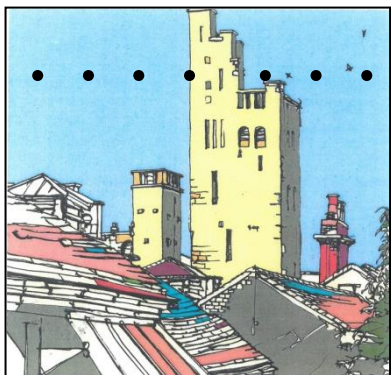


# From . . . . . Top to Bottom Street Knutsford

Looking to the past, the present and the future



## Phase 1 Consultation . . . . .

Traffic Management and Parking Proposals

January 2020



# *From Top to Bottom Street, Knutsford*

*With* our pretty streets and ginnels, crammed with interesting shops, well-regarded restaurants and cafes, and Tatton Park on the doorstep our Knutsford is a gem.

*Here* there is a true sense of Community not only amongst the businesses who support one another but also amongst the townsfolk, whose voluntary work creates a great sense of well-being.

*Few* things are more pleasant than wandering happily, here for a few hours, perhaps catching an exhibition about the town's most famous resident, the writer Elizabeth Gaskell, or delving into the history of King Canute during his millennium celebrations.

*Our* town centre, with its Royal May Day, Sunday street markets, intriguing architecture (including the precious asset of the Richard Harding Watt buildings), shopping for fine products or just offering the opportunity to browse around, has staked a claim as a distinctive visitor destination and a great place to be, where old world charm meets modern glamour.



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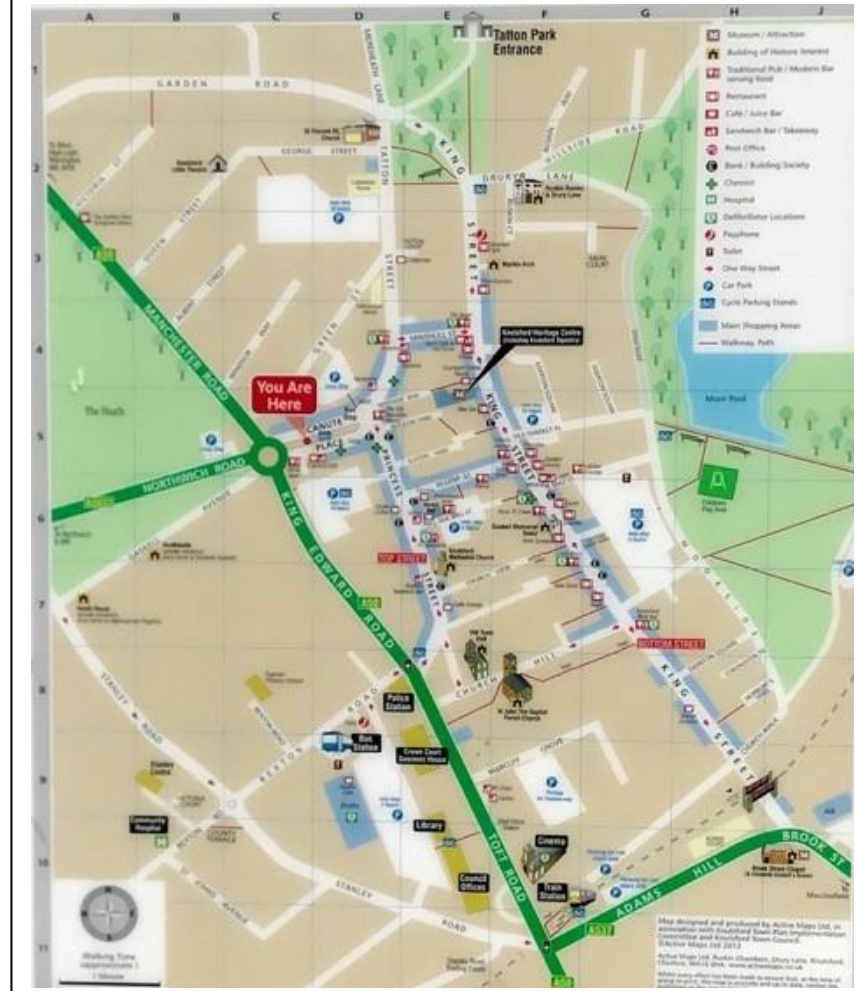
The Town Centre Portion of the Millennium Tapestry  
Reproduced with the kind permission of Knutsford Heritage Centre



## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The necessity** for an overall master plan for Knutsford Town Centre has been obvious for some time. The only comprehensive report was prepared in 1947 and, if implemented, it would have destroyed the historic features of the town centre which today are admired by both residents and visitors alike.
- 1.2 The decision** of the Knutsford Town Council to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan (N.P.) for the town as a whole created an opportunity to study the town centre more carefully and include within the N.P. a section dealing with the town centre.
- 1.3 However,** it became clear that the detail required to prepare a plan (other than just a list of desirable objectives) necessitated a separate document specifically dealing with the town centre which would not form part of the Neighbourhood Plan. The N.P. would therefore only contain a summary of the basic policies for the town centre and no more and that the Town Centre Working Group should be responsible for the greater detail.
- 1.4 Discussion** within the W.G. took place to determine the boundary of the proposed plan and it was decided to include, in addition to the core business and shopping areas, the grassed area of both The Heath and The Moor. These open spaces contribute greatly to the well-being of the town centre, as they attract many visitors to Knutsford throughout the year.

## KNUTSFORD TOWN CENTRE





**1.5 The Town Centre Working Group** agreed in January 2017 the **Primary Objective** as being:-

**1.6 To ensure the long-term viability and prosperity of Knutsford's Town Centre for the people living in and working there and for visitors.**

**1.7 To achieve** this the Town Centre Plan would need policies which would:

- 1. Retain and enhance the town centre's rich heritage and character.**
- 2. Minimise the conflict between vehicles and pedestrians.**
- 3. Ensure that the town centre is a safe and pleasant place to live, do business and to visit.**
- 4. Promote the development of additional facilities, businesses and homes.**
- 5. Promote the creation of a 'central space' where civic and cultural events can take place and**
- 6. Create a town centre which will attract visitors and tourists.**

'Retail employment fell by 62,000 last year as the digital revolution put more pressure on the high street'

'About 15% of retail spending is occurring on line now'

The Office for National Statistics. 3/9/17.

'Nearly a quarter of shoppers have deserted British high streets in the last decade as retailers have struggled to adapt to changing consumer habits and the rapid rise of online shopping'

The Daily Telegraph. 11/9/17.

**1.8 In the light of the Town Council's decision** not to proceed with the Improvement Plan prepared by Cheshire East Council for the middle section of King Street it was apparent that it was essential for the W.G. to study the whole of the business core '**From Top to Bottom Street**' with a view to preparing, as a matter of urgency, a traffic and car parking strategy. This subject has for a very long time been the concern of many of the businesses, residents and visitors as it has been felt that up to the present no acceptable solution to the problems caused by the increase in vehicular movement has been formulated.

**1.9 Consequently, this initial document is purely limited to formulating, proposing and agreeing a solution to the traffic and parking issues without which the town centre is unlikely to thrive.**

## 2. MORE RECENT STUDIES OF THE TOWN CENTRE

- 2.1** The following documents / plans have previously been prepared:-
- (a) **The Knutsford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal** (2005)
  - (b) **Knutsford Town Plan** prepared by residents (2010)
  - (c) **A Draft Knutsford Town Strategy Consultation** (2012)
  - (d) **The King Street Enhancement Report** (2012) prepared by the Knutsford Town Centre Working Group and
  - (e) **A Detailed Study of a Section of King Street** prepared by Cheshire East Council (2014)
  - (f) **The Neighbourhood Plan Emerging Policies Questionnaire 2017**. The W.G. have considered the comments made by the responding public.
- 2.2** Two of the above documents stand out as being remarkable these being the Knutsford Town Plan and The King Street Enhancement Report both prepared by residents.
- 2.3** The information within these two reports, the surveys carried out and the consultation with the public undertaken are of a standard seldom seen. The authors did a remarkable job. The W.G. has gleaned much from the information contained therein, in particular a breadth of views expressed during the extensive consultation process.

### The Knutsford Town Plan 2010

#### Executive Summary

The Knutsford Town Plan and Action Plan have been prepared following in-depth analysis of the large number of responses to the Survey Questionnaire. A Working Group of volunteers was allocated to each of the six topics identified in preliminary surveys. They collated all the views expressed by the community, and then thoroughly researched the topics, including many meetings with agencies and individuals. For example, the Parking section received advice, free of charge, from a car park design/build consultant. More than 5,000 hours of volunteers' experience and expertise have produced a review of the opinions of Knutsford people that would have cost many tens of thousands of pounds and has the advantage of coming straight from the community itself.

### THE KING STREET ENHANCEMENT

" The report presents the results of 18 months work by the volunteers of Knutsford Town Centre Working Group considering how the central section of King Street could be improved to provide enhanced provision for pedestrians"

August 2012

**2.4** However, while these two documents were in themselves remarkable neither addressed nor proposed a detailed plan which embraced the whole of Knutsford's business and shopping area. In particular, the King Street Enhancement Scheme purely related to one section of King Street as any proposal was limited to the availability of funding from Cheshire East Council.

**2.5** This report led on to the Town Council requesting that Cheshire East Council prepare a much more detailed plan solely for the section of King Street between Church Hill and Old Market Place.

**2.6** This proposal failed spectacularly as:-

- (a) It did NOT follow either the recommendations or the spirit of the King Street Enhancement Plan and hence many residents were disappointed.
- (b) The plan did not include any proposals which would increase or resolve the parking issues; it reduced the perceived number of parking spaces, an aspect about which many businesses understandably were very concerned.
- (c) The proposals for the resurfacing of the street were of a 'modern' design and did not reflect the historic character of the existing town centre and
- (d) It did absolutely nothing to address the acute problem of through traffic and only partially addressed the obvious conflict of pedestrians and vehicles in **one** of Knutsford's principal shopping streets.

**2.7** **Consequently**, the scheme was abandoned in Nov 2015.

The A50 T.R.  
Unfortunately, the town centre is cut in two by the very busy and congested A50 T.R. It is cause for regret that pedestrians visiting the doctors, the public library, Booths supermarket and bus station have to vie with traffic if they require to visit the historic shopping core as well. Only the construction of a by-pass could resolve this situation. Therefore, this report unfortunately has concentrated solely on Knutsford's historic core.





### 3 PUBLIC OPINION

- 3.1** The reports prepared by the Town Plan Group listed the many observations of the public as to what they considered to be the most important aspects to resolve. The results of consultation process were that an overwhelming majority of Knutsford's residents considered that pedestrianisation (in some form or other) was desirable. Additionally, businesses within the town centre were inclined, on balance, to opt for some streets to be pedestrianised.
- 3.2** Over the past two years there has been an abundance of letters published in The Knutsford Guardian which referred to the town centre regarding traffic, safety of pedestrians and the need to implement a plan to resolve the issues. Again, while some correspondents were opposed to doing anything there has been a clear desire to make the town safer, cleaner, more attractive and less congested with traffic, combined with a requirement for additional parking. With the proposed increase in population the letters expressed the present arrangements are unsuitable to cater for another 950 dwellings, some 650 of them now subject of planning applications.
- 3.3** As an integral part of the N.P. process the Town Council circulated a questionnaire to every household, part of which requested the opinions of residents pertaining to the town centre. Many views were expressed, but again, although the questionnaire deliberately did NOT mention 'pedestrianisation', there were many responses which identified the need for such a scheme, or alternatively, to drastically improve the existing conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.
- 3.4** On the other hand, it is also abundantly clear that there is a solid base of opinion that has opposed pedestrianisation per se. The scheme in Wilmslow has been cited as a 'disaster'. There is an understandable feeling that pedestrianisation would diminish car parking and that without traffic the streets would appear to be deserted and lack atmosphere. All these factors would lead to loss of footfall, it is said, leading to smaller profits, thus endangering those businesses that survive and rely on 'passing traffic' and the ability of customers to park outside the premises the driver wishes to visit. These fears are real and it is not the wish of the W.G. to ignore or dismiss them but to address them.
- 3.5** It is clear, however, that the Cheshire East Council will play a large and very important part in any decision which is to be made. Without that authority's blessing or approval no plan could be implemented, as Cheshire East Council is the responsible authority for highways and the major car parks and it holds the purse strings to enact any proposal which incurs cost.
- 3.6** Therefore, the plan to be put forward as regards traffic management or car parking will have to be of sufficient quality to be able to convince both Knutsford Town Council and Cheshire East Council of its advantages. Consequently, anything put on the table must not only be sensible, have the backing of the residents, the businesses and local councillors, but also must be costed, legally sound and capable of being implemented over a phased period.

#### COMMENTS

*'Footpaths are too narrow for people using a walking frame and the traffic is too close to pedestrians'*

*'I have to shop elsewhere in places where there is pedestrianisation or wide pavements because of the inaccessibility of Princess St and King St.'*

*'Moorside must be improved for vehicle movement'*

*'Bring back the total closure of King Street to traffic on Saturdays'*

*'Beautiful town ruined by traffic and parking'*

*'King Street is a short cut to the north'*

*'Those people who don't want improvement in King St and elsewhere in the town will be responsible for its death'*

## 4 AN ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES TO PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 4.1** The overall nature of these comments made by the residents and businesses that have previously been consulted can be summed up as:-
- (a) **There is too much traffic** in particular heavy goods vehicles within the historic town centre.
  - (b) **There is an unacceptable conflict** between vehicles and pedestrians due mainly to the narrowness of the carriageways and footpaths.
  - (c) **The speed** of some of the traffic presents a danger to pedestrians.
  - (d) **The standard** of both roads and footpaths is poor, making it difficult for pedestrians and, for those less mobile and those with limited vision.
  - (e) **The narrowness of the streets** combined with the exhaust fumes from vehicles that are often starting and stopping creates a level of pollution which is unacceptable.
  - (f) **There is often** a shortage of suitably located parking spaces. This depends largely on the destination of the driver, the length of time they intend to park, the time of day (or night) and the day of the week and, of course, the weather. It is also, dependent on how far the vehicle's occupants are prepared or physically able to walk.
  - (g) **It is often difficult** to 'window shop' as by so doing one is either obstructing the footpath or inhibiting passengers getting in and out of their vehicles.
  - (h) **The streets are often blocked** either by vehicles loading and unloading or by drivers taking ages to reverse or exit parking spaces on King Street and Princess Street such that, in the event of an emergency vehicle needing to reach its destination quickly, it would be unable to.
  - (i) **Unfortunately**, within the town centre there are many occasions when the public park illegally and drivers with a disability badge park without showing any consideration or responsibility for other road users coupled with an insufficient level of enforcement.

### EXTRACTS from letters to The Guardian

'It really is time large/wide vehicles and four wheeled drivers were banned from King St'. May 24<sup>th</sup> 2017

'For years now I've hated Knutsford's broken narrow pavements and street parking, but as I have got older, it's become impossible to look in shop windows while pedestrians overtake or come towards me, and I usually end up in the road dodging cars'. Nov 30<sup>th</sup> 2016

'I've recently revisited my university town, Durham City. Its centre has always been busy and popular with tourists. I found every street leading to the market place had been pedestrianised and the footfall it has generated is amazing'. 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2015

'Knutsford has a wealth of heritage which brings visitors and makes it a charming place to live, but for how much longer when the oldest street in town is so much in need of improvement. The future of the town could be bleak unless it keeps up with the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century'. 2<sup>nd</sup> Dec 2015

'Living in Mobberley I usually shop in Wilmslow but decided to pay Knutsford a visit at the weekend. I think that it will be a long time before I visit again. While the shops are lovely, it was treacherous trying to push a pram along King Street especially when it was wet'. 9<sup>th</sup> Dec 2015



King Street

**4.2 From the traffic** information gained from Cheshire East Council it would appear that King Street has **in excess of one million vehicles per year** travelling from south to north. Many appear to be using the street merely as the quickest or most convenient method of traversing the town centre and not for visiting the houses, shops or businesses. This is clear to see if one stands outside Waterstones and watches the vehicles go by.

**4.3 Although** we have no statistics it is clear to all that Princess Street, while providing access to public/private car parking mainly acts as a conduit for those drivers who wish to avoid King Edward Road.

**4.4 If it were proposed** that the section of **King Street** from Church Hill to Minshull Street were to be pedestrianised, most but not all the shops and businesses, in that section do have access from the rear.

**4.5 On the other hand,** when **Princess Street** is closed for a Makers Market, exactly the opposite is the case.

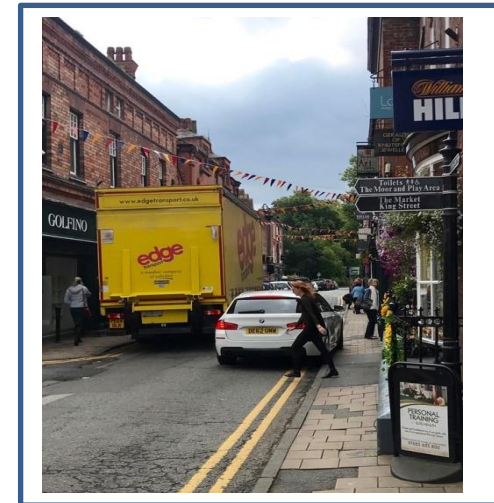
The list of premises and homes cut off to vehicular access is enormous and includes: -

- (a) Waitrose public and adjoining private carparks – 64 spaces.
- (b) Numerous properties accessed off Red Cow Yard.
- (c) Slaters Court
- (d) Regent Street underground car park – 29 spaces
- (e) Silk Mill Street carpark – 40 spaces
- (f) The Market Hall.
- (g) Dwellings in Silk Mill Street and Church View.
- (h) Boots, WH Smith, Waitrose and Coop. /Post Office.
- (i) The Cross Keys and the Rose and Crown (King Street).
- (j) Lloyds, Santander and HSBC Banks.
- (k) Knutsford Methodist Church.
- (l) Land to rear of Fine & Country.
- (m) Numerous shops and offices.

**In total** there are at present a minimum of 200 parking spaces accessed from Princess Street half of them being privately owned.

**4.6 It is therefore inconceivable** that a pedestrianisation scheme should be imposed on Princess Street.

**4.7 Similarly, to close Canute Place** to traffic would be unwise as it is the one area of on street car parking which is limited by time, provides an essential asset for the adjoining shops and is used predominantly by (very) short stay parkers from early morning to late in the evening. The vehicles are always on the move. To remove or significantly reduce parking in this locality would adversely affect many shops in the immediate vicinity of Canute Place to a very great extent and would eliminate taxi ranks.



Princess Street



## 5 THE PEDESTRIANISATION QUESTION

**5.1** In order to determine a solution appropriate research on the success or otherwise of streets which have been pedestrianised was undertaken. The following documents on pedestrianisation are available:-

- (a) **Impact of pedestrianisation and traffic calming on retailing.** A review of the evidence from Germany.
- (b) **Re-imaging urban spaces to help revitalise our high streets.** Dept. for Communities and Local Government.
- (c) The Independent Newspaper article '**Pedestrianisation. Towns say: we want cars.**' 25/9/1999.
- (d) **Valuation of townscapes and pedestrianisation.** Department for Transport 23/2/2013.
- (e) **Big ideas for Toronto. Pedestrian Only.**



Vienna, Austria

- (f) **Pedestrian – Only Shopping Streets Make Communities More Liveable.** Planetizen 03/01/2011.
- (g) **The pedestrian pound.** The business case for better streets and places. Living Streets.
- (h) **The hidden dangers of pedestrianisation** by Ludo Campbell-Reid. RTPi The Monocle Forecast 2015.
- (i) **Street Design for All.** Dept. of Transport.



Bergen, Norway

**5.2** If one visits many UK and European towns and cities where shopping streets have been converted to exclude vehicles, virtually without exception they are busy and economically viable, there being few, if any, empty shops. They are safe, secure and attractive. The very best examples are located in historic centres not dissimilar to our Knutsford but they include also large cities such as Vienna.

Most pedestrianised streets seem to thrive but there are examples where this is less true. The nearest excellent example of a successful and extensive scheme of pedestrianisation is Chester, the footfall appearing to be extremely heavy. Even Paris at a weekend in 2016 closed the 10 lane Champs Elysees in the centre of Paris to all vehicles. Consequently, the Mayor of Paris has deemed that the Avenue be closed to traffic one Sunday a month.

## 6 AN OPINION

- 6.1 For residents** and visitors alike the historic quality of our town centre is of great importance. It's quaint, it's intriguing, it has a range of shops including some multiples and several banks and numerous restaurants/public houses. It is a delight to visit especially on May Day, Sunday Makers Markets and whenever there are special events. Potentially it serves the community well.
- 6.2 It is therefore difficult** to criticise the quality of ambience of the town centre BUT changes are necessary to improve the overall experience of ALL who visit, work or reside in the town centre. The most important of the changes identified in all the consultations previously and more recently undertaken are traffic and car parking provision and the wish of many to close certain streets to traffic.
- 6.3 To do this**, and to do it well is not as easy as it looks. Every town is different; each town has its peculiarities and there cannot be one predominant solution especially in the case of Knutsford.
- 6.4 Consequently**, before embarking on any proposal the W.G. undertook a survey of cars being parked on streets and within the private car parks associated with individual business premises between Tatton Park entrance and the railway station. Cheshire East Council provided information pertaining to the number of cars parked within the council's car parks for a similar day and time. The average occupancy on that survey was 63%.
- 6.5 The W.G. survey** took place mid-morning on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2015 and excluded cars parked within the curtilage of individual dwellings. In addition, the cars parked just outside the town centre where it was clear that these belong to people employed

within the centre who regularly parked their vehicles and walked into the town centre daily were counted. Such roads included Mereheath Lane, Tabley Road, Grove Park and the lay-by adjacent to the Water Tower on Mobberley Road etc.

- 6.6 The number of cars counted** plus those within public car parks and making an estimate of cars parked within individual private houses/flats mean that in the region of 2000 or more are regularly parked within or immediately adjacent to the town centre daily, even when the town is not particularly busy.
- 6.7 It is clear too** that at other times, for example, Fridays and Saturdays although there may be fewer cars belonging to employees, there is a greater demand for car parking from shoppers, visitors and families using the town's recreational facilities.
- 6.8 Any proposed traffic and management scheme** must therefore, consider that in excess of 2000 vehicles either have the existing right to be driven to these spaces at all times, day or night or they require an appropriate and convenient location to leave their vehicle whilst being employed in the town centre. The only exception is when the council applies for a road closure for The Makers Market or The Lions Fayre etc.
- 6.9 Wholesale pedestrianisation is therefore out of the question, especially when one must consider the need for businesses to be served with goods at times convenient for both the delivery firms and the recipients.**

### 6.10 What Next?

## 7 A SOLUTION

**7.1 Consequently, any significant, permanent and extensive closure of either Princess Street or King Street is not the answer to the town's prosperity.** This recommendation will no doubt be unacceptable to a large number of residents and some businesses. However, in order to achieve an attractive and acceptable solution to ensuring that Knutsford Town Centre has a long term future it is proposed that a **Limited Vehicular Accessibility Scheme** is implemented combined with a plan which will, over time, increase the number of convenient car parking spaces to serve the town centre.

**7.2** It is fair to say that individual members of the Town Centre Working Group suggested a variety of ways in which this could be accomplished, although all had the same enthusiasm for resolving the present unsatisfactory situation. Various ways were discussed as to how to minimise vehicles in the town centre; all agreed that additional car parks were required but while it was suggested that one or two car parks could be sited on the outskirts of the town itself to cater for long term parkers, it was considered it would necessitate making provision for the drivers to be ferried into the town. Ideally this matter will need addressing in the future during the Neighbourhood Plan Process.

**7.3 It was agreed that the three main objectives of the Limited Vehicular Accessibility Scheme should be:-**

- (i) **To retain the opportunity** for residents and businesses within the town centre to maintain vehicular access.
- (ii) **To limit severely extraneous through traffic** and hence reduce the total number of vehicles within the town centre, thus improving the safety of pedestrians, minimising pollution, providing opportunity to improve the streetscape and the quintessential atmosphere, resulting in a long-term increase in footfall.
- (iii) **To provide for discussion a detailed report** as to how additional convenient car parking can be provided within the town centre to meet the everyday needs of the residents.





## 8.1 A LIMITED VEHICULAR ACCESSIBILITY SCHEME FOR KNUTSFORD

To control the flow and destination of traffic in the commercial heart of the town, the centre has been subdivided into three sectors limiting but not prohibiting access

- These sectors are:-

- (i) **Western Sector** Princess Street.
- (ii) **Northern Sector** Canute Place, Tatton Street, the northern end of King Street together with Old Market Place and Egerton Square.
- (iii) **Southern Sector** Church Hill, Church Walk, King Street to the South of Old Market Place and Moorside.



**8.2** These three sectors will ultimately have a limited number of accesses and a separate exit or exits. There is an overlap between the northern and southern sectors, but the road layout will be redesigned so as not **in the long term** to allow traffic to cross from one sector to the other, other than the limited number of 'service' and maintenance vehicles which will be permitted to use the central section of King Street.

**8.3** For the **LVAS** to be fully implemented it is proposed that consideration is given to the re-construction of the northern end of Moorside, as this road is unmade and is in a diabolical state of repair, a disgrace to the town. Moorside could then be extended to meet Hillside Road, enabling traffic to travel in a northerly direction exiting the town centre. Simultaneously, the newly constructed road could open up views of The Moor Pool and provide some additional on-street parking.

**8.4** To sub-divide one sector from the other **two short sections of roads** (each approximately 50 metres in length) **are to be closed to all traffic**. These are:-

- (i) The very narrow sections of Princess Street between Red Cow Yard and Waitrose and
- (ii) That section of King Street between The National Westminster Bank and The Bath House shop.

The section of **King Street** would be closed permanently to all vehicles, completely redesigned, repaved and transformed into an attractive space for pedestrians, making the shopping experience all the better. **The Princess Street section** would be redesigned to be pedestrian friendly but also to facilitate the passage of the occasional goods vehicle over a certain length at specific times of the day. There are several ways that would be controlled.

## **A     The Western Sector**

**8.5**     To achieve the closure of the northern narrow section of Princess Street a new vehicular access from King Edward Road to the existing Cheshire East Council (Waitrose) car park is proposed to be constructed. This entails the construction of a short slip road for traffic travelling south from the Canute Place roundabout only. Vehicles will not be able to enter the slip road when travelling from the direction of Toft Road or be able to exit onto King Edward Road. The exit will be via Princess Street as it is now. In parallel and integral with the slip road there is the opportunity to redevelop the car park to provide the same number of public and private parking spaces plus 22 apartments, each with its own parking space. This aspect is described in more detail later. It is difficult to see how the construction of this access will inhibit the traffic flow on King Edward Road or constitute a danger to other road users or pedestrians.

**8.6**     The present route to the car park is 4.5m wide, there is no footpath and the traffic is two way. It is presently totally unsatisfactory for its present purpose. The proposal is for a one-way flow into Princess Street via a carriageway of 3.0 m width alongside which would be a footpath adjacent to Gascoigne Halman 1.5m in width which would extend through to King Edward Road linking the two roads. This would replace the existing public right of way which diagonally crosses the car park.

**8.7**     The premises on the western side of Princess Street which is intended to be closed to (most) traffic have limited vehicular access from Canute Place (adjoining the White Bear public house.) Those on the eastern side will continue to gain access from either Red Cow Yard or Slaters Yard, neither of which will be affected.

**8.8**     Princess Street will be the subject of an enhancement plan making it generally much more pedestrian friendly, as the number of vehicles using the street will be greatly reduced, as few will now use it as a through route. Very few premises, will be adversely affected by this proposal and the safety of pedestrians, especially for those walking to and from Canute Place, will be much safer and pleasanter. There will be a small loss of on-street parking spaces but elsewhere there are separate proposals to offset this loss.



**Princess Street**

## B The Northern Sector

- 8.9** As previously stated, Canute Place is an important (short stop) shopping location, but it is an extremely busy place and, despite the central refuge, difficult for pedestrians to cross safely, as there is no crossing where pedestrians have priority over vehicles. However, the **L.V.A.S** presents a good opportunity to make improvements.
- 8.10** The existing bus stop is to be re-sited onto King Edward Road with a specially constructed 12.0 m long lay-by being created in the wide footpath outside the Waitrose car park.
- 8.11** The idea is to close the southern carriageway alongside the Cranford Cafe keeping the Sainsbury's carriageway one way only in its current direction. Canute Place from the roundabout to Princess Street would be re-designed removing the central refuge and providing in total an additional 15 parking spaces between the roundabout and Minshull Street. A well-designed town 'square' measuring some 25m x 12m is proposed to provide seating (as there is now) and a location for the annual Christmas tree, keeping the three traditionally designed lamp posts in their present position. The road layout would be such that 3 parking spaces would have an electric power supply, 5 spaces (suitably enlarged) would be for unloading of commercial vehicles to be used by taxis' in the evenings, and 3 will be solely for the disabled. There are none at present. The design would ensure that the parking areas and the 'town square' could be utilised on special occasions for social and cultural activities.



- 8.12** Vehicular access across the Canute mosaic alongside the newsagents will be closed except for pedestrians and access to the rear of all the properties to be via Red Cow Yard. This may well need a certain degree of cooperation between the various owners of the land to the rear to enable this to be put into place.





**8.13 The southern length of Tatton Street** alongside Edmundson's is intended to be one way only in a northerly direction as far as Green Street. This will enable an additional 9 on-street parking spaces to be provided on the eastern side without any impediment to the traffic flow omitting the recently created spaces alongside Edmundson's which have created a significant traffic problem as two-way traffic cannot continue as the carriageway is even narrower than that outside Laura Ashley. Although it would be desirable to increase the width of Tatton Street from Green Street to George Street by 700mm to enable proper two way traffic and on-street parking, Cheshire East Council have said that the cost (at this point in time being in the region of £25000) would be prohibitive but this should be re-considered. In the absence of a road widening scheme the Council has provided a passing bay by eliminating two parking spaces opposite Laura Ashley and adding these to each end of the parking. This does assist the flow of traffic which this scheme suggests should continue to be two way.

**8.14 It is intended that Green Street** remains unchanged except that vehicles will not be permitted to enter from Manchester Road by reconfiguring the junction ensuring that all vehicles when leaving Green Street onto Manchester Road turn left only using the roundabout should they wish to proceed northward along Manchester Road.

**8.15 The Gaskell Avenue** junction with the roundabout will be reconfigured to prohibit vehicles joining the roundabout from the Avenue to improve the flow of traffic by lessening the number of junctions, otherwise there are no other changes enabling the school coaches a convenient and logical route to The Knutsford Academy whilst maintaining access from the east for the businesses and residents.

**8.16 The section of King Street** adjoining Tatton Park's entrance will be made two-way with the elimination of two parking spaces in the on-street parking, providing a passing bay similar to that now existing on Tatton Street. These spaces to be 'refunded' by adding one extra space at each end without serious diminution to the necessary visibility splays. This change will enable vehicles going to and from Hillside Road and Drury Lane a much better and quicker route by avoiding the necessity always to traverse Minshull St. The direction of traffic in King St from Drury Lane to Minshull St is to be reversed towards the town Centre when it will either turn up into Minshull St or left into Old Market Place adjacent to The Bath House shop. The completion of the Moorside link road will allow Minshull St to be traffic free, should that option be decided on later. To facilitate improvements to the junction of Mereheath Lane, Garden Road, Tatton St and King Street it is proposed that a roundabout be constructed to create a natural right of way for vehicles.



## C The Southern Sector

**8.17** This section comprises sections of King Street namely from the railway to Church Hill and the entrance to the car park and secondly from there to Old Market Place opposite the National Westminster Bank.

**8.18** The lower section of King Street will remain as it is but due to the nature of the LVAS the number of vehicles using this section of King Street will be considerably reduced as it will no longer be a short cut. **Commercial vehicles over a certain weight or length will be prohibited from entering King Street at all times.**

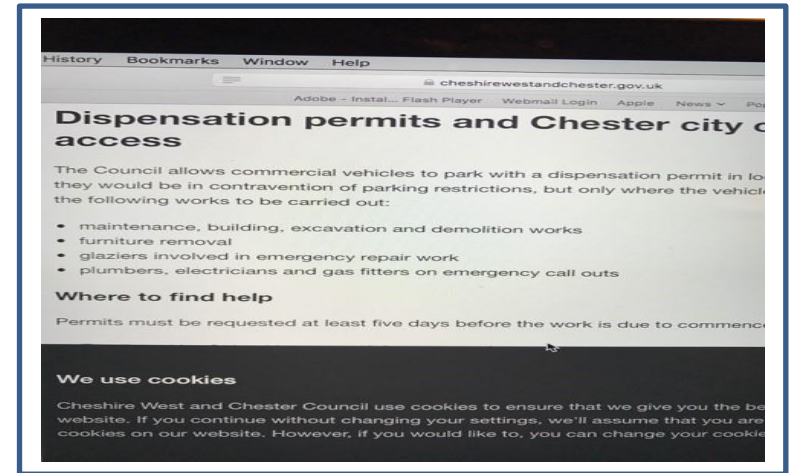
**8.19** The central section of King Street (the subject of the abandoned Cheshire East Scheme) will have vehicular access severely restricted. Apart from the fact that any vehicle travelling along this section will eventually end up leaving the town centre by the way it came in under the railway bridge, there will be restrictions as to the timing as to when deliveries and maintenance vehicles can access this area.

**8.20** It may be asked how the middle section of King Street can be environmentally improved and still be vibrant. Look at Regent Street, forget the criticism of the use of materials, the street has many advantages.

- (a) It has both retail and residential uses.
- (b) It is predominantly pedestrian.
- (c) It has no pavements, no yellow lines and no problems for goods vehicles delivering.
- (d) It is well lit and is the attractive pedestrian route from Princess Street to King Street between Minshull Street and Church Hill.
- (e) Despite being pedestrian friendly, at the lower end of Regent Street is an underground car park for 29 cars and you would not know it, proving that a shared surface, in certain instances, can work for the benefit of all.

It is therefore proposed that should the suggested LVAS be implemented that a separate detailed study is progressed to recommend a major environmental and streetscape plan which will well and truly enhance the ambience of King Street making it an interesting and enjoyable street to visit and to do business, retaining its historic character by being predominantly pedestrian.

**8.21** It is proposed that the section of Moorside alongside Norbury's Yard Church Walk be one way only in the direction of the railway bridge enabling a 'gyratory' road system using King Street and Moorside via the Cheshire East King Street car park to be implemented.



## 8.22 Church Hill

Discussion has taken place as to whether any change should be made to the direction of traffic on Church Hill bearing in mind its junction at the King Street end. This junction has nil visibility for vehicles entering King Street and large vehicles such as refuse disposal lorries have great difficulty turning left into King Street and these vehicles are relatively short compared to some. Additionally, there has been several instances when the Boutique D'or has been damaged by vehicles crashing into the shop. Consequently, it is proposed to close the lowest cobbled section of Church Hill alongside Church Hill Gallery for reasons of highway safety and to prevent drivers using this attractive narrow street as a rat run. It has been noticed that when this section of road has been closed either due to repairs to the road or in the interest of safety when it has snowed or the road is icy, there has been no significant adverse effects to traffic flows in the town.



## D. General Comments

- 8.23** The concept of the LVAS for Knutsford Town Centre and Conservation Area is to retain and improve the town centre into an area where footfall can flourish, the public can be safer, the air is cleaner and the environment much improved by not being dominated by motor vehicles. Within the historic core instead of yellow lines, parking spaces will be sympathetically marked out as they are in many continental towns, street clutter removed, lighting enhanced so that window shopping will once more be possible whilst additional car parking is to be provided as will be described later in this report.
- 8.24** For the most part this concept is achievable purely using existing traffic and parking legislation. The one exception is that the proposal can only be fully completed if the link to Hillside Road by, means of a reconstruction of the existing unmade highway, is completed.
- 8.25** It may be considered that some of the detail proposed is tricky in road layout terms but if one examines Knutsford's existing road layout there are already some very good examples as to how the re-direction of traffic aids traffic flow and is accepted by the residents. For example, Stanley Road is one way only adjacent to the Council Offices, then two way and beyond Bexton Road one way again. Similarly, Bexton Road has a very short section of one-way traffic adjacent to the Police Station. One-way roads work very well in Knutsford and there is no reason why any future scheme should not perpetuate this method of highway layout.

## 9 EXISTING PARKING SITUATION

- 9.1 Insufficient parking** within the Town Centre has been the opinion of many residents and visitors when asked for their ideas on how to improve the town centre, second only to the undesirability of the narrow heavily trafficked streets and lack of any pedestrianisation.
- 9.2 Unquestionably**, at times there is an insufficient number of car parking spaces to meet the demand especially during weekends and on days when events are taking place. Even on a normal working day many vehicles are parked on residential roads outside and some distance from the town centre to the annoyance of the residents. However, the unavailability of suitably located parking spaces has been overstated purely because there are peaks and troughs in demand. Furthermore, the turnover of vehicles within a space is often rapid leading to spaces becoming vacant on a regular basis.
- 9.3 As mentioned earlier** in this report, Cheshire East Council's own survey on a Tuesday illustrated that on that day seldom were the Council's car parks full to capacity with the exception of the one to the rear of the Waitrose store which unfortunately allows very lengthy parking at a relatively modest cost.
- 9.4 With the potential increase in the number of households up to possibly 1000 by 2030 plus the anticipated increase in population of Knutsford's immediate hinterland no one can claim that it is unnecessary to have a plan which increases car parking facilities as soon as possible AND during the next twelve years ensures that a plan for many more places is approved and implemented, as this is a major concern of Knutsford's residents.**
- 9.5** If the town centre is to flourish as a result of the adoption of a plan to improve the experience of residents and visitors to the town, then this will undoubtedly result in an increase in demand for spaces irrespective of population growth.
- 9.6 Unfortunately**, the potential need for car parking spaces cannot be quantified with any accuracy over the next 12 years? There are so many unknowns and potential variables that it is doubtful whether a definitive number can be arrived at. Hence, this report does not purport to suggest a target for additional spaces or even a time frame for their provision but that does not mean that the authorities should not consider various possibilities as to how to increase the number of spaces or be dilatory in taking action to do so.



## 10 POTENTIAL PARKING SOLUTIONS

- 10.1** This report recommends a **two-prong approach** to improving and increasing the number of parking spaces. These are (i) modifications to the existing on-street parking provision and (ii) the redevelopment of three of the existing Cheshire East Council's car parks.

### 10.1 (a) Modifications to existing on-street parking

On-street parking spaces are possibly the most economical way to provide additional spaces. However, if the proposals for the traffic management within the town centre are implemented this will result in some diminution of spaces. There will be a reduction within the section of King Street between Church Hill and The Bath House shop. There will be a lesser reduction within Princess Street and minor variations to the number presently parked on Moorside adjacent to The Moor. On completion of the Moorside extension to Hillside Road it would be advisable to ban parking on the upper end of the road to enable the free movement of vehicles when the traffic volume increases.

A more detailed study of existing on-street parking is required to illustrate how on-street parking can be increased to more than compensate for these losses, and indeed, to increase considerably the spaces available **without compromising highway safety or traffic movement.**

A summary of the significant changes are as follows:-

(i)	Tatton St. between Minshull St. and Green St.	4 spaces. (Repositioning spaces)
(ii)	Green Street	6 spaces. (Redefining)
(iii)	Gaskell Avenue	10 spaces. (By extending)
(iv)	Canute Place (inc loading)	15 spaces. (By redesign)
(v)	Bexton Road	10 spaces. (Redesigning ex Hackney Rank)
Total		45 spaces



## 10.2 The redevelopment of existing car parks

Within the town centre are six Cheshire East Council car parks providing a total of 640 spaces of which three, Tatton Street, King Street and Princess Street (Waitrose) provide a potential for redevelopment.

### 10.2 (a) Tatton Street Car Park

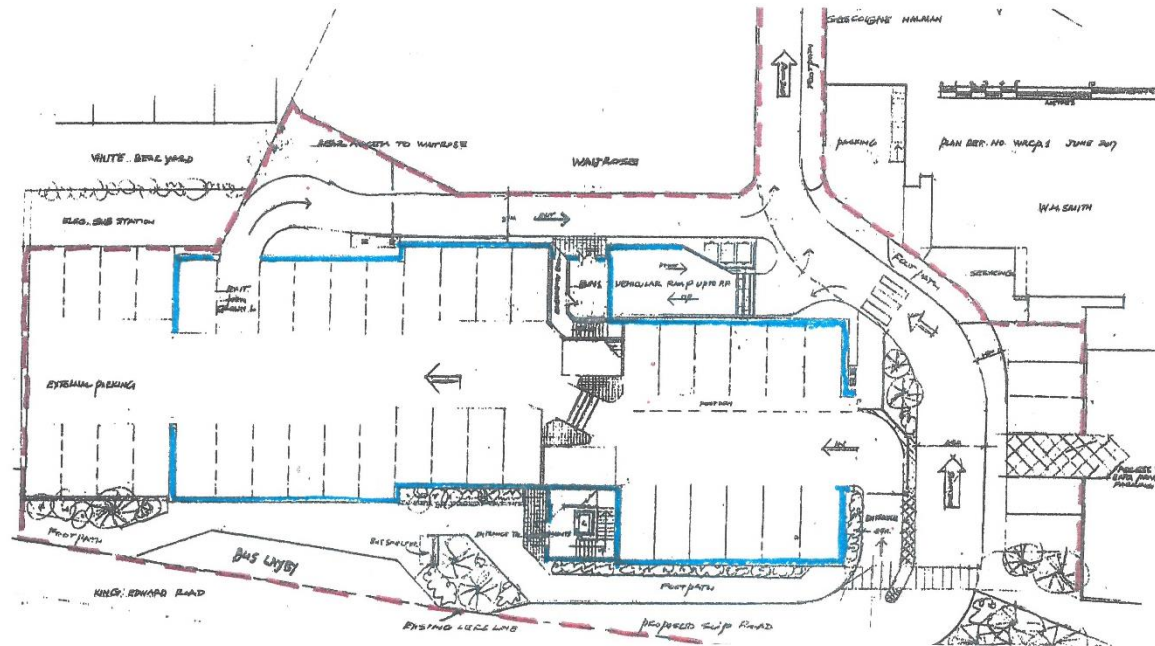
This car park currently provides 144 car parking spaces plus two substantial spaces for coaches. The car park has a lower, mostly flat area with access from Tatton Street and a higher level of car parking on the site of the disused gas works. The lower area accommodates 66 vehicles, with the balance on the higher level. Of the two distinct areas, the lower level would be more suitable for the erection of a multi-storey car park whilst the proximity of Elizabeth Gaskell Court to the higher level would inhibit the desirability of creating a multi-storey of any height in that location. Similarly, to excavate and form a lower level area of car parking would necessitate sheet piling within 4.5 metres of the rear of the Elizabeth Gaskell Court which would be totally unacceptable to the residents and involve the removal of at least 200 fully laden 20-ton vehicles of potentially contaminated earth. The cost of doing this would be prohibitive (except in London or Central Manchester). It is therefore proposed that each level be looked at as a separate entity. If the two coach parking spaces were to be re-sited elsewhere, by careful re-planning and extending the higher-level car park slightly towards Queen Street, the present number of spaces could be increased from 144 to 177 without any significant expenditure.

In the due course of time and following the development of the King Street car park, which is of prime importance, the lower level could accommodate either (i) the construction of a second level by using a modular second storey system not requiring foundations or (ii) the construction, in the long term, of a multi-storey car park to incorporate (without any significant loss of car parking spaces) 9 apartments over 3 floors facing onto Green Street. Each apartment would have its own individual parking space.

Hence, while the existing number of spaces available is 144, the car park could be developed in stages to provide 177 or 220 or 260 or 300, if the multi-storey car park was ultimately 4 storeys' in height, depending on both the demand and the availability of funding.

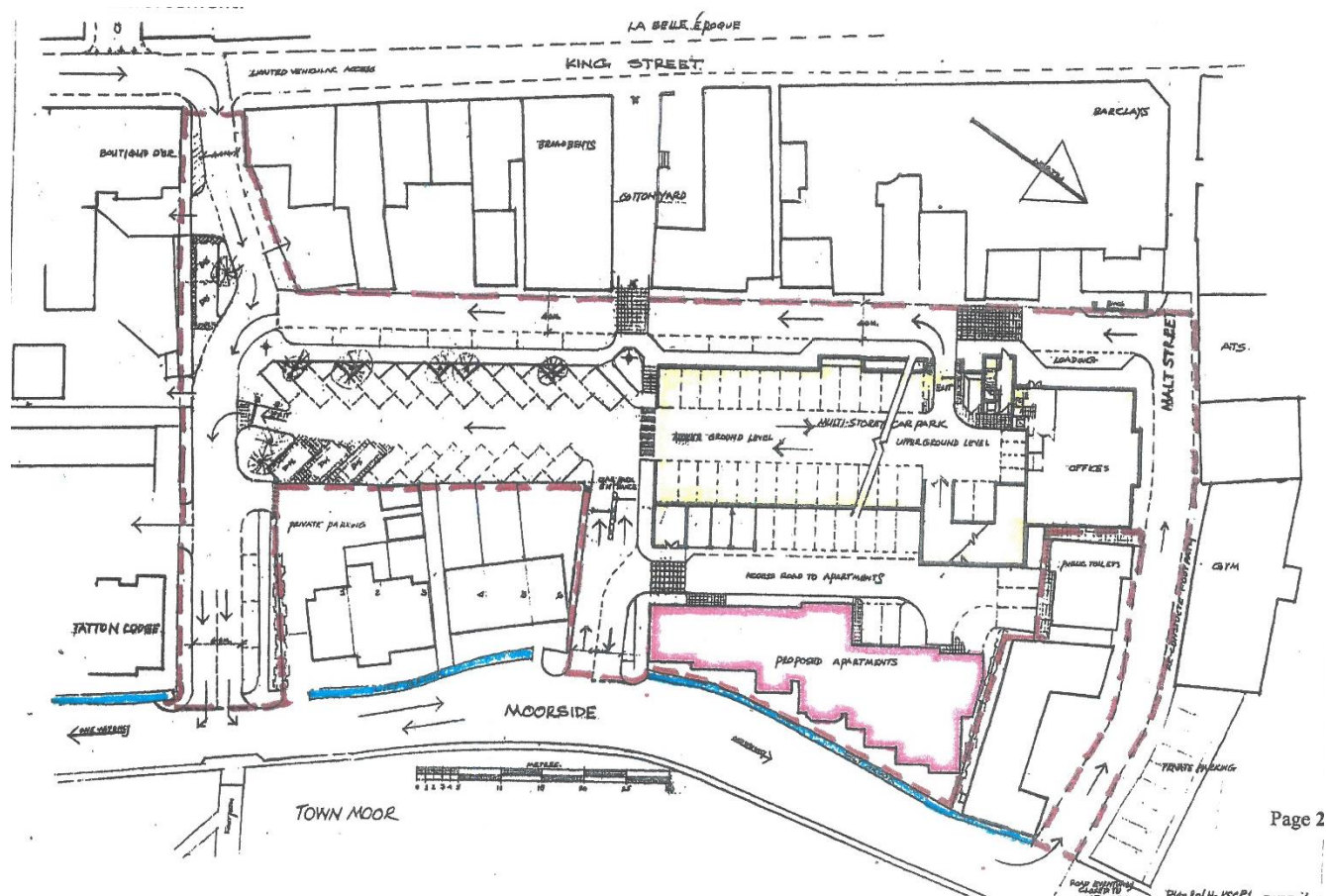
## 10.2 (b) Princess Street (Waitrose) Car Park

As previously stated, the redevelopment of this site with a new access from King Edward Road is vital to achieving a far pleasanter, safer and attractive Princess Street enhancing its potential for environmental Improvements. The plan provides for both some ground level parking, retaining vehicular access to the adjoining private car parking area, together with the construction of a four-storey building of which the ground and first floors would consist of parking with two floors providing much needed town centre accommodation in the form of one and two bedroomed apartments. On the assumption that each apartment is allocated one space the number of spaces still available for public use remains the same at 54 of which 2 will be for the disabled. Developing the site in this way will achieve not only additional housing but will enhance the view of the town centre as seen from King Edward Road, a view that is disappointing and lacking in ambience. The development of 22 apartments increase the value of land considerably and consequently the increase in value will go a long way to funding the development and the construction of a new access road. In addition, there will be a contribution from the developers via the C.I.L. and Cheshire East Council will receive additional Council Tax Revenue.



## 10.2 (c) King Street Car Park

This car park is located on perhaps the most valuable real estate within the town centre. While it is appreciated that the prosperity of the town centre would be devastated if no car park existed, the financial return from this Cheshire East Council asset is negligible bearing in mind the cost of maintenance and the cost of managing, the emptying of meters and law enforcement.





**It is therefore proposed to:-**

- (a) Re-plan the road layout in accordance with the proposed traffic management scheme incorporating one new access from Moorside into the car parking area with separate exits.
- (b) To subdivide the site into three parcels namely residential, ground level parking and multi-storey parking. The land fronting Moorside overlooking The Moor is ideal for the development of apartments not dissimilar in concept to the adjoining Tatton Lodge taking advantage of the tremendous view of The Moor. There would be 15 two and three bedroomed apartments with a total of 17 garages and parking spaces.
- (c) The area between the apartments and King Street is most suitable for a multi-storey car park retaining the existing public toilets. The lower ground level of the car park would be partially excavated as the land slopes upwards towards the rear of the King Street shops. The car park would be five storeys in height and even then, it would be lower than the roof heights in King Street. Three levels of the car park at the Malt Street end would contain offices with a level of car parking below and above. The income from the sale of the land for the apartments and from the annual rent for the offices will go a long way to initially funding the construction and to repay any loan required to complete the scheme.
- (d) The existing ground level car park behind Nos 1 to 6 Moorside would remain as it is except that it would be re-planned and enclosed.

The means of access to the car parking would be controlled by barriers with payment being made solely on exit. Whereas there are now 128 parking spaces the revised scheme provides for 22 spaces on the surface car park plus 18 spaces of on-street parking on the surrounding road system. Plus 170 spaces in the multi-storey car park. This creates a total of 210 spaces an additional 75 spaces, a 64% increase. Of the 210 spaces there are 5 for the disabled and each floor will have 2 electric charging points. In addition, there are 3 motorcycle spaces on floor numbers 2, 3 and 4.

## **10.2 (d) Silk Mill Street**

It is not impossible to redesign this car park to obtain a few additional spaces, but ideally there needs to be a total re-assessment of how and for what purpose the car park could be re-designed, bearing in mind that Silk Mill Street affords access to businesses in King Street as well as the existing residential properties and the Cooperative Store. Hence, this report does not make any recommendations for change at this point in time.

## 11 SUMMARY OF CAR PARKING PROPOSALS

- 11.1** For the short- and long-term prosperity of the town centre it is essential to provide additional car parking in the immediate vicinity of the town centre. The occupation of the proposed new dwellings will exacerbate the current parking issues and the last thing the business people of Knutsford want is for the prospective residents to be put off visiting the town centre from day one and go elsewhere due to lack of the provision of convenient car parking.
- 11.2** If the traffic management scheme is implemented then there can be both a **diminution of conflict** between pedestrians and vehicles and the opportunity **to create additional selective on-street car parking**. Consequently, this plan proposes an increase in on-street parking of 47 spaces but simultaneously there will be reduced parking in King Street and Princess Street in the region of 24 spaces.

- 11.3** Consequently, this proposal, would provide net additional car parking as follows:-

On-street parking	an additional	45
King Street car park	an additional	75
Tatton Street Phase 1 only	an additional	<u>33</u>
		155
Less spaces lost approx.		<u>24</u>
Net increases in parking spaces		<u>129</u>

N.B. If the Tatton Street car park were to be fully developed the number of additional spaces could increase to 254 depending on the number of storeys the car park is developed.

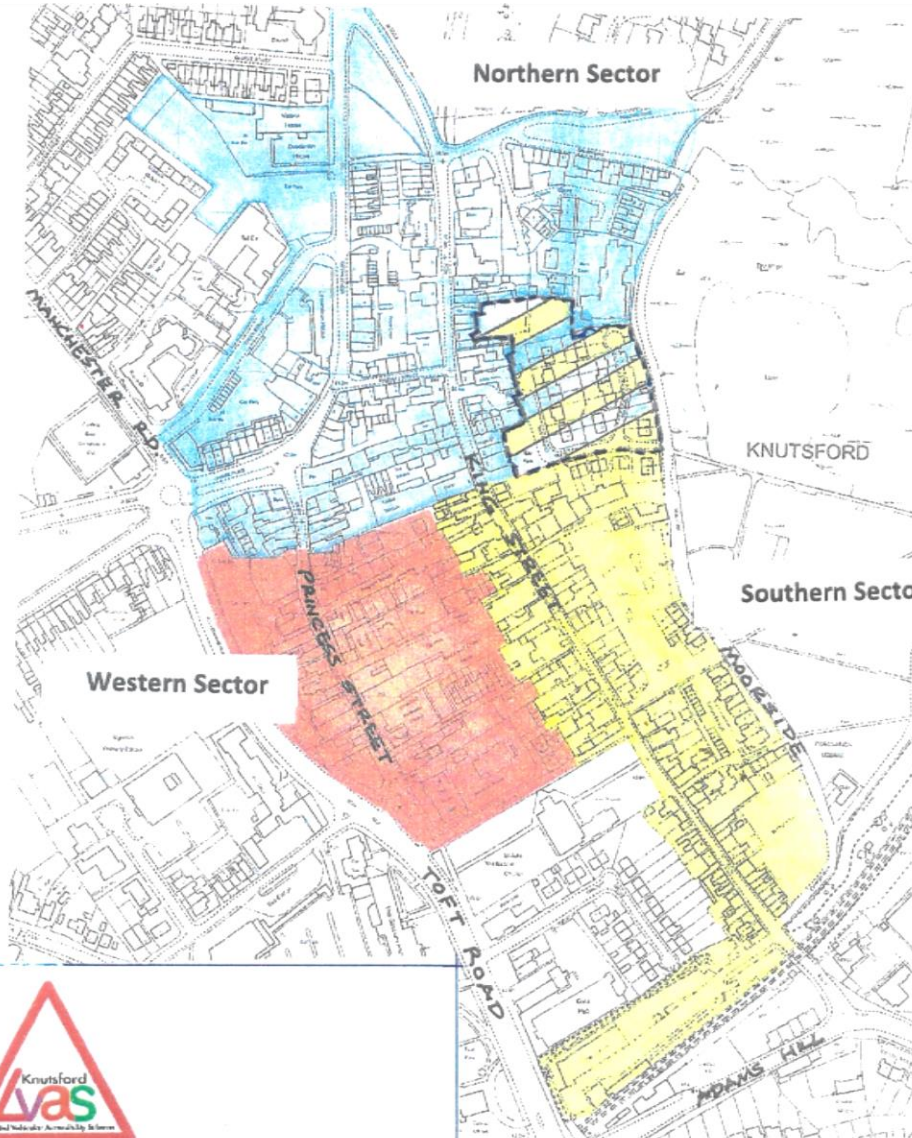
- 11.4** The foregoing figures exclude the desirable reduction in the current on-street parking on Hillside Road should the Moorside link be completed, a link which enables the newly extended Moorside to be designed to accommodate a length of on-street parking to compensate for the reduction on Hillside Road.
- 11.5** For the purposes of clarity a car parking space has been defined as being 2.4m x 4.8m and an on-street car parking space as 2.1m x 5.5m, a space for the disabled driver 2.7m x 5.8m, and electric charging point. 2.5m x 4.8m and commercial vehicle unloading bay 3.0m x 6.0m.



# Appendices

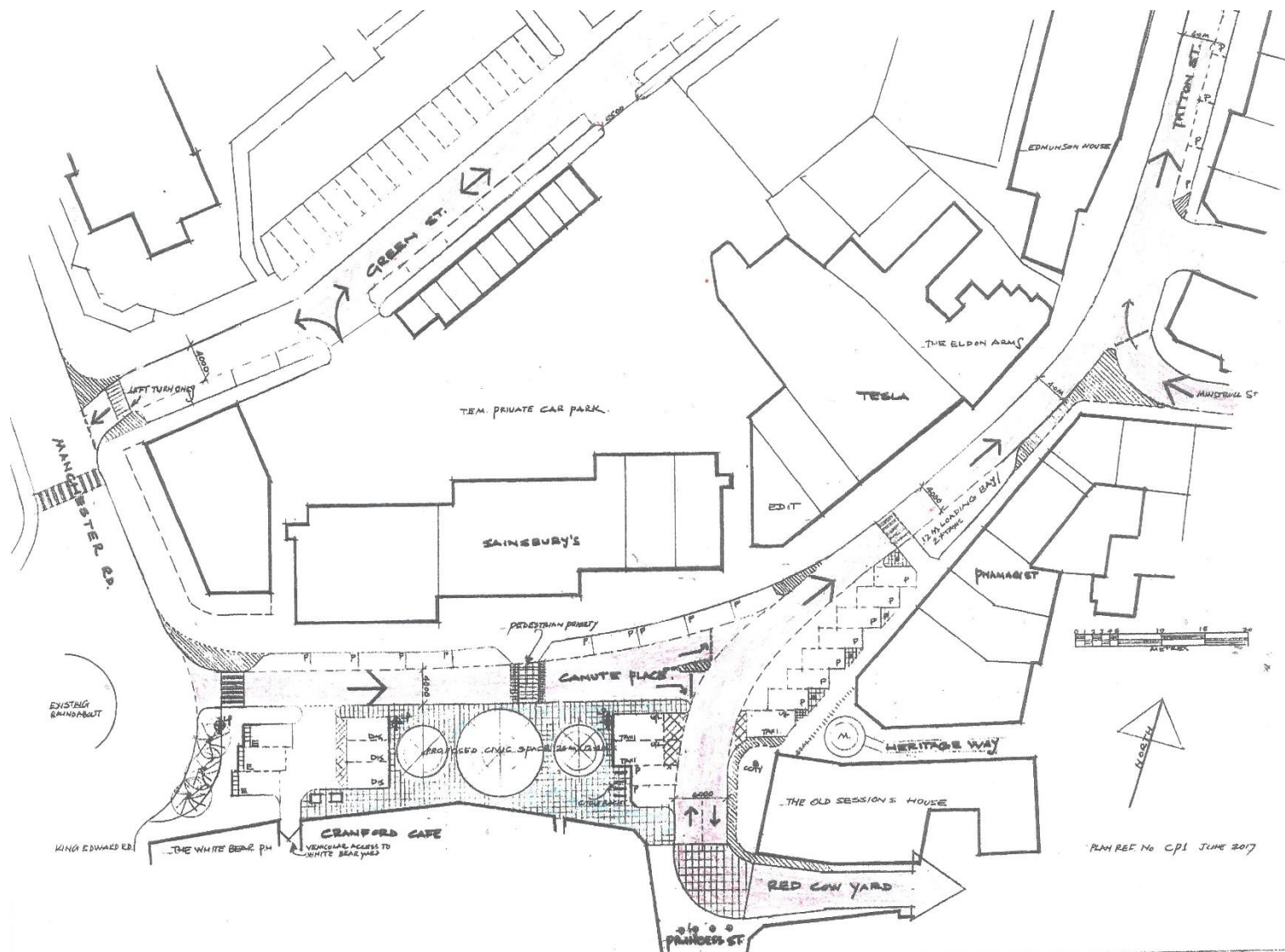
## Appendices

- A KLVAS Sectors.
- B Proposed Traffic Management Scheme
- C Canute Place Proposals
- D Elevation of Waitrose Apartments  
Elevation of Moorside Apartments
- E King St Car Park Elevation and Section
- F Supplementary Design Details
- G Acknowledgements



Knutsford  
Limited Vehicular  
Access Scheme





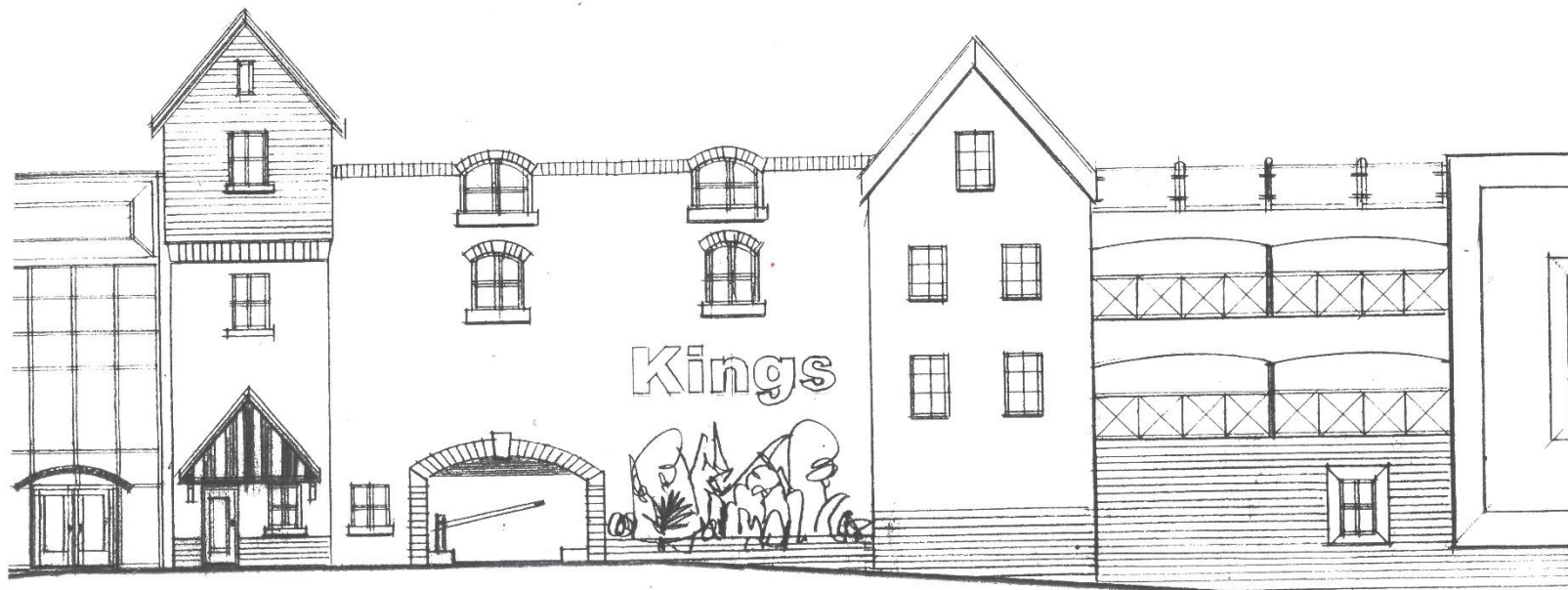
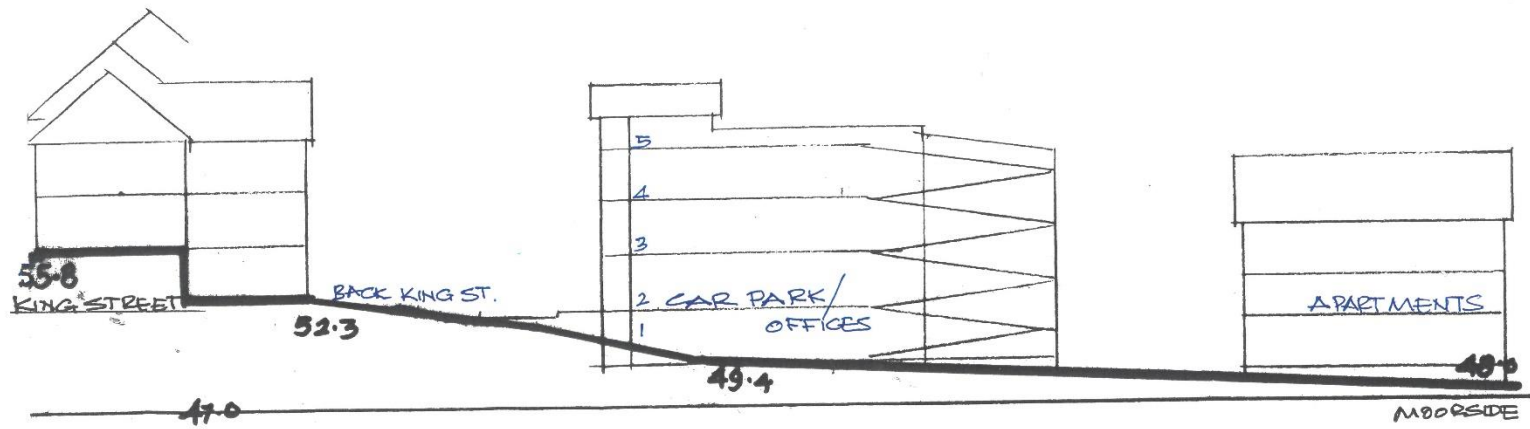


ELEVATION TO KING EDWARD ROAD



PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF APARTMENTS.





if

You appreciate that internet shopping is radically changing people's shopping choices at the expense of our High Streets,

You appreciate that there is tension between pedestrians and vehicles in Knutsford's narrow streets,

You would like more convenient car parking spaces to enable our town to attract more custom,

You are concerned for people with limited mobility & for parents with young children and buggies,

You are concerned about pollution from vehicles,

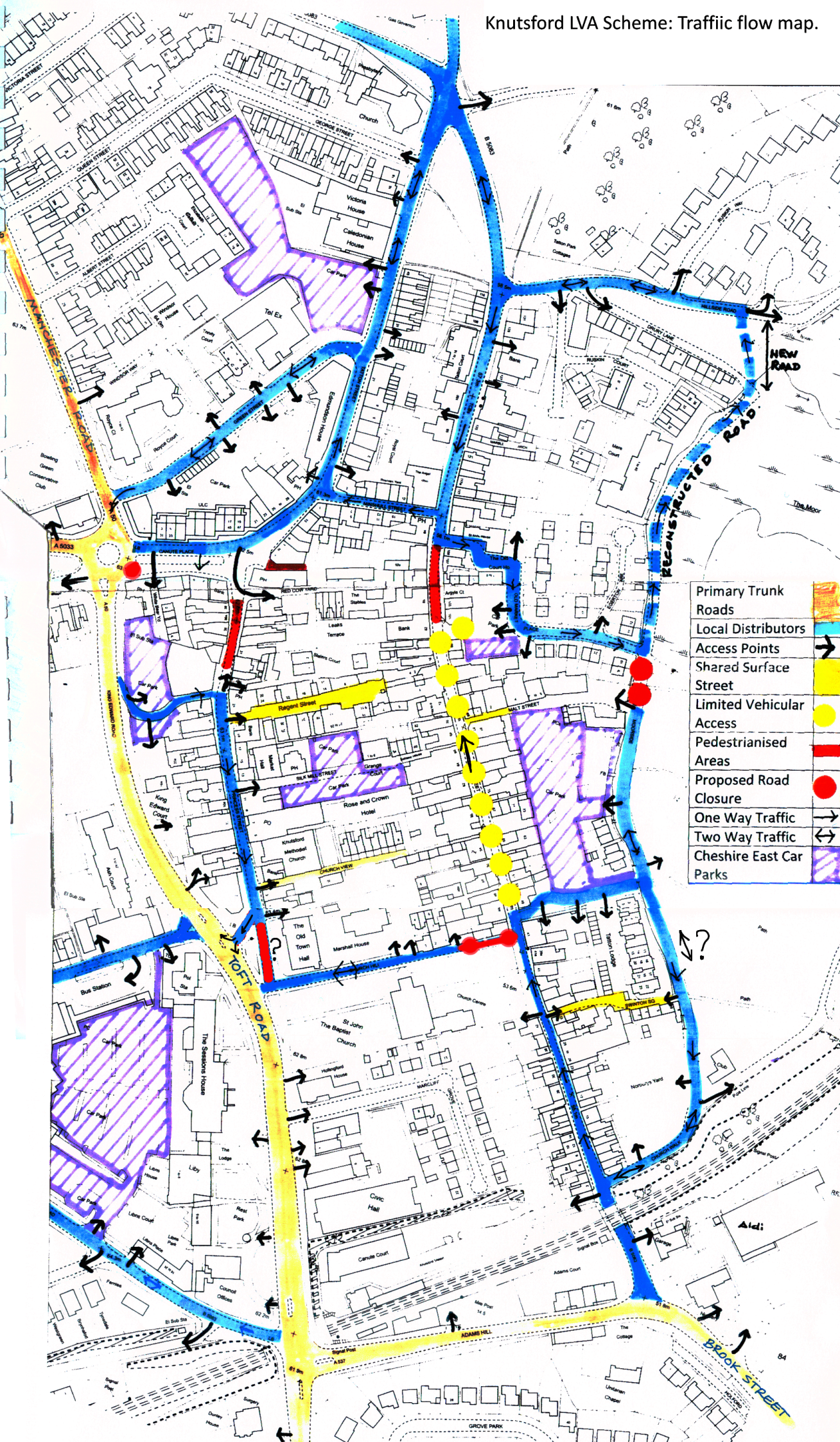
You are very keen for Knutsford's Centre to be an attractive place to live, do business and visit.

.....then you will probably agree that

**These initial proposals for traffic flow, parking and the limitation to the number of vehicles clogging up and polluting out historic town centre need to be addressed by Knutsford Town Council in association with Cheshire East Council as a matter of urgency.**









<b>F SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION AND NOTES</b>
<p>The success of Knutsford Limited Vehicular Access Scheme described in principle in the foregoing pages relies on very careful detailing of on-street parking, variations to road and footpaths layout, parking restrictions, and changes to the design of the road and footpaths. These topics have been given plenty of thought but the sole purpose of this report is to put forward a positive proposal for traffic management and additional parking. If these are accepted in principle then details of the aforementioned topics will be the subject of a more comprehensive study.</p> <p>It is however, worth noting the following facts:-</p>

**It is however, worth noting the following facts:-**

<b>(a) ON-STREET PARKING</b>
It is quite clear that there needs to be a reassessment of all marked-out parking and unloading bays within the town centre in order to maximise the number of spaces where possible, to eliminate them where pedestrians will have priority and to ensure that schemes can be prepared to improve, not only the quality of the surfacing but overall the character and visual attractiveness of the town centre. Within the central core of the historic centre ideally yellow lines will be minimised with parking spaces being marked out sensitively as in European towns. Careful thought will be given to the provision of convenient parking for those with disabilities and, looking to the future, for the siting of electric charging points.

<b>(b) CHURCH HILL / PRINCESS STREET</b>
The W.G. have discussed how to facilitate traffic emerging from Princess Street being able to make a right hand turn towards King Edward Road. To do so legally at present, drivers have to co-join the top of Church Hill and then (with some difficulty) turn right awaiting a gap in the traffic from both directions. Neither the Princess Street exit adjacent to Simon Boyds where vehicles are prohibited from a right turn or the Church Hill junction are satisfactory from the highway safety point of view. The W.G. recommend that all traffic emerging from King Street exits adjacent to Simon Boyd necessitating the repositioning of the lights to facilitate both a left and right hand turns.

**(c ) DESIGN**

The very functionality of a multi -storey car park of any size makes the incorporation of such a significant structure within a Conservation Area very challenging for any Architect and every Planning Officer and very difficult for the more discerning resident to accept. Everyone will have a different approach to the design solution. Hence, in addition to the incorporation of offices into the King Street multi-storey car park to assist with the funding, it gives the designer that opportunity to be more imaginative in the design of its appearance. What is clear is that a brash approach to the external design of the car park is unacceptable and therefore a suggested idea for discussion is included in these appendices purely to give an example how to resolve the issue.

With the Waitrose car park with the two upper floors being residential it will be much easier to resolve as can be seen with the sketch provided.

[illegible]

#### **( d) TEMPORARY CAR PARKING FACILITY**

Should it be decided to construct a multi-storey car park on the King Street Car Park or to develop the Waitrose Car Park this will entail the temporary loss of convenient town centre parking spaces. In the interest of the town thought will need to be given to making temporary additional spaces available to be used by the public during the course of the developments. This document does not pretend to have an answer, but in such an instance, it would be wise to increase the higher level of Tatton Street car park as described earlier in this report and to construct a second level by means of a temporary modular structure adjoining Tatton Street. At King Street , the apartment development would need to be programmed to follow the opening of the multi storey car park. It is suggested that during the time of the redevelopment of the King Street car park it may be wise for the authority to discuss with the owners of the private car park on the far side of The Moor a contract for the public to be able to utilise a section of the car park and to reimburse the company for such use. Similarly, the adjoining United Utilities site has a substantial hard surface surrounding the brick pumping station on the site and it may be possible to agree the temporary use of the land for car parking.

Purely as a suggestion, it may be possible to utilise the extensive car parking area adjacent to the Bowling Club on Mereheath Lane as there appears to be sufficient land to accommodate any occupier of the now empty offices plus the bowling club members. The above are purely suggestions to be investigated if it is felt necessary to provide additional parking spaces for a temporary period of time, should this plan for traffic management and parking be approved. Other convenient ways to increase the number of car parking spaces during the development period have been mooted, but the whole question of need and location will need to be studied in greater detail.

#### **( e) PARKING CHARGES**

The failure of many High Streets to be financially sound has often been blamed either on the lack of car parking or the cost of parking, consequently, there is a strong desire that parking charges should be minimised if not abolished. Whatever system is imposed it needs to be seen to be fair which presently it is not. To park on the highway is free. It is also free to park in the Cheshire East Car Parks after 6pm in the evening

and on certain days, for example, the King Street car park can be used extensively during the day at a cost to drivers but in the evening, especially in the summer and on Sundays, the car park is often completely full at no cost to the drivers. The cost of traffic wardens, the enforcement fines and the maintenance of the car parks should be paid for by all who use them not just day time shoppers. Hence, a full review of parking charges within the town centre should be made. The initial thoughts of the Town Centre Working Group are that there should be no charge for parking for short periods of time, whether this be half an hour or one hour or more has not been decided. What is absolutely clear, is that the provision of parking, whether it is on the highway or within a public car park needs to be paid for. There should be a balance between the users and the residents as a whole and this requires full discussion. An appropriate charging policy will need to be seen to be fair and hence potential residents and visitors to the town centre will not be deterred by lack of parking or cost thereof. Any such policy should specifically related to the requirements of Knutsford town centre.

<b>(f) CANUTE PLACE AND ROUNDABOUT</b>
Cheshire East Council have disclosed potential plans for changes to the road layout within Canute Place and modifications to the junction either eliminating the roundabout and introducing a traffic light controlled junction or increasing the size of the roundabout. These schemes have not been discussed by the Town Centre Working Group. Both envisage the closure of the Gaskell Avenue junction with the roundabout, improvements to the alignment of the road between Northwich Road and Gaskell Avenue junction with the roundabout, making the turn from King Edward Road much easier. Furthermore, the plans seen envisage moving the zebra crossings well away to very inconvenient locations for pedestrians. It also suggests an alternative road layout for Canute Place.
The following are 'off the cuff' comments and as such do not form part of the traffic management and parking scheme prepared by the Working Group.
Firstly, it is accepted by Highway Engineers in general and Cheshire East in particular, that traffic lights in such a situation do not necessarily improve the traffic flow often lengthening the time it takes the driver to go from A to B and increasing the length of traffic queues. Secondly, the closure of the access to

Gaskell Avenue from the roundabout will mean a rather extended journey all residents and the businesses on Gaskell Avenue, Cranford Avenue, Racefield Rd and The Academy, along King Edward Rd and Stanley Road. This will be particularly so for the school coaches going to The Academy. Whilst the closure of the exit onto the roundabout (as proposed in the foregoing report makes sense) the closure of the access does not. The plans in the minds of the Highway Engineers for Canute Place itself do little to improve the current situation, provide virtually no extra car parking, do not take the pedestrian fully into account, whilst costing a substantial sum of money which could be far better spent on enhancing a very important and historic location.

<b>(g ) FUNDING</b>
The cost of implementing the proposals has not been undertaken, but many of the proposals can be put in place by using the existing legislation.
As far as the redevelopment of the existing three Cheshire East Car Parks are concerned the proposals for two, King Street and Princess Street, is dependent of the simultaneous development of apartments or the inclusion of offices, whilst the increased value of the land will assist in the funding of the proposals. Cheshire East did allocate a substantial amount of money for the implementation of their intended scheme for King Street, now abandoned, and it is understood that this may well still be available for the benefit of improving the town centre as a whole. Cheshire East have an indicative plan for changes to the road layout in Canute Place to be funded by Crown Estates the developers of the Northwich Road housing and therefore it may possible to reallocate this money to ensure the proposals in this plan be put in place increasing the car parking provision substantially and improving the environment and lessening pollution.

<b>( h) TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS</b>
Should the principle of the LVAS be adopted, it will necessitate the introduction of transitional arrangements especially with regard to the provision of places for people to park. Within the town centre itself there are few, if any, areas suitable for temporary parking whilst the car parks are developed, although the report highlights two areas adjacent to Town Moor. Hence, the W.G. recommends that the Town Council together with Cheshire East get together to see whether, within the immediate vicinity of the historic core, temporary car parking could be provided at a reasonable cost.
It has been noticed that the Cheshire East car park at Booths is seldom at capacity and has a 2 hour maximum parking restriction. If a section of the car park could have an unrestricted time limit then it would be beneficial for those town centre parkers who presently park at Waitrose for long periods or on the adjoining roads all day long.
Additionally, the W.G. recommends that for events in the town and for those employees who presently park on the residential roads surrounding the town centre (to the annoyance of residents) a parking solution is found. This may mean an extension to 'Residents Only' permits on certain roads.

<b>(i) ROAD CAPACITY VERSUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT</b>
Comment has been made that should the rat runs through King Street and Princess Street be closed then this would put more vehicles onto Adams Hill, Toft Road and King Edward Road, True. However, these roads are of sufficient width and alignment for a large number of vehicles and, in practice, the queues of traffic are generally at peak travel periods not continually throughout the day.
In any case, the priority should be on pedestrian safety, creating a pleasant environment to shop and do business thus maintaining and improving the financial viability of the town centre.
<b>(j) SUSTAINABILITY</b>
The Working Group is mindful to ensure that the accompanying proposals are sustainable. Consequently, whilst it is outside the remit or the ability of The Town Council to initiate improvements to the rail and bus services it is felt that the current proposals go a long way to improving sustainability for the following reasons:-
1. Proposals encourage footfall rather than vehicular movement by creating friendly pedestrian oriented streets and areas.
2. By providing additional parking

Knutsford's residents will be encouraged to use the Town Centre rather than travelling by car further afield to shop and enjoy recreational activities.
3. The limitation of the volume of traffic within the town's centre will reduce considerably the level of harmful air pollution created by slow moving and idling vehicles.
4. Within the final plan, provision will be made for a number of well located covered cycle racks to encourage the use of cycles as a local means of transport.
5. Where it is proposed to provide additional parking ie Tatton Street, King Street, Princess Street and Canute Place electric charging points will be installed.
6. The current draft proposals for the redevelopment of three C.E. car parks includes a total of 48 homes. All these apartments are within easy walking distances of both the bus and rail stations which will avoid the necessity to use a motor vehicle.
To summarise, the proposals which will assist in the creation of a vital viable town centre.
<b>(k) Highway Improvements</b>
It may be considered by the Highway Authority that lights will be required at th junction of Adams Hill and King Street.
Additionally, an improvement to the visibility at the Manchester Rd. Garden Rd junction is advisable.







## G Acknowledgements.

I would like to thank all past and present members of the group for their contributions to the first stage of the proposals and in particular for their ambitions to create a safer, pleasanter and better town centre environment for all. I thank **Phil Brown** for the Church Hill photograph and **Jamie Edwards** for the Gaskell Tower logo.

In particular, **John Coffey** has acted as Secretary keeping me on my toes. **Wendy Moleas** has proof read this document whilst **Mrs Tracey Siddall** has had her patience worn thin by not only having to interpret my scribble but in having to reset many of the pages time and time again to suit a desire for each page to be easily read.

Additionally, Councillor Stewart Gardiner has made numerous beneficial contributions to the content of the report.

All this would not have been possible or much more time consuming if the Working Group had not had the benefit of the tireless and amazing work undertaken previously by residents in producing both the Knutsford Town Plan and the King Street Enhancement Proposals from which the Working Group has obtained a considerable amount of information and consultative information.



Christopher Gray, Lead Councillor for the Town Centre for the duration of the preparation of this consultation document , Dr John Coffey, Councillor Tony Dean, Bridget McCreedy, Julia Chard, Hugo McCorkell, Brian and Sylvia Chaplin and other Councillors, business owners and residents.