

A future high street built around people

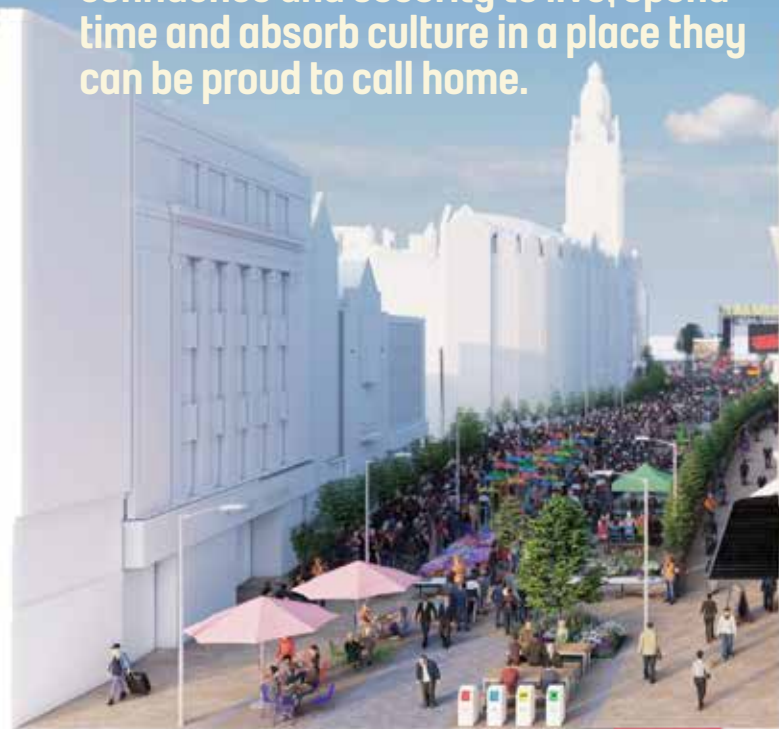


In 2019 Sheffield was a finalist for European City of the Year, and shortlisted as Place Brand of the Year - but we won't rest on our laurels.

In June 2020, Sheffield City Council, in partnership with the University of Sheffield, submitted a 2nd Stage bid to the Future High Streets Fund for Fargate and High Street.

We need your help to keep it moving in the right direction.

Sheffield residents deserve a city centre that is economically viable and beneficial for all, which gives people the confidence and security to live, spend time and absorb culture in a place they can be proud to call home.



Our ambition is a '15 minute city' – providing access, clean air, re-purposing obsolete buildings high standard living accommodation & enhancing our cultural ecology.

Sheffield is the Outdoor City thanks to our abundance of green spaces and is the only major urban centre within a National Park. We are aiming to extend that by connecting culture and communities through corridors acting as destinations in their own right throughout the city centre, to position Sheffield as a world leading example of liveability.

To help realise this, 'Event Central' will support a year-round programme of top quality events both within a new building and within a series of pocket parks within our street-scape down this beautifully re-purposed area of the city centre.

Our proposal is a catalyst for sustained economic investment, it re-purposes key streets to serve a growing population, creating adaptable, climate-resilient public space for accommodation, events large and small and supporting small micro creative industries. Focusing on the historic shopping streets of Fargate and High Street, our scheme reconnects the city centre, reversing a trajectory of decline and will deliver a strong viable mixed neighbourhood.

The issue

Fargate and High Street was once the heart of retail but has become a barren landscape in need of love. Vacancy rates before spring 2020 were down to 14% in Fargate, a greater proportion of short-term, low quality lettings, with an average spend per shopper slipping from £41 to £35 over the last four years.

At the same time, just above it, the Heart of the City development is driving huge investment and re-making Sheffield. Below it, the medieval heart of the city, Castlegate is being re-purposed as part of the innovation corridor, a tech quarter with pioneering new ventures. Culture, vibrancy, and economic feasibility are essential to connect these two districts and make Fargate/High Street - and Sheffield as a whole - a visionary place of how cities can be planned, built, and lived in. Our Vision is innovative, future proof and economically viable.

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Our Vision is co-produced with clear local authority leadership, world leading research intervention with the University of Sheffield and supported by investors, to create the conditions for a viable, innovative world class future city centre.

Three key actions for success

These interventions are designed to generate investor confidence, attract and retain new visitors and residents, and build on Sheffield's unique offer as a creative, climate resilient and sustainable 'Outdoor City'.

1 We will re-purpose Fargate as an events and cultural setting.

The five-storey 'Even Central' property, currently used for short-term retailing, will be converted to facilitate a year-round programme of events. Alongside this hub we will reconfigure the top of Fargate to provide outdoor space for major international events, supported by modernised power and utility infrastructure. This scheme is expected to attract 110,680 visitors annually, of which 50% are assumed to be additional.

2 Front Door Access to upper floor retail premises will catalyse investment in residential and live/work accommodation.

A programme of works to enable access to upper floors of retail premises will catalyse their conversion to inner city living. This scheme will provide the building blocks to revitalise key buildings accelerating the viability of creative mixed-use retail premises.

3 Transforming the Public realm works in High Street and its historic side streets will deter crime by creating green sociable spaces and continue the climate resilient greenscaping.

A bespoke lighting scheme throughout the intervention area will improve the public experience of the city centre with derelict public spaces transformed into oasis of tranquillity.



Even more of a case for 'now'

Our proposal was designed to address long-term issues and pre-existing challenges of decline and the Covid-19 pandemic have made them even more urgent.

Our vision is an opportunity to take decisive action now whilst consumer recovery is low and footfall slow to recover. Urgent action is needed to make more creative uses of open and public space as well as a renewed ability to make city centres habitable.

Alongside our infrastructure proposal, businesses throughout the city are actively part of the Make Yourself At Home initiative, thereby giving the public increased belief in the ability for cross-sector partnerships to make a difference in their city with actions, not just words.

Collectively, this will be a strong physical manifestation of a renewed consumer confidence and economic recovery, demonstrating that the city is ready for accelerated change.



Architectural images on pages 2, 3 and 4 produced by Joseph Chapman and Bor-Ren Hui, students from the School of Architecture at the University of Sheffield.

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