

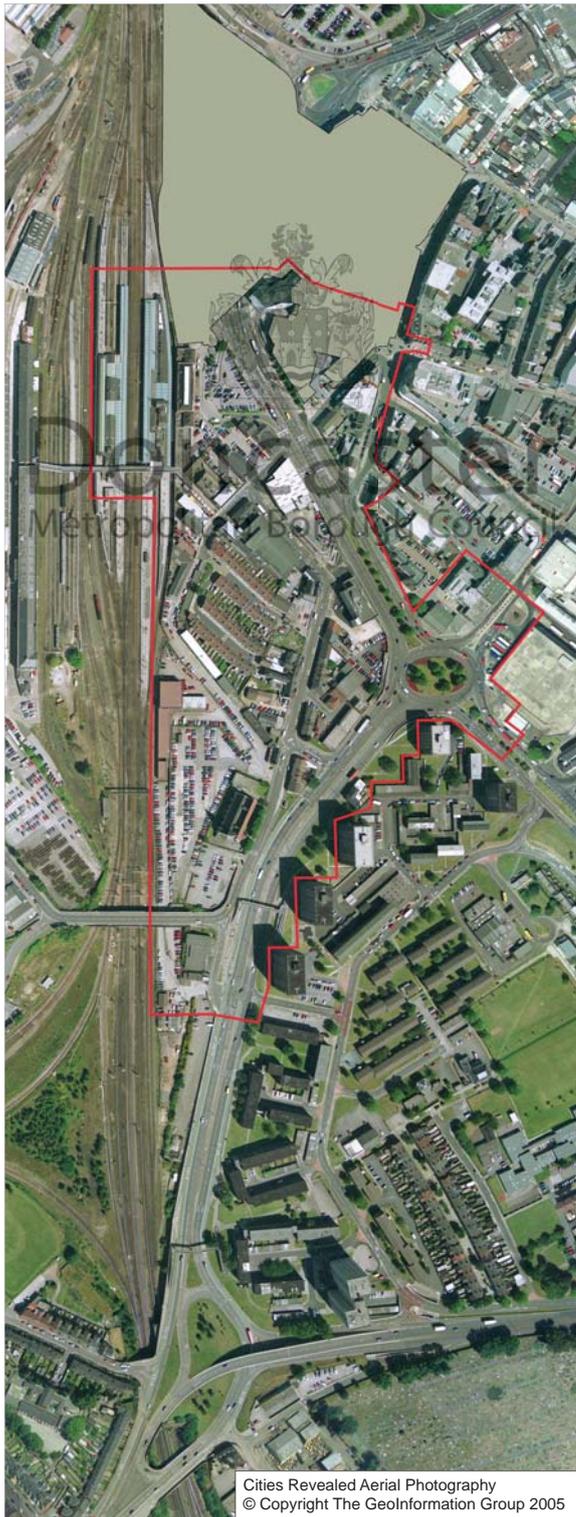
01

**The Area Action Plan and its Context**

St Sepulchre Gate West AAP



## 01.1 Introduction and Background



Aerial view of the St Sepulchre Gate West area indicating the Area Action Plan boundary.

### 01.1.1

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC) has identified the St Sepulchre Gate West (SSGW) area for regeneration. This Area Action Plan (AAP) will support and proactively enable regeneration and forms part of the emerging Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Borough. This AAP is a formal 'Development Plan Document' and sets out the statutory planning policy for this part of Doncaster's town centre. It provides the planning framework for future development and regeneration over the period to 2021, which will provide new housing, jobs, shopping, leisure and new and enhanced public spaces, transport and environmental improvements.

### 01.1.2

Importantly, the Area Action Plan focuses on the delivery of regeneration for the St Sepulchre Gate West area. The plan will not only set out the policy framework against which planning applications will be assessed, but it will consider how the regeneration of the area should be proactively delivered and coordinated by the public and private sectors in partnership.

### 01.1.3

The need for an AAP for this area stems directly from the 2003 town-wide masterplan (Doncaster Renaissance Masterplan) commissioned jointly by DMBC and Yorkshire Forward. That masterplan took the form of an 'Urban Renaissance Charter' for the town centre, defining a range of key projects within a wider development framework for the next 25 years. Eleven key projects were identified that included a project at Doncaster Station/Trafford Way, titled 'Station Square' that informed the current AAP at SSGW. These factors indicated a need to review existing planning policy for the town centre, as set out in the Unitary Development Plan.

### 01.1.4

The St Sepulchre Gate West area has undergone significant change over the last half century, most notably with the creation of Trafford Way in 1962 and the recent expansion of the Frenchgate Centre into a 700,000 sq.ft. shopping mall as a regional attraction. Partly as a result of these developments, the viability and vitality of St Sepulchre Gate West area has declined and the area itself has become isolated with concerns about its attractiveness and vibrancy, despite its proximity to the town centre. The need for an AAP derives from the need to remedy this situation, and fundamentally, to reconnect St Sepulchre Gate West to the town centre.

**01.1.5**

The various stages in the preparation of the AAP have included involvement from both the public and stakeholders (statutory and informal). Engagement with local residents and businesses has helped to shape the Plan and tackle very real needs and concerns over issues of safety, environmental quality and the future prosperity of the area.

**01.1.6**

A key community and stakeholder event was held in November 2006 to raise awareness of the project, to identify key issues affecting the performance of the area. This was followed by formal consultation on a Baseline assessment during which time the public were invited to comment and statutory consultees notified. In March 2007 the public were asked to comment on the range of options generated for the area. An Options Report and Sustainability Appraisal of the options was posted on DMBC's website for six weeks, along with a questionnaire to capture public comment. This Preferred Option representation was launched in late November 2007 in conjunction with an exhibition and the statutory six week consultation period. Details of the consultation will be set out in the Consultation Statement available separately from the Council.

**01.1.7**

The overall development and direction of the AAP has emerged within the following conditions:

- The national, regional and local planning policy context;
- Community and stakeholder engagement;
- Doncaster's Shared Priorities (Local Area Agreement);
- Existing specialist studies including the Urban Renaissance Charter for the town
- Area appraisals identifying characteristics and issues;
- Transport and access issues and the 'Great Streets' project;
- Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan proposals;

**01.1.8**

Increased development to the edges of the town have affected the future function/role and viability of inner town centre locations such as SSGW. The threat of unmanaged growth and change could lead to undesirable development as well as to further degeneration and loss of economic vibrancy in the AAP area. The Plan is bold and sets out the moves necessary to address this situation. The vision is described through more detailed objectives that, in turn, support the new policies for SSGW.

## 01.2 Process of Area Action Plan Production

### 01.2.1

Specific guidance regarding the preparation of Area Action Plans is set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 and its accompanying guidance document. PPS12 can be viewed at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/147429>

and its Companion Guide can be viewed at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/147432>

In summary, the preparation of an Area Action Plan must, as a minimum, follow the following stages:

- a) Evidence Gathering
- b) Prepare issues and alternative options in consultation
- c) Public participation on preferred option
- d) Representations on preferred option
- e) Preparation of submission Area Action Plan
- f) Submission Version of Area Action Plan

### 01.2.2

This Submission Version of the Area Action Plan is the culmination of all of the stages 'a' through 'e' listed above. A Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken on the different stages of the work. The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal of Options informed the development of the Preferred Option, which in turn, formed the basis for the AAP. The Sustainability Appraisal is available on the Borough Council's web-site at: <http://www.XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX>

All the documents produced at each stage are available from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council:

[http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/living\\_in\\_doncaster/neighbourhoods/planning/local\\_development\\_framework/ldf\\_-\\_are\\_action\\_plan\\_development\\_plan\\_documents.asp](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/living_in_doncaster/neighbourhoods/planning/local_development_framework/ldf_-_are_action_plan_development_plan_documents.asp)

### Baseline Report (Nov 2006)

#### 01.2.3

The first stage of the Area Action Plan process was the production of a Baseline Report which sets out the 'Evidence Base' upon which the Action Plan will be developed. This report has been published and can be viewed as described above. A summary of the Baseline Report is set out at Chapter 2 of this report.

### Issues and Options Report (Feb 2007)

#### 01.2.4

The survey work that was undertaken during the preparation of the Baseline Report and initial stakeholder consultations identified a range of issues and development opportunities for consideration in the Area Action Plan. An Issues and Options Report was produced to consider the range of options for the regeneration of SSGW. A Sustainability Appraisal of the options was also produced.

The Issues and Options Report and the Sustainability Appraisal were published in draft in February 2007. Consultation on these draft options took place from 7th May to early June 2007.

### Preferred Option Report & Draft AAP (Oct 2007)

#### 01.2.5

DMBC took into consideration the comments raised during this consultation and produced a 'Preferred Option' which it has taken forward in the Area Action Plan. The purpose of this report was to describe the 'Preferred Option' so that local residents, retailers and other businesses, community organisations and other stakeholders could easily understand the objectives and implications of the Area Action Plan.

### Public Consultation on the Preferred Option (Nov 2007 - Jan 2008)

#### 01.2.6

A statutory six-week statutory consultation period on the Preferred Option took place from 26th November 2007 - 11th January 2008. This consultation period was in line with the Council's commitment to consultation, as set out in its draft Statement of Community Involvement and the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

### AAP Finalisation (Feb-Mar 2008)

#### 01.2.7

Following public participation on the Preferred Option and draft policies material, all representations were noted, tabled and taken into consideration by DMBC. Where possible, amendments based on the Preferred Option consultation have been made and are reflected in the Area Action Plan Development Plan Document for submission to the Secretary of State. In addition, the Sustainability Appraisal of the Preferred Option has informed the Area Submission Version Area Action Plan (see Section 01.4).

### Ongoing public participation and involvement

#### 1.2.8

At each step of the way analysis of the SSGW area and emerging proposals for its improvement have been informed by consultation with local people and stakeholder organisations. A wide variety of initiatives have been deployed, the details of which are set out in the Consultation Statement document, available at the Council's web-site at: <http://www.xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>

The remaining sections of this chapter present a summary of the statutory policy context for the report, whilst the remaining chapters are structured as follows:

Chapter 2 – Summary of Baseline Report

Chapter 3 – AAP Vision and Objectives

Chapter 4 – AAP Area-wide Policies

Chapter 5 – AAP Proposal Sites

Chapter 6 – Implementation



The statutory consultees' consultation meeting brought together Council officers and other stakeholders to discuss site issues.



An exhibition was open to the public for approximately two weeks in early December 2006 as part of a formal six-week consultation on Baseline and Sustainability Appraisal Scoping.



Formal consultation on the Preferred Option took place between November 2007 and January 2008.

## 01.3 Sustainability Appraisal & AAP Policies

### 01.3.1

#### **Sustainability Appraisal**

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires the Borough Council to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Plan as it is developed. This also ensures that environmental assessment requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC are followed.

The SSGW AAP is accompanied by a separate Sustainability Appraisal Report (SA) which evaluates the likely social, economic and environmental effects of the plan. This is informed by the previous SA evaluations (Scoping, Options Assessment and Preferred Option).

The Sustainability Appraisal is a parallel but integral part of the preparation of the Area Action Plan and has informed the vision and proposals set out in this document.

### 01.3.2

The findings of the Sustainability Appraisal of the Area Action Plan indicate that overall, new proposals delivered through the Plan will contribute permanent positive social, economic and environmental impacts on sustainability, and allow for further growth and enhancement of the SSGW area within Doncaster's town centre. The proposals for major environmental improvements to Trafford Way and Cleveland Street, along with the re-connection of St Sepulchre Gate West and increased pedestrian crossings to the town centre will dramatically enhance the quality of experience for all users. New open green spaces provide recreational opportunities hitherto non-existent in the area. The introduction of a wider range of uses including new employment space, community training and increased retail floorspace are likely to provide additional jobs for local people and attract an increased number of visitors to help sustain and add to the vibrancy of the town centre economy. New housing will provide for local housing needs and create a more diverse and balanced demographic to the area. A better distribution of parking including more efficient use of surface car park

space along with highways improvements and better public transport provision will improve environmental quality and accessibility.

### 01.3.3

The SA has identified some areas of potential conflict, including the need to protect locally important buildings (both Listed and of cultural significance), to improve biodiversity and green space provision whilst accommodating new development. The SA has ensured that new developments are compatible with other new and existing uses and complementary in design and layout to the wider town centre environment. AAP policies and proposals for development sites are drafted to ensure potentially adverse social, economic and environmental effects are minimised and appropriate mitigation is secured.

The plan endorses sustainable construction techniques and maximisation of energy efficiency, in particular through co-location of living and working, maximising the high accessibility characteristics of the AAP area, and attention to building layout and design, have been incorporated into all new development proposals and policies.

The assessment in detail can be found in the Sustainability Appraisal of the St Sepulchre Gate West AAP (available separately from the Council).

### 01.3.4

#### **Area Action Plan Policies**

The policies contained in the Area Action Plan are structured in the following manner:

- Area-wide policies
- Proposal Site policies (applicable to defined character areas).

These policies should be considered together, along with the saved policies in the Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy and Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Planning Guidance (RPG12).

## 01.4 Strategic and Local Policy Context

### Overview

#### 01.4.1

The St Sepulchre Gate West Area Action Plan is consistent with the policy context provided by:

- National planning policy (Planning Policy Statements (PPS's), Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) and Circulars);
- Regional planning policy - specifically the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Planning Guidance to 2016 (RPG12); and,
- Local plans and strategies for Doncaster, including the Unitary Development Plan Review (2001-16), Doncaster Local Development Framework (2005), and the Doncaster Local Area Agreement 'Doncaster's Shared Priorities' (2007/8-2009/10)

The AAP conforms with national planning policies and the focus on regenerating the SSGW area is in general support of existing UDP policies and other plans and strategies.

### National Planning Policy

#### 01.4.2

A number of national level policies are relevant to the AAP. These include:

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development  
 PPS3 Housing  
 PPS6 Planning for Town Centres  
 PPS12 Local Development Frameworks  
 PPG4 Industrial, Commercial and Small Firms  
 PPG13 Transport  
 PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment  
 PPG17 Planning and Open Space

The above policies are addressed in detail in the Baseline Report to this AAP, however it is worth highlighting the following:

#### 01.4.3

A key objective of PPS6 Planning for Town Centres is to promote the viability and vitality of town centres by: *"Planning for the growth and development of existing centres by promoting and enhancing them and by focusing development and a wide range of services there in a good environment which is accessible to all"*.

#### 01.4.4

Area Action Plans and other planning tools can be used to proactively plan for and encourage growth and to manage change to existing (historic) environments. Town centres such as Doncaster should meet the needs of the community and provide for a range of retail, leisure and local services; promote accessibility, the efficient use of infrastructure; promote social inclusion and economic growth; and, ensure a high quality environment where people would choose to be.

### Yorkshire and Humberside RPG

#### 01.4.5

RPG12 identifies Doncaster as part of group alongside thirteen "other main towns and cities" in the region which play a secondary role to the key cities (Sheffield and Leeds). None of the thirteen settlements have the range of functions to compete on a greater scale than that at which they currently operate (para 2.32). The Guidance refers to the unsustainable effects of out-of-town developments on the functioning of commercial centres (para 2.43). Doncaster is also defined as one of four main urban areas in the sub-region and will benefit from the development of Robin Hood airport (para 4.59).

The key policies that are relevant to the St Sepulchre Gate West area are listed below. The full text of these policies can be found in the Baseline Report.

#### Theme 1: Economic regeneration and growth

*"...extending the benefits of successful sectors to areas in need of regeneration by: supporting the adjustment of the economic base in areas of decline; and enabling or providing necessary infrastructure and transitional support"*.

#### Theme 2: Promoting social inclusion

*"Maximising the contribution to regional development by: supporting the individual character of urban sub-regions; providing integration between land use, transport, social and economic policies; and, fostering community participation in plan making."*

#### Theme 3: Urban and rural renaissance

*"Fostering urban renaissance by: promoting earlier, greater and better-informed attention to urban design; steering effort and resources towards making existing"*

## 01.4 Strategic and Local Policy Context

*settlements better places to live, work and invest; concentrating new development to foster social and business links; integrating land use and transport planning so that more of people's needs are met in locations close to where they live; minimising the impact of traffic in urban areas; and, tackling dereliction and decay in urban areas.*

**Theme 4:** Conserving & enhancing natural resources  
*“Limiting the claim on non-renewable resources and reducing the need to travel by: seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and, maximising the use of previously developed land and existing buildings for development.*

In accordance with RPG12 and in line with the emerging Local Development Framework for Doncaster, the policies and proposals in the SSGW AAP will not undermine the regeneration efforts in the wider Borough. It concentrates on the local need for regeneration and site proposals aimed at improving facilities and amenities for local communities and the town centre.

### Transport

Regional guidance supports the intensification of development within urban areas, and the matching of land use to accessibility levels. It includes:

Policy T1 “Development that generates a large number of passenger movements should be located at or close to sites which provide...ready and convenient access on foot, by cycle and public transport”

The guidance also promotes policies to reduce reliance on the car and to promote alternative modes for personal travel.

The guidance encourages better integration of public transport facilities with the areas they serve, which is of particular relevance to Doncaster Station and the transport interchange:

Policy T5 “Investment in public transport measures should be promoted in development plans and local transport plans including: investment in public transport infrastructure, particularly further Quality Bus Partnership corridors and improved interchanges and pedestrian links between bus/rail stations and

commercial centres.”

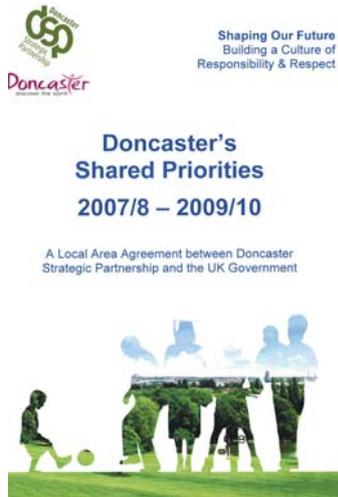
### Local Policy Context

#### 01.4.6

The existing Unitary Development Plan (July 1998) is the statutory development plan for the Borough and sets out strategic and detailed planning policies and key objectives for land use planning relevant to this AAP. Its policies were automatically saved as the relevant development plan for three years from the coming into force of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 on 28th September 2004. The policies and proposals set out in the UDP adopted in July 1998 are being gradually replaced by the adoption of the relevant LDF statutory documents and will be replaced on adoption of the Core Strategy (DPD) in March 2010 (to cover the period to 2021). Prior to adoption of DPDs it is proposed to save some policies and to not save others (The LDS 2007 Review identifies those policies proposed not to be saved after September 2007).

Current saved town centre policies relate to the whole of the town centre and not just to St Sepulchre Gate West. The policies proposed within this AAP will therefore not supersede saved town centre policies. An assessment of the relevant UDP saved policies can be found in Appendix D.

## 01.5 Doncaster's Shared Priorities & The Doncaster Borough Strategy



### 01.5.1

The St Sepulchre Gate West Area Action Plan has been prepared with regard to both The Doncaster Borough Strategy (2005-2010) and the current Local Area Agreement (LAA) - 'Doncaster's Shared Priorities' (2007/8-2009/10) that updates the Borough Strategy. The LAA sets out a vision for the Borough with key themes, transformational goals and priorities.

The priorities of the LAA that are relevant to SSGW have informed the objectives and proposals in the Area Action Plan. The table opposite sets out these relevant LAA priorities and how these will be delivered through the Objectives of the SSGW AAP. Full details of the SSGW AAP are provided in Chapter 2 while the LAA priorities are further referenced throughout the text of this AAP.

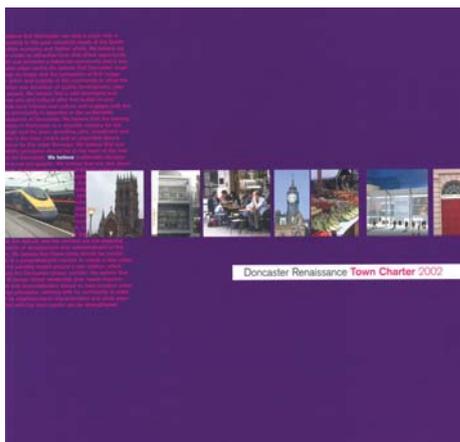
Chapter 6 of this Area Action Plan provides a number of monitoring indicators to measure whether the aims of the Area Action Plan are being met. This in turn, will indicate how the delivery of the Area Action Plan will contribute to the achievement of each of the LAA priorities.

Doncaster's current LAA was agreed in January 2007 following public consultation and covers a three-year period (2007/8-2009/10). The Council and its partners are currently revising Doncaster's LAA and from June 2008, there will be the partnership document which sets out a small set of improvement priorities that the Council and its partners must focus on over the next three years.

## 01.5.2

LAA Themes and Priorities	Relevant SSGW Area Action Plan Objectives
<b>Theme 1: Children and young people</b>	
<b>P4:</b> Engage and involve Children & Young People in making a positive contribution, as detailed in the CYPP.	<b>P:</b> St Sepulchre Gate West as a vibrant mixed neighbourhood, complete with a range of community and recreational facilities and employment opportunities.
<b>P7:</b> Develop a flexible and well-trained workforce across partner agencies and take forward joint commissioning arrangements to meet the needs of Children Young People	<b>P:</b> St Sepulchre Gate West as a vibrant mixed neighbourhood, complete with a range of community and recreational facilities and employment opportunities.
<b>Theme 2: Safer, Stronger &amp; Sustainable Communities</b>	
<b>P1:</b> Reduce overall crime to ensure that every Neighbourhood is safer and feels safer.	<b>J:</b> Improve safety and feelings of security, particularly in the St James Street Estate.
<b>P2:</b> Reduce anti-social behaviour to ensure that every neighbourhood is safer and feels safer.	<b>J:</b> Improve safety and feelings of security, particularly in the St James Street Estate.
<b>P5:</b> Empower residents to make a positive contribution by participating in wide ranging social, cultural, community & environmental activities, with the support of the third sector.	<b>P:</b> St Sepulchre Gate West as a vibrant mixed neighbourhood, complete with a range of community and recreational facilities and employment opportunities..
<b>P8:</b> Protect the environment for current and future generations by increasing recycling and reducing waste, resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.	<b>O:</b> Ensure that new developments use resources efficiently and are sustainable in their design, construction and operation.
<b>P9:</b> Improve the quality of people's local environment by providing cleaner & greener public spaces.	<b>I:</b> Improve overall public realm quality and overcome the existing deficiency in green open space. Provide green infrastructure corridors to link up the recreation, biodiversity and wildlife habitats to provide a green lung into the centre of the town.
<b>Theme 3: Healthier Communities &amp; Vulnerable People</b>	
<b>P2:</b> Increase opportunities for all to participate in active recreation and to have healthier lifestyles.	<b>K:</b> Improve connections to the railway station, town centre and surrounding communities (especially the St James Street Estate). <b>E:</b> Establish a mix of complementary uses and overcome existing problems between housing and neighbouring railway functions.
<b>Theme 4: Economy and Enterprise</b>	
<b>P1:</b> Balance achieving sustained economic & population growth with environmental protection	<b>A:</b> To overcome the existing economic stagnation by addressing the existing physical isolation and introducing a mix of sustainable land uses.
<b>P2:</b> Improve innovation, competitiveness and access to enterprise across Doncaster.	<b>A:</b> To overcome the existing economic stagnation by addressing the existing physical isolation and introducing a mix of sustainable land uses. <b>C:</b> Ensure new land uses exploit the site's strategic gateway location in accessibility terms, whilst synchronising with townwide strategies
<b>P3:</b> Deliver an urban and rural renaissance by enhancing the social, economic, cultural, recreational and tourism assets of the Borough for the benefit of residents and visitors.	<b>B:</b> To realise the development potential of the area, potentially including workspaces, hotel conference facilities, small shops, housing and a multi-storey car park. <b>C:</b> Ensure new land uses exploit the site's strategic gateway location.
<b>P6:</b> Improve the choice, quality, safety and supply of housing to support economic growth and regeneration.	<b>E:</b> Establish a mix of complementary uses and overcome existing problems between housing and neighbouring railway functions.
<b>P7:</b> Ensure Doncaster's transport system meets the needs of all individuals and businesses in a safe, sustainable & effective way.	<b>M:</b> Enhance the attractiveness of public transport with improvements to the station interchange, bus facilities and pedestrian links. <b>N:</b> Improve the efficiency of parking operations as part of plans for enhancing the Doncaster Station public transport interchange. <b>K:</b> Improve connections to the railway station, town centre and surrounding communities (especially the St James Street Estate).

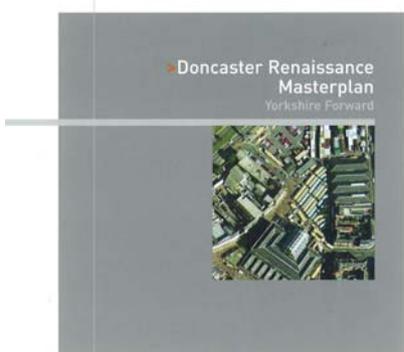
# 01.6 Doncaster Renaissance Town Charter 2002 & Doncaster Renaissance Masterplan (2003)



## 01.6.1

The Doncaster Renaissance Town Charter (2002) and Doncaster Renaissance Masterplan (2003) do not have formal status within the LDF but are key formative and strategic studies for the town. The Charter sets out common aims and identifies the need for a consensual vision. A focus on 'Districts, Neighbourhoods and Corridors' evolved and led to the following development principles for Doncaster:

- Extending the historic civic axis
- Creating new quality corridors ('Great Streets')
- Strengthening the waterway corridor
- Creating a new urban district (Lakeside)
- Improving the St James' Street area
- Defining a fixed urban edge to the urban centre



## 01.6.2

The Masterplan builds on these structuring principles and highlights 11 key projects to realise the programme of renaissance. These include:

1. Market Square
- 2. Station Square (part of the SSGW AAP area)**
3. Waterdale Square
4. Christchurch
5. Waterfront Park
6. Gas House Basin and Pump House Square.
7. Riverside walkway
8. King Square.
9. Hallgate Square.
10. Art gallery gardens.
11. St George's Gardens



Of these twelve, the Station Square project was central to the identification of an AAP for SSGW, taking in the station and its immediate setting. Further consideration of the project area led to the inclusion of land adjacent to St Sepulchre Gate West and south to St James' Church, including the bounding arteries of Trafford Way and Cleveland Street.

Figure 1.2 Doncaster Masterplan Proposal Sites (2003)