Rochdale Town Centre

Delivery plan
Rochdale town centre has already benefited from unprecedented levels of investment, with a £250m regeneration programme now almost complete.

Along with our partners, we have created a number of new developments and the ideal springboard for further investment.

We are now ready to embark on phase two of our radical transformation programme, which will see us invest a further £150m in the town centre.

This Delivery Plan has been prepared to accompany our investment leaflet, which highlights the major projects that will play an important role in the continued transformation of Rochdale town centre.

Our priorities include:
- Unlocking our heritage assets
- Creating a first class retail and leisure experience
- Creating high quality homes to promote town centre living
- Transforming our public realm
- Better connectivity

The individual maps for the eight ‘quarters’ highlight the key projects, development opportunities and economic initiatives relevant to each quarter.

A number of private sector investment opportunities are identified in this strategy. These are primarily vacant or under-occupied buildings and sites in public or private ownership. Many of these development opportunities are ready to be brought forward by the public sector, working closely with property owners and developers.

Businesses across Rochdale town centre have recently voted to form a Business Improvement District, which could generate £1.5 million over 5 years to help attract more shoppers, better promote the town centre and improve safety.

The BID, which will operate for five years from April 2019, aims to:
- Create a brand and identity for the town centre to further promote its many businesses
- Boost safety and improve the visitor experience
- Further develop the public realm with targeted cleaning and tackling empty buildings
- Create more opportunities for retail and leisure to complement the new Rochdale Riverside scheme and attract more office-based businesses into the town centre.
Aims and objectives

The opportunities identified in this delivery plan contribute to the key priorities in the council’s Place Plan for the Borough 2016-2021:

• Place
  We will create safe, resilient, flourishing and high quality places where people choose to live, work and invest.

• Prosperity
  We will encourage business growth and enterprise, increase our skills levels and create the conditions for the creation of good quality jobs.

They will contribute to the specific objectives and outcomes of the Place Plan by:

• Supporting the delivery of increased housing provision across the borough to boost economic growth and meet current and future housing needs, including options to deliver town centre housing.

• Facilitating the bringing forward of private and stalled sites to support residential growth.

• Creating urban growth sites - regenerate infill and brownfield sites to widen housing choice.

• Improving retail and commercial facilities in town centres and assisting in improving peripheral areas of town centres.

• Encouraging the provision of a more diverse housing offer, including an expanded choice of larger and higher value dwellings, key to achieving an attractive and sustainable borough, and helping to increase the wealth profile of the borough by retaining existing, and attracting new, higher income earning households to underpin the local economy.

The interventions will also help the council’s economy directorate achieve its objectives to:

• Increase the number of local people in employment.

• Increase the value of inward investment.

• Increase the land brought forward for residential & employment development (council and private sector land).

• Maximize income generation for the council (capital and revenue).

• Improve the borough’s town centres.

• Improve and protect the quality of our built and natural environment.

• Increase the quality and use of the borough’s heritage assets.

Clockwise from top left

New homes close to Rochdale town centre.
Rochdale Town Hall, new town centre apartments at 2 Smith Street, new businesses Petit Cafe, and Buckley Menswear.
Delivery Plan

The following individual projects, spread across the eight distinct quarters within the town centre, will contribute to achieving the aims and objectives identified above in the following ways.

Unlocking our heritage assets

- Rochdale Town Hall
  - £16.5m proposals, supported by a successful stage two Heritage Lottery Fund bid, to restore and redevelop our town hall as part of £25m which is to be invested in town centre heritage

- Town Hall Square
  - We have appointed landscape architects to develop a £5m transformation of this area

- Greater Manchester Fire Service Museum
  - We are working with the Heritage Lottery Fund to transform this museum and turn it into a major local attraction, with the potential for up to 6,000 visitors per year

- Our Drake Street project and Northern England Support Heritage Action Zone will bring forward housing opportunities and restore heritage buildings and around the town centre over a five year period

- The preparation of a heritage strategy will help identify the opportunities and challenges, the council boards in managing its heritage assets. It will provide a framework to coordinate heritage management and to help deliver a programme of heritage based regeneration in the town centre

Creating a first class retail and leisure experience

- Rochdale Riverside
  - A major new retail and leisure scheme in the heart of the town centre, will be completed by mid 2020

- Rochdale Market
  - We recently opened a brand new outdoor and indoor market next to the re-opened River Roch

- Our innovative business rates scheme in Rochdale town centre to bring empty town centre properties back into use has already reduced our vacancy rates considerably and we will continue with this initiative as part of our ongoing drive to improve our retail and leisure offer

- The continuation of our new business start-up scheme aims to complement the business rates scheme by bringing empty properties back into use and support their occupation. This is a discretionary scheme which awards grants to independent retailers who set up in selected areas of the town centre

- The Business Improvement District (BID) will help support existing and new businesses by promoting the town centre offer and improving safety

Creating high quality homes to promote town centre living

- Rochdale town centre offers the opportunity to provide new housing, through new build and conversions of town centre buildings and to bring life into the town centre

- We’re looking to bring forward new residential development opportunities and additional 2,000 homes in and around the town centre, including Lower Falinge, Rochdale Riverside Phase 2, Drake Street and Central Retail Park

Transforming our public realm

- We’re bringing forward property and public realm developments to support Rochdale Riverside and the new market, to encourage private sector investment and enhance the heritage assets and the town centre conservation area

Better connected

We want to improve the connection between Rochdale Railway Station, the town centre and the main development sites around the station, as well as making improvements to Rochdale Railway Station

- We plan to improve connectivity across all eight quarters from north to south and east to west, with particular focus on improving connections from Lower Falinge and Rochdale Bank to the town centre, colleges and transport interchange.

- Funding opportunities through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to support these improvements are being explored

- The original Highway Movement Framework for the town centre was prepared in 2014 to provide a coordinated framework to accommodate the developments taking place across the town centre. We’re updating our Highway Movement Framework to ensure all town centre driving and walking routes are updated and refreshed to accommodate the many new developments, including Lower Falinge, Central Retail Park, Station Gateway, Town Hall Square and Rochdale Riverside

The Eight Quarters

Cultural Heritage Quarter

Included in this area are the Town Hall, Town Hall Square and the former magistrates building.

Rochdale Riverside

- A scheme to deliver an improved retail and leisure offer in phase 1A of the office, residential and leisure in phase 2

Drake Street

- Develop a strategy to bring forward residential development opportunities and restore heritage assets

Yorkshire Street

- Plans to improve shop frontages and encourage the re-acquisition of empty properties will improve this well-established shopping area.

Water Street

- Plans to improve linkages to the town centre and create a number of development opportunities, including residential, offices and business.
The proposals include a full scale restoration of large sections of the building and its historic rooms and features, including the Great Hall’s Magna Carta mural, ceiling tiles and extensive stained glass windows. The outside of the building would also be restored, cleaned and better lit.

In May 2018, the HLF approved the first stage of an £8.9m bid to restore and redevelop this hugely important building.

Rochdale Town Hall is without doubt a building of the highest level of national importance. Its Grade I listing places it in the top 2.5 per cent of buildings nationally, and it was described by the authoritative architectural historian, Nikolaus Pevsner, as one of the dozen most ambitious High Victorian town halls of England, of rare picturesque beauty, boasting splendid interior schemes.

The aim is to enhance the setting of the town hall through public realm improvements, removing parking from the front of the building, and the installation of architectural lighting to key heritage buildings in the area around the square.

Connections to Broadfield Park and elsewhere in the town centre will be improved and opportunities to develop other cultural and heritage assets will be explored.

Old Magistrates Court

The privately owned former magistrates building is located on the edge of Town Hall Square. It represents an opportunity for a range of new uses to complement the Cultural Heritage Quarter.

A range of environmental improvements and complementary investments are planned for this area.

Connections to Broadfield Park and elsewhere in the town centre will be improved and opportunities to develop other cultural and heritage assets will be explored.

Cultural Heritage Quarter

Rochdale Town Centre - Assembly plan
Rochdale Riverside

The Rochdale Riverside retail and leisure development is being progressed by the council and its development partner GMP.

The scheme, which comprises around 24 retail and leisure units, six screen cinemas and 314 new parking spaces, will create 1,000 new jobs and stimulate the economy by an estimated £6m a year. HS2, Next, Sainsbury’s, B&M and JD Sports have already committed to anchor the scheme, which is expected to complete in mid-2020.

The scheme provides an improved quality retail and leisure offer with a greater variety of shops, as well as boosting the early evening economy.

Rochdale Riverside Phase 2

Phase 2 of the scheme will be delivered at a later stage and provides an opportunity to deliver a residentialled development with a range of other possible new uses, such as a hotel and offices.

Bell Street

This vacant site is in private ownership and will become a prominent location upon completion of the Rochdale Riverside scheme.

The site has significant long-term development potential, but a temporary environmental improvement scheme providing a high-quality civic square, to complement the Rochdale Riverside scheme, is proposed.

Rochdale Town Centre - Delivery plan

Drake Street

A major gateway into the town centre and a bespoke strategy, supported by the council, private sector and historic England, Drake Street is being brought forward to address some of the fundamental issues facing this part of the town.

There are a number of empty properties and vacant sites which offer a range of development opportunities including residential, office, leisure and food & drink.

The historic character of the lower part of the street, with its important architectural heritage, is well suited for independent shops.

Other measures to develop the area will also be considered, including improving parking levels and targeted shop front and public realm improvements.

Drake Street

Heritage Action Zone

Drake Street and the surrounding area were awarded the Heritage Action Zone status by Historic England in 2017.

The vision for the Heritage Action Zone is to transform this historic derelict area into a vibrant area of mixed-use development that showcases and celebrates Crane’s legacy. The programme is part of a wider Drake Street Strategy that will deliver £25 million pounds in the area over the course of five years. It will deliver mixed-use buildings, supporting retail, available for building owners and businesses from April 2019.

Central Retail Park site

Central Retail Park consists of a shopping centre and a large vacant site facing Drake Street. The vacant site is a major residential opportunity that could provide a well-connected town centre living and be a trigger for transforming the area.
Yorkshire Street

Upper Yorkshire Street is a well-established retail and business area. However, improvements are required to enhance outdated property frontages and reduce vacancies.

A long-term strategy is proposed to help redefine the role of the street, address some of the key issues and create a new identity for this area and attract new businesses. We are also working to improve its connectivity with Rochdale Riverside, the transport interchange, and Lower Falinge and Rochdale Lower Falinge and Rochdale Riverside, the transport interchange

The business rates discount scheme and new business start-up scheme apply to the area.

Key:
- Yorkshire Street

Water Street

Water Street is an area of mixed uses and is approached from Drake Street and Waterside Street, two principal routes into Rochdale town centre.

Its location immediately to the south of the town centre represents a major redevelopment opportunity with improved links to the Rochdale Riverside area, the transport interchange and the wider town centre.

The proposals take a number of historic buildings which should be retained. Here are a number of sites close to the town centre, which could be developed as residential or office space. Public realm and property enhancements could also improve the street scene.

Key:
- Development opportunities

© Heritage England Archive
Heart of the Town

Market - indoor and outdoor

The new Rochdale market is located on the Butts, in the heart of the town centre, and next to the recently re-opened River Roch.

The site accommodates around 25 to 30 stalls, with the former Santander building providing a small indoor market hall and café to enhance the market hall and café to enhance the wider town centre offer.

The new Rochdale market is located on The Butts Avenue, providing a small indoor market hall and café to enhance the wider town centre offer.

The ginnels along Butts Avenue provide an opportunity to create a niche independent food and drink courtyard, capitalising on its historic character.

A scheme to support new business start ups and improve the paving, lighting and property frontages of the ginnels around The Butts Avenue and the rear of the properties in Yorkshire Street will greatly enhance the appearance of this area.

South Parade

The properties on South Parade overlook The Butts and provide the backdrop to the recently re-opened River Roch.

We propose to work with the owners of the vacant buildings in the area to attract new occupiers and promote the improvement of property frontages to complement proposed public realm improvements in the area.

The ginnels

The ginnels around The Butts Avenue and the rear of the properties in Yorkshire Street provide an opportunity to create a niche independent food and drink courtyard, capitalising on its historic character.

The Walk

This historic pedestrianised street has recently been re-paved in natural stone to match with The Butts.

A targeted shop front improvement scheme would further enhance the attractiveness of this area and increase investment.
Fire Service Museum
There are plans to redevelop the
new home for the Greater Manchester
Fire Service Museum, which until
recently also operated as Rochdale's
main fire station.

The Museum Trust received a Round
2 approval from the HLF in June 2019.
The aim is to refurbish this prominent
building and deliver a first class
cultural attraction for Rochdale and
Greater Manchester which will also
increase visits to the town centre,
due to its location next to Rochdale
Railway station. Options to convert the
upper floors of the building to create
workplace accommodation are also
being considered.

Rochdale Railway Station
The railway station has already
benefited from Network Rail funded
rehabilitation.

There are further proposals to relocate
the booking office and retail unit to
street level and enhance the main
station entrance fronting Marsden Road
to provide an attractive visual
presence to the street scene.

Fish Dock Car Park
The car park forms part of a portfolio
of assets which are being disposed of
by Network Rail.

There is an opportunity to work with
any new owner to explore the potential
of this site for alternative uses. It is
proposed to engage with Network Rail
and the new owner to bring forward
development proposals for the site.

Station Gateway
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Performance Management & Monitoring

An action plan which supports this document will capture timescales, resources, funding sources and key stakeholders. It will be regularly updated and used to monitor and review performance, progress and targets.

Funding

The various projects and interventions identified in this delivery plan will be funded by both the public and private sectors. Public sector funding is already committed to deliver a number of the projects identified, and further public sector funding will be used selectively to attract private sector investment to help deliver other identified projects. Opportunities to secure additional public sector funding will also be pursued. The action plan identifies potential funding sources for all of the projects identified in this delivery plan.

Lower Falinge and College Bank

Our ambition is to create an attractive and desirable place to live, and to improve quality of life within these neighbourhoods. We’ll do this by improving the quality and mix of the housing offer in the area, and by connecting it to the town centre, the colleges, and transport links.

An on-going scheme, spearheaded by local mutual housing society RAM, will fund major improvements to homes as well as creating new green spaces and improved public spaces.

The current proposals will deliver a mix of houses, flats, and bungalows in the town centre, with both new and refurbished homes. There is also potential for larger family homes and specialist homes for older people. Transforming the quality and mix of housing in Lower Falinge and College Bank will also increase confidence in the town centre — helping to bring in much-needed private sector investment.

A master plan for the Rochdale Infirmary site (and the surrounding community) is being developed. The new proposals will deliver a mix of residential, retail, shared space and community facilities and a new entrance.

Key

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>New homes completed 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>New homes completed November 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Next phase of build</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zones</td>
<td>A50 College Bank, A51 and new principal homes post 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retained Homes</td>
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Potential regeneration opportunities around Rochdale Infirmary
Rochdale
The time is now

We’ve got big plans for Rochdale and we want you to get involved.
Come and speak to us about how we can help you realise your next investment opportunity:

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