

Part Two

Issues & Proposals

CONTEXT

The 1999 Study sets down a clear vision for the future where the planned and potential growth in Central Bletchley can play a strategic role in sub-regional growth. The established and new drivers of change outlined in the previous section illustrate that the potential to achieve the vision is now far greater than in 1999. Additionally, the public sector partners are now working together to co-ordinate change and are prepared to commit resources to delivery. However, the challenge is probably greater than in 1999. Although there have been small steps forward the substantive initiatives of the study have yet to be progressed and their need is now even greater.

The 1999 Study provides a detailed analysis of the issues facing Bletchley Town Centre. Four years on, the majority are still relevant; indeed many of the weaknesses have become more pronounced.

The following sections address key issues which are relevant to shaping the Regeneration Framework and indicate the proposals for change. The issues fall into four key areas:

- **Uses and activities** (Section 4)
- **Access and movement** (Section 5)
- **Design and public realm** (Section 6)
- **Image, role and marketing** (Section 7)

These issues have shaped the **Regeneration Framework and Projects** which are described in Part Three of this document.

4. uses and activities

CONTEXT

Currently, Central Bletchley remains comparatively unattractive to property developers and occupiers. However, since the 1999 study there have been some small but significant signs that, given the context of regeneration and change in the town centre, investment will follow. Although, since the 1999 study, the market has not come forward with significant schemes and the main opportunity sites have failed to catalyse regeneration.

The challenge remains to diversify the range of uses and activities in the centre, to move it away from its primary role as a discount or value retailing location and to grow key areas including:

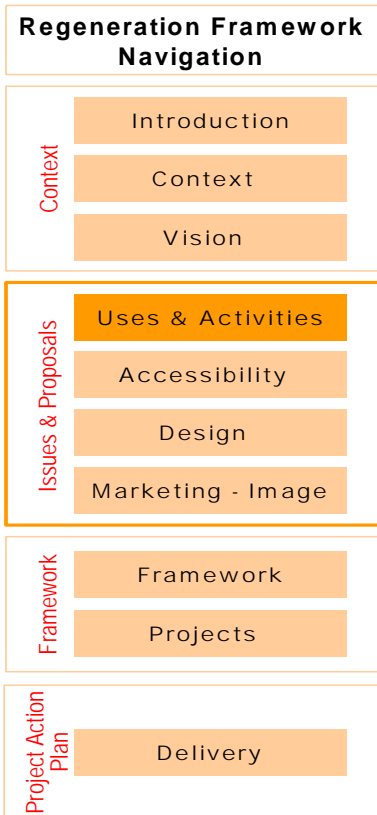
- Diversified **mixed-use** development
- New **retailing** opportunities
- **Residential** – with town centre living
- An **evening economy** – with a range of restaurants, bars and cafés
- **Employment** opportunities – stimulating appropriate town centre employment
- **Cultural and civic uses** – to fulfil Central Bletchley’s role as the second centre of Milton Keynes

Each of these uses and activities comprises the balanced offer that will deliver sustained regeneration of the town.

Although the major sites have not come forward for development or re-use, there have been some significant changes in the property market.

- The ownership of **Stephenson House** has changed, with the new owners looking to redevelop the building for residential accommodation with ground floor active uses as a bar of café.
- Adjacent to Stephenson House, on the former **Wetherburn Court**, a store for Wilkinson has been developed.
- Also, the **Co-op department store** is in the process of internal rearrangement and expansion of existing floor layout.

Furthermore, the redevelopment and consolidation of **Milton Keynes College** at Bletchley is a positive commitment to the town – growing the positive impacts of students and learning to the town’s ‘offer’. The other drivers of change explored in the foregoing section highlight the opportunities for Central Bletchley in developing this balanced and sustainable future role.



OVERVIEW OF THE 1999 STUDY ISSUES

The 1999 Study set out a number of strengths and weaknesses in terms of uses and activities in Central Bletchley:

Strengths

- Critical mass of retail
- Part covered centre
- Presence of national multiple stores
- Office centre potential
- Competitive rents – low cost ‘satellite’ location
- Available space
- Retail demand
- Accessibility from a wide catchment
- Significant development opportunities
- Other refurbishment opportunities
- Number of small business
- Proximity and growth of college
- Parking availability
- Positive aspirations or key landowners and developers
- College desire to stay
- Opportunity of Bletchley Park
- Proximity to station
- Leisure centre and recreation around centre
- Proximity to residential



Brunel Centre: Houses several national multiples

Weaknesses

- General lack of diversity
- Retail lacks variety
- Few mixed use areas
- Opening hours too restricted
- Not enough businesses in growth sectors
- Market not innovative
- Lack of diversity of leisure
- Few evening activities
- Lack of restaurants and entertainment
- Shortage of leisure opportunities – particularly children’s leisure
- No cultural, arts or heritage centre
- Few visitors to central area
- Few residents in central area
- Housing opportunities being missed
- Land ownership is complex and potentially inhibiting



Opportunity sites: Bletchley benefits from numerous town centre sites that can be brought forward for development

Many of these points reflect key problems of accessibility and movement, or urban design and quality of the public realm issues which are addressed more fully, later in this part of the Framework.

However, these strengths and weaknesses raise issues which must be addressed if the town is to play its key role as the second centre of Milton Keynes, meet local needs as a thriving mixed use town centre, or strengthen its services and range of functions to accommodate strategic growth in the coming decades.



Mixed use development encourages 'shared-trips'

DIVERSITY OF USE - MIXED USE AND MAJOR SITES

Fundamentally, the Framework needs to create the conditions for a vibrant town centre to grow, with a diversity of uses and activities that are attractive to a range of residents, retailers, employers and visitors. Successful centres have this range of functions that ensures they are the destination for 'shared-trips' and also are prepared to weather economic cycles that damage 'fragile', one-dimensional centres – or parts of town centres dominated by single uses and activities.

Mixed Use and Diversity

The aim therefore is to provide a diversity of use in mixed use schemes. The potential development projects also need to be attractive to the development market: of a sufficient size and with many of the risks of land assembly and access removed. Bletchley needs to make it as easy as possible to invest, develop and locate in the town.

There is evidence that the property market is now beginning to more readily accept the benefits of mixed use schemes and the vitality these can bring. But, in locations such as Bletchley, there is scepticism about the viability of such schemes and they will need to be promoted carefully – and be accompanied by clear and realistic development briefs.

Bringing forward Key Priority Sites

Importantly, there is a number of large development sites for mixed use town centre development, although many will need work from the Regeneration Partners to assist with facilitating development, possible land assembly, initial landowner discussions and potential development arrangements to bring them forward. Priority sites with clear opportunity in Central Bletchley, and which should be a priority to bring forward include:

- A number of inter-related sites to the **north and South of Queensway at the western end of the retail centre** – including the current J Sainsbury, Brunel Centre, Chandos Place, Wetherburn Court, Co-operative Store, Stephenson House and developments north to Princes Way
- The **existing Leisure Centre site**, surrounding car parks and landscaping – with additional sites to facilitate comprehensive development
- **Station Environs** to deliver projects that will provide activity around the station and substantially reduce the impact of severance
- Maximising development opportunities through **realignment of Saxon Street** from Buckingham Road to the railway bridge
- redevelopment of the **Police and Fire Station** sites, as they become available to provide residential and commercial uses.



Railway Station: Surrounding land is a key priority site

- **Bletchley Park** – to realise the substantial potential of this area

The priority regarding property remains to facilitate and serve the future economic competitiveness and social needs of the town through delivering robust yet flexible development projects. This was to be delivered through the redevelopment of key sites particularly those noted above.

RETAILING

An important driver in the health of the town centre is the scale, range and variety of retail provision. This remains the key area of concern for Bletchley. Although there is a critical mass of retailing this is dominated by smaller and ageing units along Queensway:



Providing a range of retail opportunities is key to a town centre's success

- Retailing along **Queensway** is still characterised by discount stores with a growing number of charity shops. There has been little new development in recent years and most space above the shops is either vacant or underused.
- The **Brunel Centre** building remains generally of a poor quality and compares unfavourably with modern commercial developments in CMK and elsewhere – including many out of centre schemes.
- The **Sainsbury's** store suffers from poor visibility from Saxon Street and Queensway, with a car park that is difficult to access.
- The **Co-operative** department store offers a distinctive presence in the town yet the building and floorspace is dated.

Redevelopment of the **Wetherburn Court** site for Wilkinson indicates that there is underlying and unmet interest from retailers for floorspace in Bletchley. Additionally, Woolworth sought to locate in Central Bletchley in 2000, but planning permission was refused. There is a good prospect that other multiple occupiers may be attracted if modern retailing facilities were available, and particularly if the overall town centre 'offer' and environment is improved.

An important element of the Framework is to attract new types and scale of retail; improving customer profile and spend. This will be achieved through a number of initiatives.

New Mixed-Retail Floorspace

Remodelling of the western Queensway area is an important proposal in the regeneration of Bletchley. Both north and south of the street, the area provides the opportunity to deliver significant new mixed use development with housing, food and drink and additional comparison and convenience retailing floorspace in the town centre and include improved food store provision.

The whole area falls within the currently defined retail centre and the Council remains committed to the improvement of foodstore provision in central Bletchley – whether this be to the north or south of Queensway, but as part of a wider retail offer including the potential to introduce new comparison multiple stores.



Bletchley needs to develop offer mixed use developments with above groundfloor housing

The development is unlikely to be a single comprehensive redevelopment scheme. The Co-operative department store is a key component of the Bletchley town centre retail offer, and Stephenson House offers an

opportunity to deliver town centre residential development in Bletchley. Consequently, it would not be desirable to redevelop these parts of the site unless the scheme involved re-provision of equivalent comparison retailing and town centre living.

It is also important that the creation of the new quarter responds to the need to become part of the urban structure of Bletchley and should come forward as a series of town centre schemes and not one more characteristic of edge-of-centre. Opportunities for a mix of uses must be maximised and pedestrian permeability improved significantly:



Active frontages need to be promoted along all main pedestrian routes

- Any reconfiguration or redevelopment of the Brunel Centre or of the Co-operative Store must re-open the line of Queensway and maximise the frontage to this street – potentially including redevelopment of Chandos Place.
- Development should create an active frontage along Saxon Street and redevelop the bus station site as part of wider proposals to remodel highway infrastructure in this area.
- The northern part of the site offers expansion space for future retail/residential development as the reprofiling of Saxon Street moves north. This may also form part of a more comprehensive redevelopment of this site.

Due to the number of existing landowning and occupier interests involved, there are a number of potential outcomes to development of the sites. It is appropriate that the market determines the distribution of uses and activities, but within the framework outlined in a Design and Development Brief for the Quarter which focuses on Design, Traffic and Mixed-use criteria. It is expected that the Regeneration Partners will need to become involved in facilitating a high quality development of this area.

Improving Existing Provision

Refurbishment and renovation to commercial premises along Queensway, promoting the progressive improvement of existing premises and selective redevelopment through involvement of owners, is as important as new retail development at the western end.



Shopfront and façade improvements will improve the retailing environment along Queensway

In the context of a programme for improvement of the streetscape in Queensway – with Elizabeth Square being a first element – a number of initiatives should be progressed involving existing owners and occupiers.

- A **shopfront and façade improvement scheme** that will transform the existing street scene. A design guide will assist in ensuring the quality of new frontages and target resources. Where resources are limited, the focus should be on improvements at ground floor level.
- A programme of actively **bringing upper floors back into commercial or residential re-use**. This would be a long term project and would focus on buildings that are suitable for long-term conversion (including separate accesses)
- Active encouragement for existing owners to bring forward programmes for investment including the **quality redevelopment** of sites that involve active ground floor frontages and residential development above.

- Encouragement to increase the **food and drink offer** on Queensway, particularly focusing evening economy uses to the eastern end around Elizabeth Square and on the northern side of the road, where opportunities for pavement seating should be maximised.

It is essential that the future of Queensway comes forward in a clear and co-ordinated manner. Joint working with traders and owners with the Regeneration Partners is essential to target investment and bring forward change.

Market and Agora

The focus on investment must also extend to the market and improving its setting in Queensway and the relationships with the Agora:

- Streetscape work on Queensway should formalise the location of the **street market** and remove unnecessary traders' vans which are damaging to the street scene and hamper pedestrian permeability and visibility of the market and shops.
- A programme for renewal of the **Agora** is required. The building operates as a 'market hall' but is in need of updating to meet the new aspirations for Central Bletchley – potentially extending activity to the rear of the building on the Brooklands Road frontage.



Quality urban living opportunities will help to transform the image of the town

RESIDENTIAL

New retail floorspace to meet a variety of requirements is a key driver, but so is the stimulus of new residential dwellings – bringing new life and spending power to Central Bletchley.

This responds to both national policy guidance and local needs to stimulate the vitality of town centres. The Regeneration Framework should create the conditions and image for new residential development in central Bletchley that offers choice and quality. This should be

- **Mid-density urban residential** generally in the range of 50 to 80 dwellings per hectare. Selected higher density schemes would be acceptable where site and design considerations are met
- the creation of **urban living opportunities throughout the centre**, focussing upon quality residential units offering a range of type and tenure, including upper floors of new and existing retail uses
- meeting the Milton Keynes local plan policy of 30% of units to be **affordable housing** which should normally be integrated with sale housing
- particular focal points for **mixed-residential and commercial development** around the station particularly in conjunction with the realignment of Saxon Street as part of an intensified transport corridor
- significant new **town centre residential communities** at both the Leisure Centre site and in the Bletchley Park area



New housing developments should incorporate elements of affordable housing

EMPLOYMENT

The 1999 Study identified the need to diversify the economic base as Bletchley's employment base is dominated by firms outside of key growth sectors.

Strengthening the local economy through diversification into a variety of employment areas, particularly knowledge-based industries, remains a key priority. Central Bletchley needs to offer a broad range of employment sectors, ensuring that the economy is not over dependent on one activity or sector which may be subject to cyclical fluctuations.

The Regeneration Framework therefore builds on the proposals in the 1999 Study to broaden the economic base, particularly in office-based and technology industries with potential for:

- the **Enterprise and Innovation Hub** to help develop knowledge and innovation employment opportunities, acting as a stimulus for growth of business floorspace in the distinctive environment of Bletchley Park;
- the development of **live work units** to offer smaller work space for small companies and entrepreneurs both in the Park and elsewhere in the town centre;
- the development of **smaller suites for SME's** around the railway station as part of mixed use developments;
- provision of **larger commercial properties** in highly visible and accessible locations around the station and on Saxon Street for longer term growth.



Live-work units diversify the employment offer

The employment growth potential is closely linked to the creation of a better 'place' to invest and work. New employment floorspace will only come forward as the character of Bletchley changes in the coming years

Offices

Whilst the 1999 Study identified the potential for Bletchley to re-establish itself as a significant office centre and expand its role as an employment location in the service and related sectors, this must now be viewed as a longer term aim. The Development Framework for Central Milton Keynes and the availability of accommodation elsewhere in Milton Keynes, combined with existing investor perceptions of the town as a secondary business location, means that there will be limited demand for new large office space in the short to medium term. This will change as the character of Central Milton Keynes changes and the regeneration of Bletchley makes it a more compelling business location.

Priorities for predominantly office development should focus on locations where the environment is most likely to meet occupier needs; in the Bletchley Park area and around the railway station where access to public transport is high.

New Milton Keynes Council Office Facility

The potential relocation of 1,000 to 1,200 council office staff to Bletchley provides an important component of regeneration. This is a catalytic project for Central Bletchley and shows considerable commitment to the town from the local authority.

It begins to rebuild the critical mass of office based employees in Central Bletchley, supporting a wider range of local amenities and will begin to change perceptions of Central Bletchley as an office location (for employees and businesses).



Civic and municipal buildings can catalyse regeneration

Currently, the development is expected to be proposed on land in Council ownership at the Knowles Schools Site at the eastern end of Queensway. This would come forward following a consolidation of the education requirement of the site.

However, other sites should also be considered for the Council office facility, including the eastern side of the station which would be highly accessible to both rail and bus services. It would also stimulate the realignment of Saxon Street and intensification of activity on this important city-wide public transport corridor.

To be successful as a catalytic development, the new facility should be of high quality design and a highly visible testament to the process of change in Bletchley.

It is important that feasibility work and site assessment progress quickly. If the facility is to be occupied in 2007-8, then substantive planning of the development project needs to begin immediately.

Enterprise Hub and Innovation Centre

The SEEDA sponsored Enterprise and Innovation Hub at Bletchley Park will be providing a service for unmet demand within the Milton Keynes area for specialist small scale managed workspace and growing a distinctive location for small and medium-sized businesses.

Importantly, it provides a stimulus to begin the regeneration and active re-use of Bletchley Park - attracting knowledge age companies, increasing and diversifying the quality of premises and offering smart flexible workspace.

A successful Enterprise Hub will also create the demand for follow-on space as businesses grow and be a focal point for other employment driven growth. The distinctive environment of Bletchley Park provides a major opportunity for such growth – both in refurbished buildings and in newly built accommodation.

Live-Work Accommodation

Although live-work accommodation has been most successful in metropolitan areas, there is a growing demand for a variety of flexible living and working space. In Bletchley, the Regeneration Framework should accommodate live-work accommodation – particularly for those in knowledge and creative industries looking for less expensive 'starter' space, and encourage those who 'work from home' to benefit from the support services and facilities of a town centre location.

Two key areas provide opportunities:

- **Bletchley Park** - benefiting from the resources of the Enterprise Hub, the distinctive environment and access to the range of business and meeting facilities at the Park; and
- **Close to Queensway** – in the town centre residential areas, with easy access to services in the core



Any new council office facility will need to be of high quality design



Live-work accommodation should focus on knowledge and creative industries

CULTURAL USES, THE EVENING ECONOMY AND CIVIC FUNCTIONS

A priority of the 1999 Study was to develop the town's culture and the evening economy through the promotion of arts and cultural activities, to be complemented by an evening economy 'offer' targeted at a wide range of ages and families. This would see the image and profile of Bletchley transformed, enabling the town to capture higher value by breaking the 9-5 economy that prevails in the centre. It would also add a new diversity to the mono-dimensional retail offer available today.



Evening economy will enable the town to capture higher value

In the four years since the study, there have been some important changes in Bletchley that will impact upon its ability to develop an evening economy and strengthen its cultural focus in a number of dimensions.

- Proposals for the **Stadium MK** will provide Bletchley and the wider Milton Keynes area with an important addition to its social and cultural infrastructure. Although this is just outside Central Bletchley, the impact and catalytic effect should be substantial – where evening economy trade can be drawn to Central Bletchley
- There is also now a real prospect of achieving a **New Leisure Centre**, with the Milton Keynes Leisure Facilities Strategy proposing the redevelopment of the existing leisure centre to provide a range of new facilities and services.
- The prospect of an overall masterplan for **Bletchley Park** will also enable the existing heritage, museum and cultural uses in the Park to be consolidated and strengthened.
- Importantly, the **strategic growth** forecast for Milton Keynes combined with local planning policy highlighting Bletchley as the second centre for cultural activity in the city has heightened the need to achieve this priority - for Bletchley to offer cultural and evening economy uses to complement those on offer at CMK and elsewhere.



Bletchley needs to promote cultural and civic functions

The Regeneration Framework responds to this need to strengthen the broader 'offer' of Central Bletchley in a number of ways. The focus is on drawing people to Bletchley beyond the 9-5 shopping day.

The Framework also identifies the potential to bring together a number of civic uses and cultural elements together as part of a community building.

New residential accommodation in the central area will provide a ready market for such emerging economy uses but importantly it also adds to activity on the street and natural surveillance promoting a safe and pleasant place to be in the evening. The quality of environment is also important with public realm being a key component in drawing people to the centre. These elements create the context for key initiatives included in the Framework.

Leisure Centre Development

The development of a new leisure centre, incorporating community and cultural facilities and performance space is identified as one of the new key drivers of regeneration.



A new leisure centre will be a city-wide draw

The project is identified in the Milton Keynes Council Leisure Facilities Strategy for 2003-2008 to replace the existing centre. In developing the concept for the new leisure centre it is important that it contributes positively to the regeneration of Central Bletchley – meeting local needs but also drawing in visitors from across south Milton Keynes (and encouraging them to stay in the town centre as part of a longer trip).

Consequently, the proposals should include:

- The range of **sport and recreation facilities** set out in the Leisure Facilities Strategy – broadly replacing those as existing;
- A new **swimming pool** – of minimum 25m with potential to expand to 50m in time;
- **Community facilities** for meeting and recreation – including provision for the 'Loft' project and similar initiatives;
- **Performance space** – suitable both for local groups and smaller professional productions, with the potential of using the larger leisure centre spaces for events;
- Accommodate **healthy living** provision – including relocation of existing primary care facilities in Central Bletchley to integrate these with sport and recreation;
- **Car parking** that meets the needs of the leisure centre and is also available to town centre visitors – integrated with the building preferably in multi-storey provision or as a 'deck' under the main sports facilities; and
- A strong **frontage to Queensway** with café/bar and retail provision at ground floor level opening on to the street. Meeting space and offices should be at upper level providing surveillance to the street.



The new leisure centre will need to incorporate a 25m swimming as a minimum



The new leisure centre will help to promote healthy living

This is an existing project and is a catalyst for regeneration in Central Bletchley. As a major public building it should be designed to be of the highest quality and contribute positively to the aspirations of the Regeneration Partners. Its design should be guided by a Design and Development Brief which considers the new development and future of the existing leisure centre site.

Funding for the new facility is not confirmed and key issues need to be considered at an early stage in bringing forward the project:

- A 50m swimming pool is proposed in the strategy. Clearly, this has a significant land requirement and its viability needs to be confirmed.
- The existing leisure centre site provides an opportunity for 'enabling development' to support the construction cost of the new facility. The availability of this site for enabling purposes needs to be confirmed.
- The StadiumMK proposals involve the loss of playing fields and replacement provision could take the form of contributions to alternative leisure provision that supports regeneration aims in the town centre – including some outdoor provision in the form of a Multi-use Games Area (MUGA) and indoor provision. Clarification that this is an acceptable route for alternative provision is required from Sport England.

This catalytic project is important for the regeneration of Bletchley. It is understood that the existing swimming pool has a maximum of five years remaining before requiring substantial investment to maintain its use. Although the condition of remaining elements of the existing leisure centre is

less critical, significant maintenance will also be necessary. Consequently, commitment to design and development of the project is required urgently.

The Regeneration Partners have a key role to play in delivering this project. Although the vast majority of land required is within the ownership of Milton Keynes Council, some land assembly is expected to be required.

Bletchley Forum - Civic Presence

There is currently no civic presence in Central Bletchley. There is no focus for civic or community life of the town nor is it clear how the public access local authority or other public services. If Bletchley is to fulfil its role as the second centre of Milton Keynes then these elements are important.

Furthermore, lifelong learning, arts and heritage issues were raised in the 1999 Study. The library is currently set away from the main central area of Queensway and although a popular facility, misses the opportunity of contributing to the learning and cultural life of the town centre. Additionally, there is no visual arts or heritage provision in the town. Even quite basic provision begins to establish a new dimension to town centre 'life' and improve the number of reasons to come to Central Bletchley and to stay.

The Town Council has already established an office on Queensway to act as a focal point for their activities and for the Central Bletchley regeneration initiatives. This will become an important focal point for community engagement as fundamental changes in Bletchley come forward.

This early provision is the basis for a new civic / community building, **The Forum** located on Queensway, providing a library and lifelong learning facilities, with civic and exhibition space and potentially a heritage centre to encourage residents and visitors to explore their town and understand its rich history and future potential as an important and thriving part of a greater Milton Keynes.

Supported by a café and other retailing on the street frontage, this facility is an important element of the broader cultural 'offer' of Central Bletchley.

As a project involving the Regeneration Partners and other agencies it requires careful scoping. A site along the central section of Queensway should be sought when there is a clear scope and commitment to proceed.

Bletchley Park

The potential of Bletchley Park to contribute to a number of aspects of regeneration in Central Bletchley has been explored through this Framework document. It is also an important part of the cultural 'offer' for the town. This is Bletchley's only nationally important asset.

Strengthening the attraction at Bletchley Park through the development of museum and heritage uses, together with associated meeting facilities to meet the needs of a growing community in the western part of Central Bletchley is an important component of the Framework.

However, the future for Bletchley Park must be a viable one. Currently, large areas of floorspace are empty. It is understood that these areas greatly exceed the space required to interpret the history and heritage of the Park.



The Forum will provide the town with a much needed community facility



Civic and exhibition space will encourage the community to interact



The forum will be located along Queensway

Whilst other uses and activities are proposed for the Park, these all need to be set within the context of the conservation and heritage aims for the area and require a cohesive Masterplan to ensure future development comes forward in an integrated and sensitive manner.

Food and Drink and Active Ground Floors

Individual projects and opportunities identified in this section of the Framework have proposed a number of proposals that would add cafes, bars and restaurants to Central Bletchley as part of mixed use schemes including:

- A new retail-led **mixed use quarter** as part of the conversion of **Stephenson House** to residential;
- **The Forum** as a new civic and learning centre;
- The **new leisure centre**; and
- **Queensway** as a location for further encouragement of bars and restaurants at ground floor level along Queensway, particularly focussed around **Elizabeth Square** where public realm improvement will provide a new setting for evening economy uses to flourish.

These are essential components to delivering a vibrant town centre that has life beyond shopping hours and is a place where people will want to come to live, work and visit.

The Framework recognises that these elements need to be proactively brought forward:

- Actively encouraging **new entrants** to the market through inclusion of active ground floors in development projects;
- Working with landowners to bring forward **suitable existing premises** for conversion – where food and drink uses will not adversely impact on the amenity of existing town centre residents; and
- Initiating a programme of **improvements** stimulated by existing occupiers along Queensway (and individual premises elsewhere) linked to the façade scheme introduced above.

Management and Promotion

The encouragement of cultural and civic uses will require a clear development programme to ensure that the initiatives are interesting, lively and relevant – and that they are sustained. The evening economy will need significant assistance in becoming established but once established will require promotion and careful management.

As these activities form an essential and inter-related element of the Central Bletchley 'offer' their success will depend upon a co-ordinated effort by the Regeneration Partners and local business and cultural providers to promote and celebrate the qualities of Central Bletchley – both locally and across the sub-region.

EXISTING COMMUNITIES

An important final component of the uses and activities for Central Bletchley is to consider the existing residential communities around and within the town centre. Whilst they benefit from proximity to shopping and will benefit from the transformation of the central area, they will also bear many of the impacts of change.



Retail led mixed use development



Active groundfloor uses



Bars and restaurants add life and vibrancy to a town

Also, the regeneration of Central Bletchley cannot be seen as a 'stage set' – extending along Queensway and the new development sites.

A programme of improvements and management measures should be introduced – particularly focussed in the residential areas immediately to the north and south of Queensway. The scope of measures would need to be worked up with residents but would be expected to include:

- Improvement to **on street parking** provision and parking management measures and improvements to important **pedestrian routes** through the areas; and
- More **effective use of 'spare' land** left over following the introduction of past highway or servicing infrastructure – including new homes on some areas.

Whilst this would not involve removal of any formal recreation or play areas, some informal grassed areas or underused parking areas may be put forward for development where this would:

- **Improve the street scene** and add to safety and security for pedestrians; and
- Enable traffic speeds to be slowed or **reduce the impact of traffic** (particularly on Princes Way).

In such circumstances, the net proceeds from the development of sites should be put to specific projects to improve the residential streets within the locality.

CO-ORDINATED PROPOSALS

The Regeneration Framework responds to this need to break the inertia in Central Bletchley by proposing that key areas are brought forward for a variety of town centre uses and that the public sector intervenes if necessary to unlock the complex land ownership and assembly issues.

Each of these use and activity proposals are brought forward as a part of the co-ordinated Regeneration Framework plan and projects outlined in Part Three of this document.