

PENRITH PLACE PLAN

2021-2031



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1. INTRODUCTION



1. INTRODUCTION

The Place Plan sets themes for investment for Penrith going forward which will help it achieve its Vision for the future in a coordinated and managed way supporting local businesses and residents and improving the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of Penrith.

This is the Place Plan for the historic Market Town of Penrith, prepared by the Penrith Town Team with the local community.

The preparation and development of the Plan has come about as a result of community participation and engagement and is intended to capture the energy and enthusiasm of the local community about their place. It articulates an ambitious vision for driving recovery improvements and prosperity and bring confidence that targeted investment interventions will

result in meaningful change for the better.

This Plan describes a Vision of Penrith for the future, the creation of which is the result of collaboration of local and strategic organisations and structured input from the local community. This has been through engagement sessions both on-line, in groups and on a one-to-one basis seeking views, ideas and feedback to a series of questions. It also builds on the engagement undertaken as part of the other local strategic documents identified within the Place Plan.

“ Great food, great space, great heritage, great access to the lakes... It's unique and intriguing. ”





Drawing upon evidence and data illustrating the current performance of the town, and with due regard to the impact of Covid19, the Plan defines a shared Vision for Penrith. It describes its assets, sets out its challenges, assesses potential opportunities going forward, and explains an ambitious programme of actions and possible projects, interventions and investments which are designed to help Penrith achieve its Vision over the next ten years.

The content of the Penrith Place Plan has been informed by a number of Strategic Objectives that have been identified and developed by the Town Team to improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of Penrith.

The development of this Plan has followed the steps of the Cumbria Borderlands Place Programme Route Map which will be used to drive delivery.

- 1 Promote and consolidate Penrith as a gateway to and destination for the surrounding world class landscapes and cultural heritage, thereby sustaining and nurturing innovation within the local visitor economy
- 2 Promote and consolidate Penrith as a community hub for local rural communities and the enjoyment of arts and culture activity
- 3 Place green principles and decarbonisation at the heart of policy development and project delivery
- 4 Safeguard existing businesses and attract new businesses to Penrith and Penrith town centre, to widen the economic base to drive economic recovery and prosperity
- 5 Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Penrith, increasing spend per visit and extending the visitor season
- 6 Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation, including education and training opportunities, with a focus on embedding a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship
- 7 Maintain and increase the number of people living in Penrith and Penrith town centre
- 8 Raise the quality of the physical and natural environment in Penrith and Penrith town centre



Photo Credit: Getty Images

THE TOWN TEAM

The development of the Penrith Place Plan has been overseen by the Penrith Town Team. The role of the Town Team has been to support and shape the development of a 'Place Plan' for Penrith. The Town Team is represented by a wide range of local stakeholders thereby providing a 'whole town place planning approach'.

The Town Team members are:

Nick Wright (Chair)	Cumbria County Council
Daren Broad	Penrith BID
David Allen	Cumbria CVS
Amanda Holliday	Penrith Industrial BID
Heidi Marshall	Chamber of Trade
Cllr Patricia Bell	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Hillary Carrick	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Helen Fearon	Cumbria County Council
Cllr Mary Robinson	Eden District Council
Cllr Virginia Taylor	Eden District Council
Cllr Jonathan Davies	Penrith Town Council
Cllr Ron Kenyon	Penrith Town Council
Cllr Dave Knaggs	Penrith Town Council

CUMBRIA BORDERLANDS PLACE PROGRAMME



Photo Credit: Town Council

OUR APPROACH

The development of the plan has followed the steps of the Cumbria Borderlands Place Programme Route Map which will be used to drive delivery.

ROUTE MAP



2. OUR VISION



2. OUR VISION

The Vision incorporates a strong economic role for Penrith that comes from its highly strategic location in Northern England, sitting within an amazing rural environment and with fantastic growth opportunities for business, population and the visitor economy. Creating a quality town that meets the needs and aspirations of residents, businesses and visitors alike whilst growing as a hub for a wider experience.

The Vision for Penrith highlights place of real distinctiveness for Cumbria; a combination of a **vibrant, independent** town which is supremely **well connected and located**. It has natural beauty all around it, is a **buzzing centre for business** and is developing a strong cultural proposition based on everything from food and drink to events and festivals. Penrith has **tremendous potential** to prosper and thrive and as a result, to develop as a significant destination in Cumbria.





There are **three thematic areas** which are like “chapters of the story of Penrith”. These will be the strategic priorities to guide future activity for developing and promoting the town.

The Place Plan has been designed to be complementary to the Eden Local Plan and the activities and policy areas relating to Penrith. In particular it will complement the delivery of Inspiring Eden, Eden District Council’s new plan and investment for economic recovery and prosperity.

The Place Plan is committed to delivering zero carbon emissions and supporting initiatives and activities that will help achieve this. It recognises the importance of making responsible environmental choices to maintain a healthy, clean and green environment for now and for future generations, so they are able to enjoy and benefit from Penrith’s natural and cultural heritage.

01. CAPITALISING ON OUR CONNECTIONS



02. HUB FOR BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP



03. CULTURALLY CENTRED

THEMES

01 CAPITALISING ON OUR CONNECTIONS

Penrith is literally and metaphorically at the crossroads; a place that is the ultimate “location, location, location” and on the cusp of realising transformational growth and prosperity for the benefit of all. It sits as an important station on the West Coast Mainline and is located on the M6. It is a principal town on the A66 which is the main route to the north east and being dualled in one of the largest infrastructure projects in England. There are opportunities to enhance and make better use of the area around the train station and improve links into the town centre and the surrounding areas. This concept would require working with key partners within the rail sector.

There is potential to create better transport connections across the town through developing further the Rural Mobility Hub, a demand-responsive transport service which provides greater access to the town from the surrounding villages where traditional public transport is limited or non-existent. There are opportunities to consider a green transport hub to enhance green routes, movement around town and better wayfinding through investments in cycling and walking. This would support the work of the emerging Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and Parking and Movement study. These initiatives coupled with other infrastructure such as an electric charging hub and the installation of electric charging points would help join up different modes of transport and support greener and more sustainable means of travel. It also breaks down barriers to accessing employment for residents of Penrith and the surrounding villages through access to new travel opportunities thereby expanding the travel to work area.

Penrith is not only on the edge of the Lake District National Park, it's also close to the Yorkshire Dales National Park and next to the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Yet for all this wondrous connectivity and stunning assets, Penrith lacks a compelling reason to visit or to be a destination. Post pandemic it has everything people would want, and more, with an amazing opportunity to become a hub for a wider experience. It is rightly looking to become an active travel hub as well as a centre for active sports so people can enjoy the area using Penrith as their base. The creation of a National Parks Centre, incorporating the Tourist Information Centre would help capitalise on this tourist and visitor opportunity. This approach also fits perfectly with the National Park dispersal strategy which encourages people to experience places surrounding the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales. These are expanded in Appendix 1.



Photo Credit: Getty Images



02 HUB FOR BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, ENTERPRISE & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Aside from Carlisle, Penrith could be considered the place for business and commerce in Cumbria, again greatly assisted by its fantastic location and connections. Whilst the town centre is a bustling home to many independent shops, as well as chains and has some great food and drink offers, it is around Penrith that comes the greatest surprise. There are industrial estates, business parks and a real hive of commercial activity in a wide range of business sectors; indeed this diversity is keeping the local economy resilient and strong. The scale and variety of businesses means there are two Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), one for the town centre and one for Gillwilly Industrial Estate, Penrith Industrial Estate and Eden Business Park.

There is further scope for growth if the right premises can be brought forward. In the centre that means repurposing buildings and thinking about how start-ups can be attracted in shared space or within characterful architecture. Around the edge of the town, it means developing new builds or updating existing stock such as by the site at junction 41 to the north of the town. Penrith is the perfect work/live location post pandemic and needs to capitalise on this opportunity. These are expanded upon in Appendix 1.



03 CULTURALLY CENTRED

For Penrith to continue to prosper and thrive as a destination, for those wanting a different quality of life it has to equally grow and diversify its cultural offer. This is a town with considerable history and heritage epitomised by Great Dockray, the Castle and Castle Park and St Andrews, although these important assets can be greatly enhanced to be a more central part of the offer. There are a number of visitor attractions surrounding the town such as Lowther Castle to the south of the town and the visitor attraction Rheged near the motorway. These are an important part of the proposition. However, there can be much more storytelling, animation and joining up of assets across the town and area. There are also important plans to develop a cultural hub within the town centre creating a destination experience for the town and wider area. There are also opportunities to enhance its cultural assets such as developing Castle Park, making use of empty shop units within the town centre to support and promote local creative businesses, and wider interpretation of the towns listed buildings and colorful history.

Penrith is perfect for sport and activity linked to health and well-being, something that is now paramount for many people. Here you can be at one with nature in a matter of minutes, cycling, walking, climbing the hills, gazing at the view or even open water swimming! The town has the opportunity to develop its accommodation proposition linked to a growing food and drink offer with the potential to make even more use of local field to fork produce; supporting Penrith as a major destination. These are expanded on in Appendix 1.



3. PENRITH AS A PLACE



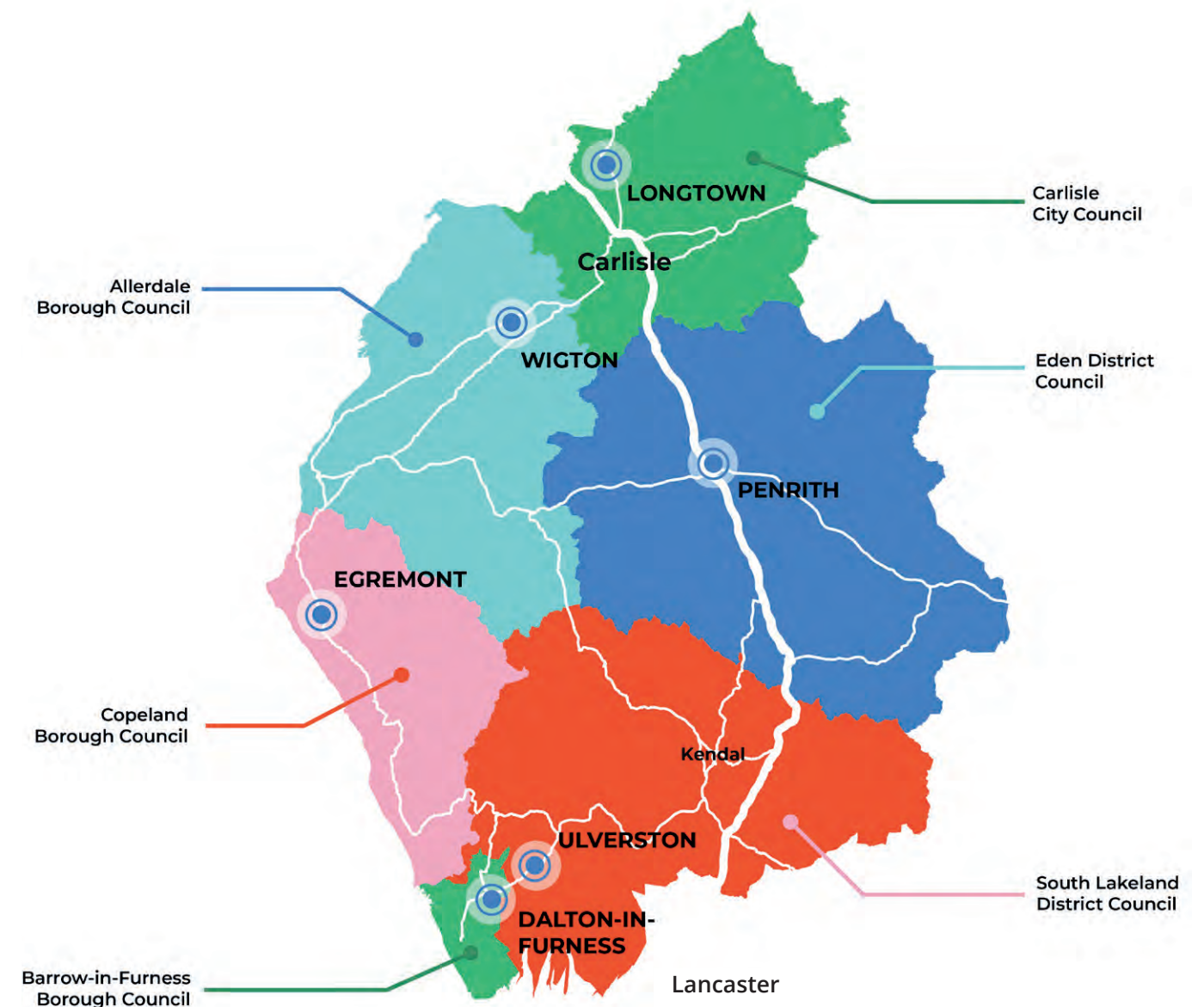
3. PENRITH AS A PLACE

Penrith is a large historic market town with a population of 15,168². It is located in the district of Eden at the junction of the M6 motorway and the A66 trunk road. It is centrally located within Cumbria just a few miles east of the Lake District National Park with good road connections across to Keswick and to Ullswater. It is also in close proximity to the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Pennines. The A66 also affords good connections across to the North East and Yorkshire and beyond and the town benefits from a railway station on the west coast main line which has been there since 1846. It provides direct service connections to both Scotland and London although the number of “stopping trains” has reduced since 2008.

Penrith is identified within Eden District Council Local Plan as being the main town for Eden and as such is the location for many of the district's key services such as the location of the District Council. Its strategic location also means it is home to the Cumbria Police and Fire Service Head Quarters, and a large regional office of the Environment Agency.

The town is also home to two secondary schools, the selective Queen Elizabeth Grammar School and the Ullswater Community College. There is a hospital and health centre, which was opened in 1970. In addition, there are two large industrial estates to the north of the town with a diverse range of businesses including haulage and logistics and food manufacturing.

Even though it lies outside the national parks and Areas Of Natural Beauty (AONB) the town is surrounded by attractive rural countryside and the Centre Parcs holiday village is located just to the south at Whinfell Forrest.



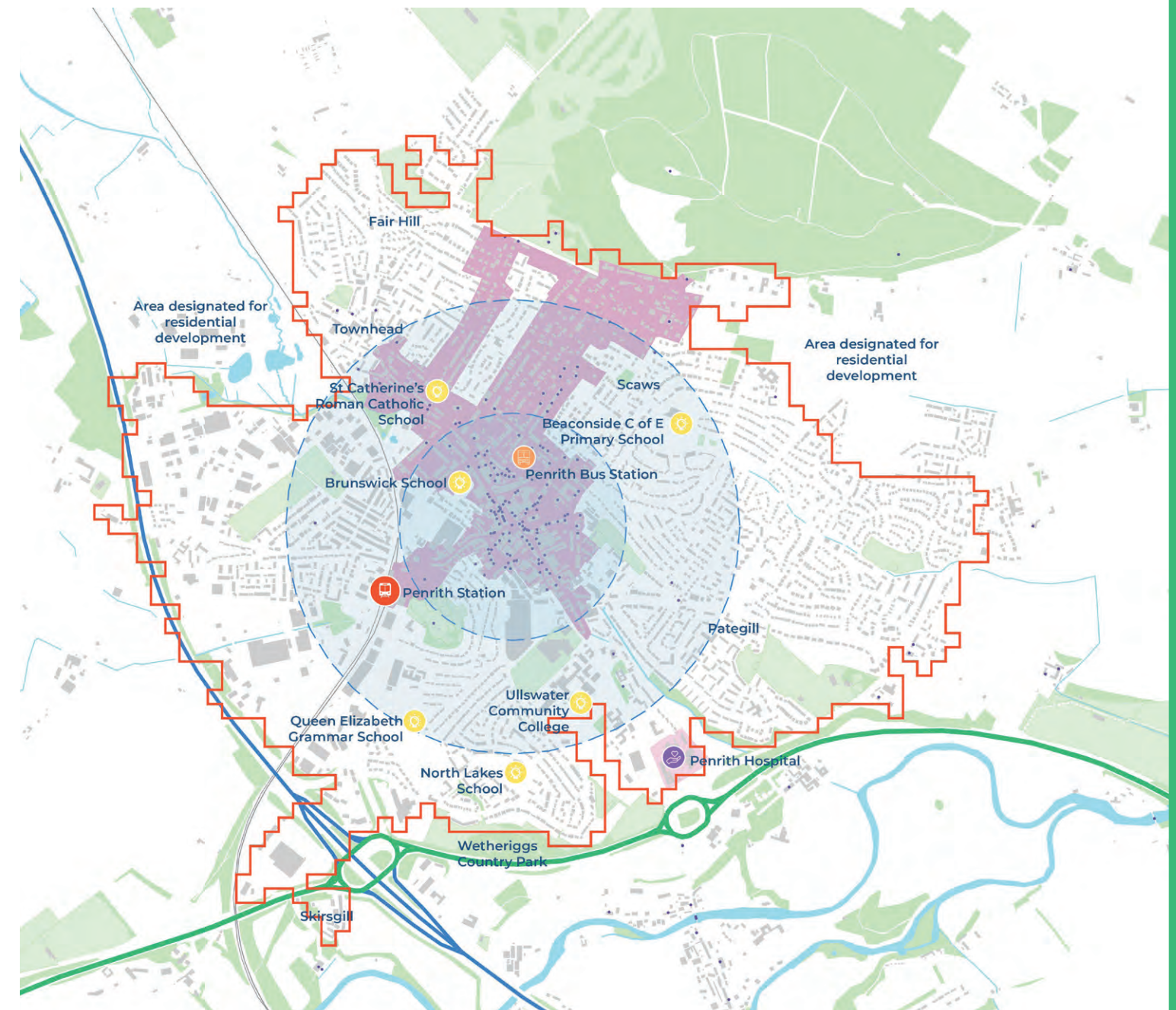
² Cumbria Observatory Oct 2021 statistics

In recent years there has been an expansion of retail uses, (Booths, Aldi, Morrisons, Cranstons) along the corridor into the town centre near the railway station and opposite the historic Castle ruins. There is also now an M&S Food Hall and a large Sainsbury's store opposite the leisure centre; the car park for which incorporates a Premier Inn. The New Squares retail development provides many opportunities for different enterprises, including the potential for use by social enterprises.

House prices are above average and with the range of services and rural hinterland in particular, Penrith is a popular location for many retirees.

However, the overall feel of the town is one that "could be doing so much better", currently punching below its weight with so many positives and strengths from which to build a more prosperous place for all. There are currently too many vacant town centre retail units impacting negatively on the streetscape and the overall vitality of the town centre, despite some very attractive and popular features.

Eden District Council's Local Plan identifies land to the north of the town for residential housing and land at Stoneybeck Roundabout has already been given permission for business use and the possibility of making greater use of the under used M6 junction 41 has been explored. This has merit in supporting the objective of rebalancing the population mix and is worthy of further consideration going forward as the town shapes its future direction and identifies the activities needed to achieve its aims.



- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|---|---------------------|
|  | Town Centre Boundary |  | Penrith Bus Station |
|  | Walking Radii From Town Centre |  | Train Station |
|  | Education |  | Conservation Area |
|  | Penrith Hospital |  | Listed Buildings |

4. OUR TOWN IN CONTEXT



4. OUR TOWN IN CONTEXT

Whilst the town has a strong and friendly community Penrith recognises that it needs to evolve as it strives to develop and draw in more families, harness its strategic location as an excellent employment base and provide a diverse offer for both locals and visitors. The EDC Local Plan recognises the opportunities for growth with a number of future growth and housing sites identified. Whilst the Penrith Neighbourhood Development Plan considers how development can be of environmentally sustainable design including reduced energy use and carbon emissions and be accessible with social inclusivity.

Penrith is a place that often “looks in on itself” a little too much and would benefit from greater recognition of its regional context. It is a significant town and employment hub for a potentially wide catchment with excellent transport connections, lying between Kendal to the south and Carlisle to the north. However, there are challenges with limited public transport to the hinterland.



It is acknowledged locally that it has become a little "stuck in its ways" and needs to move with the times. Penrith is a successful local and sub-regional service centre, but it could be so much more. It therefore needs to provide more good value homes, build upon the high-quality education and leisure offer and provide a broader range of facilities for the younger population.

Whilst this Place Plan stands on its own as a document articulating the challenges, opportunities and potential interventions which would boost the performance of the town. It is also prepared with regard to various locally prepared action plans such as the Eden District Council Local Plan (2014-2032), the Inspiring Eden Economic Development Framework, the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Community Plan and the Penrith Town Council Business Plan. Each of these plans have been subject to considerable consultation and engagement.

It has also considered the emerging Penrith Parking and Movement Study and the Penrith Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan and other regional and local strategies - particularly the Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership's Re start, Re think, Re boot Recovery Plan. It has been developed with consideration

to the strategic objectives referred to earlier which link in with the overarching ambitions of the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal.

Importantly, the Penrith Place Plan has considered a great deal of statistical data assembled by Cumbria Observatory which sets out the current performance of Penrith against key headings. This data informed the selection of Penrith as a place which would be suitable for Borderlands investment under the Place programme and also informed the headline "themes" which emerged from the community consultation which helped to tell the Penrith story. This could include Heritage Lottery, Sport England and funding streams that will emerge from the Levelling Up agenda and the National Shared Prosperity Fund.

In developing the vision, themes, strategic objectives and proposed project concepts, a communications and engagement plan was developed that consisted of stakeholder workshops, 1-1 conversations and an online and face to face survey.



Photo Credit: Getty Images

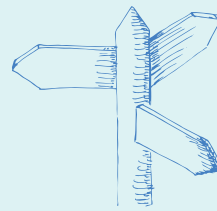
EXAMPLES INCLUDE:



- Median house prices are slightly above the Cumbrian average but median household incomes are some way short of the Cumbrian average.



- Within Cumbria, Penrith has the largest proportion of residents who live and work within the same area.



- Almost 50% of workers travel less than 2km to work.



- Penrith has more than double the Cumbrian average of employment in the transport and storage sector illustrating the excellent strategic location of the town.



- There is a marked difference in educational attainment between certain areas of the town, with the more deprived areas scoring noticeably less well compared to other towns in Cumbria.

³ Cumbria Observatory Oct 2021 statistics

Headlines from the online/physical survey are;

- 148 responses where over **36%** live in Penrith, over **8%** work in Penrith and over **31%** live and work in Penrith.
- When asked what are the positive things about Penrith, the top three answers were **friendly, community and location**.
- When asked what the negative things about Penrith, the top three answers were **parking, empty shops and lack of choice**.
- When asked what Penrith's best kept secret is, the top three answers were **The Beacon, community spirit and quirky independent shops**.
- When asked what Penrith's biggest challenge is, the top three answers were **attracting new businesses, reinvigorating town centre and retaining young people/developing community activities**.

The word clouds are included in appendix 3.

5. OUR OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES



5. OUR OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Penrith is a place which has enormous economic opportunity to increase the prosperity of the local community.

Connectivity through its links to the rail and road network is a key asset and opportunity. It gives ready access to the south of the country, the west of Cumbria, the North East and Yorkshire to the east and Scotland and Edinburgh to the North. The infrastructure upgrades to the A66 provide excellent prospects for growth and development for the town, as well as opportunities to

attract new visitors.

Two thriving business and industrial parks, high performing health and education facilities and a strong sports and leisure offer together with a charming and characterful town centre all make Penrith an attractive place. The auction mart on the outskirts of the town also reflects the major agricultural economy that exists within the town and its rural surrounds.

Local employment, stunning rural countryside and nearby national parks all combine to underpin huge opportunities for repositioning Penrith as a visitor destination and as a great place to live, learn and work.

Its proximity to Carlisle is also an opportunity for Penrith. A vital ingredient in the growth and sustainability of Penrith is attracting more working age people and families to recognise how good a place it is to live and work. Providing more affordable priced homes will be attractive to buyers as the St Cuthbert's Garden Village project comes on stream to the south of Carlisle.

The Green agenda is also important for Penrith to harness and be at the forefront of initiatives to achieve net zero emissions.

The town's conservation areas, medieval history and the related streetscape, listed buildings, such as the Town Hall, Castle ruins and Park are undoubted assets of significance for the town. They each contribute to its overall character and sense of place, which is valued by the local community, and will play a key role in shaping its future.

The Cumbria Digital Infrastructure Strategy identifies the importance of digital infrastructure for modern life and the connectivity it provides to services and markets. Penrith benefits from good digital connectivity, both with regards to access to superfast broadband and 4G coverage. The town has 95.2% of premises with over 30 Mbps of fixed broadband speed coverage and 100% of premises have access to the four Mobile Operating Networks. Penrith is therefore well placed to attract and support investment opportunities with its good digital infrastructure.

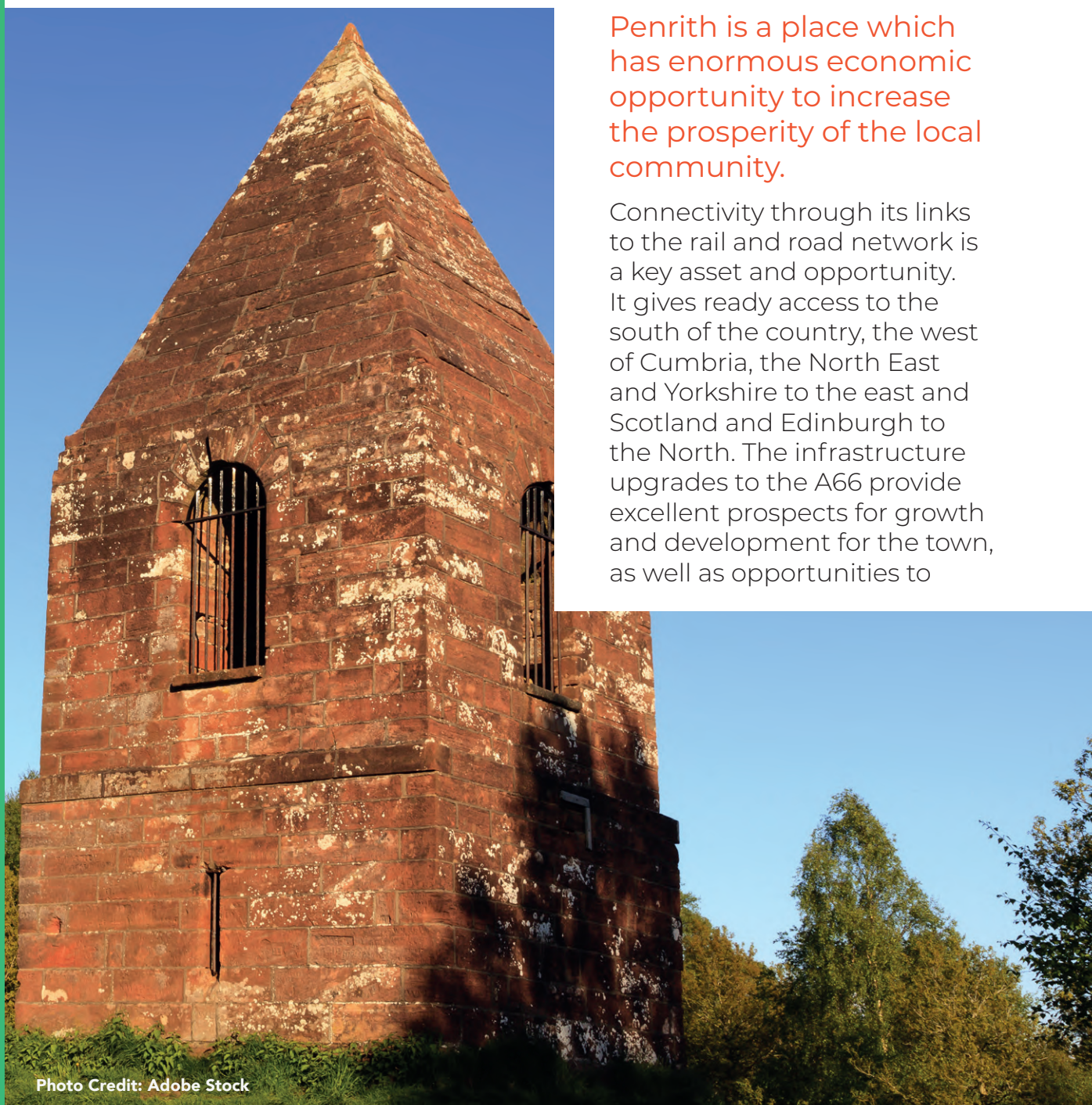


Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

Opportunities do exist however, to better maintain, improve, enhance, and develop the features and facilities of the town. With cooperation and collaboration between local partner organisations and the private sector these sorts of interventions would strengthen the offer of Penrith as an attractive and vibrant place to live, work and visit. There is the potential to consider the principles set out by Bill Grimsey to support repurposing and bringing back into use redundant sites and properties. The town needs to introduce more reasons to visit which means more compelling marketing and promotion of the attributes of the town to compete better with other locations.

However, there are many challenges. There are a number of empty shops within the town, including at the New Squares development. The town would benefit from having a higher profile and a positive brand. The town needs more self belief as a place and more confidence in a clear future/ vision going forward.

There are challenges in retaining young people as they emerge from full time education and are attracted by broader employment opportunities elsewhere and the bright lights of a city. The closure of Newton Rigg College, situated on the outskirts of the town, has had a profound impact on Penrith and indeed Cumbria. It was the only agricultural college in the county providing the sort of education rural young people required, including those from across the county as a whole.



Photo Credit: Thinking Place

6. BUILDING OUR FUTURE



6. BUILDING OUR FUTURE

As described earlier in the Vision section, three themes have been identified and agreed locally which have informed the consideration of potential projects, interventions and investments. It is critical for this Plan that these contribute to the achievement of the overall Vision and work together with each other to form a coherent Plan which knits together and drives the change needed.

Project ideas have been sought locally and from the broader engagement work initiated with regard to existing action plans prepared by the community group town council, district council and county council.

The following are illustrations of project proposals, under each theme, which are designed to support the town achieve its Vision of the future as well as address the headline strategic objectives.



Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

THEME 1

Capitalising on our connections

This theme would capitalise on the excellent connections that Penrith benefits from. It would support people moving through the town through enhanced active travel and improved transport links. This would be through improved cycling and walking routes, further development of the Rural Mobility Hub, enhanced use of the Railway Station forecourt and better wayfinding between the Railway Station and the Bus Station. It could also consider Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure.

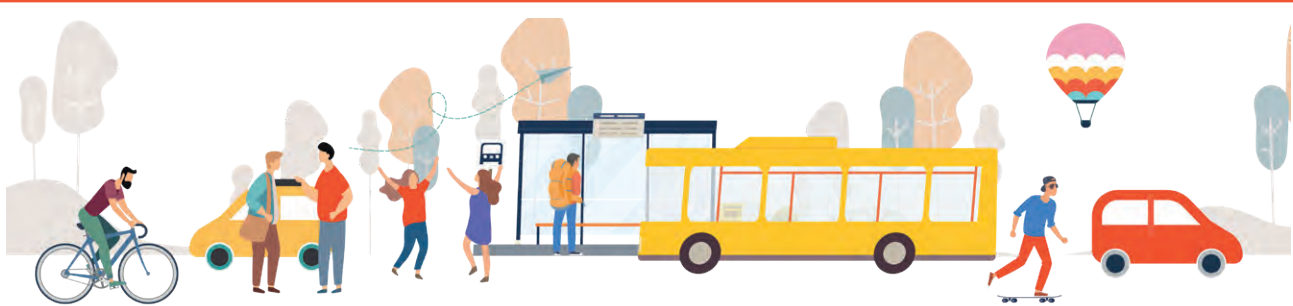
Concept 1A Green Routes and Movement around Town

Project Idea:

This project would see an investment in improved cycling and walking links and associated infrastructure. It would support a greener and more sustainable mode of transport and could help address barriers to economic and social participation through alternative means to access these opportunities. The concept would also support movement around the town, and could include a cycling hub and consideration of an electric bike hire scheme. The aim of the project would be to support people to access the different services the town has to offer and ultimately increase the amount of time and money people spend in the town. These interventions will be led and delivered through the work being undertaken on the Penrith LCWIP and the Penrith Parking and Movement Study.

Outcomes and Benefits

This concept would support active travel across the town. It will directly achieve upgraded walking and cycling routes which will have the potential to increase footfall. In addition, it will address the barriers that prevent people from pursuing walking and cycling as an activity. As a result of improved movement around the town there will be less congestion and the physical environment will be improved, contributing to improved health and well being outcomes.



Concept 1b Transport Links and Rural Mobility

Project Idea:

The town has such strong connectivity it could serve as a much stronger hub of economic and social activity. This concept would build upon the work of the Rural Mobility Hub to deliver a demand responsive transport solution for the rural area within a 15 mile radius of Penrith town centre. It could support specific touring sites locally positioning Penrith as a key stop as part of a Lakeland holiday. This also supports Avanti's ambition to work more closely with Stagecoach to better align timetables, so people are more able to readily travel by train and bus to the town and its surrounds.

The Railway station forecourt at Penrith has opportunities to be enhanced and act as a better gateway to Penrith. Complementary initiatives that could support the delivery of this would be improved signage, wayfinding, public realm and options to better link the Railway Station to the Bus Station which would make the whole town

Outcomes and Benefits

This theme will result in Penrith becoming a key service hub for the rural surrounds. Additionally, improving footfall will also be an important outcome by allowing people to make their way through the town and take advantage of the services and independent retail that Penrith has to offer. Through better coordination of services and opportunities people will be more likely to use public transport. The public spaces will be improved, supporting and promoting sustainability and the green economy.

Concept 1c National Parks Centre

Project Idea:

This idea revolves around utilising the excellent connections and potential that Penrith has in order to draw in visitors to the area and make much more of the close proximity of the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales national parks and Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The current Tourist Information Centre location is within a listed building owned by the District Council; however, its location does not lend itself to as much footfall from visitors as it should do. The proposal could be linked with co-location of a National Park visitor centre in Penrith itself, close to car parking and hotel rooms, providing a holistic visitor offer. A high street presence in Penrith would be a real boost and begin the repositioning of the town in the eyes of visitors and link in with the excellent road and rail connections to bring people to Penrith.

Outcomes and Benefits

The key output for this project would be increased visitor numbers to the town and increased footfall and dwelling time. This would have a positive impact through increased spend in the shops and local services. This would support enhanced Gross Value Added as well as create and safeguard jobs.



Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

THEME 2

Hub for business, industry, enterprise & entrepreneurship

This theme builds upon the strong business base that exists in Penrith but recognises the challenges of empty buildings, redundant sites, absent landlords and offer a package of activity to stimulate new enterprise and bring vacant properties back into use.



Concept 2a Highstreet Enhancements, Redevelopment of key sites and buildings

Project Idea:

This concept would focus on a grants programme that would repurpose town centre buildings and sites. There are a number of sites that could be brought back into use such as, the old Post Office and Coop as well as the old Gasworks site. The Penrith Town Team could act as a conduit to starting discussions with key stakeholders to repurpose derelict sites and premises. A grants programme could cover a range of eligible activity such as shop front enhancements, or capital investments to a building interiors to stimulate economic activity. There could also be opportunities to support green infrastructure and initiatives such as improving and reimagining Great Dockray and Middlegate.

Outcomes and Benefits

This concept has the potential to bring back into use empty redundant buildings and derelict sites for a range of purposes, including a digital High Street project to develop a click and collect infrastructure. A variety of end uses could be considered as part of the business case development. The Concept would create new jobs and increased footfall and dwelling time in the town resulting in more money being spent in the town. Additionally, green infrastructure improvements can be made to support green growth and carbon neutrality.

Concept 2b Support for Business

Project Idea:

Support for capital infrastructure is the starting point to help achieve the vision for Penrith. To fully maximise the impact that capital funding can deliver, appropriate business support packages need to be in place to ensure that businesses can adapt and respond to the opportunities that this Place Plan will deliver.

Through the project businesses would have access to a range of services that would help them grow and thrive. This would build on the existing Inspiring Eden Business Recovery and Support programme and could include for example an E-commerce support programme to new and existing business.

Potential exists to develop an Ambassador Programme. Working with key partners such as the Cumbria Chamber of Commerce, Penrith Chamber of Commerce Federation of Small Businesses, Chamber of Trade, the BIDs and the Social Enterprise Partnership, relevant and appropriate support can be identified and developed for existing and new and aspiring businesses.

Outcomes and Benefits

This project would support new and existing businesses to grow, increasing Gross Value Added and ultimately new jobs. The establishment of an Ambassador programme would see the creation of a new network to share and disseminate information across the town and act as a driver for business growth.

THEME 3

Culturally Centered

Heritage has an essential role to play in making communities better places to live, creating economic prosperity, and supporting personal wellbeing. Penrith benefits from strong local heritage and cultural assets that have the potential to be enhanced further and act as a real hub for cultural and heritage activity.

Concept 3a -Support for the enhancement, improvements and development of Penrith's cultural and heritage assets

Project Idea:

This concept would support the enhancement of the cultural and heritage offer in the town which can diversify into new opportunities that would appeal to the local community and bring new visitors into the town.

Support could include initiatives to promote and enhance the offer at Castle Park, repositioning the Tourist Information Centre developing a Cultural Hub. The theme links strategically with the aims and objectives of the Arts Council and Heritage Lottery through increased participation in cultural and heritage activity, developing the local economy and supporting the local area to be a better place to live, work and visit. Improved interpretation would increase participation in the cultural offer as well as supporting Penrith's new brand (see 3b opposite).

Outcomes and Benefits

Through the delivery of this concept there would be an enhanced and improved cultural and visitor offer. It is anticipated a wider range of people could become involved in heritage activity, increasing footfall in the town and giving the town an economic boost.



Concept 3b Pride in Penrith

Project Idea:

This project would support the development of a brand for Penrith. The town of Penrith is currently punching below its weight and with future planned investment in and around Carlisle it runs the risk of getting left behind. Its strategic location and strong connectivity, its proximity to other attractions and its inherent local character need to be better promoted and the essence of Penrith needs to be given some recognition so its strong offer for visitors and locals is more widely appreciated. The project could see the creation of a "Penrith Your Town" initiative which would see community involvement in the promotion of the town. This would build on the work already being delivered through the Penrith Marketing Group made up of Penrith Town Council; Cumbria County Council, Eden District Council, Penrith Town BID, Industrial BID,

the Library and Chamber of Trade who are working with a marketing professional to develop a marketing plan post Covid.

Outcomes and Benefits

This concept support new and existing businesses, increasing their GVA and safeguard and create new jobs. A new network would also be created.

CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

These project ideas and initiatives could grasp the challenges and opportunities faced and support the aspirations of the Place Plan to achieve the vision. The concepts are at a very early stage of consideration and development and the next stage of implementation is to identify the appropriate next steps for project development.

Engagement with local partners including the town council, the district council, county council, and other local stakeholders will be initiated to support this process. Nonetheless, each of these concepts is capable of being developed, subject to more detailed consultation, and consideration of project constraints.

Projects will be developed, in a proportionate manner following HM Treasury Green Book principles and will be overseen by the Town Team. A Project Office could be considered to focus and support the development and delivery of the interventions within the programme. The business cases will respond to the individual requirements of the funder, and each business case will be expected

to demonstrate its contribution to inclusive and sustainable growth. For Borderlands funding, these business cases will be compiled into the Borderlands Town Investment Plan.

These projects will inject much needed pride and confidence into the town and help to address the need for greater local spending power to sustain and develop the current retail and leisure offer and develop the town as a social, economic and community hub for Penrith and its surrounding areas.

Appendix 1 provides details of the steps for implementation.



Photo Credit: Adobe Stock

7. DELIVERING CHANGE



7. DELIVERING CHANGE

7.1 Outputs, outcomes and benefits

The Penrith Place Plan is designed to boost the attractiveness, functionality and economic performance of the town. The Place Plan advocates giving it a recognisable heart- distinctive in its design - and feel/ambience, to better attract residents and visitors, to more frequently use, dwell, congregate and meet in the centre. The Place Plan will help reinstate the towns centres vibrancy and vitality which many stakeholders want. The benefits will be significant, particularly for the younger population. Whilst the outputs from most of the prioritised interventions will be physical improvements to the environment; the outcomes will be a huge increase in local pride and confidence in the town's future and a keen ownership and custodianship of the improvements for the benefit of the local community for years to come.

Critically, there will be a boost to local business and more likelihood of new businesses being established to take advantage of the fresh sense of place afforded by the intended investment. Local procurement in the delivery of activity will be encouraged where possible.

“Developing a town to be attractive and exciting so to encourage diverse and innovative new businesses and visitors.”



Photo Credit: Town Council

Appendix 1 provides further detail on how the themes and concepts will support the delivery of the Place Plan's strategic objectives and the benefits that will be achieved. Quantification of these benefits will be identified as the schemes are further developed, however, key benefits could include:

- New businesses created
- Businesses Safeguarded
- Increased GVA
- Increased footfall
- New jobs
- Improved health outcomes
- Create new social enterprises to support green jobs and green economy
- Empty units brought back into use
- Improved public spaces
- Increased participation in cultural and sports activities

The Place Plan aims to provide lasting benefits for all residents, supporting inclusive and sustainable prosperity for the Penrith community. The monitoring of the Place Plan will measure the impact of the activities and interventions brought forward against the baseline indicators for inclusive growth such as deprivation, households not in work, access to services, qualifications and population/ depopulation. The baseline for these indicators can be found at Appendix 2.

7.2 Management and governance

The Place Plan has been developed in partnership with a Town Team consisting of representation from a range of Penrith stakeholders. The delivery of the Plan will continue to work within the local governance structures within Penrith, ensuring continued engagement from a range of local stakeholders. The Plan will be used to lever investment opportunities from a variety of sources, including the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal. The Town Team and Local governance structures will be an integral part of the governance for the implementation phase, with appropriate levels of engagement in development, consideration and endorsement of future schemes. As schemes are submitted to individual funding sources, the local governance of the lead organisation will be recognised as the formal decision process and endorsement for submission. Recognising the changes that will be introduced through Local Government Reform, the management and governance of the plan will continue to be reviewed as the reforms are implemented.

7.3 Monitoring and evaluation

The effectiveness of the Place Plan will be monitored through the delivery against the identified themes and the Strategic Objectives within the Place Plan. Individual schemes as part of funding submissions will be required to demonstrate their contribution to the Strategic Objectives and the outputs and outcomes that will support achievement of these objectives. Schemes will be required to submit returns and report on progress to the Town Team and funders. Mid term (five years) and ten year evaluations will be commissioned by the Town Team to identify the collective impacts of the individual interventions and their contribution against the achievement of the vision and strategic objectives.

7.4 Marketing and promotion

The Penrith Place Plan is a stand-alone document which captures local opinion, local enthusiasm and local strength of feeling regarding the future opportunities and challenges for the town.

In developing the plan, engagement was undertaken with a range of stakeholders including, local authorities, businesses and, crucially community groups. In order to take the plan forward and maximise opportunities, a full communications plan will be produced. This plan will be developed and implemented through the Town Team ensuring appropriate consideration is given to the needs and requirements of the local community, as well as maximising impact to draw in investment opportunities within the Plan.



Photo Credit: Thinking Place

APPENDICES



APPENDIX 1

PENRITH PLACE PLAN – CONCEPTS AND ACTION PLAN

Projects	Intervention/initiative	Link to Place Plan Strategic Objective	Potential Outputs and Outcomes	Funder	Next Steps
Theme 1 – Capitalising on our Connections					
1a Green routes and movement through town	Investment in improved cycling and walking links and associated infrastructure Create a cycling hub and electric bike hire scheme Support the movement of people around the town to ease the issue of peak time congestion to address the local concern over parking	Promote and consolidate Penrith as a community hub for local rural communities and the enjoyment of arts and culture activity Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Penrith; increasing spend per visit and extending the visitor season Raise the quality of the physical and natural environments in Penrith and Penrith town centre Place green principles and decarbonisation at the heart of policy development and project delivery	Additional visitors/footfall attracted Upgraded walking and cycling paths Improved health and well being Synchronised off-street and on-street parking offer Reduce congestion	CCC EDC PTC	Delivery via Penrith Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan Project Delivery Group and Movement Study Implementation Group (project groups of the Penrith Town Working Group) Deliver the Penrith Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan (LCWIP) Implementation of the Penrith Parking and Movement Study (PPMS) Identification of additional interventions/initiatives needed, outside of PPMS Identification of projects from LCWIP Identification of projects from PPMS and - Establish costs at SOBC stage - Quantification of benefits - Identification of project constraints and risks

1b Transport Links	Improvements to the station forecourt as a Gateway to Penrith Create wayfinding from the station to the town Develop a rural mobility pilot (e.g., dial-a-bus) Consideration of appropriate location for EV charging points Support the development of touring spots / touring sites in the area. Feasibility of a transport hub	Promote and consolidate Penrith as a community hub for local rural communities and the enjoyment of arts and culture activity Place green principles and decarbonisation at the heart of policy development and project delivery Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Penrith; increasing spend per visit and extending the visitor season Raise the quality of the physical and natural environments in Penrith and Penrith town centre Place green principles and decarbonisation at the heart of policy development and project delivery	Additional visitors/footfall attracted Increased GVA Increased travel options	Borderlands Northern? Network Rail? CCC EDC PTC	Identification of Sponsor organisation/s Identification of projects: - Establish costs at SOBC stage - Quantification of benefits - Identification of project constraints and risks
1c National Parks centre	Create a National Parks centre in town centre, incorporating the Tourist Information Centre	Promote and consolidate Penrith as a gateway to and destination for the surrounding world class landscapes and cultural heritage thereby sustaining and nurturing innovation within the local visitor economy Maintain and increase the number of visitors spending money in Penrith; increasing spend per visit and extending the visitor season Raise the quality of the physical and natural environments in Penrith and Penrith town centre	Additional visitors/footfall attracted Links to National Park created	Borderlands CCC EDC PTC	Identification of Sponsor organisation Feasibility of design and delivery Identification of projects: - Establish costs at SOBC stage - Quantification of benefits - Identification of project constraints and risks

Projects	Intervention/initiative	Link to Place Plan Strategic Objective	Potential Outputs and Outcomes	Funder	Next Steps
Theme 2 – Hub for Business					
2a Highstreet Enhancements	Provide a grants programme to repurpose town centre buildings and sites, bringing back into use derelict or unused assets. Enhance and promote a Shop Front Scheme for existing businesses Deliver a digital High Street project: Click and collect infrastructure in town Options for the establishment of a Project Office Public Realm improvements Options for Green Corridors	Attract new businesses to our town and town centres Increase and retain our working age population Raise the standard of the physical environment in our towns and town centres Deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation Increase the number of visitors who spend time and money in our town and town centre	Support to new and existing business (including independent shops, food and drink offer, wet weather/ inside leisure provision, visitor infrastructure) New Jobs Buildings converted to residential Improved public space	Borderlands Townscape Heritage Initiative Private Sector Match CCC EDC PTC BID	Identification of Sponsor organisation/s Feasibility of design and delivery Identification of projects: - Establish costs at SOBC stage - Quantification of benefits - Identification of project constraints and risks
2b Support for business	Programme to encourage new business / expansion of business in the town centre Creation of an Ambassador programme (as in Carlisle https://www.carlisleambassadors.co.uk/) Deliver a digital High Street project: E-commerce support programme for existing businesses	Attract new businesses to our towns and town centres Increase and retain our working age population Raise the standard of the physical environment in our towns and town centres Deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation Increase the number of visitors who spend time and money in our town and town centre	Support to new and existing business (including independent shops, food and drink offer, wet weather/ inside leisure provision, visitor infrastructure) New Jobs Increased pride in Penrith	Borderlands Townscape Heritage Initiative Private Sector Match CCC EDC PTC	Identification of Sponsor organisation/s Identification of projects: - Establish costs at SOBC stage - Quantification of benefits - Identification of project constraints and risks

Projects	Intervention/initiative	Link to Place Plan Strategic Objective	Potential Outputs and Outcomes	Funder	Next Steps
Theme 3 – Culturally Centred					
3a Cultural Assets	Develop cultural assets (parks, buildings etc.) • Castle Park • Development of a Cultural hub • Consider the location of the Tourist Information Centre. • Consideration of options for enhancing the Great Dockray area Invest in public/community space which reflects the historic character of the town including improved signage. Programme to encourage the creation of new cultural assets	Promote and consolidate Penrith as a gateway to and destination for the surrounding world class landscapes and cultural heritage thereby sustaining and nurturing innovation within the local visitor economy Promote and consolidate Penrith as a community hub for local rural communities and the enjoyment of arts and culture activity Safeguard existing employment and deliver new jobs and opportunities for economic and social participation, including education and training opportunities and a focus on embedding a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship Raise the quality of the physical and natural environments in Penrith and Penrith town centre Place green principles and decarbonisation at the heart of policy development and project delivery	New business and enterprises (including food and drink offer) Improved Market offer Improved Heritage/Cultural Attraction Improved footfall/visitor numbers	Borderlands Arts Council Heritage Lottery Sport England CCC EDC PTC	Identification of Sponsor organisation/s Feasibility of design and delivery Identification of projects: • Establish costs at SOBC stage • Quantification of benefits • Identification of project constraints and risks
3b Pride in Penrith	Create a brand for Penrith Creation of a 'Penrith, Your Town' initiative (Community involvement in the promotion and care of the town)	Promote and consolidate Penrith as a gateway to and destination for the surrounding world class landscapes and cultural heritage thereby sustaining and nurturing innovation within the local visitor economy Place green principles and decarbonisation at the heart of policy development and project delivery Raise the quality of the physical and natural environments in Penrith and Penrith town centre	Improved footfall/visitor numbers Increased pride in Penrith	CCC EDC PTC	Identification of Sponsor organisation/s Identification of projects: • Establish costs at SOBC stage • Quantification of benefits • Identification of project constraints and risks

APPENDIX 2

CUMBRIA OBSERVATORY DATA FOR PENRITH

Table 1 – Existing fixed broadband speed coverage

Admin Area	Total premises	>1000 Mbps	<1000 Mbps	>30 Mbps	<30 Mbps	>10 Mbps	<10 Mbps
Penrith	8,345	369	7,976	7,947	398	8,199	146
	As percentage	4.40%	95.60%	95.20%	398	98.30%	1.70%

Source: Connecting Cumbria September 2021

Table 2 – Existing outdoor 4G coverage from Mobile Network Operators (MNOs)

Admin Area	Total premises	4G Service From				
		No 4G	1 MNO	2 MNO's	3 MNO's	4 MNO's
Penrith	8,345	0	0	0	0	8,345
	As percentage	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	100.00%

Source: Connecting Cumbria September 2021

Table 3 – Penrith Footfall Report - September 2021
Source: Town and Place AI (Place Informatics Ltd)

	Sept 2021 Analytics	
People in catchment area	284,842	
Monthly visitors	53,697	
Monthly visitors (as % catchment)	19%	
Monthly visits	373,671	
Visit frequency (per month)	4.49	
Average dwell time	01:17	
Length of visits	Brief (6-12 mins)	13%
	Short (12-20 mins)	14%
	Medium (20-40 mins)	28%
	Long (40-60 mins)	21%
	Extended (60+ mins)	24%
Visitors come from:	CA11	24%
	CA10	14%
	CA2	9%
	CA4	9%
	CA1	7%
	CA16	5%
	CA8	4%
	CA12	4%
	CA7	4%
	CA5	3%
Day of visits	Monday	12%
	Tuesday	11%
	Wednesday	16%
	Thursday	17%
	Friday	17%
	Saturday	16%
	Sunday	10%
Time of most visits:	11:00	
	14:00	
Streets visited (% movements during visits)	Middlegate	Not available
	Devonshire Street	Not available
	Burrowgate	Not available
	Market Square	Not available
	Devonshire Shopping Arcade	Not available
Visitors also go to:	Carlisle	Not available
	Castle Retail Park	
	Appleby	
	The Lanes Shopping Centre	

Table 4 – Top 10 Employers in Penrith

Employer	Sector	Employees
Cumbria Constabulary	Public administration	800
North Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust	Human Health	290
Wm Morrisons	Retail	200
Ullswater Community College	Education	190
Sainsbury's	Retail	180
A W Jenkinson Transport Ltd	Transport	175
Environment Agency	Public administration	160
Cumbria County Council	Public administration	140
Jeld-Wen UK Ltd	Manufacturing	140
Greggs	Manufacturing	130

Source: Cumbria Observatory

Table 5 – Eden - Index of Deprivation 2019 Centiles (1 = most deprived)

Borderlands Town	LSOA	Multiple Deprivation		Income	Income Dep Affecting Children	Income Dep Affecting Older People	Employment	Education & Skills	Education & Skills - Young People	Education & Skills Adults	Health	Crime	Barriers to Services & Housing	Barriers - Geographical	Barriers - Wider	Living Environment	Living Environment - Indoors	Living Environment - Outdoors
Penrith	003A	4	4	5	5	4	3	3	3	4	6	10	6	9	3	2	9	
	003B	4	4	6	4	3	2	1	2	3	10	4	2	9	10	9	10	
	003C	3	3	3	5	3	2	1	2	4	5	10	6	9	2	1	8	
	003D	6	6	6	5	6	3	3	4	4	7	6	2	10	6	5	8	
	003E	6	6	7	6	6	4	4	4	6	7	10	7	10	2	1	9	
	004B	9	8	7	9	8	7	6	7	8	9	3	1	10	10	9	10	
	004C	9	8	6	9	8	4	5	4	9	9	7	3	10	8	7	10	
	004E	8	9	8	10	7	7	7	8	7	8	10	7	10	3	2	8	
	004F	8	7	5	7	7	3	3	4	8	10	5	2	10	9	7	10	
	004G	9	8	10	7	7	4	4	4	8	10	10	5	10	8	6	8	

Source: Cumbria Observatory

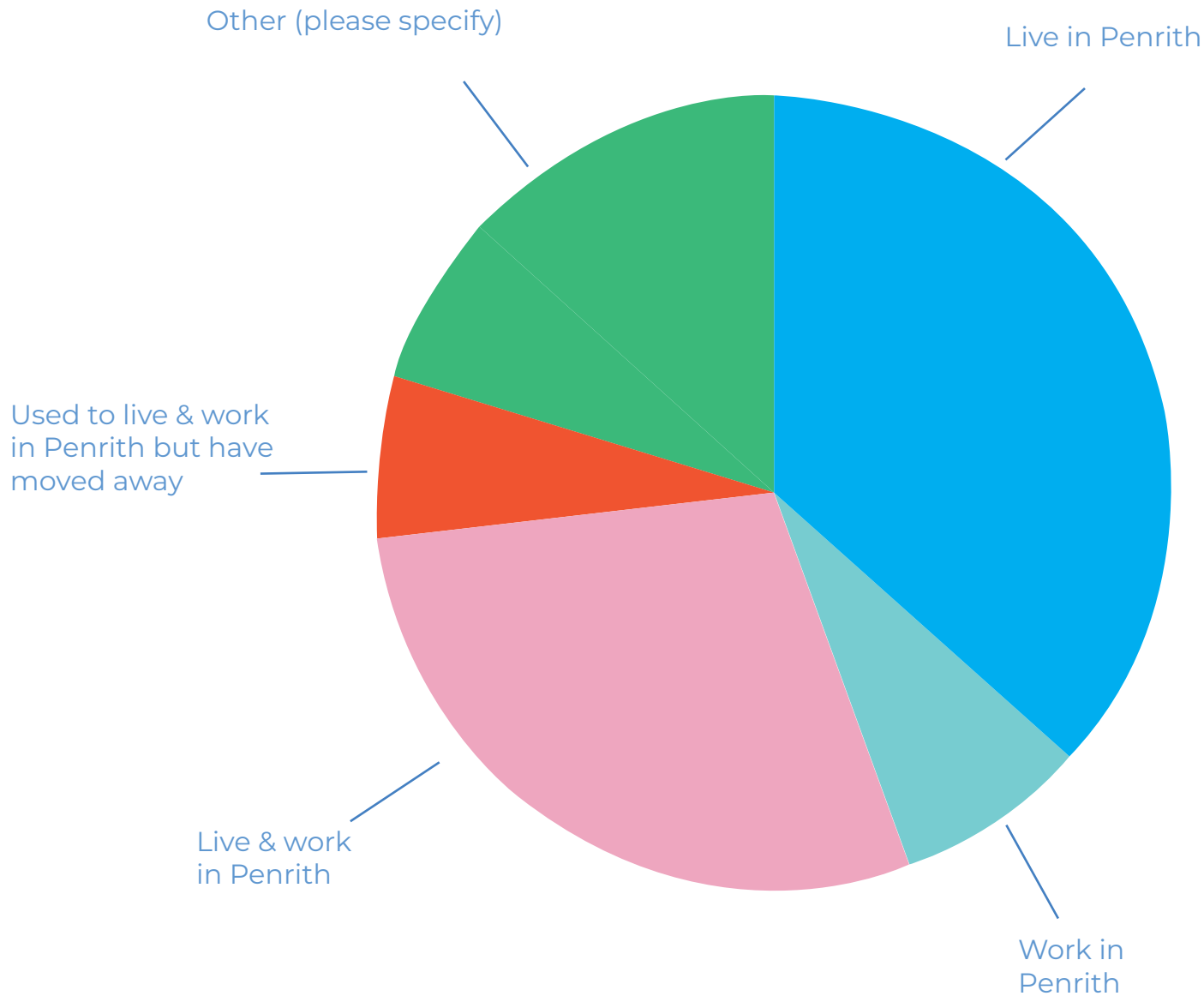
APPENDIX 3

ON-LINE/PHYSICAL SURVEY

148 responses.

The responses are represented with word clouds, the bigger the word, highlights the frequency of the word.

What is your association with Penrith?



When thinking about Penrith, what three POSITIVE words spring into your mind?



When thinking about Penrith, what three NEGATIVE words spring into your mind?



In a few words, tell us what you think Penrith's best kept secret is?



In a few words, tell us what you think is the single biggest challenge overall for the town of Penrith?



Looking to the future, what is the single biggest opportunity for Penrith in the next 10 years?

- Attract new independent & diverse shops (inc. attractive rents)
- Town centre regeneration and improve traffic flow/congestion
- Rejuvenating the high street to attract more tourists/locals to stay in the town
- To create cultural, community & arts activities and spaces; inclusive of all ages
- Retain younger generation; affordable housing, amenities, facilities, work opps
- Use position on M6/A66 junction and develop new business hub
- Encourage 'green tourism'

What's Important?

- Location, location, location west coast main line, M6, A66 Lake District, Pennines yet lacks a reason to go or be a destination!?
- It's got value, nature, landscape a good town centre with most things you need, this is what people are looking for!
- A place of successful businesses with growth potential
- There shouldn't be a problem but ...it's a bit lost, lacks identity and profile and is way too hard on itself
- Needs to be place not organisation led with confidence, belief and a brand

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