

# 4. Transport and Movement

## Access to the Town Centre

Access to the Town Centre is currently dominated by provision for the car. A significant proportion of Town Centre space is given over to on and off-street parking spaces and traffic still has access into the heart of the Town Centre – most notably along the heavily trafficked A6 which splits the centre in two, but also in areas like Bedford Square and Devonshire Square.

In a town like Loughborough good access for the private car and adequate and well-located parking provision are essential components in the health and vitality of the Town Centre and its attractiveness compared to competing centres. However, only about half of all journeys into the centre are made by the private car. Therefore, access to jobs, shopping and leisure facilities by public transport, cycling and walking needs to be improved to help reduce congestion and provide better travel choices for all – especially those without regular use of a car, and to promote social inclusion.

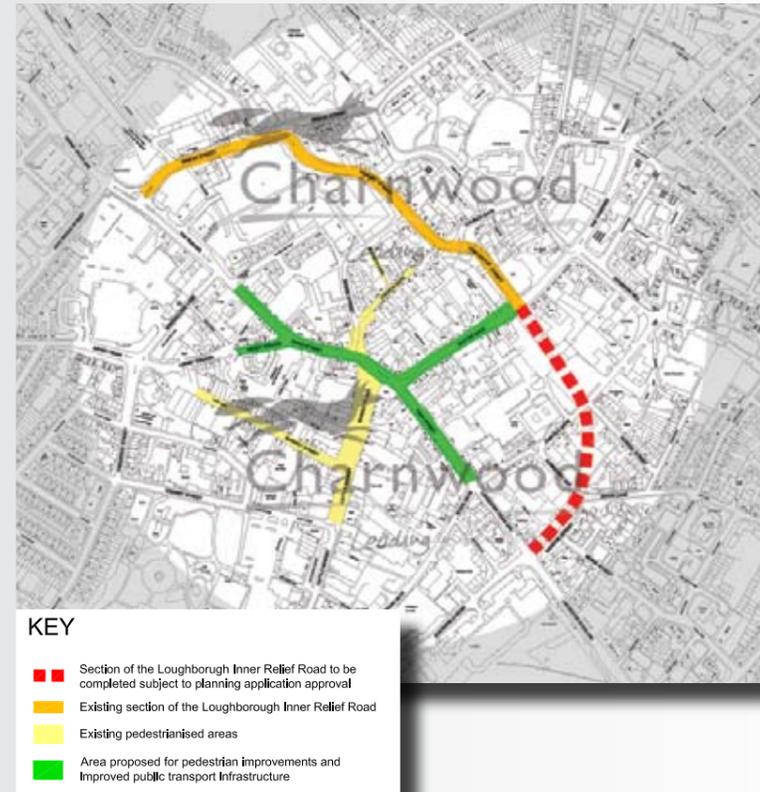
Key to this is the implementation of the Loughborough Inner Relief Road. Now a firm proposal of Leicestershire County Council's Local Transport Plan for implementation in 2009/10, the new stretch of road will enable through traffic to be removed from the A6 through the centre of town reducing congestion and providing the opportunity for enhanced bus access and facilities and a massive improvement in safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. The main elements of the proposals are illustrated in the following plans.

The Town Centre will continue to require levels of car parking in keeping with the size of the centre and the appropriate level of provision has recently been reviewed in a separate study by White Young Green to ensure that overall provision meets the changing requirements of the Town Centre.

The new Inner Relief Road will have a significant impact on traffic circulation within the central area, but it will also have a major environmental impact. The Masterplan will need to consider the character of this new road to ensure that it does

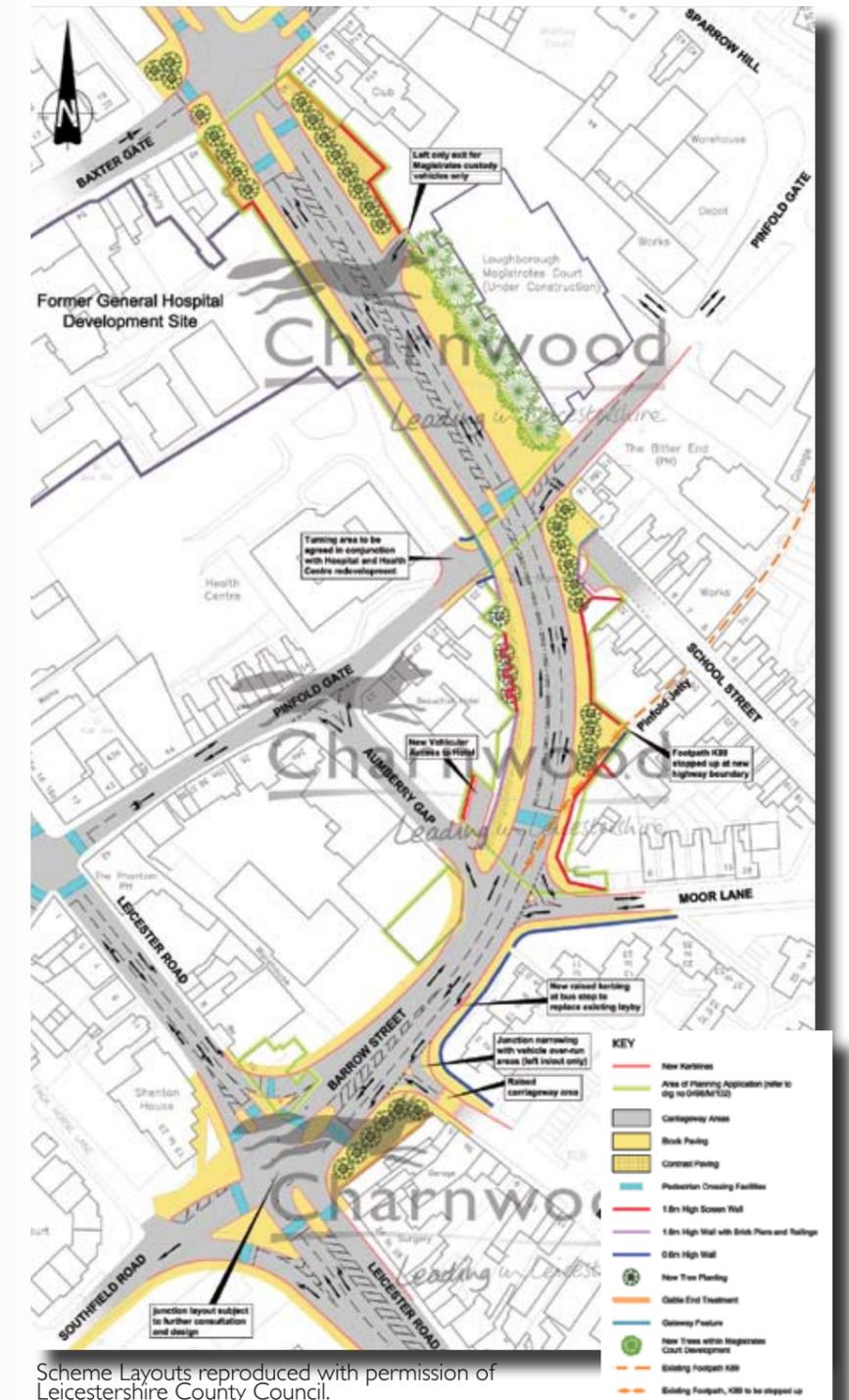
not become a barrier to movement. It needs to be designed in a way that allows access to key development opportunities but promotes sensitive and positive development adjacent to the road.

Plan 4 - General Scheme Layout



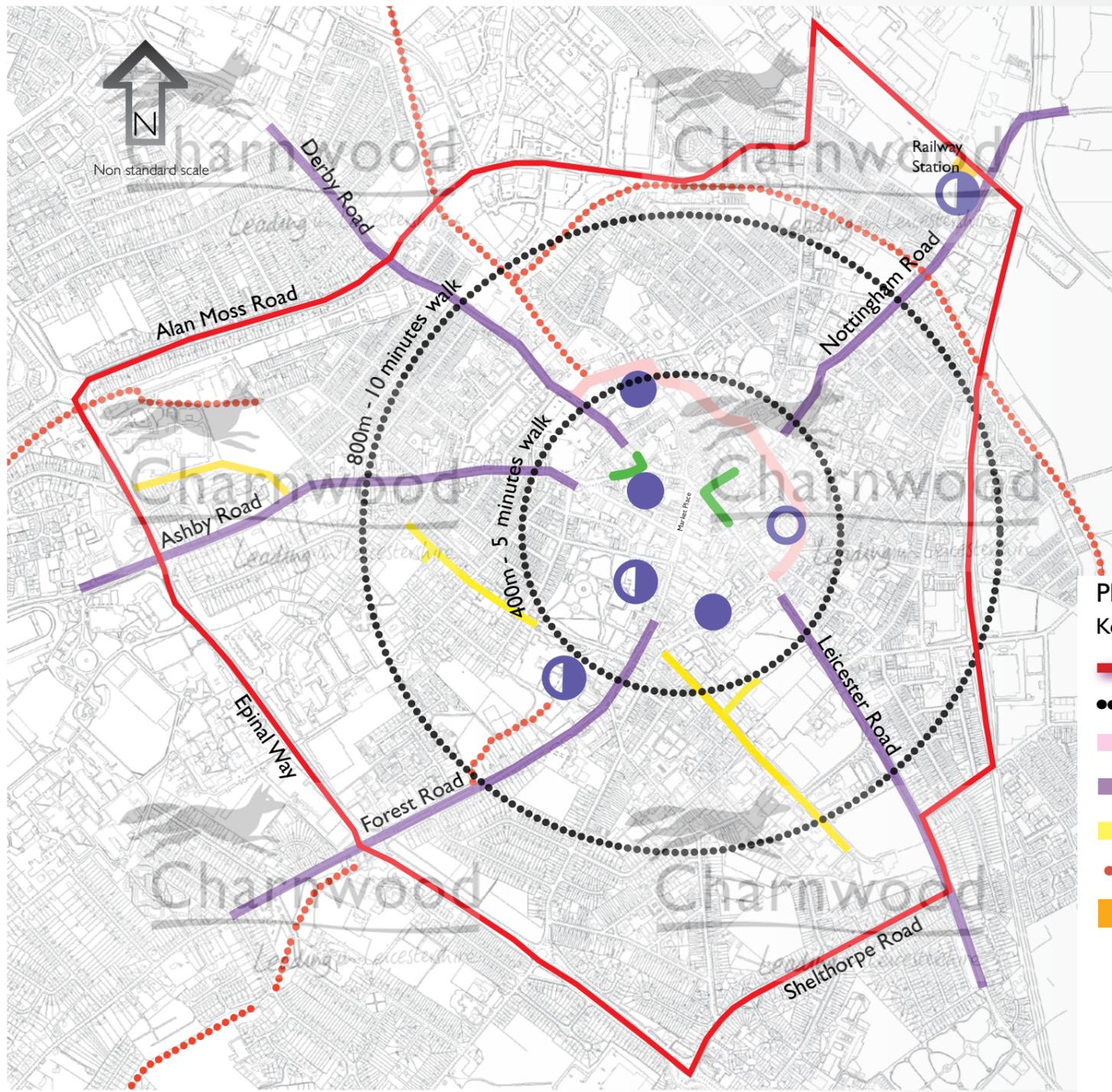
The Vision for Loughborough Town Centre can only be realised fully if the inner relief road is completed allowing traffic to be removed from the A6. This will facilitate medium term development of the Town Centre, paving the way for longer term development and regeneration. The scheme will allow Loughborough to maintain its competitive role at the centre of the Three Cities sub region as major transport and other infrastructure investment takes place in Derby, Leicester and Nottingham. Furthermore, improved bus interchange facilities in the Town Centre will enhance public transport services between Loughborough railway station, the Town Centre, East Midlands Airport and other destinations.

Plan 5 - Loughborough Inner Relief Road Scheme Layout



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The main aims of the transport and movement proposals are therefore to:-

- Improve and upgrade existing pedestrian routes into the Town Centre and Identify new ones
- Ensure that appropriate provision is made so that cycling into town is encouraged and facilitated
- Ensure the provision of high quality and accessible services for bus users and operators
- Ensure integration between various elements of public transport – buses, trains, taxis
- Rationalise surface and on-street car parking within the Town Centre whilst ensuring adequate safe multi-storey car parking at strategic points around the Town Centre

**Plan 6 - Access to Town Centre**  
Key

- Study Area
- Walking distances from Town Centre
- Inner Relief Road
- Key Road Routes
- Existing Walking Routes
- Off Road Cycle Routes
- Railway Station
- Existing Car Park
- Existing Car Park improved or extended
- Proposed Car Park
- Proposed Bus Hub

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# 4. Transport and Movement



Looking towards Bedford Square from John Storer House

The main proposals for Cycling and Walking are:

- A new pedestrian link / public realm area in the Former Hospital/Aumberry Gap site between the High Street and the new link road and across the relief road to the Magistrates Court and on to the Railway Station.
- Improved access and facilities for pedestrians and cyclists at Loughborough Station.
- Improved pedestrian links between Southfield Road, Wood Gate, Devonshire and Bedford Squares through to Queen's Park and Market Place.
- Cycle parking to be retained in the Town Centre and replaced where lost due to development or road proposals.
- It is recommended that cyclists are permitted to share bus priority lanes to bring cyclists as close as possible to the core of the Town Centre.
- Improving pedestrian and cycle links to the railway station including the provision of pedestrian and Toucan crossings on desire lines.



Market Place

The main Public Transport proposals are:

- Provision of new high-quality bus interchange facilities in the High Street/Baxter Gate area and in The Rushes/Derby Square area with state of the art bus stop design and real time information.
- Improved public transport interchange facilities for buses and taxis at Loughborough Station.
- Bus only routes along Swan Street / High Street, Baxter Gate with an eastbound bus lane along Wood Gate.
- Increasing pedestrian permeability throughout the Town Centre will improve walking times to bus stops.
- Improved signage and street lighting to and from the railway station and within the new bus hubs.
- Improved provision for taxi ranks and access.

# 4. Transport and Movement

The main Traffic Management elements of the Masterplan are:

- **The completion of the Inner Relief Road with associated junction improvements on existing and proposed sections of the road to manage new traffic patterns resulting from A6 traffic diverting away from the Town Centre.**
- **Revised access arrangements using Aumberry Gap and Pinfold Gate to serve mixed use development on the former Hospital/Aumberry Gap Opportunity Site with one way access into the development from the relief road via Aumberry Gap and two way out access from the development to the relief road via Pinfold Gate and Leicester Road.**
- **Possible conversion of Southfield Road from one-way to two-way to provide a direct strategic route to the relief road and to divert through traffic from the central area of the Town Centre.**
- **Wood Gate remaining as two eastbound lanes including one bus lane that continues to the Bus Hub on High Street.**
- **The removal of through traffic from Bedford Square.**
- **Restricted traffic access into Wards End, and Devonshire Square.**
- **Servicing access to be retained where necessary to serve the Town Centre with limited access times in bus and pedestrian priority areas.**

The proposed changes to Southfields Road, Wood Gate and Wards end will have a significant impact on local traffic patterns and may reduce some of the traffic relief expected from the Inner Relief Road on Frederick Street and Browns Lane.

Significant modifications will be required at the Southfield Road/ Leicester Road junction and access arrangements along Southfield Road and Wood Gate will need to be carefully evaluated through future traffic modelling.



Leicester Road / Southfield Road Junction

The main proposals for Town Centre Car Parking are:

- **An overall level of Town Centre parking in line with the findings of the Loughborough Parking Study, with an increase in strategically located multi-storey provision and a reduction in on-street and surface provision.**
- **A pattern of parking provision which ensures sufficient variety in terms of type, location and control to meet the needs of different groups and to cater for demand at different times of the day.**
- **A review of on and off street car parking in the Wards End, Bedford Square, Devonshire Square area to allow extensive public realm improvements to revitalise the area.**

- **A rationalisation of parking provision at Granby Street car park and Charnwood Leisure Centre to ensure appropriate strategic parking provision in this part of town with improved links to the Town Centre on foot. This is likely to involve the removal of surface parking at Granby Street and its replacement with multi-level parking as part of the proposed Devonshire Square Opportunity Site redevelopment together with improved provision at the Leisure Centre, possibly on land fronting Brown's Lane.**
- **Access to revised parking at Granby Street from Packe Street with egress via Granby Street / Frederick Street.**
- **A new strategic multi-storey car park as part of the redevelopment of the Former General Hospital/Aumberry Gap Opportunity Site, accessed from Pinfold Gate and Aumberry Gap.**
- **Potential redevelopment of the Southfields Road surface car park.**
- **Variable Messaging Signs (VMS) to be located at key traffic entry points to the Town Centre to enable the management of Town Centre Car Park spaces and reduce unnecessary circulation by vehicles searching for car parking spaces.**
- **A move to “pay on foot” parking at key multi-storey car parks.**



Beehive Lane Car Park



# 4. Transport and Movement

## Movement within the Town Centre

Loughborough has a good existing network of connected spaces and routes for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, which give the town considerable permeability. However, outside the pedestrianised area greatest priority is often given to vehicles with very little space and inconvenient routes provided for pedestrians and cyclists. Proposals for the public realm and new development will need to improve this situation by attending to how people get around by foot, bicycle, public transport and the car – and in that order. Particular attention will be paid to the needs of the mobility impaired. The scope for improvements includes the widening of footways and reduction in the amount of through traffic along the A6 and through Bedford Square, Wards End and Devonshire Square in order to increase priority for pedestrians and cyclists.

As part of the development of large sites, the provision of well connected pedestrian routes will be required and should be designed to be convenient, attractive, comfortable and conspicuous. Similarly clear, direct routes should be provided for cyclists. New routes should integrate with existing routes and movement patterns to connect to the wider area, in particular towards main streets and public facilities.

Public transport facilities should be designed as an integral part of the street layout, and public transport stops should be located within minimal walking distance from the key Town Centre facilities and uses.

New development should contribute to the existing fine grain network of pedestrian and cycle routes, in order to increase pedestrian convenience and encourage cycling and walking.

At present the A6 passes directly through the Town Centre, separating important shopping and business areas and hampering movement for pedestrians and cyclists. It carries around 12,000 vehicles a day and there are more than 20,000 pedestrian crossing movements. From 2000 to 2005 there were 87 road casualties between the terminal points of the relief road – half of which were pedestrians or cyclists.

The one-way system operating around the central area operates reasonably efficiently for car traffic but can be a barrier to walkers, cyclists and those with mobility problems when using these routes or when crossing them. The one-way system has been reviewed in order to give greater priority to pedestrians and public transport.

The key to improved movement and access within the Town Centre is the removal of through traffic to the Inner Relief Road and the extension of pedestrianisation across the A6, effectively linking the two halves of the Town Centre. In addition, the Masterplan creates a linked system of new and improved public spaces which means that, within the central area, the pedestrian has priority over all other forms of transport and can move between the key arrival and destination points without having to cross a major traffic route.

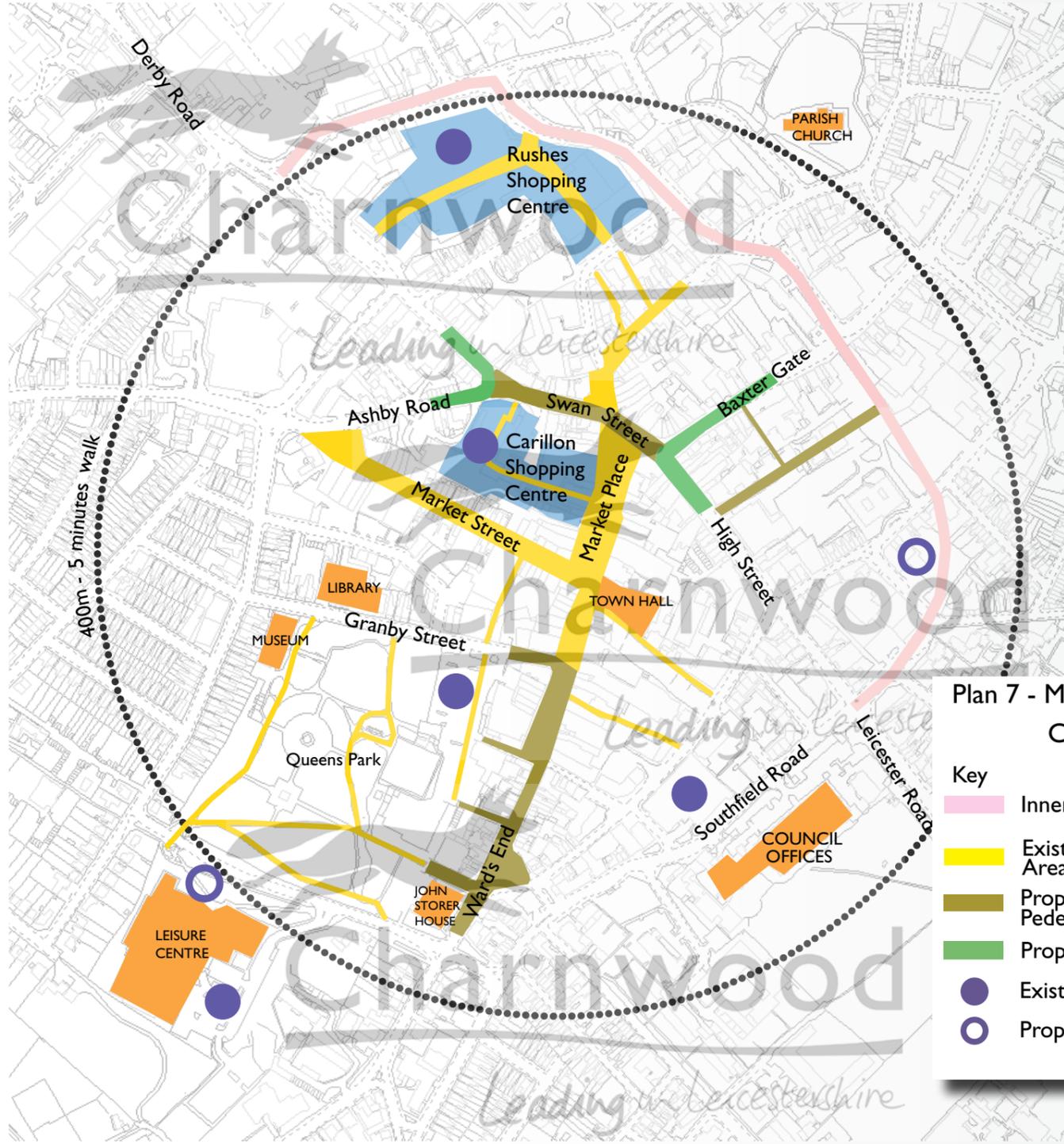


Town Centre split by the A6

The main proposals for movement within the Town Centre are:

- **Removal of traffic from Swan Street / High Street / Market Place (except for southbound buses and delivery vehicles at restricted times for a trial period of one year) will maximise the traffic free areas within the central area and reduce pedestrian conflict.**
- **Extension of pedestrianised areas at Swan Street / High Street/Market Place and Devonshire Square/Granby Street with part-pedestrianisation of Bedford Square.**
- **Provision of cycle parking at key points in the pedestrianised areas.**
- **Rationalisation of service access within the Town Centre pursued through agreements with developers and retailers.**
- **Consideration will be given to all user groups including the mobility impaired, elderly and young families in the design of public spaces. The Masterplan envisages an increase in the total number of blue badge car parking spaces available located within easy access of key areas within the Town Centre.**
- **Development of a network of Town Walks which will encourage pedestrian movement.**
- **Improved pedestrian permeability throughout the Town Centre with new and improved pedestrian links along desire lines between existing and proposed development.**

# 4. Transport and Movement



Non standard scale

**Plan 7 - Movement within Town Centre**

**Key**

- Inner Relief Road
- Existing Pedestrianised Areas / Routes
- Proposed Pedestrian / Pedestrian Preference Areas
- Proposed Bus Hubs
- Existing Car Park
- Proposed Car Park

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## Town Walks

It is proposed that a series of strategic walks be developed to help link together key areas of the town. These walks will help to define the Town Centre areas and connect existing and proposed development. They will also link existing and proposed public open spaces.

Design principles will be established for each of the walks to indicate the typical character of the routes. The detailed design will include development of standardised signage and interpretation along each of the walks to provide orientation, links to other parts of the town and other walks, and historical information. The use of distinctive street furniture, lighting elements, paving and landscaping details to highlight walks will also be part of the design approach. Developers will be encouraged to create additional open spaces for either public or private use adjacent to the strategic walks.

The proposed walks include:

### The Parks Walk

This walk will link the key existing green spaces on the edges of the Town Centre. These spaces are Southfields Park, Queen's Park and the Parish Green, which comprises the churchyard to All Saints, the Rectory Garden and Wildlife Garden. The route will also connect to the Wharf and the Grand Union Canal.

### The Canal Walk

Recognition and enhancement of the waterside walks from the Wharf alongside the Loughborough Navigation and Grand Union Canal is proposed.

### Interest and Activity Walks

A number of routes could be identified to celebrate the Town's heritage and public art interest, and to create sports/fitness trails, including connections to the University campus.

