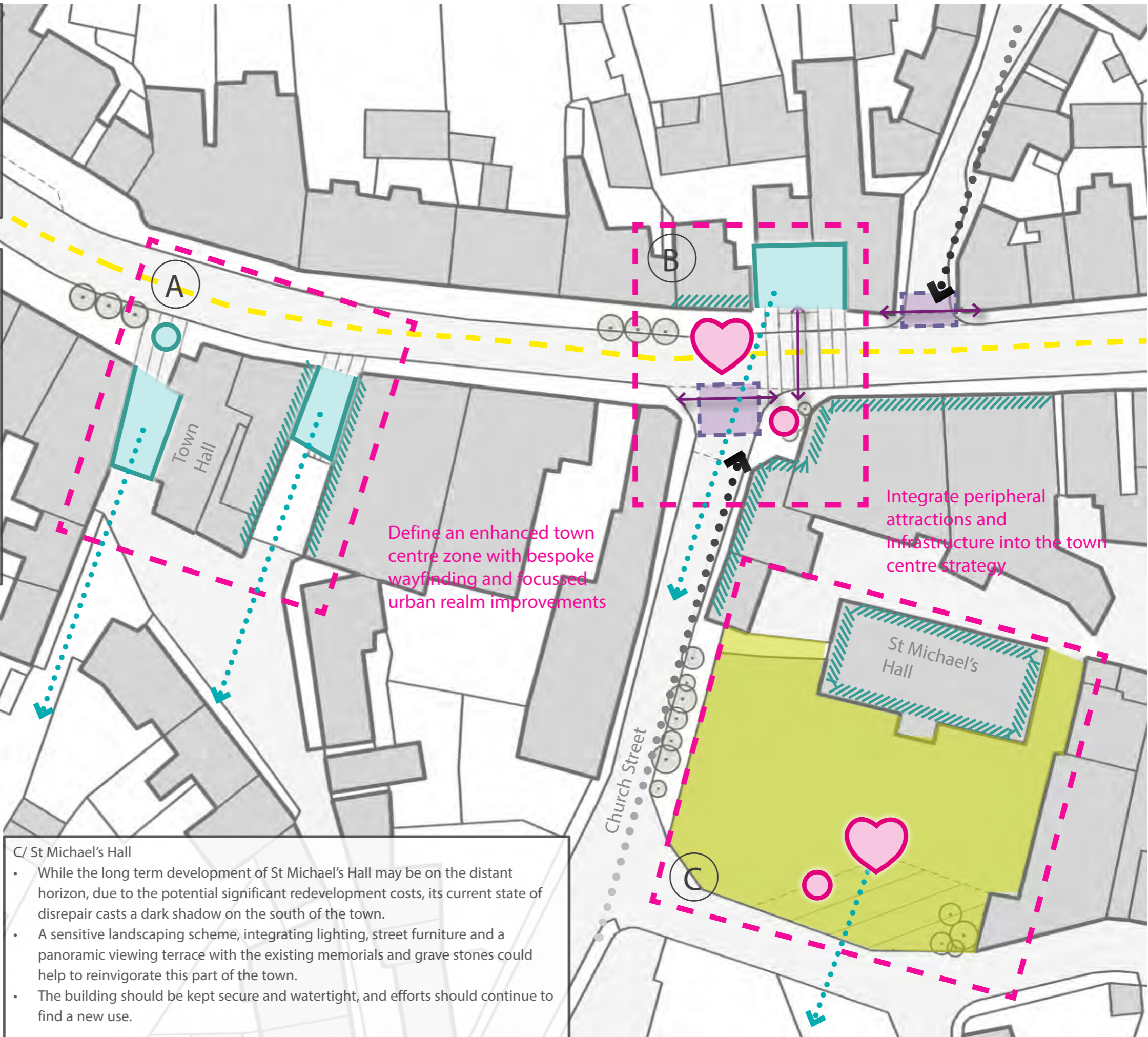


A/ High Street Adjacent Spaces

- The extension of the High Street Public Realm, in terms of materials, planting and lighting, should be orientated around viewing opportunities of the countryside to the south, using interactive signage and street furniture to create dwelling spaces adjacent to the thoroughfare of the High Street

B/ High Street Junctions

- Create thresholds at major junctions, both as a traffic calming measure and to improve the pedestrian user experience with improved and enhanced crossing points.
- Sections of road surface delineated with coloured tarmac to inform drivers of shift in emphasis towards the pedestrian.
- De-clutter and upgrade peripheral civic spaces using street furniture, lighting and planting to enhance the streetscape
- Improved pedestrian routes linking key parking zones and buildings to the High Street.



Define an enhanced town centre zone with bespoke wayfinding and focussed urban realm improvements

Integrate peripheral attractions and infrastructure into the town centre strategy

C/ St Michael's Hall

- While the long term development of St Michael's Hall may be on the distant horizon, due to the potential significant redevelopment costs, its current state of disrepair casts a dark shadow on the south of the town.
- A sensitive landscaping scheme, integrating lighting, street furniture and a panoramic viewing terrace with the existing memorials and grave stones could help to reinvigorate this part of the town.
- The building should be kept secure and watertight, and efforts should continue to find a new use.

- Adjacent Spaces
- ● ● Pedestrian High Street Access
- ↔ Pedestrian Crossings
- //// Facade Upgrade
- ♥ Wayfinding Installation
- Public Information Points

A more pedestrian-orientated Town Centre with parking removed, pavements expanded where possible and viewing platforms created to the South.



Active Front

Wayfinders

Timber Light Column



Timber Light Column

High Street Viewing

Businesses using expanded pavements



James Square is the principal civic space in the town, but it presently does not have the activities around it to reinforce this status.

James Square

Crieff's Historic Heart



James Square

Activity Centre

James Square is Crieff's primary public space, physically connecting the High Street to the South and North and offering views to the South and West. It currently holds temporary events such as markets and craft fairs, however it primarily acts as a transitional space with limited interaction with peripheral properties.

A pluralisation, diversification and upgrade of activity within the square will not only reposition James Square as a destination, but the increase in footfall will encourage peripheral businesses to develop whilst increasing the potential of attracting investment for formalised upgrading of James Square.

Parking Day Festivals are an internationally successful initiative to reuse car parking spaces as spaces for community activity. Bristol's Make Sunday Special initiative has stimulated creative thinking to reposition public space, liberated by creating car free city centre streets once a month.

Community Hub

It was evident from throughout the Charrette process that Crieff benefits from a passionate, engaged and ambitious community. With a number of independent community bodies fronting up campaigns such as the BID and the Community Action Plan, it is evident that a place for regular discourse, interaction and networking would facilitate a more efficient development structure for the town.

The establishment of a transparent and collaborative working relationship with Perth and Kinross Council, Transport Scotland and the wider community on both physical and digital platforms will facilitate a more structured, progressive and active regeneration process within Crieff.

Short/ Medium/ Long Term



Established Community Partnership



Temporary Closure Potential



Bristol Make Sunday Special



Collaborative Working Hub

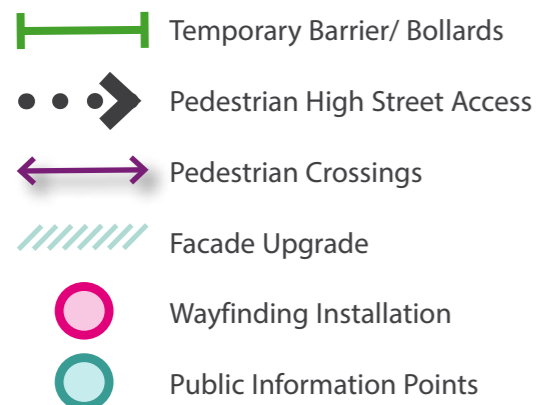


Parking Day Installation

- A/ James Square Urban Realm**
- Raised threshold and single surface to differentiate from the High Street
 - Reduce carriageway to its minimum width and differentiated using coloured tarmac to emphasise pedestrian priority
 - De-cluttering and coordination of signage, lighting, planting and minimising barriers to pedestrian movement.
 - Installation of community/ tourist information boards, high end street furniture to include raised planters for trees, shrubs and flowers.
 - Businesses should make more use of public realm for trading and create more active frontages with awnings and displays.

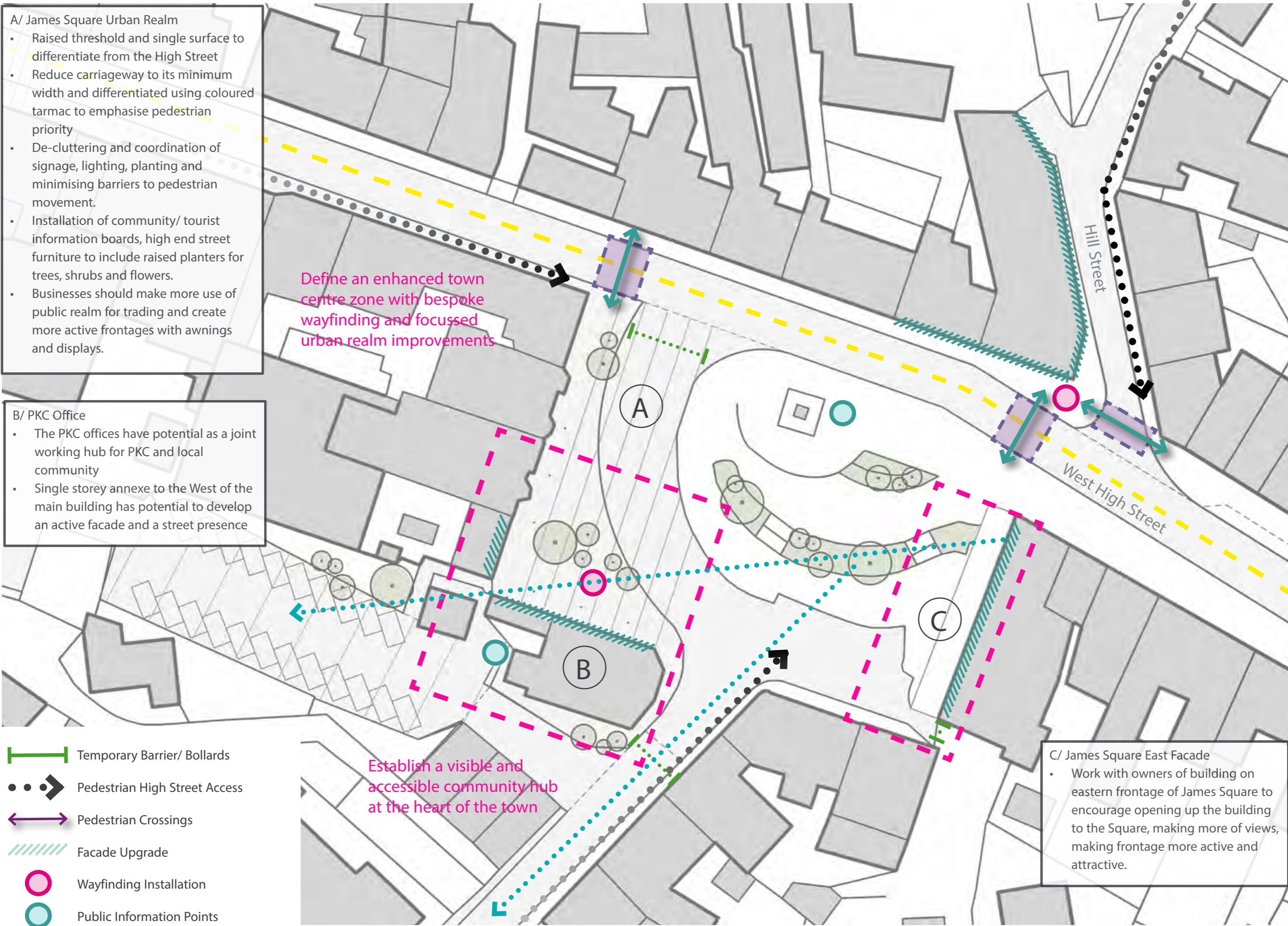
- B/ PKC Office**
- The PKC offices have potential as a joint working hub for PKC and local community
 - Single storey annexe to the West of the main building has potential to develop an active facade and a street presence

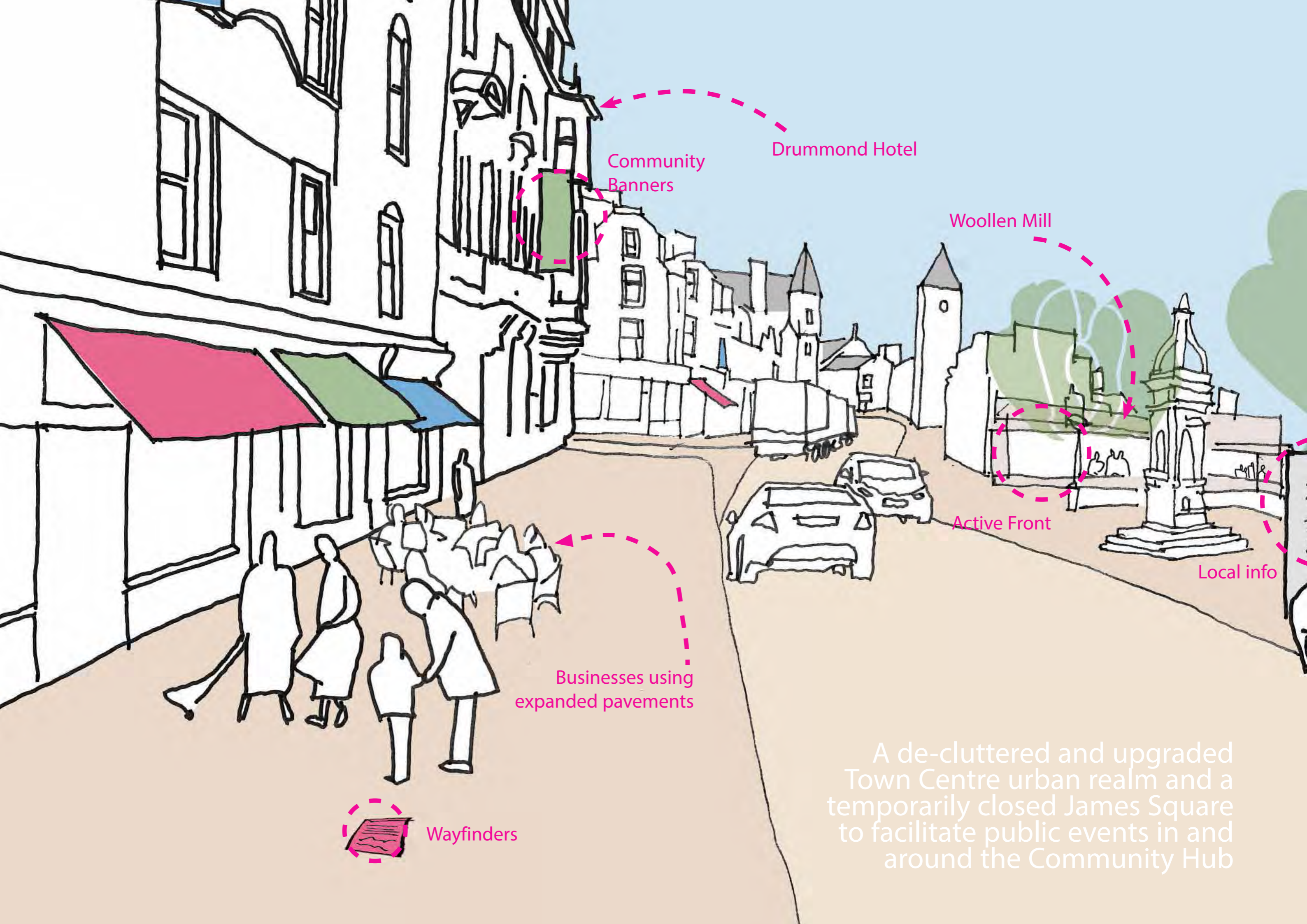
- C/ James Square East Facade**
- Work with owners of building on eastern frontage of James Square to encourage opening up the building to the Square, making more of views, making frontage more active and attractive.



Define an enhanced town centre zone with bespoke wayfinding and focussed urban realm improvements

Establish a visible and accessible community hub at the heart of the town





Community Banners

Drummond Hotel

Woollen Mill

Active Front

Local info

Businesses using expanded pavements

Wayfinders

A de-cluttered and upgraded Town Centre urban realm and a temporarily closed James Square to facilitate public events in and around the Community Hub



Community Hub
Shared with
Council Services

Community
Shop

Temporary
Bollards

Making it happen

How to deliver the proposals through collaborative working, sourcing funding and project development

03

Making it happen

Charrette Outcomes

Enthusiasm, dedication and energy are abundant within the Crieff Community but, it is clear that an effective delivery process and forum is needed to make these proposals happen.

In the words of an old Japanese proverb: "Vision without action is a dream. Action without vision is a nightmare." The Charrette's visionary thinking for the next 20 years of Crieff town centre's future will only bear fruit if is accompanied by action. This section provides information on collaborative working, funding and project development to implement the proposals described in Section 2.

The partners should use this document, alongside other documents such as the Community Action Plan, as tools to secure funding to apply for grants and loans for individual projects and seek investment from developers interested in the area and, if the opportunity presents itself, acquire an income-generating asset for the Community Trust.

It should also be used to influence Council land use planning policy and service delivery/infrastructure and facilities investment by the Council and its Community Planning partners (capital and revenue budgets).

The 20 year vision created in this report reflects Crieff town centre and the community's aspirations as they were in early 2015. Times change, tastes change and people move on.

The key principles and design approach contained in this report should be seen as a guiding strategy: the details and indeed individual projects that make up the strategy can, and should, flex over time. Any number of new opportunities and ideas are likely to emerge over the coming months and years as a result of, for example, the outcome of the BID ballot, new people emerging or new funding becoming available.

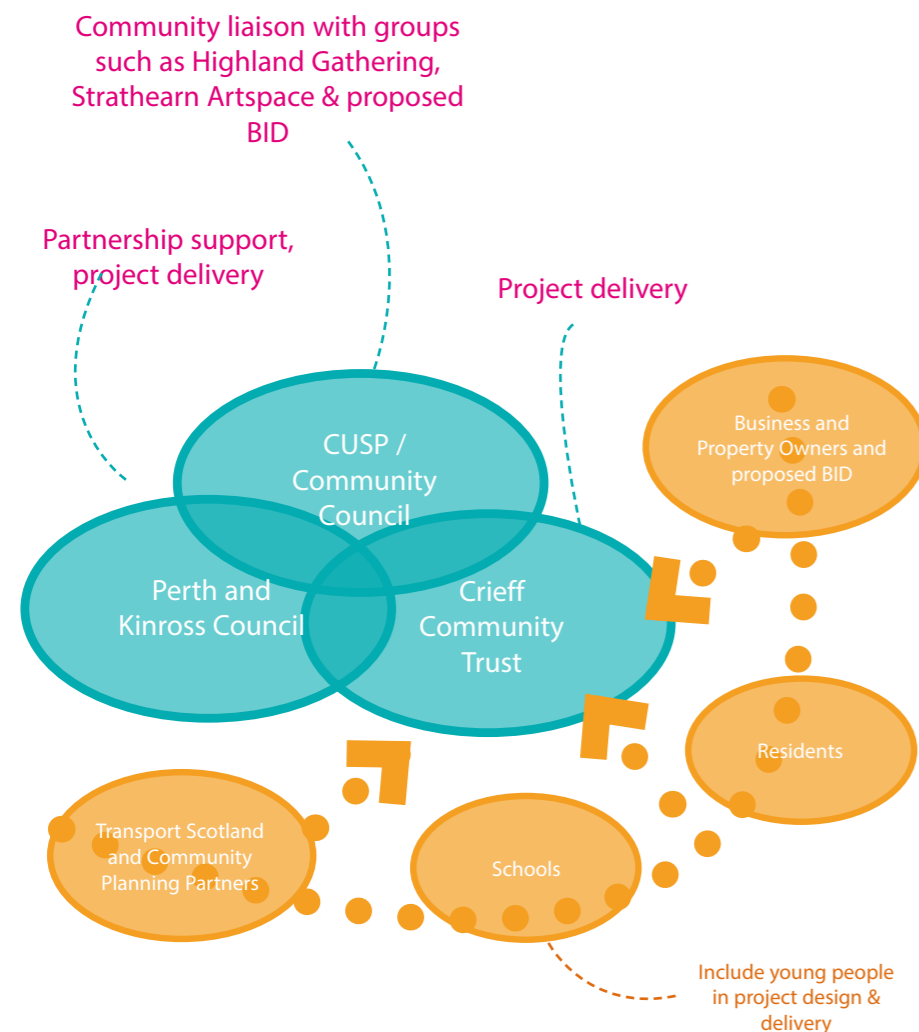
It is important not to deter activity and investment simply because something is not contained in this document. That is why flexibility and adaptability is so important..



Making it happen

Working Together

In times of limited funding, the energies and resources of all parties will be most effective through collaborative working between Perth and Kinross Council and the local community. This needs a forum to facilitate it.



It was clear from the Charrette meetings that the community of Crieff and surrounding Strathearn recognised that their local economy is largely made up of lots of small scale activities and community action, either through individual or collective means, is vitally important to help shape not just the economy but good quality social and environmental outcomes.

From the inputs at these meetings there was clear evidence of a creative community both in terms of its vitality, thinking and willingness to problem solve. Much of this creativity has grown as a response to changing economic circumstances with a recognition that the people of Crieff and Strathearn were the best people to fix problems with the support of others. The work of the Crieff Community Trust and Strathearn Artspace along with the efforts around the Crieff BID are illustrations of the creative local efforts towards binding community action that can help enhance Crieff's place identity through physical transformation, social interaction and economic generation.

Like other Perthshire settlements, Crieff relies on small creative entrepreneurial action. This action essentially projects the place's values. Such characteristics were evident at the meetings with a sharing of desires and preferences of what is required and how the community might achieve their goals.

However, the challenge is how to transfer such sharing at a Charrette into real delivering of community action. Making a living in a rural economy requires commitment and hard effort and people understandably have to put their energies into their own individual interests, priorities and productions. Equally, there is already significant collective voluntary action from those who have invested substantial time in trying to get various projects going. All of these actions demonstrate a considerable commitment by the people in their place.

The key question is whether one can find the time and capacity for all that creativity and commitment to somehow be bound together for even closer co-operative action to further enhance and project Crieff as a great place to live and visit?

All successful projects need champions and leaders who can call upon their enthusiastic energy and commitment to enthuse people to come together in the form of a project coalition of support. Successful projects can only be realised with good levels of co-operation from all of the participating partners.

From our discussions and investigations there are three key partners who need to work together and collectively take the lead for the vision to become reality. Each has a complementary role and should take the lead on certain aspects of delivery, as shown below. It is vital that the key partners (and the proposed BID if it is approved) work alongside each other in mutually supportive, trusting relationships. They need to meet frequently and keep each other updated. It is essential that Perth and Kinross Council sees itself as an equal partner in these discussions as well as offering a facilitating role. The Council, with its range of paid staff and systems, should support but not direct the volunteer-led organisations. The Charrette proposal for shared use of the Council's James Street offices as a community hub will be an important physical symbol of this joint working.

Beyond the key partners, the wider circle of stakeholders will vary over time. They need to be kept updated of progress so they can support as appropriate. Progress updates could take various forms, for example from newsletters and social media to a 5 yearly conference to celebrate and re-energise.

Funding Sources

Perth and Kinross Council Community Funding Sources

- PKC Corporate Financial Assistance Grant
- Common Good Fund
- PKC Community Environment Challenge Fund

Perth and Kinross Council operate a grant service which provides support to people looking to secure funding for projects and activities. (T: 0845 605 2000, or by visiting www.pkgrantsdirect.com)

PKC Corporate Financial Assistance Grant

Investment in growth and development

- Three year funding for voluntary organisations
- Support for Enterprising Communities
- Support to optimise other funding streams

Investment in grass-roots activities

- Support for small group activities
- Support for small community events

Common Good Funding Opportunities

Local Education Activities

- Activity or purpose that can demonstrate a benefit to the community within the common good area

Acquisition of equipment (max 50% of total costs)

Community Event Support (max 50% of total costs)

- Christmas lighting & firework displays
- Events/games/festivals
- Prize giving at events/games/festivals

Capital grants for provision / improvement of facilities for general public (max 50% of total costs)

Only limited funding has been identified for delivery of capital proposals from existing public sector budgets. It is important to make good use of this existing funding to deliver some quick wins on the ground, as described in the Delivery Timetable on page 71. Lead partners will need to be assigned to develop and implement individual projects, and all partners will need to work together to access funding and support project delivery.

PKC Corporate Financial Assistance Grant

The Council aims to target its own funding via their Corporate Financial Assistance budget in an “investment focussed” manner. Their aim is to provide support to obtaining investment funding that contributes and sustains organisations and projects. The Council is seeking to take a longer term view on investment in community capacity building that will enable stronger local communities through partnership arrangements. The Council believes such support will enable them to achieve positive social and environmental outcomes.

Common Good Fund

Perth and Kinross Council owns land and property that forms part of the common good of the former burghs in Perth & Kinross. There is a statutory requirement for the Council to manage common good assets “having regard to the interests of the inhabitants” of those former burghs. In addition, the Council administers 10 associated common good funds one of which is Crieff Common Good Fund.

The Common Good Fund is intended to provide grant support to citizens or qualifying organisations to undertake a range of community activities.

Common Good Fund awards need to comply with the “Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound approved by Perth and Kinross Council on 30 June 1999”. Awards must also comply with the Council’s statutory obligations relating to the common good assets. Awards are subject to a funding, monitoring and reporting agreements and procedures.

Other Council Managed Funds

In addition to the PKC Corporate Financial Assistance and Common Good Funds, the Council also administers a range of smaller Trusts that have been bequeathed to the Council. Trust funds are subject to particular criteria on how they can be awarded and are required to meet the intentions of the original benefactors. Trusts may be “Charitable Trusts” and “Public Trusts” under the Charity and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 definition. The Charitable Trusts are regulated by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

The PKC Community Environment Challenge Fund

Challenge funds may be awarded where projects are being led and delivered by community groups that are supported by the wider local community and can demonstrate a significant difference to the local environment. Such projects also need to demonstrate that they have a viable long-term sustainable management plan. As a general comment, grant awards are subject to a maximum of 50% of the total

Funding Sources

PKC Community Environment Challenge Fund

Support available for projects that;

- Reduce waste or recycling materials
- Save on management/ materials through plant alterations
- Benefit the local economy (tourism/ craft/ production)
- Benefit and integrate the wider, diverse community
- Work with existing/ proposed regeneration services
- Can be exercised within 12 months
- Demonstrate sustainable environmental action

Various Other Available Community Funding Sources

- Robertson Trust
- Gannochy Trust
- Forteviot Trust
- SSE Griffin and Calliachar Wind Farm Fund
- Lottery Funds "Big Lottery", "Awards for All" and "Heritage Lottery Fund"
- Creative Scotland
- A range of Scottish Government Regeneration Funds
- Sport Scotland
- Historic Scotland

project costs. The balance of costs could be covered by "match funding" and/or in kind activity.

Townscape Heritage Fund

Townscape Heritage schemes, the replacement programme for the preceding Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI), are intended to reverse the decline of the country's historic towns. Applicants work with a range of partners to repair buildings in conservation areas, creating attractive, vibrant places that people want to live, visit and invest in. Situated in a designated conservation area, Crieff is eligible to apply for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and others for the purposes of this scheme. This can include repairing and reinstating architectural detail, including shop-fronts, work to bring vacant buildings back into use, and improvements to the public realm. All of these would help address issues identified by the residents of Crieff as points which should be incorporated into the overall vision for the town.

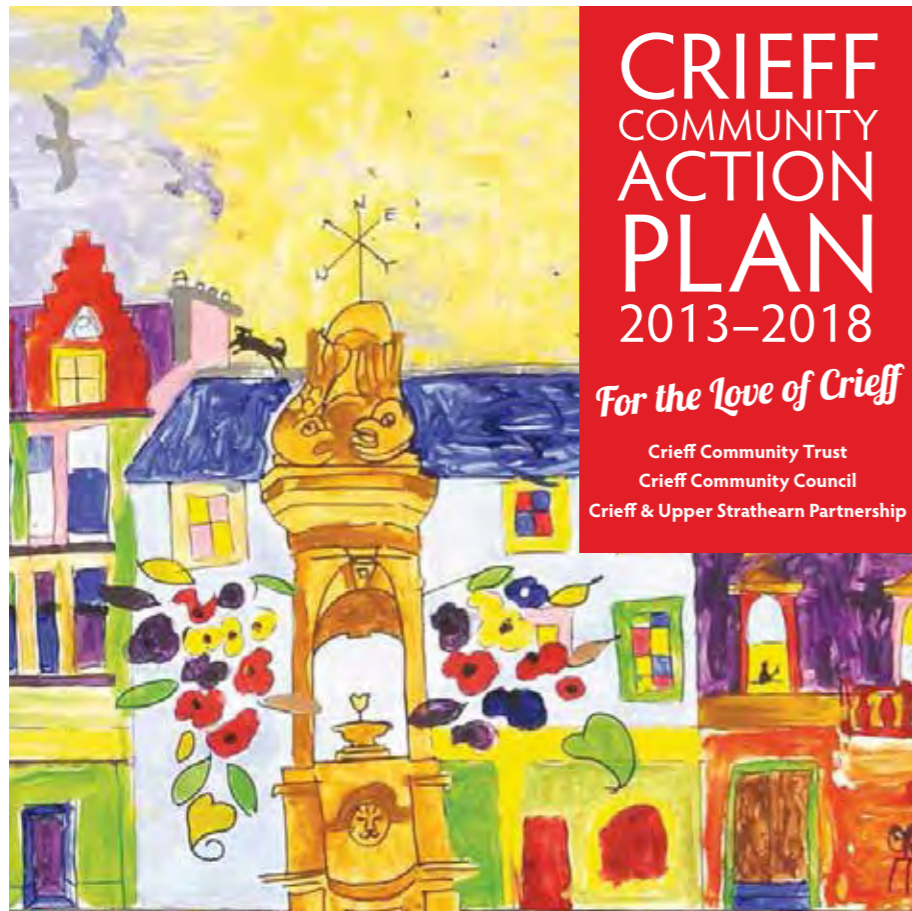
The Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill

The Scottish Government is currently promoting a Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill. This Bill is due to be enacted later this year. Related to Community Empowerment, Scottish Government is also promoting a Land Reform Bill. The provisions within the proposed Empowerment and Land Reform legislation includes greater opportunities for communities to achieve their goals and aspirations through taking independent action and by having their voices heard in the decisions that affect their area. In order to provide the necessary power to local communities it is likely that defined "community bodies" that are properly resourced and funded, will have the ability to acquire local assets and undertake local services. Future sources of public funding are likely to be linked to this agenda. This Charrette, and the proposals that have emerged, demonstrably support that agenda.

Therefore, to exercise community action under this forthcoming legislation there will need to be appropriate community structures, organisations and processes. Community bodies will require support for capacity building and while local volunteers will remain the life blood of local initiatives there nevertheless will need to be appropriate resources to deliver and operate projects. From our discussions, it was clear that the existing community groups were highly dedicated but believed that they were at full capacity through their existing commitments.

If the community wishes to acquire property for any purpose, Crieff already has "community bodies" in place and with the support of its community partners should be in a good position to exercise such opportunities as outlined in the terms of the current Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill. Discussions at the Charrette meeting included a funding pledge for further scoping work from DTA Scotland (Development Trusts Association Scotland) and their Community Ownership Support Service.

Key Recommendations



- 1 Build upon the efforts of existing community project champions to enable a strong coalition of support from people who are willing to engage and help drive the projects forward.
- 2 Assuming (1) can be achieved consider the establishment of a “Town Team” / “Crieff Co-operators” that becomes the hub for organising collective action. It may be that the Crieff Community Trust can help co-ordinate such a hub. This approach was adopted by Neilston with Neilston Development Trust coordinating their “town team” which comprised of a range of public and private stakeholders. The hub is likely to consist of more than one “community body” but its strength would come from working together in a collaborative way to avoid repetition and share resources. The hub through the community bodies would enable access to a variety of funds and act as the vehicle for community co-operative action and provide funding and management capacity
- 3 Such a “Crieff Town Team” entity should engage in a co-operative agreement with all partners and build up critical working relationships with the relevant Council representatives.
- 4 Co-operative action needs a meeting place to congregate, exchange ideas and instigate plans. Clearly, accommodation has to be accessible by the community and affordable therefore this should be located in a visible place in the heart of the community; the centre of Crieff. accommodation ideas were expressed at the Charrette meetings which included, James Square Perth and Kinross Council building, prominent privately owned derelict buildings such as the Drummond Arms, Strathearn Hotel and St Michaels Church Hall. Some of these derelict buildings will be expensive to renovate and despite their current condition, property owners can often have a differing view of their value than a potential purchaser. Therefore, our recommendation is to look for an initial early base to establish the “hub”. Momentum is vital and working on restoration projects will take time. For this reason we recommend as a starting point exploring the potential of sharing space within the Council’s building on St James Square.



Key Recommendations



- 5 Engage and seek co-operation and funding guidance from Development Trust Association Scotland (DTAS) and their Community Ownership Support Service. DTAS has indicated its willingness to provide some scoping funds for Crieff Community Trust to progress their proposals.
- 6 Monitor and engage with Scottish Government and PKC on the enactment of the Community empowerment Bill and subsequent secondary legislation along with any resulting funding initiatives and pilot programmes.
- 7 Engage with good practice Community Trusts to gain knowledge on the best way to undertake community acquisitions and generally operate a community initiative. DTAS will assist in such engagement along with good practice organisations such as Neilston Development Trust who have acquired assets under the Land Reform legislation.



Delivery Table



Project	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	
Townscape Maintenance Programme	○	○	annual spring clean with council support												
Vacant Shop Network		○	○	●	with council support										
Establish Community Hub		○	○	●	with community support										
Shared Surface in The Square					○	○	●								
Public Art Commissions		○	○	○	●	with council support									
Town Wayfinding Strategy		○	○	○	●	with community support									
Car Parking Strategy		○	○	○	●										
Town Centre Lighting Strategy					○	○	●								
Pavement Upgrade					○	○	●								
Improved Street Furniture						○	○	●	with community support						
Drummond Arms Ownership								○	○	○	○	○	○	●	
Funding		○	○	●				○	○	●					
Detailed Urban Design Proposals	○	○	●	with community support				○	○	●					
Prepare Action Plan	○	●	with council support												

Crieff needs a place which is a common forum to facilitate collaborative working between community groups and Perth and Kinross Council



Appendix

Crieff's Surrounding Assets

Regional Visitor Attraction Offer
Crieff Attractions Performance Ranking
VisitScotland 2013

- The Famous Grouse Experience (85,000 Visitors)
- Drummond Gardens (12,000 Visitors)
- Innerpeffray Library (1,900 Visitors)

'Soft' Visitor Attraction Offer
Local attractions that do not provide a structured visitor experience

Parks

- MacRosty Park
- Auchingarrich Wildlife Centre

Leisure Sports

- Crieff Golf Courses (18 holes)
- Crieff Community Campus
- Comrie Croft Mountain Bike Trails
- Lady Mary's Walk

Festivals and Events

- Drovers Tryst
- Crieff Highland Gathering

- > Drummond Castle Gardens
- © Scotland's Gardens 2012
- > Drovers' Tryst Walking Festival
- © Drovers Tryst Festival

Visitors are important to Crieff's local economy. As part of their initial analysis, the Charrette team undertook specialist research on this particular topic.

Current Visitor Numbers¹

Crieff, situated in the Perth and Kinross region of Scotland, has a population of 6,579² with a regional 60 minute visitor market of 195,000.

The region of Perth and Kinross has a population of almost 150,000 with a day trip market that includes a further 45,000 approximately. Within Perthshire, the majority of trips to region are made by people living in Scotland. Despite a decline in visits by domestic tourists between 2012 and 2013, spending by the group nevertheless increased during this period of time while visits by overseas tourist to the area have also increased.

In 2013, UK tourists to Perthshire spent approximately £183 million and made 643,000 trips to the region, 65% of these coming from within Scotland. Overseas visitors made 152,000 trips spending £57 million.

Current Visitor Offer³

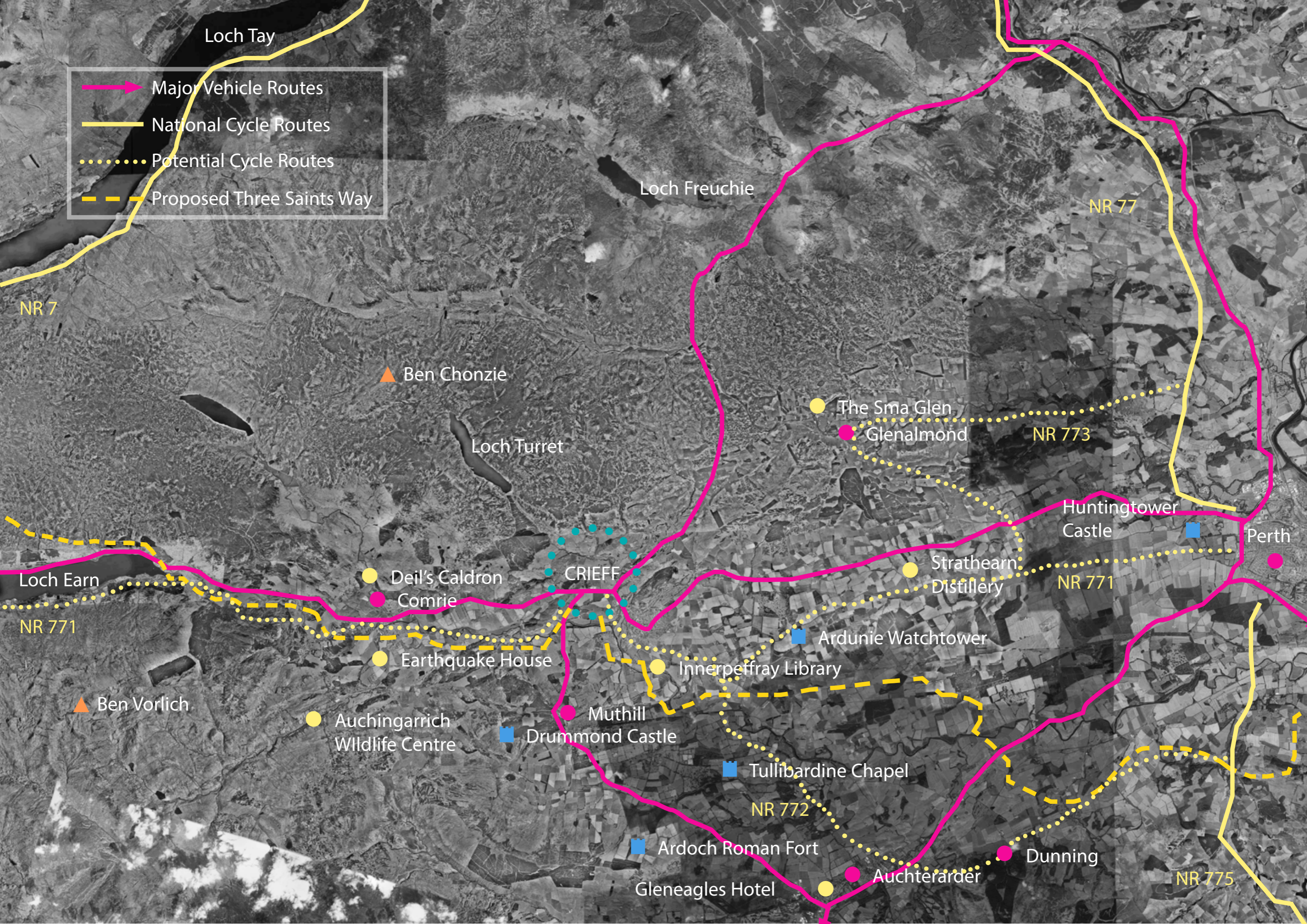
Perthshire's rural areas report significantly higher visitor numbers than the region's urban areas. A number of attractions, particularly those based outdoors, have seen their visitor numbers increase significantly between 2013 and 2014 where ten regional attractions gained over 50,000 visitors in 2014.

Visitor Infrastructure

In Crieff, the current visitor offer is varied with a mix of formal and informal attractions and events, with high quality arts, craft and eating opportunities. However, few of these are located in the town centre. Those located in Crieff are frequently on the fringe of the town and several are some distance from the town centre. The Famous Grouse Experience at Glenturret Distillery is an example of this, as a peripheral visitor attraction with a significant number of visits annually. Crieff Hydro is the town's other major attraction, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that interaction between hotel guests and the town centre is limited and that there is a desire from within the town to develop this.

1 VisitScotland 2013
2 Census 2011
3 The Moffat Centre Visitor Attraction Monitor





- Major Vehicle Routes
- National Cycle Routes
- Potential Cycle Routes
- Proposed Three Saints Way

NR 7

Loch Tay

Loch Freuchie

NR 77

▲ Ben Chonzie

Loch Turret

● The Sma Glen

● Glenalmond

NR 773

Loch Earn

NR 771

● Deil's Caldron

● Comrie

CRIEFF

● Strathearn Distillery

Huntingtower Castle

Perth

NR 771

■ Ardunie Watchtower

● Earthquake House

● Innerpefferay Library

▲ Ben Vorlich

● Auchingarrich Wildlife Centre

■ Drummond Castle

● Muthill

NR 772

■ Tullibardine Chapel

■ Ardoch Roman Fort

● Gleneagles Hotel

● Aughterarder

● Dunning

NR 775

Appendix

Crieff's Local Assets

Activities

There are a number of events already taking place in Crieff and an enhanced programme would both attract additional visitors and enhance those visitors who are already in the area. The physical improvements in the Town Centre should be complemented by the development of a distinctive retail offer based on the Arts and Crafts facilities already existing in the town, and particularly in the town centre. This could include initiatives such as Arts and Craft Trails through the Town, supplemented with a range of Arts and Craft events, activities and markets.

Key Aims

While the day-trip market for the area is significant, the number of domestic visitors to Perthshire has declined in recent years, the length of stay and levels of expenditure for both overseas tourists and domestic tourists have either increased or declined to a lesser degree. Crieff has a considerable local visitor offer which combines these popular visitor attractions with a strong offer of 'soft' visitor options, as well as opportunities for adventure and outdoors experiences.

Crieff has access to all visitor markets due to the existence of Crieff Hydro and leading local attractions. The specific markets that should be targeted include local residents, families, couples and groups. Based on the visitor assessment, it is recommended that the primary focus should be on the day-trip market and visitors staying in Perth and Kinross.

To enhance the visitor economy of Crieff, the focus should be on the following aims:

- To establish Crieff as a destination for day trippers and tourist visitors throughout the year
- To enhance the town centre experience for local residents and visitors
- To promote a distinctive identify for Crieff in the day tripper and tourist markets
- To promote the town centre and local formal and informal attractions to key visitor markets
- To establish community digital and social media networks
- To establish links with Crieff Hydro, Crieff Visitor Centre, and Famous Grouse Experience visitors to encourage them to visit an enhanced town centre, with improved information points and way-finding initiatives
- To establish a distinctive events programme designed specifically to encourage additional visits to the town

> Crieff Country Market
© Hubertus Game 2012
> Lady Mary's Walk
© Andrew Llanwarne 2006



-  Major Vehicle Routes
-  Existing Footpaths
-  Proposed Footpaths
-  Potential Cycle Routes



 The Famous Grouse Experience

 Crieff Golf Course

 Macrosty Park

 Crieff Hydro


 Highlandman Footpath Link

 Lady Mary's Walk

 Community Campus

 To Lochearnhead NR 771 Cycle Route


 Crieff Visitor Centre

 Perth/ Gleneagles Station NR 771/772 Cycle Route

 Drummond Park and Muthill Footpath Loop

 Innerpefferay Library

 Three Saints Way Footpath

 Drummond Park



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