



TOWN CENTRE DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Kirkcaldy

October 2015



The objective of
the placemaking
agenda is to
**CREATE
SUCCESSFUL
PLACES**

Placemaking is enshrined in planning and development principles and policies across Scotland and Fife. At the Scottish Government level, the National Planning Framework, Designing Places, Designing Streets and Creating Places comprise a suite of policy documents that set the placemaking agenda for Scotland.

This is taken down to a Fife context through policies within the Development Plan and planning policy guidance “**Making Fife’s Places**”. This will continue through the emerging Local Development Plan.

Good quality, successful places will be assessed against the following principles, as set out by Fife Council in its **Making Fife’s Places Planning Policy Guidance:**

Distinctive - Design that makes the best use of site attributes and respects and enhances the character of surrounding buildings, streets and green networks to create places that have a sense of identity.

Safe and Pleasant - Attractive, well managed and appropriately scaled places designed to encourage activity and overlooked by surrounding buildings and active frontages. With clear definition of public and private spaces, where parking does not dominate and there is natural traffic calming.

Easy to move around and beyond - Street design that considers all users and is well connected into existing movement networks, putting people and place before vehicular movement and meeting policy in Scottish Government’s Designing Streets.

Welcoming - Places that encourage social interaction, where it is easy for people to find their way around and access local services in a walkable neighbourhood.

Adaptable - Places that can support a mix of compatible activities with built in flexibility so that they can adapt to changes in the future.

Resource Efficient - Development designed to make best use of resources, achieve high environmental performance and minimise impacts on the built or natural environment.

The process of placemaking is complex. For new development to create places that are successful requires thinking beyond the boundary of a proposed development, and a proper assessment of how development will relate and respond to its wider surroundings.

Placemaking is more than just creating better design of buildings and public spaces. It is about understanding the nature and character of places, the interaction of buildings, spaces & movement, and how they are (or can be) used by people. Proposals should then respond to this. Schemes that are parachuted into an area, taken from other, quite different places, and that do not have regard for local circumstances and characteristics, will quite often fail.

“Meet the requirements of any design briefs or development frameworks prepared or required for the site.”

This document identifies design and/or development opportunities, or other interventions, that may enhance the role, function, attractiveness and, therefore, **success of Kirkcaldy town centre**. The issues are portrayed in a concise, graphical and easy to digest format.

This Framework document offers firstly, a strategic overview of town centre wide issues, before drilling down in more detail to look at the town centre as a place of 4 Quarters. The analysis of these areas examines the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and provides an Action Plan alongside an overall concept or vision to help steer the thinking about future projects.

This document is a **concept-based framework**. It is not a technical document with detailed solutions to all the problems. It captures the essence or ideas for actions, and displays them in a way that may help stimulate discussion or debate.

Or, in other words, the document can be seen as a vehicle for establishing a direction of travel for the area and **setting the context** for detailed project work.

The Local Development Plan for the area - **FifePlan**, sets out the expectation within **Policy 1**, Part C(6), that development proposals should:

In addition, Policy 6 - **Town Centres First**, sets out the Council's policy strategy for considering development proposals within our town centres.

The concepts and proposals within this document are consistent with the policy strategy established within FifePlan. Where relevant, FifePlan proposal references are included within this framework for ease of cross referencing.

There are 5 sections to this study:

1. Strategic Overview

The 4 Quarters:

2. The Waterfront

3. Social Quarter

4. Merchants' Quarter

5. Cultural & Heritage Quarter

Within the analysis of each of the 4 Quarters, there is an assessment of the strengths, the issues, and opportunities alongside an overall concept/vision to help steer future discussions on the delivery of projects to make improvements to the town centre over a variety of timescales.

TOWN CENTRE DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Strategic Overview



Strengths

KEY POINTS:

- Signature buildings help provide the town centre with character and identity.
- The new leisure centre provides an additional signature building - of character and place, and its orientation helps to activate the Waterfront in its location.
- Dramatic views and glimpses of the sea/coast add to a sense of place.

- A number of pedestrian links, particularly from the bus station side of the centre, help connect people into the retail core.
- The Green Corridor provides an attractive, safe and comfortable environment for people, connecting train/bus stations, and onwards to the High St
- There is a wide range of car parking options available serving most areas of the town centre.
- The wider movement network around the town centre 'core' is very permeable for vehicles and pedestrians, offering a choice of routes.
- The pedestrianised zone offers an attractive, comfortable space for people.
- The town square, close to the heart of the town centre, provides an accessible event space set within an attractive built environment.

- Town Centre 'Signature' Buildings
- CP Car Parks Serving Town Centre
- BS Bus Station
- TS Train Station
- ⋯ Pedestrianised Area
- ⋈ Permeable Movement Network
- Key Views into and out of Town Centre
- ↔ Pedestrian Links
- ⊞ Town Square
- Green Corridor

KEY POINTS:

- Prominent buildings such as the Postings and the multi storey car parks reduce the townscape quality within town centre
- Key connections from the bus station/Postings area to the High St are unclear and/or are substandard in terms of townscape value.
- The Waterfront environment for people is substandard. The area is dominated by infrastructure serving vehicular movement. As a result, key pedestrian crossing points are difficult, time consuming and/or not pleasant spaces for people.

- The public realm along the Promenade - which serves the regional tourism asset - the Fife Coastal Path, offers limited townscape value, and presents a sense of isolation from the wider town centre.
- On one of the most prominent streets in Kirkcaldy - The Esplanade, there is limited people activity or building fronts facing this street.
- Key views to the towns' most important natural asset - the coast - are fractured in places, or not used effectively to create a strong character and identity for the town centre.

St Brycedale Ave

High Street

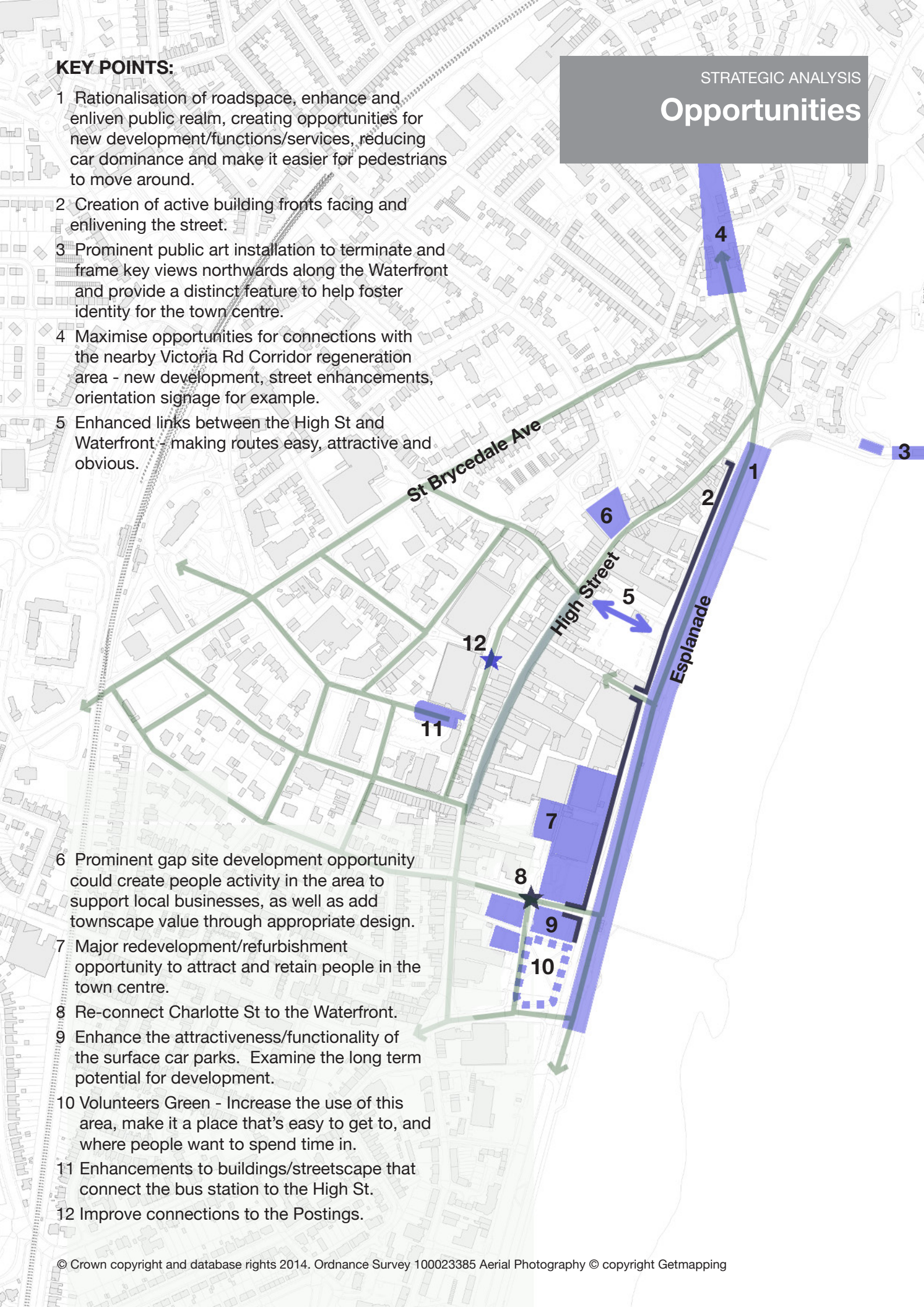
Esplanade

- Termination of Green Corridor - unclear links to TC
- Pedestrian 'nodes' unclear, poor quality
- Key pedestrian route from bus station
- ★ Movement and view fractured by road layout
- Key crossing points
- ⋯ Street frontage with very limited activity
- Under used spaces
- Prominent vacant building
- Multi storey car parks - prominent buildings but with negative impact on townscape

Opportunities

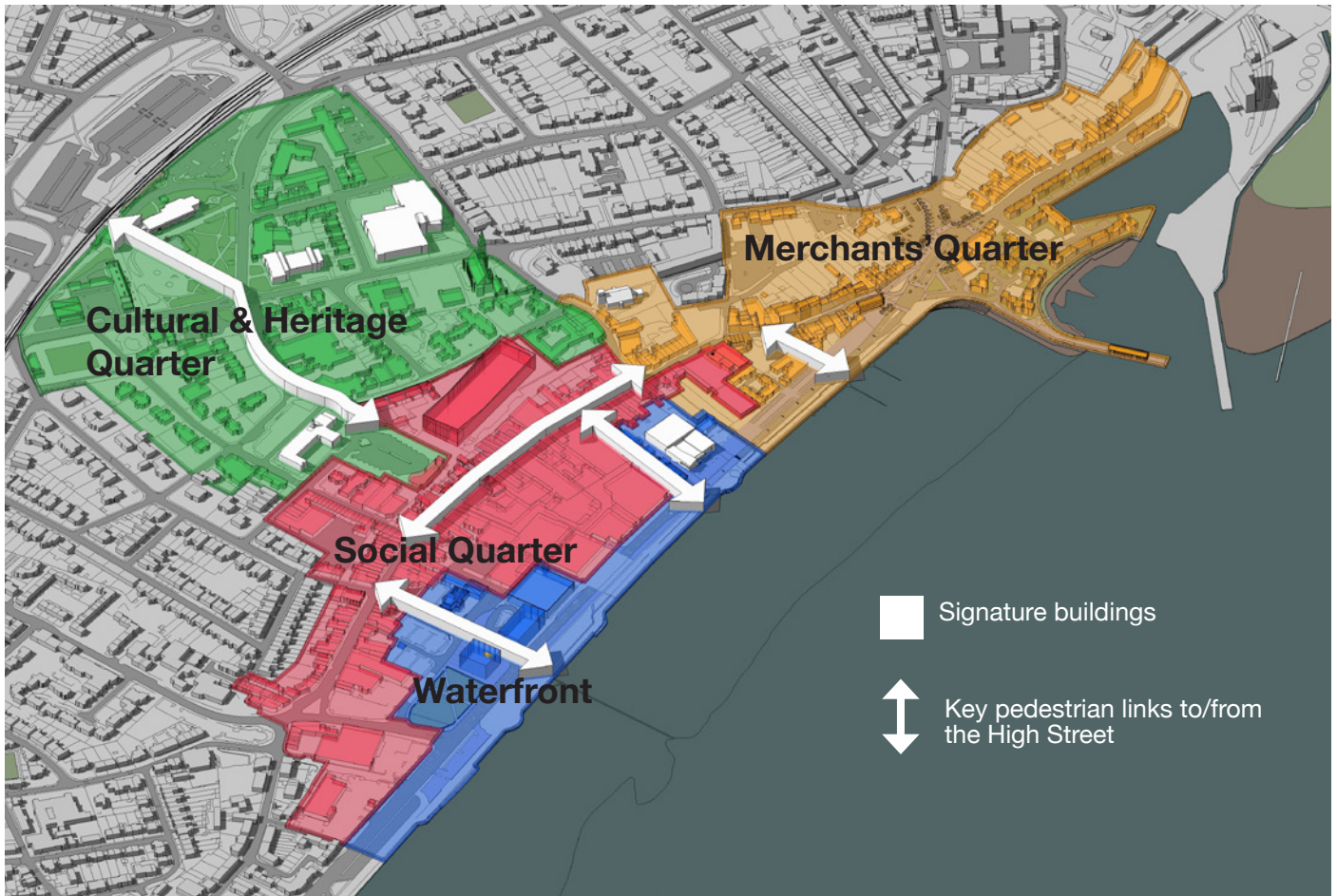
KEY POINTS:

- 1 Rationalisation of roadscape, enhance and enliven public realm, creating opportunities for new development/functions/services, reducing car dominance and make it easier for pedestrians to move around.
- 2 Creation of active building fronts facing and enlivening the street.
- 3 Prominent public art installation to terminate and frame key views northwards along the Waterfront and provide a distinct feature to help foster identity for the town centre.
- 4 Maximise opportunities for connections with the nearby Victoria Rd Corridor regeneration area - new development, street enhancements, orientation signage for example.
- 5 Enhanced links between the High St and Waterfront - making routes easy, attractive and obvious.
- 6 Prominent gap site development opportunity could create people activity in the area to support local businesses, as well as add townscape value through appropriate design.
- 7 Major redevelopment/refurbishment opportunity to attract and retain people in the town centre.
- 8 Re-connect Charlotte St to the Waterfront.
- 9 Enhance the attractiveness/functionality of the surface car parks. Examine the long term potential for development.
- 10 Volunteers Green - Increase the use of this area, make it a place that's easy to get to, and where people want to spend time in.
- 11 Enhancements to buildings/streetscape that connect the bus station to the High St.
- 12 Improve connections to the Postings.



Kirkcaldy Town Centre Quarters

The four quarters in the town centre



TOWN CENTRE DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The Waterfront



THE WATERFRONT Strengths

Coast/Beach - the major asset of the area. There is an accessible beach, impressive views across the Forth, access to the wider Fife Coastal Path and its location is very close to the Core retail area, and wider town centre.



The Esplanade, A921, is an important vehicular route to and through Kirkcaldy town centre. The spaces and buildings on either side of the Esplanade are very prominent and any offer they provide for the visitor can be clearly seen. There are easy to access car parks just off the Esplanade, and so this arterial route has the potential to feed large numbers of people into any new opportunity or development (one recent example being the new Leisure Centre).



Footway along the Prom - this is a pedestrian environment with stunning coastal and seaward views. It is also the route of the Fife Coastal Path. There is great potential to draw people to this area, and keep them there with a variety of enhanced spaces and/or new leisure activities, alongside opportunities to increase the permeability of this area with the adjacent High St.



Not many buildings provide frontages directly onto the Esplanade area, but the few that do, contribute positively to the streetscape and offers people movement and activity to the street.



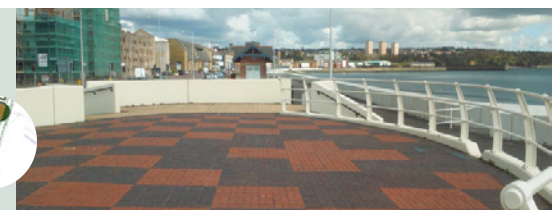
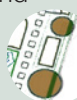
Car parking - there are prominent and easily accessible car parking opportunities in this area, serving the Esplanade area as well as the High St. These car parks are of different formats - multi-storey and surface, and are located on both sides of the road to maximise opportunities for drivers to access them.



The bus station is located close to the Waterfront area, being less than a five minute walk to the Esplanade, offering the opportunity for large numbers of people to move to and from this area.



A number of 'social spaces' are located along the Promenade as part of the footway. These can act as meeting places, or places to sit and enjoy the view.





Volunteers Green - a green oasis in a grey and blue environment. A soft urban space with potential for enhancements to its appearance and function to attract more people to use and experience this space.



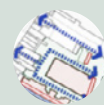
Vehicles can also permeate the wider area from the Waterfront, allowing greater connectivity between the range of town centre services and functions on offer.



Low key pedestrian entrance to the Mercat Centre - this allows pedestrian movement both ways between the retail core and the Waterfront areas.



Pedestrian movement routes - either side of the Mercat 'complex', the Waterfront area is well served with pedestrian routes connecting to the High St environment.



The Esplanade A921. This road forms a visual and physical barrier between the waterfront and any activity on the street side of the road and to the High St beyond. To integrate the waterfront, with its public realm and beach environment, and building activities on the street side, these barriers need to be removed, and possibly additional uses/services/functions of the public realm on the coastal side be encouraged to be a further draw for people movement.



Public realm - this consists of car parking areas, footways, including the Coastal Path, and other public space. There is a sense of isolation and remoteness from the town centre, as well as the fact that these spaces are underused. This is most likely due to limited visual and/or difficult physical connections to the wider town centre.



Existing social spaces are not well used. They are well connected along the Promenade, but are not easy to get to from the High Street area due to the presence of the 4 lanes of the A921. This disconnection from the vitality of the High St may contribute to the lack of use and the sense of isolation within these spaces.



The existing surface level car parks are screened at their boundaries by brick walls and hedges. This enclosure reduces any sense of comfort and can contribute to a perceptual lack of security. There is limited overlooking due to the enclosed nature of the car parks.

Overall, the car parks feel detached and isolated from visual and physical connections to the High St and Waterfront areas.



Vacant buildings with a prominent waterfront location.



Buildings of low townscape quality.



Planters screen pedestrian routes, creating spaces that have poor visual connections with surrounding spaces, with a subsequent reduction in the sense of safety/comfort. This may influence people behaviour and contribute to the current low level of pedestrian use.

Natural movement routes up through Charlotte Street are blocked by walls.





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Inactive building elevations that do not contribute positively to the 'liveliness' of the waterfront environment.



Volunteers Green - underused, uninspiring, little sense of place or identity, exposed - a wasted asset?



The historic street pattern - and natural movement route - has been fractured at this location, and movement is diverted away from the natural direction to the waterfront. Creates a confusing environment.





Waterfront Quarter: Overview



Charlotte Street Link & New Development Opportunity



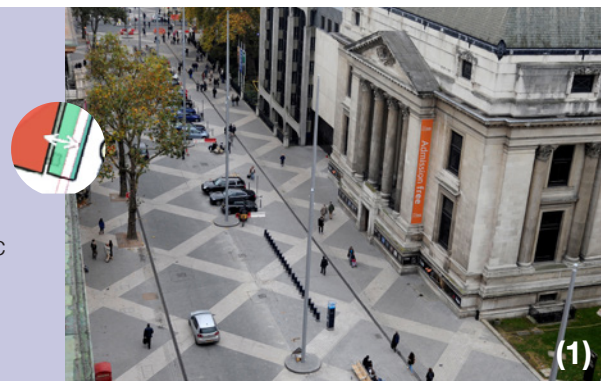
Rationalised carriageway. Opportunity to release land for other uses e.g. public realm, development opportunities, car parking.

Vision - creation of an open, attractive space that links the shore to activity on the street side, with active building fronts running the length of the Esplanade in this area - making it easy for people to move, attractive, providing a range of services/functions, reducing the perception of barriers to movement to the coast, reducing the sense of car dominance, and providing more space for people.



Public realm enhancements to key buildings can improve their setting, visual prominence and increase people activity.

Possibilities to encroach into the existing carriageway to provide an appropriate setting for buildings with a high level of people movement. For those buildings facing the waterfront, it is important to help facilitate movement to the coast - this could be helped by an assessment of surface materials, with one approach being the public realm materials 'flowing' from the buildings to the coastal edge to give the impression of a seamless transition, rather than one that is dissected by a hard traffic dominated space.



Opportunity for the creation of social spaces and/or visual markers (eg lighting, art feature, or small building(s)) that either focusses views from the High St area or, where located in front of key buildings, can provide other services/facilities. These social spaces could include cafe kiosks, meeting space, temporary gallery space and/or space to spend time in next to the sea. These spaces can spill out on to the rationalised carriageway area to maximise this public realm opportunity and reduce the perception of distance and separateness between the shore and the street sides, as well as facilitate easier access /crossings.



Volunteers Green - opportunity to increase its value as a green 'oasis' within the town centre, by enhancing pedestrian routes to and through the site, and re-examining boundary treatments, footpaths, planting structure and links to nearby redevelopment opportunities.

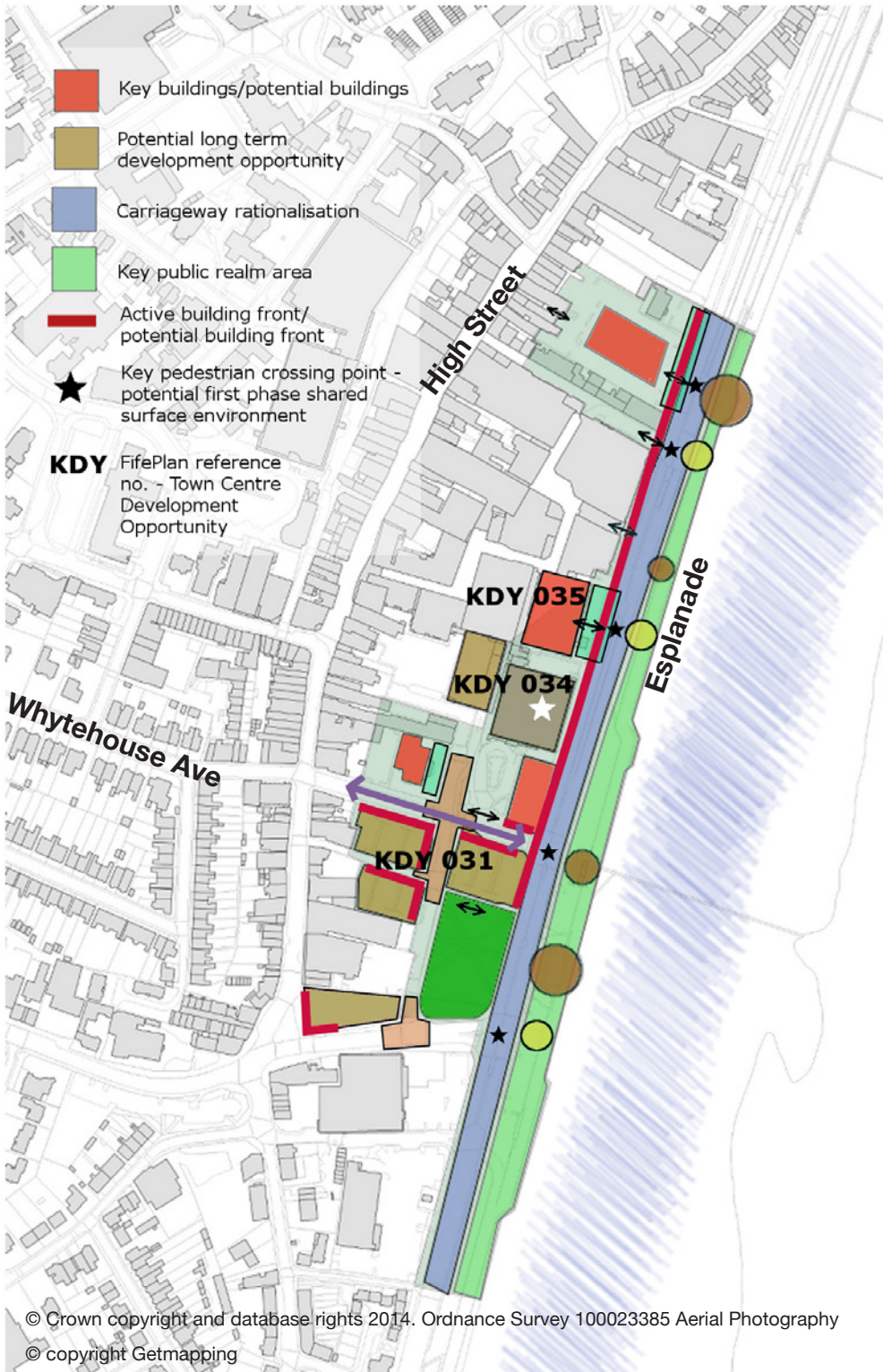


Opportunity to reintroduce the historic street pattern at Charlotte Street - providing a direct physical/visual link to the waterfront, with the opportunity to enhance the views to the coast.



Pedestrian routes - Identify opportunities to enhance these routes through signage, lighting, street materials, art installations for example. This will help facilitate movement, create safe and pleasant routes for pedestrians to use between the High St and Waterfront areas, and ultimately increase activity along these routes.





Long term development opportunities - opportunity to create active street frontage and movement routes from the High St to the Waterfront, reinvigorating these streets, and providing more activity here towards the Waterfront..



Junctions - Opportunity to enhance the pedestrian environment -with the aim of making it easier for people to move around, to access facilities and the Waterfront area and encourage pedestrian movement.



Existing social spaces can be enhanced/refurbished to provide attractive and functional places to meet and spend time in..








Car Parks - review of car parking strategy Over time, there may be the opportunity to consider the release of some sites for development.

Meanwhile, existing surface car parks could be reviewed with a view to removing overbearing boundary treatments alongside other general improvements to increase their openness and attractiveness.


Esplanade Multi Storey Car Park - This is an important car park resource for the Waterfront and wider town centre. It is easily accessible and a prominent structure. There is the opportunity to modernise and uplift the internal/external appearance and function. This can provide a visual marker for the town centre area.



Short Term

1	Esplanade Carriageway Rationalisation	Design Study to examine opportunities for rationalising the existing roadspace; creation of space for enhanced public realm; new development; car parking and/or enhanced pedestrian crossings. The aim is to encourage people to move to/from the High St area to the coast, and the facilities/services in between. This should be via easy to navigate, safe, intuitive routes, alongside a wider range of uses/functions to create more people activity and reduce the sense of car domination.	
2	Improvements to Pedestrian Environment	Design study for the general pedestrian environment, particularly along the Promenade. Identify a scheme of improvements, through materials, lighting, public art enhancements for example, to facilitate safe and pleasant movement, help foster a strong sense of identity and maximise connectivity options between the coast and the High St. This would have the objective of encouraging people to use the pedestrian spaces and any other function offered within this area, creating an active and busy place. Any scheme should build upon the current enhancements underway through the sea wall upgrade project.	
3	Opportunities - car park sites	Review of car park strategy with the aim of establishing where any sites could, in the long term, be released for development.	
4	Enhancement of surface car parking	Existing Surface Car Parks - creation of a programme to enhance their local environment - removing/replacing overbearing boundary treatments, within a general scheme of improvements to surface material and landscaping, with the aim of making these spaces, open, attractive, and easily accessible.	
5	Volunteers Green enhancements	Identify opportunities to enhance its role/function as a green oasis, including a review of landscaping, street furniture, art, boundary treatments, movement routes to and through the site, to encourage more activity within this important civic space.	
6	Multi-storey improvements	Scheme to modernise and uplift the Esplanade Multi Storey building, with the aim of improving this facility and providing a visual marker for this area.	
7	Major development opportunities	Identify major development opportunities and prepare appropriate level of design guidance for key sites.	

Medium Term

8	Identify & design series of social spaces	Social Spaces/Visual Markers - the identification, design and implementation of a series of clear, attractive, functional and easily accessible social spaces, with strong visual markers to signal and attract users. There may be an opportunity to create new social spaces, as well as enhance/upgrade existing ones.	
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Medium Term

- 9 Key buildings - Public Realm enhancement
Public Realm enhancements to the fronts of key buildings. Taking advantage of potential road rationalisation, this project can identify key buildings (existing and future), and provide design guidance on enhancing the setting of these buildings, with the potential to enhance the public realm, encouraging people to use the space/ building and facilitating wider access to the coast and other social spaces within the Waterfront area and beyond.



- 10 Shared space crossings
Shared Space Crossings - enhancing key pedestrian crossing points to: reduce car dominance, encourage pedestrian movement between the High St and the waterfront. Shared space crossings enhanced through signage, lighting, street materials and/or art installations to help provide identity and character to the street.

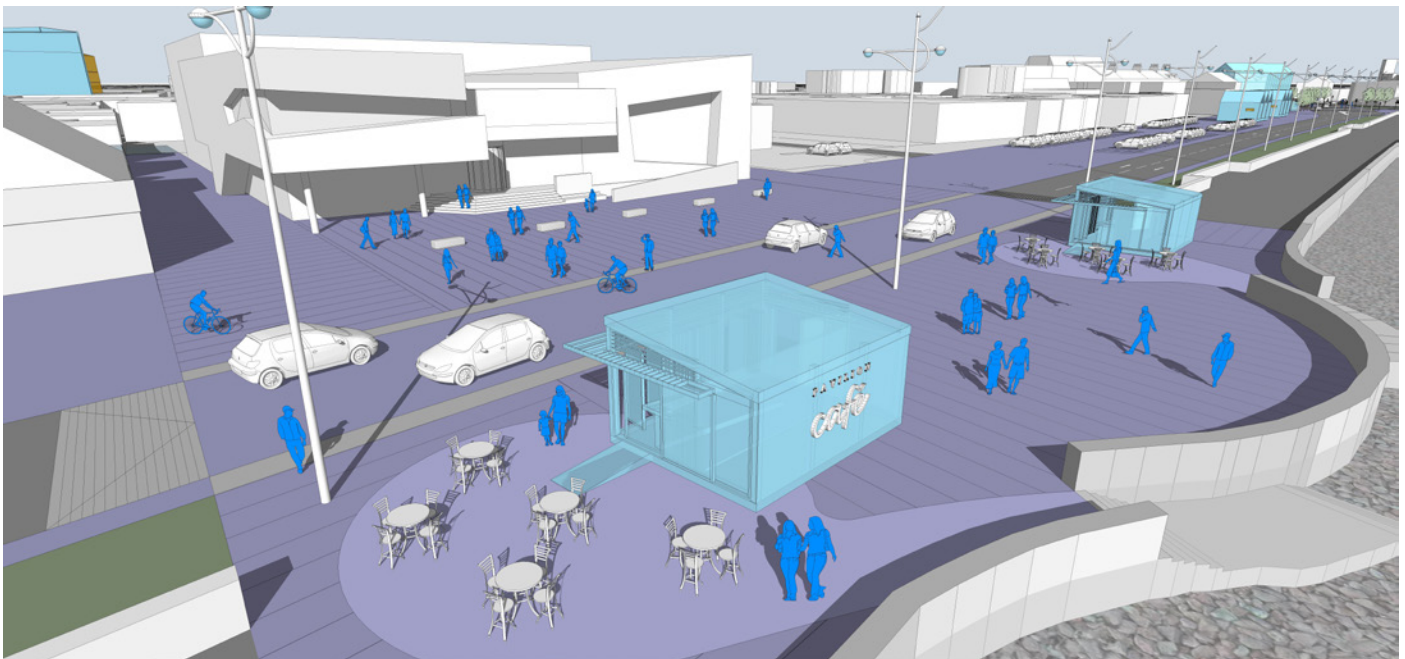


Review of car park strategy with the aim of establishing where any sites could, in the long term, be released for development.

Long Term

- 11 Opportunities - car park sites
Reintroduce the Historic Street Pattern at Charlotte St. Feasibility study to examine the creation of a direct vehicular and pedestrian connection from the High St to the Esplanade, with long term potential for street frontage development to provide activity to the street - creating a more natural and logical street pattern and movement route.

Shared Space



TOWN CENTRE DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Merchants' Quarter



MERCHANTS' QUARTER

Strengths

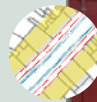
Coast/Beach - the major asset of the area. There is an accessible beach, impressive views across the Forth, access to the wider Fife Coastal Path and its location is very close to the Core retail area, and wider town centre.



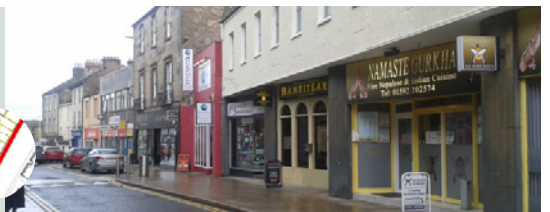
The Esplanade, A921, is an important vehicular route to and through Kirkcaldy town centre. The spaces and buildings on either side of the Esplanade are very prominent and any offer they provide for the visitor can be clearly seen.



There is an existing mix of independent retailers, cafes, restaurants, which provides a liveliness to the area at different times of the day and evening.



There is a strong street presence of building activity - that is, where building fronts are facing the street to provide activity along these important routes, and which contributes positively to the 'life' of the street.



Prominent buildings, including the Old Kirk and Merchants' House, offer a positive contribution to the character, identity, and range of uses/events available within the Merchants' Quarter.

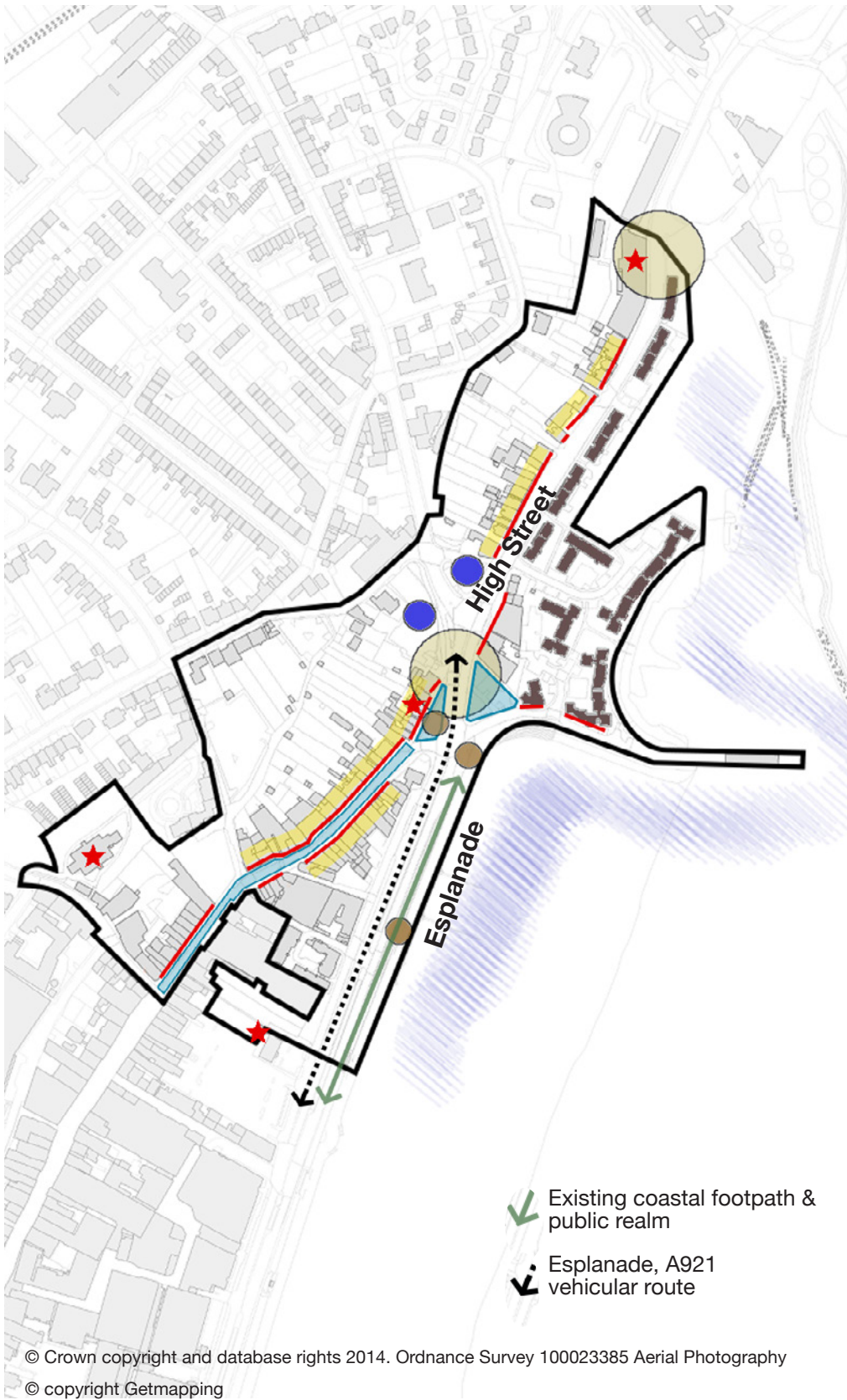


Strong historic urban character, which provides the context and setting for the commercial activities within the Merchants' Quarter.



Gateway entrances to the Merchants' Quarter can provide a clear sense of entering a particular place.





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Residential development - the concentration of modern housing development provides waterfront/town centre living opportunities within the Merchants' Quarter, helping to support commercial activities and enhance the liveliness of the area.



High Quality public realm provides an attractive setting for the historic built environment.



Social spaces can act as meeting places, or spaces to enjoy the coastal location.



Car parking - there are prominent and easily accessible car parking opportunities in this area.



Barrier to pedestrian movement. This road forms a visual and physical barrier between the Waterfront and the High St, as well as dividing the High St in two. To help integrate all parts of the Merchants' Quarter, these barriers need to be removed, and possibly additional uses/services/functions of the public realm on the coastal side be encouraged to provide a further draw for people movement.



Public realm - the footway, including the Coastal Path, and other public space: There is a sense of isolation and remoteness from the town centre, most likely due to limited visual and/or difficult physical connections.



Key pedestrian crossing points - are difficult and unattractive places that are overly dominated by the presence of vehicles. These points should be used to connect important routes/elements of the Merchants' Quarter - including the Waterfront, northern High St, southern High St, and the car parks.



The existing surface level car parks are generally screened at their boundaries by brick walls and low level planting, which appears tired, dated and detracts from the wider townscape quality. This enclosure reduces any sense of comfort and can contribute to a perceptions over security issues. There is limited overlooking, particularly from the adjacent roadspace due to the enclosed nature of the car parks.

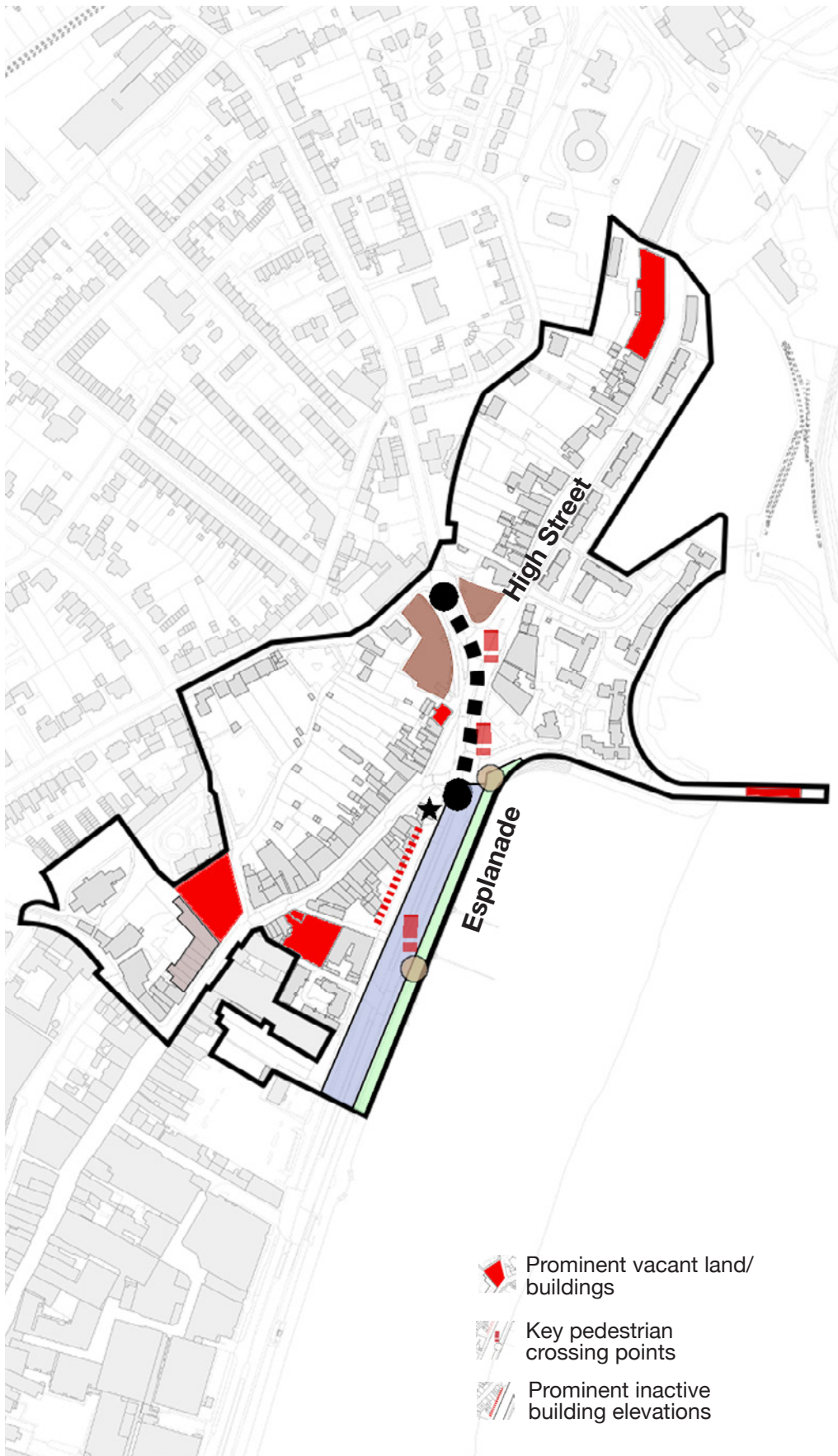
The positive impact of boundary interventions is evident on the High St side of the northern car park where good quality railings have been used on a short section of the boundary.



Very prominent site at an important junction, which sits adjacent to high quality public realm, important historic buildings, the waterfront and important movement routes.

The current use as a car wash is inappropriate for a site of this visual and locational importance. The existing buildings/structures are a negative influence on the townscape quality of the Merchants' Quarter.





Prominent inactive building elevations that do not contribute positively to the 'liveliness' of the waterfront environment.



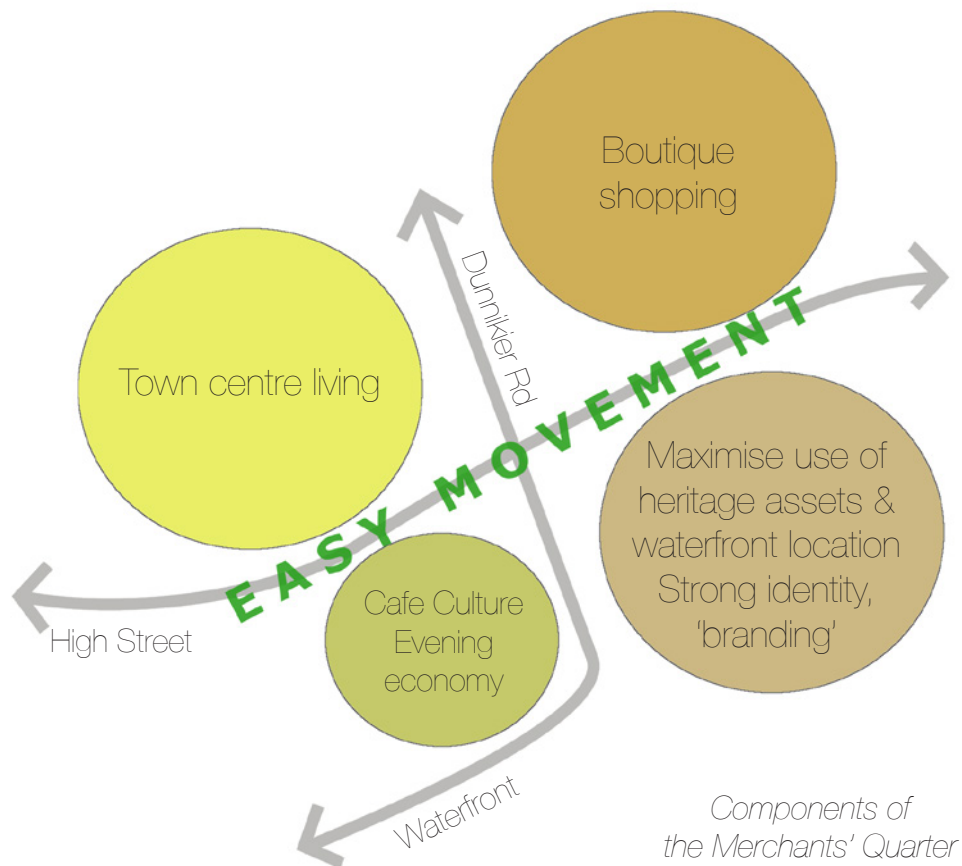
Prominent vacant land/buildings detracts from the sense of liveliness, success and the generally positive quality of the townscape within the Merchants' Quarter.



Existing social spaces are well connected along the Promenade, but are not easy to get to from the High Street area due to the presence of the 4 lanes of the A921 and the junction to Dunnikier Rd. This disconnection may contribute to the lack of use and the sense of isolation within these spaces.



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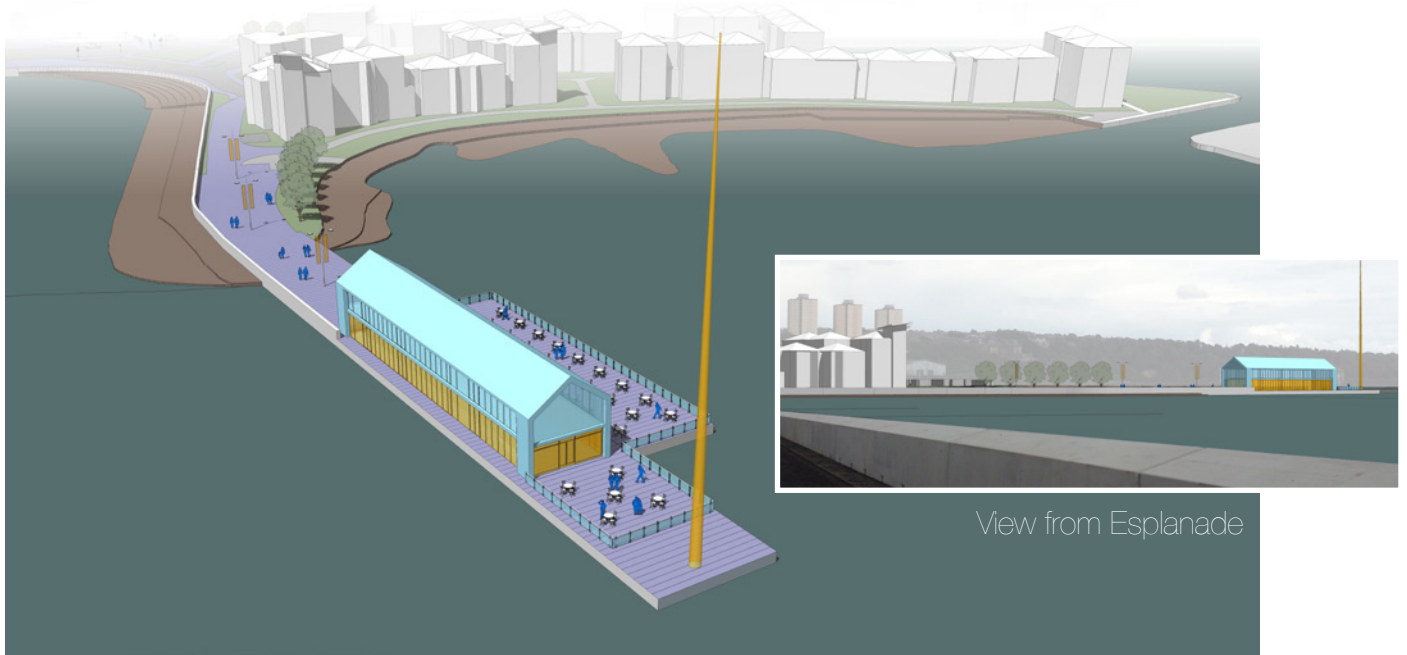


VISION

The Merchants' Quarter will be a place that is:

- Easy for people to move around the area, and to the wider town centre/Waterfront areas.
- A well connected, vibrant, attractive area with a strong sense of identity and place.
- Offering a distinctive place to live, work, eat, shop and relax.

Opportunity for Licensed Leisure & Public Art



Key pedestrian junctions/movement routes



Rationalised carriageway. Opportunity to release land for other uses e.g. public realm, development opportunities, car parking.

Vision - creation of an open, attractive space that links the shore to activity on the street side, with active building fronts running the length of the Esplanade in this area - making it easy for people to move, attractive, providing a range of services/functions, reducing the perception of barriers to movement to the coast, reducing the sense of car dominance, and providing more space for people.



Social Spaces/Improved pedestrian connections.

Opportunity for the creation of social spaces and/or visual markers (eg lighting, art feature, or small building(s)) that either focusses views from the High St area or, where located in front of key buildings can provide other services/facilities. These social spaces could include cafe kiosks, meeting space, temporary gallery space and/or space to spend time in next to the sea. These spaces can spill out on to the rationalised carriageway area to maximise this public realm opportunity and reduce the perception of distance and separateness between the shore and the street sides, as well as facilitate easier pedestrian access /crossings.



Other vacant buildings - opportunity to consider a strategy to encourage the re-use of all vacant buildings to increase the vitality, marketability, branding and further success of this area. This may be achieved through grant funded schemes, marketing strategies and/or direct public sector/partnership intervention.



Existing surface car parks could be reviewed with a view to removing overbearing boundary treatments alongside other general improvements to increase their openness, attractiveness, and positively responding to their location as a gateway to the Merchants' Quarter.



Public Art - opportunity to establish a beacon for Kirkcaldy town centre, utilising a highly prominent but underutilised space, clearly visible from land and sea.

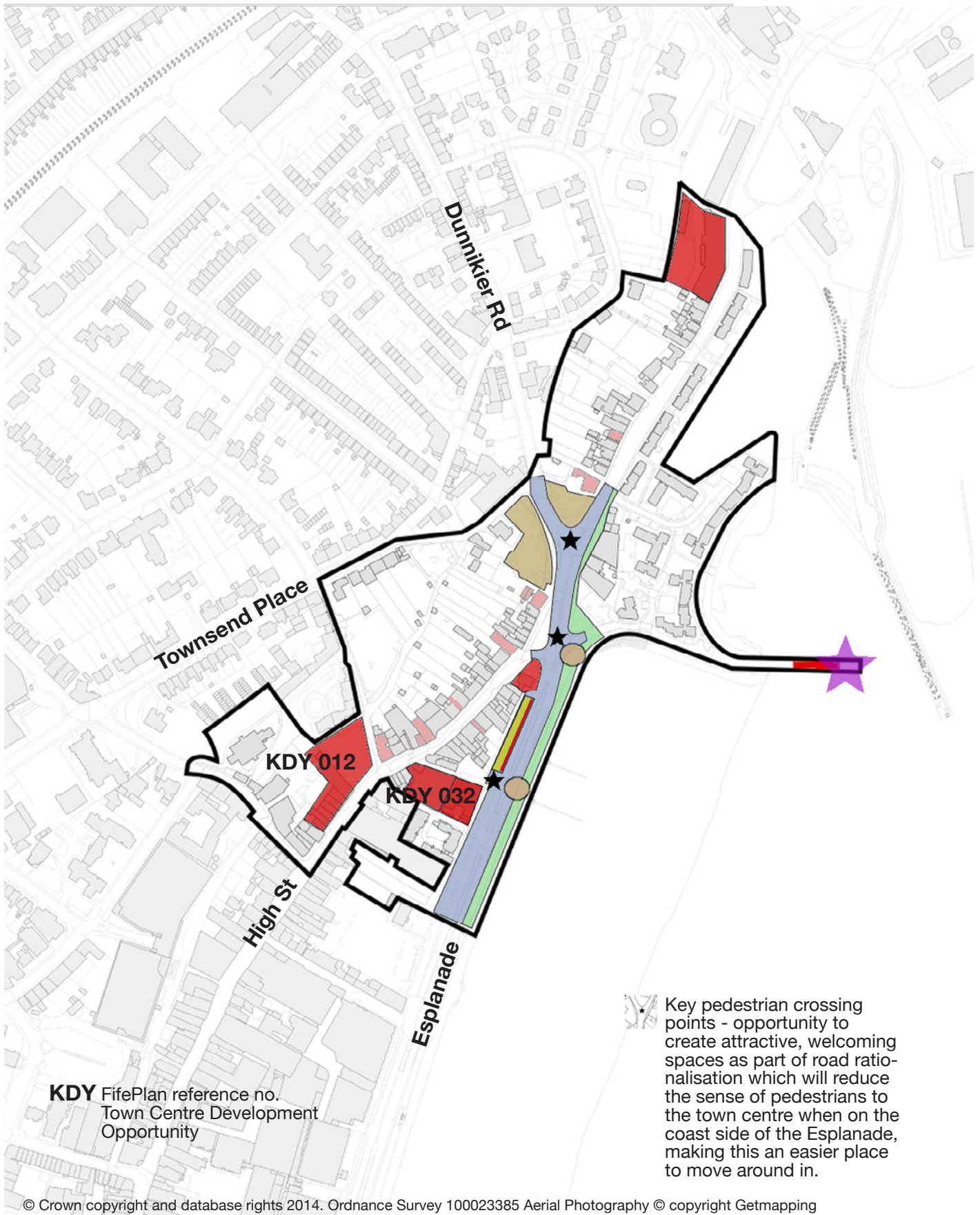
An installation of an appropriate scale can form a backdrop to the town centre or a focal point, when arriving at the Esplanade from the Inveriel area. This can help foster a sense of identity and branding for the area.



Development opportunity sites. Major development sites on large and/or prominent areas of land, and can serve as a gateway to the Merchants' Quarter.

Potential uses may include private housing, hotel, land/or other supporting leisure/cultural activities in line with the vision for this area.





Development Opportunity - single storey, contemporary design, building front facing the coast, maintaining service access for buildings behind. Potential uses could include, shops, cafe, gallery space, watersports centre - eg windsurfing, paddleboarding, sea kayaking.



Short Term

1	Esplanade Carriageway Rationalisation	Design Study to examine opportunities for rationalising the existing roadspace; creation of space for enhanced public realm; new development; car parking and/or enhanced pedestrian crossings. New car parking opportunities are actively being examined in the waterfront area of the Merchants' Quarter. The aim is to encourage people to move to/from the High St area to the coast, and the facilities/services in between. This should be via easy to navigate, safe, intuitive routes, alongside a wider range of uses/functions to create more people activity and reduce the sense of car domination.	
2	Improvements to Pedestrian Environment	Design study for the general pedestrian environment and its relationship to vehicular movement, particularly along the Promenade and the junction to High St/Dunnikier Rd. Identify a scheme of improvements, through street/junction design, materials, lighting, public art enhancements for example, to facilitate safe and pleasant movement, help foster a strong sense of identity and maximise connectivity across the Esplanade and the key junction at the High St.	
3	New development opportunities	Identify major development opportunities and prepare appropriate level of design guidance for key sites.	
4	Enhancement of surface car parking	Existing Surface Car Parks - creation of a programme to enhance their local environment - removing/replacing overbearing boundary treatments, within a general scheme of improvements to surface material and landscaping, with the aim of making these spaces, open, attractive, and easily accessible.	
5	Branding/Marketing Strategy	Creation of a strategy to create a strong brand/image for the Merchants' Quarter -focussing on assets such as independent shops, evening economy, history, town centre living opportunities, proximity to the coast and wider town centre, whilst also setting out an appropriate level of design coding for future buildings/public realm to help reinforce the MQ as a distinct place.	
6	Public Art Strategy	Creation of a public art strategy which will identify potential locations, scale, theme and delivery opportunities to reinforce the Merchants' Quarter as a place.	
7	Town Centre Living	A town centre living project to assess, identify opportunities and establish a strategy for assisting the delivery of new residential development.	
Medium Term			
8	Identify & design series of social spaces	Social Spaces/Visual Markers - the identification, design and implementation of a series of clear, attractive, functional and easily accessible social spaces, with strong visual markers to signal and attract users. There may be an opportunity to create new social spaces, as well as enhance/upgrade existing ones.	

Medium Term

9 Key buildings - Public realm enhancement
Public Realm enhancements to the fronts of key buildings. Taking advantage of potential road rationalisation, this project can identify key buildings (existing and future), and provide design guidance on enhancing the setting of these buildings, with the potential to enhance the public realm, encouraging people to use the space/building and facilitating wider access to the town centre and the facilities this has to offer.



10 Shared space crossings
Shared Space Crossings - enhancing key pedestrian crossing points to: reduce car dominance, encourage pedestrian movement between the High St and the waterfront. Shared space crossings enhanced through signage, lighting, street materials and/or art installations to help provide identity and character to the street.



11 Tourism/cultural/events strategy
Opportunity to create a tourism/cultural/events strategy to build on the existing successful programme of events at the Old Kirk. This would enhance the profile and range of activities within this signature building and make it a stronger physical and cultural destination within the town centre.



Gateway Development



TOWN CENTRE DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Social Quarter



SOCIAL QUARTER Strengths

Pedestrian zone - recent upgrade creating a pleasant, attractive environment for people, with high quality surface materials and a consistent palette of street furniture to give a sense of place.



There is a strong mix of uses - national retail chains, independent shops, as well as cafes, pubs, restaurants and a limited amount of residential uses.



The area is very accessible from a range of transport options - bus, train, cars and cycling/walking, with car parking penetrating into the heart of the town centre.



There is a good network of movement routes to connect the High St with other places and spaces within the Social Quarter and surrounding town centre, providing a permeable environment.



There is a clear shopping 'heart' within the High St, where there is a concentration of national chains. Beyond this 'heart', a greater mix of uses begins to become more apparent to encourage a wider range of 'social' opportunities - eg restaurants, pubs, independent shops for example.

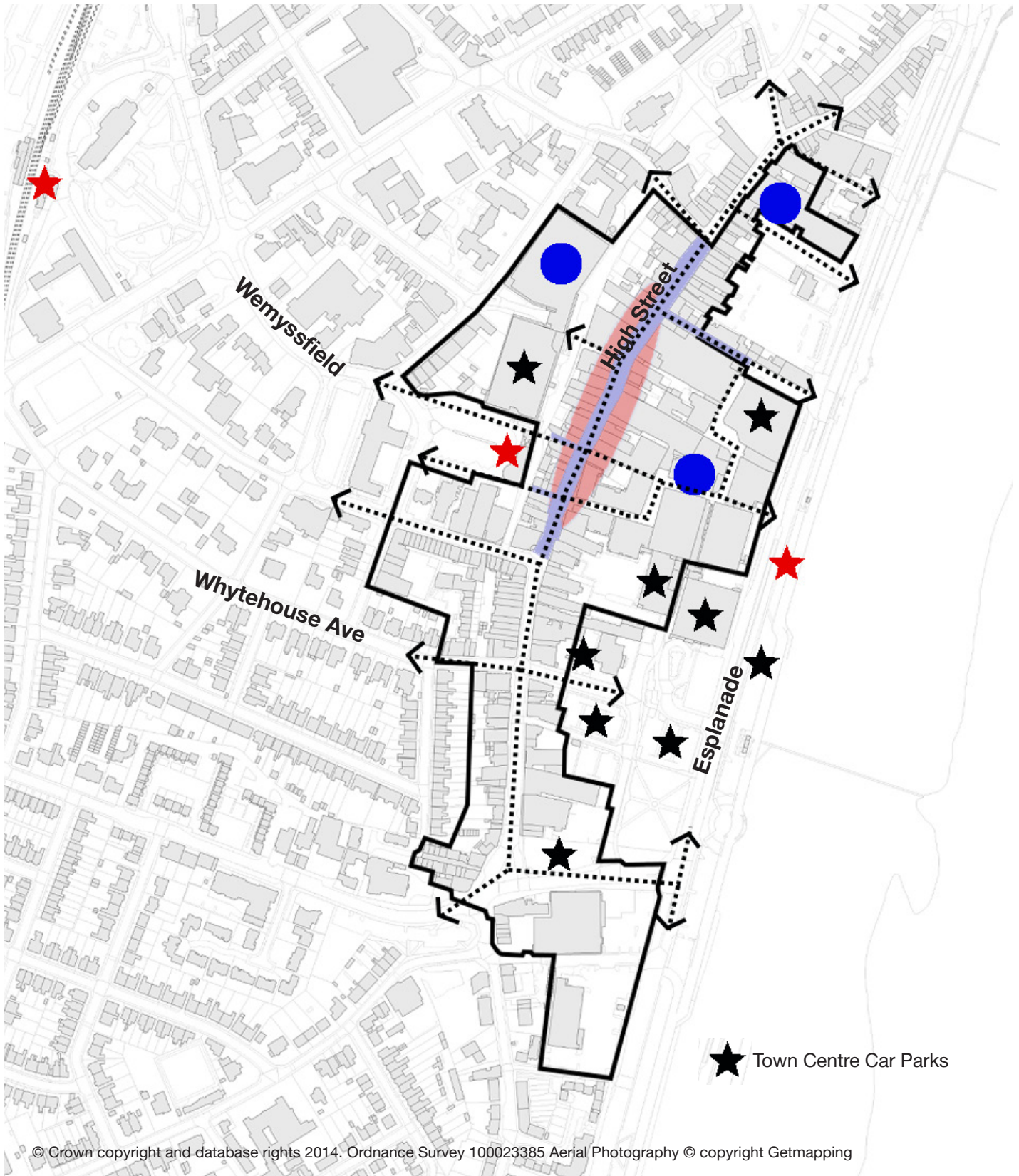


Beyond the High St, there are three large covered retail/social centres that offer a range of activities or shopping opportunities.



The Social Quarter offers High St, Bus Station and Waterfront presence, making it very central to the life and activity of the wider town centre.





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Strong historic environment, which presents a positive streetscape, and helps foster a sense of place.



Prominent buildings turn their back on the Waterfront area - in particular the Mercat Centre and Kirkcaldy Market. This restricts effective movement and integration between key places within the town centre, and presents generally inactive building elevations (or back doors) to the Waterfront.



Several key buildings have a negative influence on the streetscape - notably, the Postings and Kirkcaldy Indoor Market. These buildings are dated, appear tired, and negatively affect the visual quality of the townscape. They do not help to portray Kirkcaldy town centre as a modern, fit for purpose place. These buildings may be in need of investment to provide an economic, social and visual lift to the streets in which they sit.



Poor quality gateways/nodes/social spaces - Where movement junctions - or nodes - occur, in some places, they are indistinct - i.e. there is little streetscape definition that there may be an opportunity for a change in direction and it is not clear what opportunities are present in terms of destinations beyond the junction.



Some spaces could also be social or meeting spaces but are not distinctive enough or contain the appropriate street furniture to facilitate this. For example the benches are arranged in a linear fashion where they could be, in places, arranged in a more social layout (semi circle for example).

There are a noticeable number of vacant buildings/units within the Social Quarter. As well as affecting the economic performance of the town centre, it leads to a sense of a place with a reduced vitality, as well as being a negative influence on the visual quality of the streetscape.

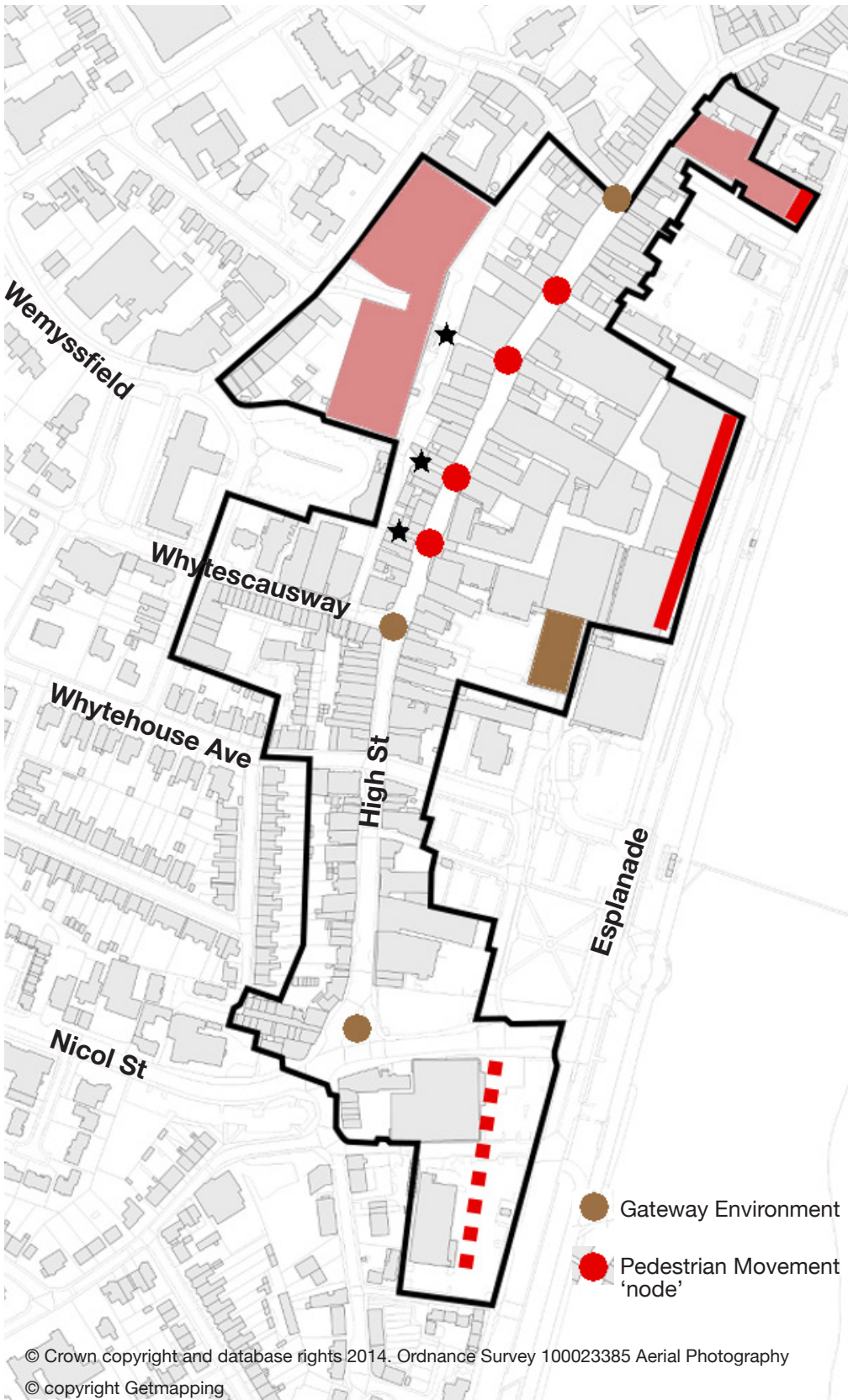


Key movement route from bus station to High St (adjacent to Postings). Here the pedestrian can lose the sense of where the High St is, and not comprehend that it is not far away.



The pedestrian link to the High St via Lady Inn Wynd (and also Rose Wynd) is generally poor quality, dominated by the Postings building, generally poor street materials, a pedestrian crossing, and a blank rear elevation of a building on Hill St





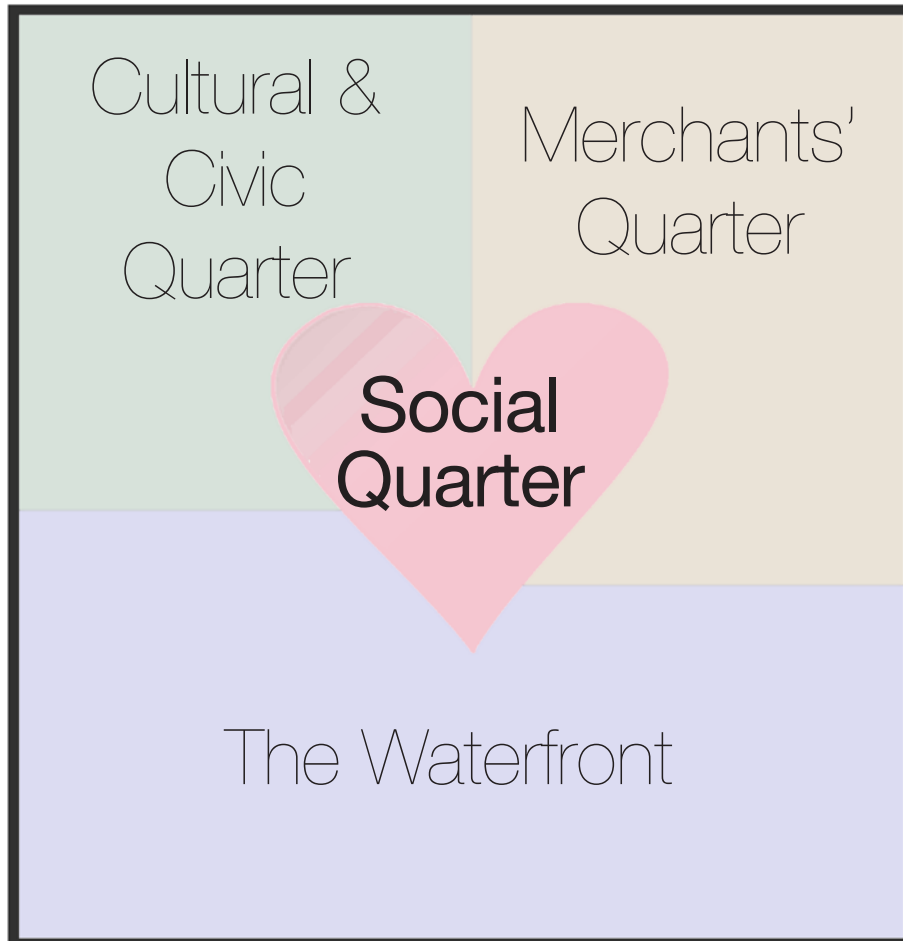
Weak building line - As a gateway into the town centre, these retail buildings are dominated - from a visual perspective - by car parking, with single storey retail units set back substantially from the street. The overall appearance and impact is not strong, or of enough substance, to provide an announcement of arrival in the town centre.



The mix of uses in the town centre is not strong - in particular the 'core' retail area containing the pedestrianised area - with the closure of prominent cafes/burger restaurants. Where previously there was a strong sense that this was a mixed use area, the current sense is that it is a mono-use daytime area.

Multi storey car park - unattractive (inside and out), underused, and given its current visual impact, is too dominant within the streetscape.





VISION

- The Social Quarter is a place representing the heart of activity within the town, where people come to meet, shop, eat, drink, live and work.
- The Social Quarter will be a place where people socialise, sustaining and developing the liveliness and range of activities that feeds the surrounding Quarters and wider town.
- The environment and infrastructure required to support and develop the Social Quarter will be identified, encouraged and facilitated.

The Postings Re-development Concept/Opportunity



View from Hill Street, looking down Lady Inn Wynd towards High Street



Support the emerging Development Plan strategy to concentrate retail into a core part of the High St, with other supporting and complementary uses adjacent - fostering a sense of a “High Value Heart” of Kirkcaldy, fed and supported by a range of uses and functions beyond the heart.



Pedestrian movement/connections are generally focussed towards vehicular priority, particularly around the edges of the pedestrianised area. This creates barriers for pedestrians joining the core town centre area from adjacent areas and reduces the comfort and natural flow of people movement towards the town centre heart. Key spaces, junctions and/or crossings could therefore be reprioritised and/or resurfaced to provide a sense of space for pedestrians and a natural and easy movement flow to/from the heart.



Residential uses above the ground floor. A strategy or programme to enhance this offer may potentially release a significant number of properties available for residential use above ground floor level. This would provide activity and life outwith retail opening hours, provide a safer environment, and could be a driver for additional investment to service the needs for new residents.

Social Spaces - creation of a series of distinct spaces that provide an opportunity to meet people, sit and/or spend time in. These spaces could utilise glimpses of the sea to form a backdrop, or use junctures (or ‘nodes’) or movement routes to help define them. Street furniture could be arranged in a socially conducive way, for example to enclose spaces and facilitate people spending time here, or to accommodate street theatre and/or busking. These spaces can be created using upgraded street surfacing, distinctive street furniture, lighting, art or landscaping to help define these places



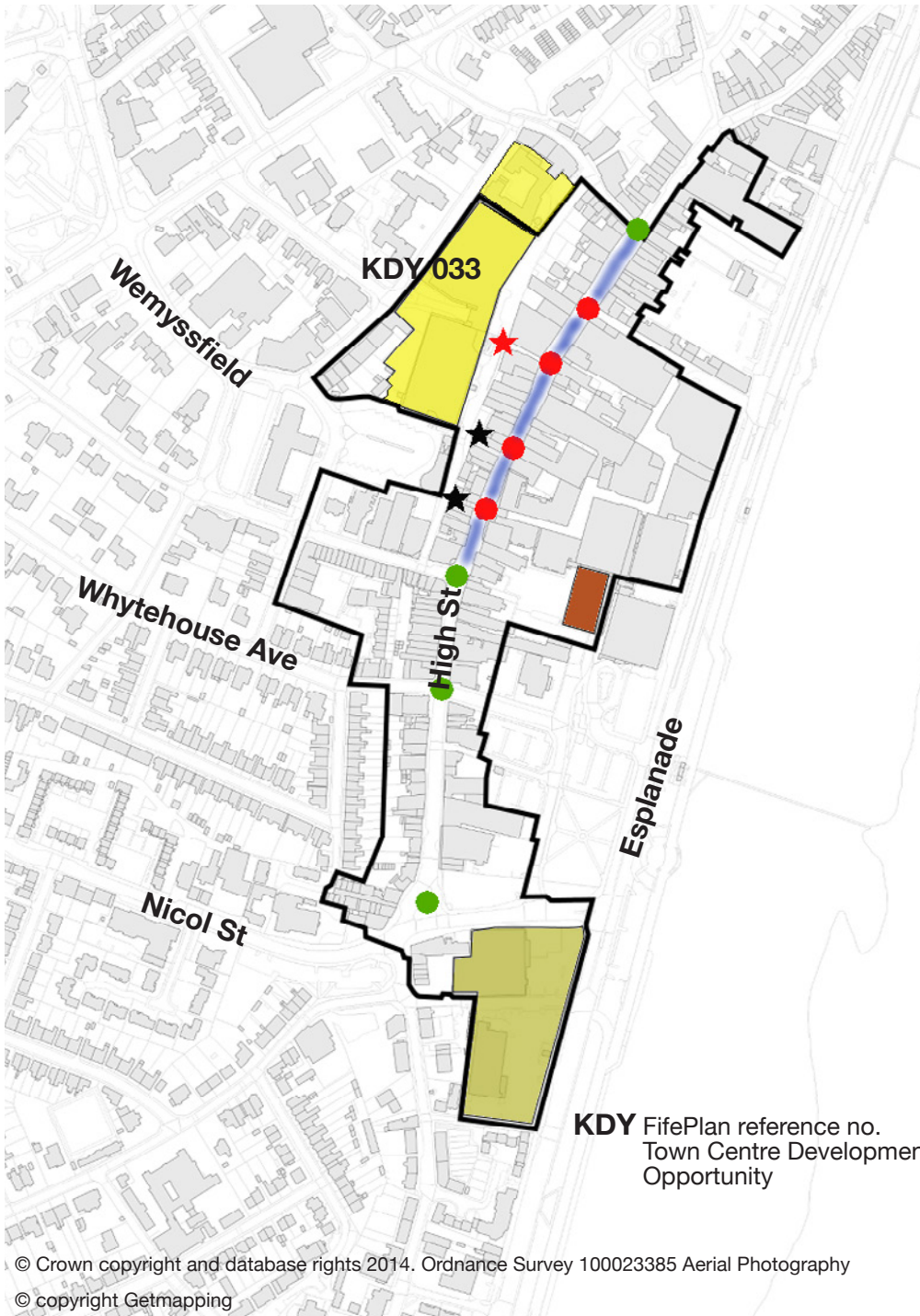
Opportunity to improve the connection from the High St to the Postings at the steps adjacent to Bell Inn Wynd through surface material, lighting (including decorative as well as functional), roof enhancements and/or art installations.



Scheme of lighting - as part of refurbishment of key Wynds and Closes connecting High St to Civic Quarter and Waterfront, to create attractive, safe and pleasant pedestrian movement routes connecting the town centre Quarters.

Long term opportunity to redevelop the site of existing retail units at the ‘gateway’ to the town centre. This could provide a strong frontage with distinctive buildings, with active frontages forming the entrance to the town centre.





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Site of Postings Centre offers the long term opportunity for a complete redevelopment, to provide a modern retail/leisure-led mixed use town centre facility. This could include the adjacent former Territorial Army site

There may be the opportunity to look at expansion of the current footprint, building higher and potentially building over the top of the bus station, providing a completely covered station environment with additional facilities on the upper floor(s)







The Thistle Multi Storey Car Park offers the opportunity for its refurbishment or removal/redevelopment, providing a town centre development site that could, alongside adjacent and wider redevelopment sites, help create new movement routes connecting the High St with the Waterfront with increased activity between these areas.





Opportunity to improve the pedestrian connections from the Bus Station to the High St along Rose Wynd, but particularly along Lady Inn Wynd. This could create a clear, attractive and welcoming route - the opportunity is present to examine the feasibility of creating a roof structure along Lady Inn Wynd, across Hill St, and up to the Bus Station pedestrian area. With accompanying street improvements, lighting (including artistic/decorative lighting) this could facilitate a clear and obvious route for accessing the High St, and create a space that could facilitate the development of supporting activities, such as market stalls, busking space for example. An important aspect of this opportunity is addressing the bland/inactive rear elevations of buildings on Hill St - an opportunity may present itself to reuse this building with an active frontage facing Hill St and the bus station.




Short Term

1	Improvements to Pedestrian Environment - Shared Space Crossings	Shared Space Crossings - enhancing key pedestrian crossing points to: reduce car dominance, encourage pedestrian movement between the Social Quarter, the Waterfront and the Bus Station in particular. Shared space crossings enhanced through signage, lighting, street materials and/or art installations to help provide identity and character to the street.	
2	Postings Steps Refurbishment	Design/Implementation strategy for the refurbishment of this key route, including consideration of surface materials, lighting (including decorative as well as functional), roof enhancements and/or art installations.	
3	Social Spaces Design	Social Spaces/Visual Markers - the identification, design and implementation of a series of clear, attractive, functional and easily accessible social spaces, with strong visual markers to signal and attract users. There may be an opportunity to create new social spaces, as well as enhance/upgrade existing ones.	
4	New Development Opportunities	Identify major development opportunities and prepare appropriate level of design guidance for key sites.	

Medium Term

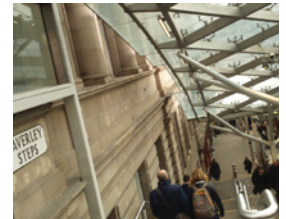
5	Town Centre Living	A town centre living project to assess, identify opportunities and establish a strategy for assisting the delivery of new residential development.	
6	Improvements to Pedestrian Environment Closes/Wynd	Design study for the pedestrian environment within the Closes and Wynds, representing key pedestrian movement routes between the Social Quarter, the Waterfront and the Civic & Cultural Quarter. A scheme of improvements would be identified, through street/junction design, materials, lighting, public art enhancements for example, to facilitate safe and pleasant movement, help foster a strong sense of identity and maximise pedestrian activity to enliven the streets and spaces within the town centre.	
7	Lighting Strategy - Movement Routes	A lighting strategy for the key pedestrian movement routes, with the objective of creating a thematic approach that helps contribute to the creation of a clear and distinctive identity for the Social Quarter, as well as safe and pleasant spaces for people to move around in.	

Long Term

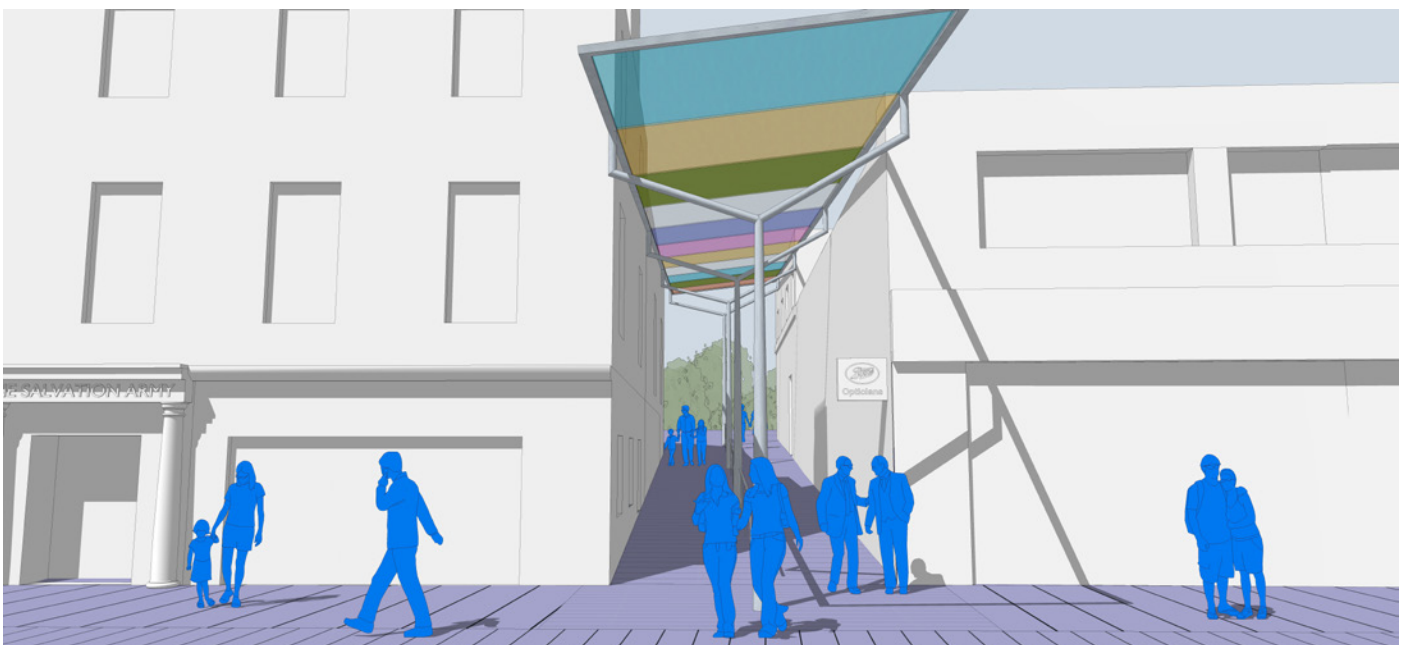
8	Postings -Major Development Opportunity	Prepare an appropriate level of design guidance for this important town centre site, with the objective of providing a modern retail/leisure led, but mixed use, town centre facility. The potential for expanding beyond the existing footprint and height may be explored to assess any opportunities to maximise the use/value of the land.	
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Long Term

- 9 High Street/Bus Station Route Reconfiguration Design feasibility to assess the opportunity for restructuring the pedestrian route from the Bus Station through to the High St, looking at public realm improvements, building elevation improvements, a potential roof structure to provide covered access and create a strong visual connection to the High St, and opportunities to introduce additional uses such as market stalls, signage, lighting, art for example.



High Street Arrival



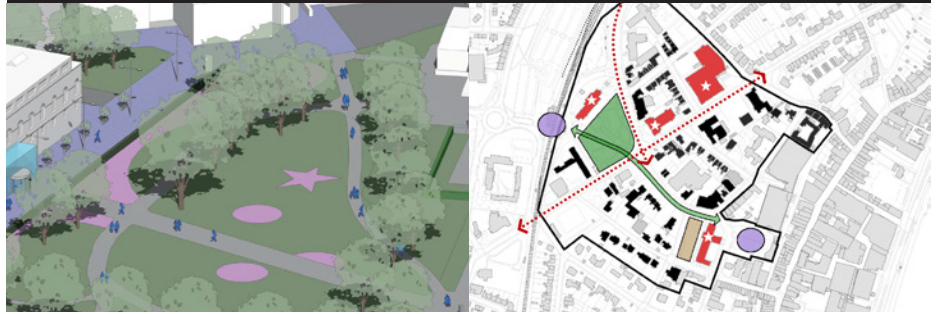
View from High Street, looking up Lady Inn Wynd



View looking South along High Street

TOWN CENTRE DESIGN AND
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Cultural & Heritage Quarter



Strengths

Signature buildings - providing strong townscape presence and distinctiveness. This helps to define Kirkcaldy town centre as a place with identity and character.



Historic urban setting - this Quarter has a very strong historic urban presence, providing a sense of identity for the town centre. The presence of many large and signature buildings, alongside significant areas of public realm, means the townscape offers a looser 'grain' in terms of building and street layout, than other Quarters within the town centre, reinforcing the character and identity of this area.



Accessible - Principle public transport infrastructure located within this Quarter, providing a key role as a 'gateway' into the wider town centre environment. In addition, principal vehicular routes serving the town centre - Bennoch Rd/Wemyssfield and Abbotshall Rd/St Brycedale Ave penetrate these areas, facilitating easy vehicular movement to nearby car parks.



War memorial gardens - an attractive semi-formal parkland, which is on the main pedestrian route from the train station to the High Street. It is well used as a movement route but not so well used as a place to spend time in.



Green Corridor - wide, comfortable cycle/pedestrian route running from the train station to the bus station.

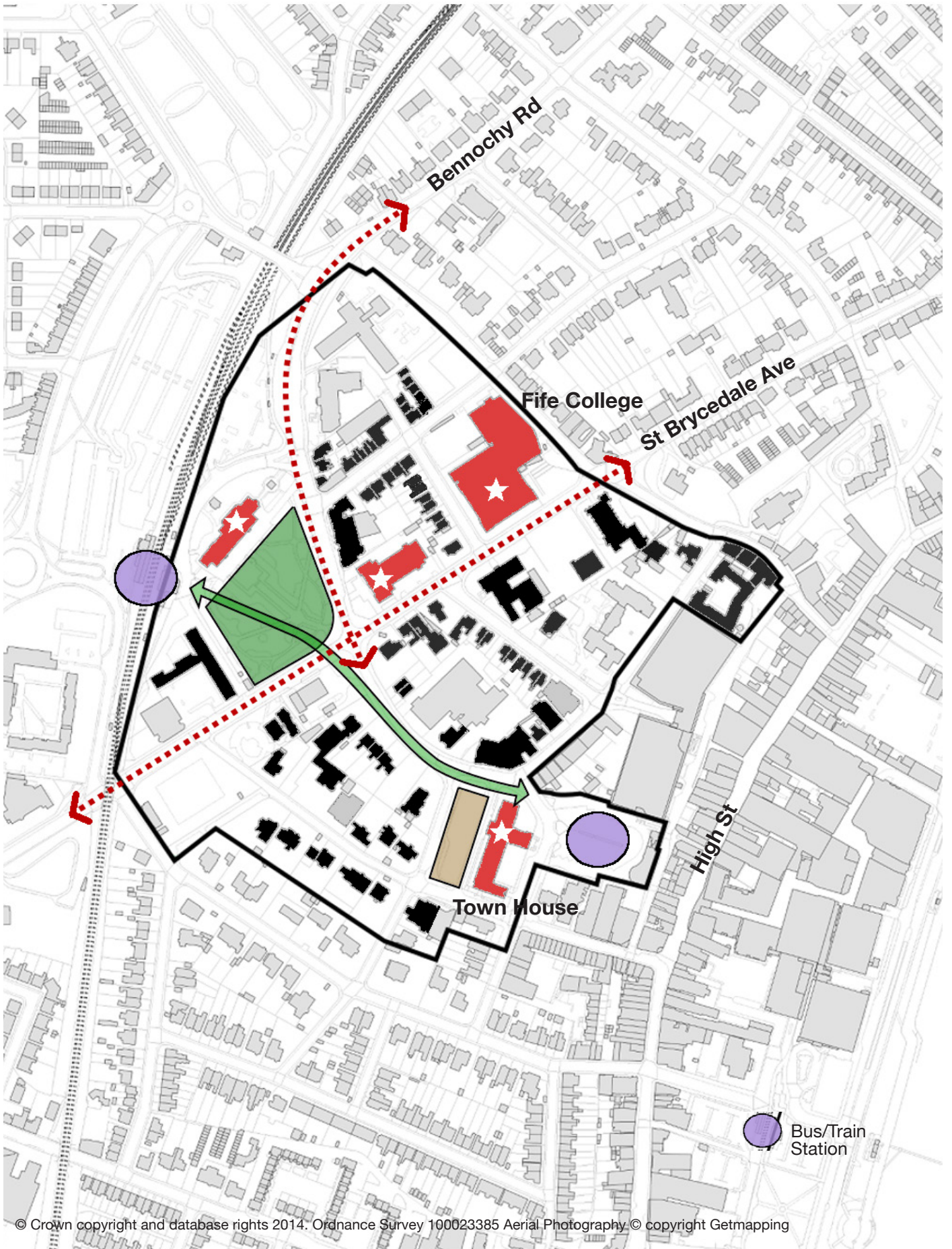


Town House Square - this is a key civic space, that both serves as public realm setting for the Town House itself, and as a location for civic and social activities, such as the farmers market, and a variety of festival events.

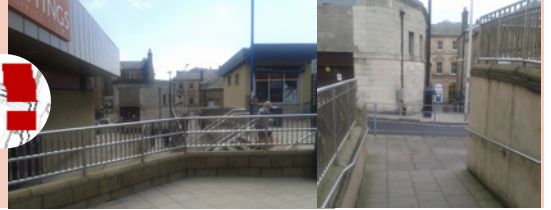


Key tourism/leisure/workplace/study place facilities are located within this Quarter. This can be a visitor destination in its own right, or a launch pad to the rest of the town centre.





Key pedestrian movement route - linking the bus station to the High St (adjacent to the Postings). At this location, it is easy to lose an understanding that the High St is not far away. There is a sense of isolation from the High St. This is due to a combination of topography, building elevation quality, public realm, clarity of routes, and signage.



Town House Square - is dated in terms of materials (coloured concrete slabs and black plastic bollards). The overall attractiveness of the public realm does not do the area justice, particularly as it forms the setting for the Town House, a signature building, and a civic hub for Kirkcaldy.



Prominent vacant buildings, particularly adjacent to the War Memorial Gardens reduces the positive sense of place offered across the wider area.



War Memorial Gardens - there is a dark edge adjacent to Forth House, which reduces the sense of openness, safety and accessibility, caused by the high trees/hedging at the western boundary.

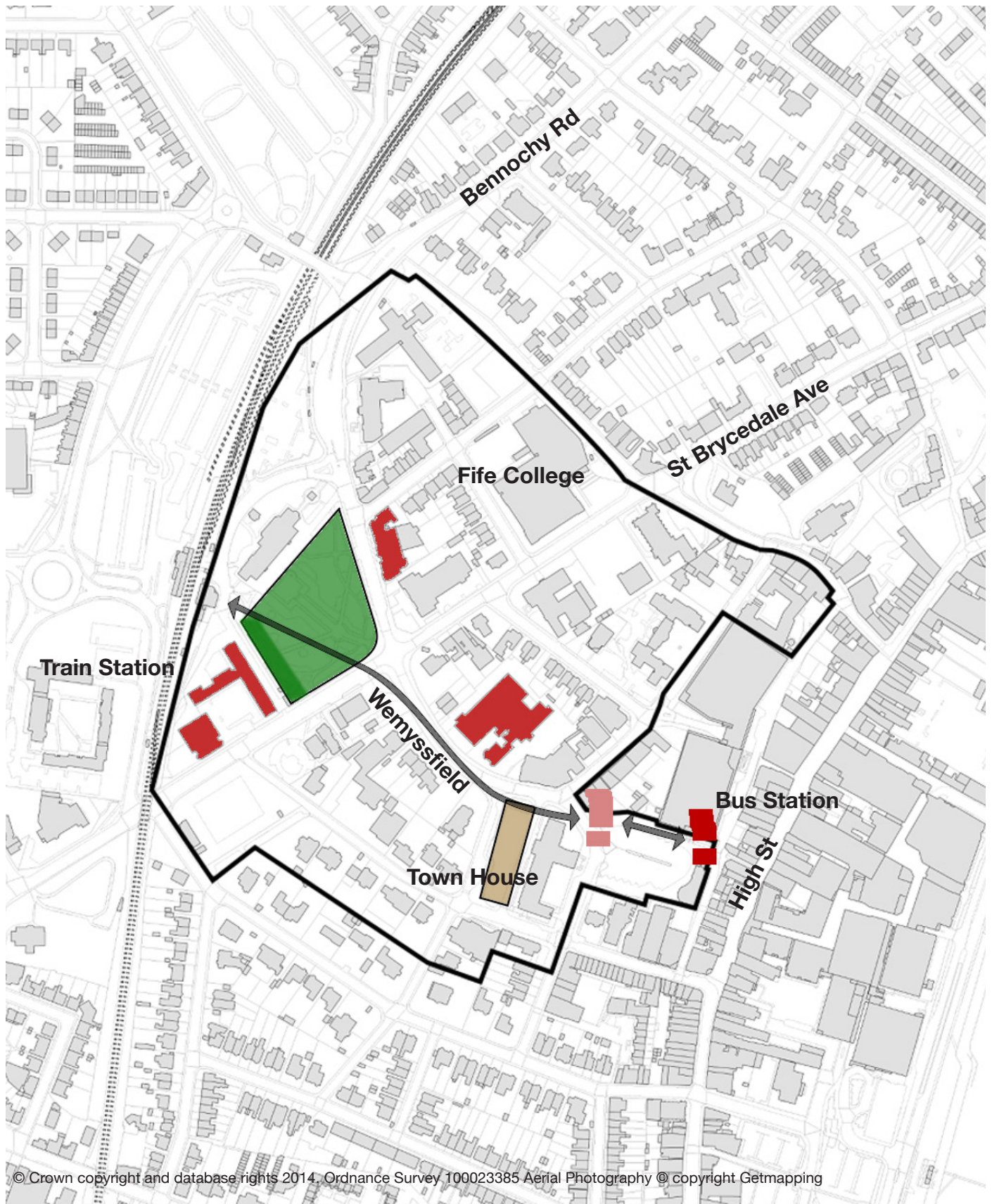


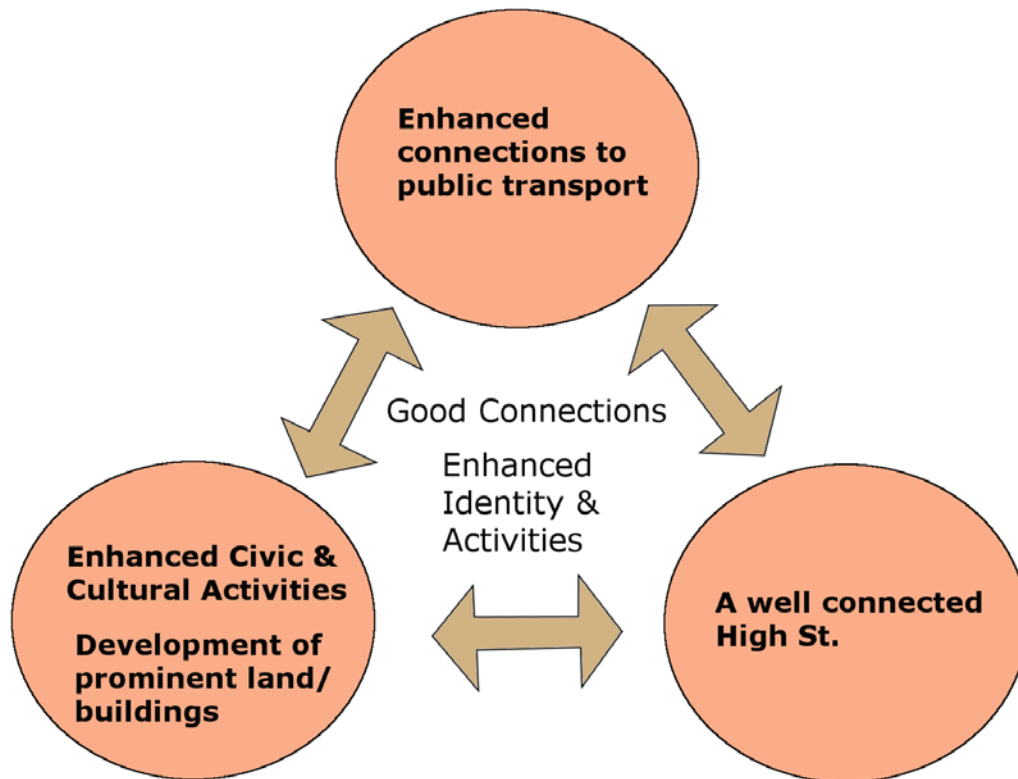
The Green Corridor portrays a sense of stopping at the bus station and not going any further. There is a feeling of detachment from the High St and a reduction in the sense of place - i.e. an understanding of where one is in relation to the core town centre, and little comprehension or visual connection of where people should go to reach the High St. from the end of the Green Corridor.



Town Centre Arrival - the public realm and its function between the train station entrance and the Galleries is dominated by vehicles. It is not welcoming or attractive, and the location of the town centre is not clearly signalled. As a principle arrival point to the town, there is scope for improvements to make it more fit for purpose and to encourage people to walk easily to the town centre.







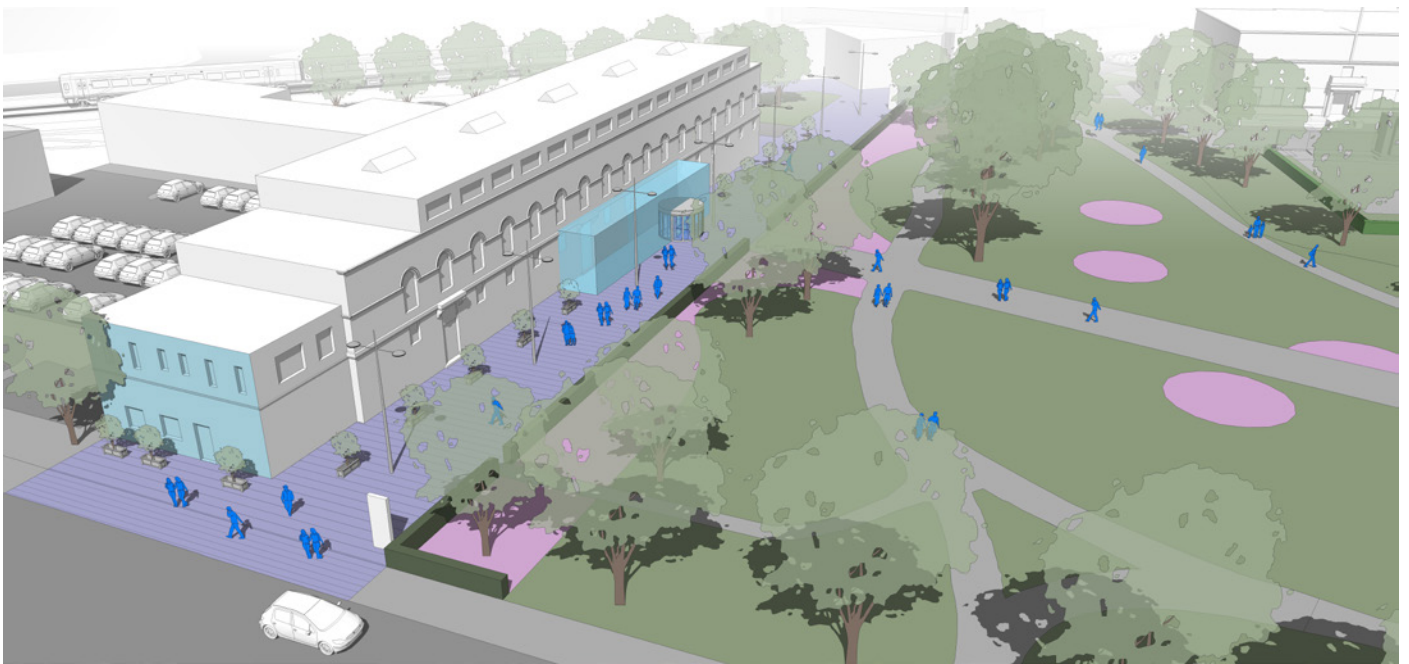
VISION

To: Enhance the identity and opportunities of the area as a focus for cultural, heritage and civic activity.

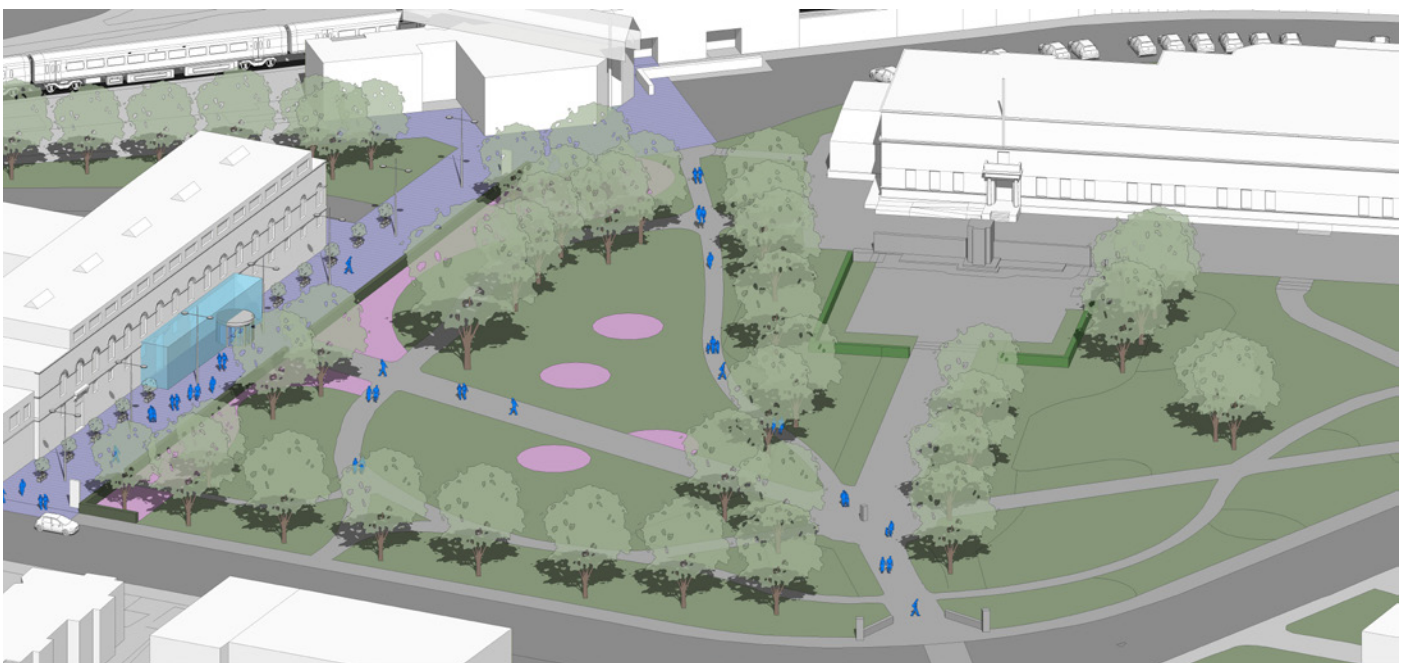
By: Improving connections to the public transport hubs and the High St

- Improvement of key civic spaces to encourage people to spend time in.
- Development of prominent vacant land/buildings to increase the vitality of the area, where more people are living/working/spending time in.

Forth House Re-development/Memorial Gardens edge enhancement opportunity

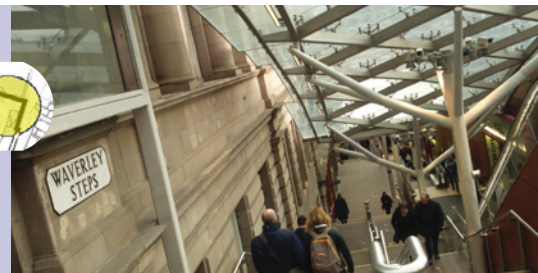


Town Centre Pedestrian Links from Train Station



Opportunities

Signalling the High St from the bus station - making a clear, attractive, welcoming route - opportunity to examine the feasibility of creating a roof structure along the close from bus station to High St and improving the appearance/activity of rear elevations that are dominant en route to the High St - these kind of improvements could make it a clear route, and facilitate supporting uses, such as market stall space, busking space for example.



Events Management - opportunity to utilise public realm areas such as the Town Square and the War Memorial Gardens for a wider range of events/activities - objective: making these areas a fixture in the activity/life of the town centre.



Major development opportunity adjacent to Adam Smith Theatre - may help provide activity, and life on Bennoch Rd, along with additional pedestrian movement to High St, to generate more footfall to support local business and town centre facilities.



Other development opportunities. Major refurbishment and/or redevelopment opportunities to increase the profile and activity within this Quarter. End uses could be residential, office, business, leisure, cultural or other town centre function.



Improve the appearance, function and liveliness of the Gardens - removal of existing dense bushes, and provision of active frontage for any new use and/or development at Forth House facing onto the Gardens.



Connections to Victoria Rd Regeneration Corridor - appropriate signage strategy to indicate direction of travel to the regeneration corridor.



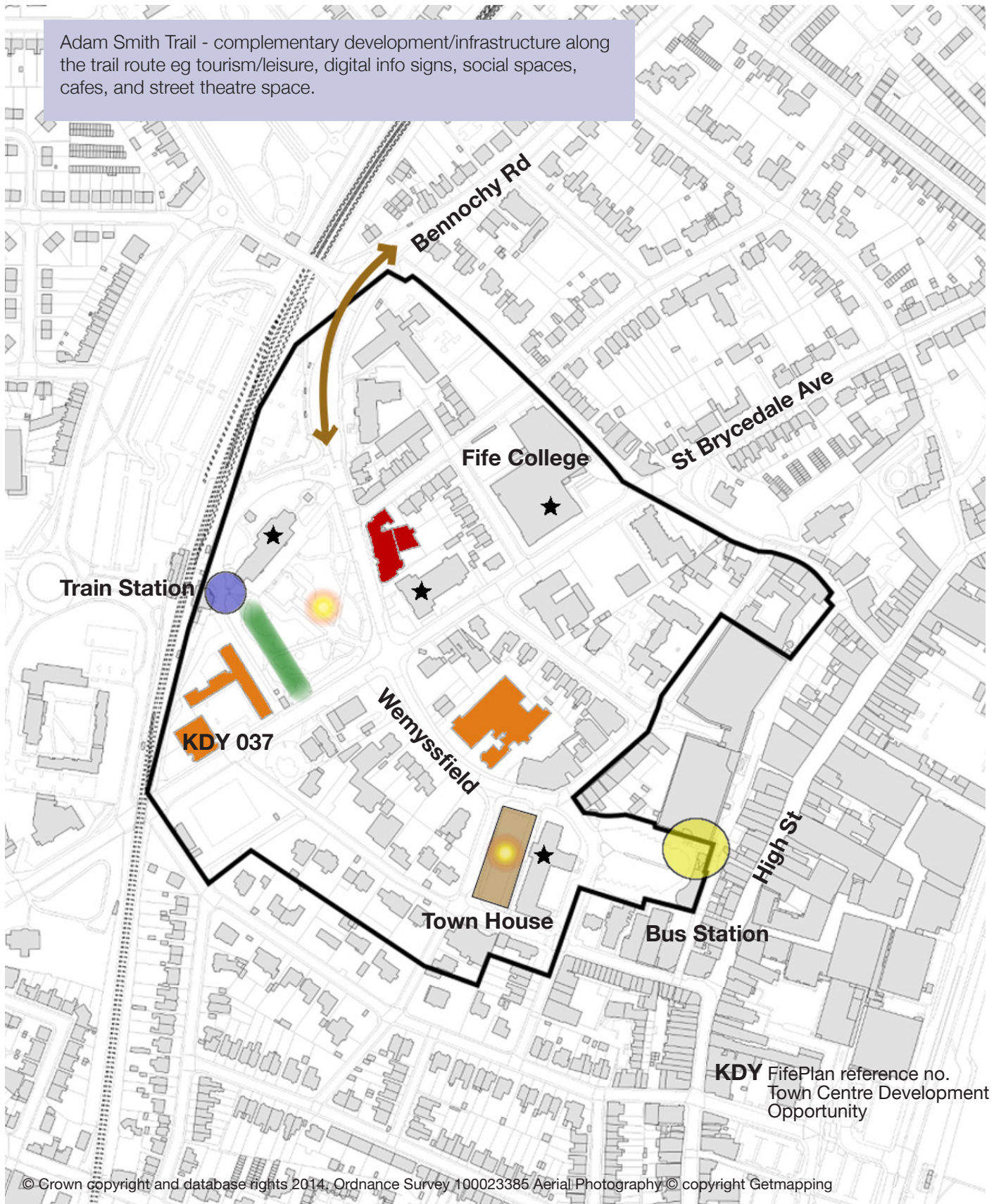
Refurbishment of town square, including surface materials, street furniture, and ensuring future events needs are met - eg servicing.



Promote signature buildings - opportunity to install feature lighting to highlight the towns signature buildings in a co-ordinated manner, so there is a clear theme or style applied - adding to the sense of place or identity.







Adam Smith Trail - complementary development/infrastructure along the trail route eg tourism/leisure, digital info signs, social spaces, cafes, and street theatre space.







Train Station public realm project. Opportunity to examine a project that connects the public realm in front of the Galleries to the train station entrance, creating a seamless, high quality, welcoming entrance to Kirkcaldy town centre.



Short Term

1	High St. Pedestrian Link	Design feasibility to assess the opportunity for restructuring the pedestrian route from the Bus Station through to the High St, looking at public realm improvements, building elevation improvements, a potential roof structure to provide covered access and create a strong visual connection to the High St, and opportunities to introduce additional uses such as market stalls, signage, lighting, art for example.	
2	Support Adam Smith Trail	Identify opportunities for the provision of infrastructure to support the development/improvement of the Adam Smith Trail e.g. tourism/leisure opportunities, digital information signs, social spaces, street theatre, public art trail.	
3	Design Principles - Vacant Land/ Buildings	Creation of design principles for vacant land/buildings to encourage future development that can contribute positively to the character, life and activity of the Cultural & Heritage Quarter.	
4	Link with Regeneration Corridor	Identify opportunities to form strong links with the Victoria Rd Regeneration Corridor - including a signage strategy, and identification of any complimentary development opportunities and/ or land use proposals that could support this Quarter and/or the VRRC.	

Medium Term

5	Town Centre Arrival	Town Centre Arrival Space - Design/Development strategy to assess options for creating a stronger sense of welcome for people arriving by train, to create an attractive, comfortable space for pedestrians to commence their journey into the Cultural & Heritage Quarter and wider town centre.	
6	Garden Improvements to open up adjacent development opportunity	Identify scheme of garden maintenance that may remove the enclosing and isolating planting to the western edge, allowing any refurbishment or redevelopment of Forth House to provide active elevations facing this key area of public space.	
7	Lighting Strategy - Movement Routes	A lighting strategy for the key pedestrian movement routes, with the objective of creating a thematic approach that helps contribute to the creation of a clear and distinctive identity for the Social Quarter, as well as safe and pleasant spaces for people to move around in.	
8	Events Management Strategy	Events Management - Create a Tourism/Cultural/Events Strategy to identify additional opportunities for using key areas of public realm, their funding requirements, to create a sustainable programme of activity in these spaces.	

Acknowledgements

Additional photographs have been kindly provided by the Steve Tiesdell Collection.

Specific acknowledgements to the following for their photographs:

- (1) The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea p18, p20
- (2) Urban Pioneers p18, p20



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