



A Future Kirkby Town Centre?

An Initial Proposal from Vision Kirkby



“There are two kinds of pride, both good and bad. 'Good pride' represents our dignity and self-respect. 'Bad pride' is the deadly sin of superiority that reeks of conceit and arrogance.”

- John C. Maxwell



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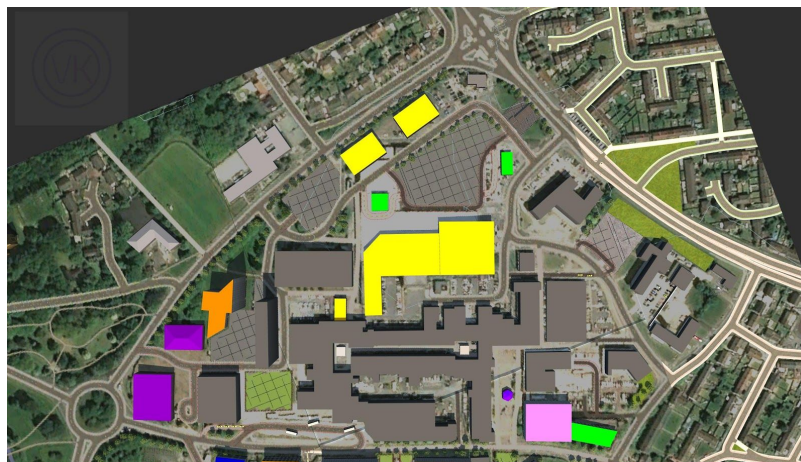
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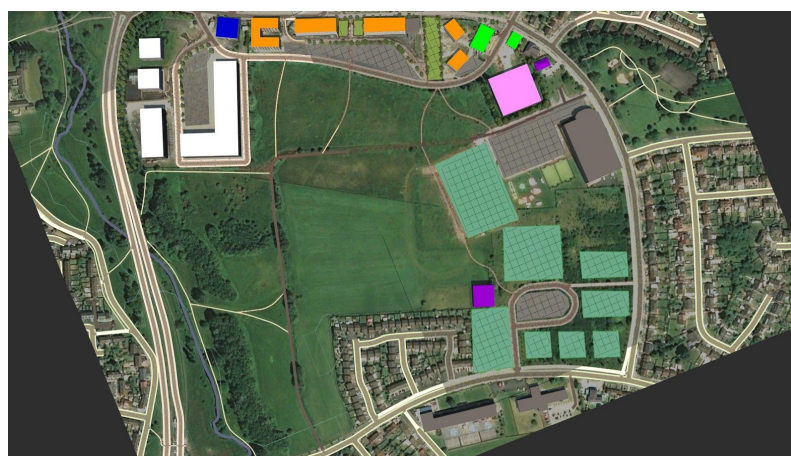
How did we get here?

Vision Kirkby has run a couple of consultation events with the community, along with social media engagement, to get their ideas on what they would like to see in Kirkby Town Centre. This information has been used to develop this conceptual plan to demonstrate what could be possible for the heart of our town. The plan includes what we believe to be a sustainable mix of retail, business, residential, entertainment, leisure, education, civic and community space that can revitalise the heart of Kirkby.

North and South of Cherryfield Drive



There are two distinct areas of focus to this plan: north and south of Cherryfield Drive. This is because much of the planned development north of Cherryfield Drive has already been outlined and which we support in principle. Plans for extensive house building on land south of Cherryfield Drive are considerably less well publicised and which we do not agree with.

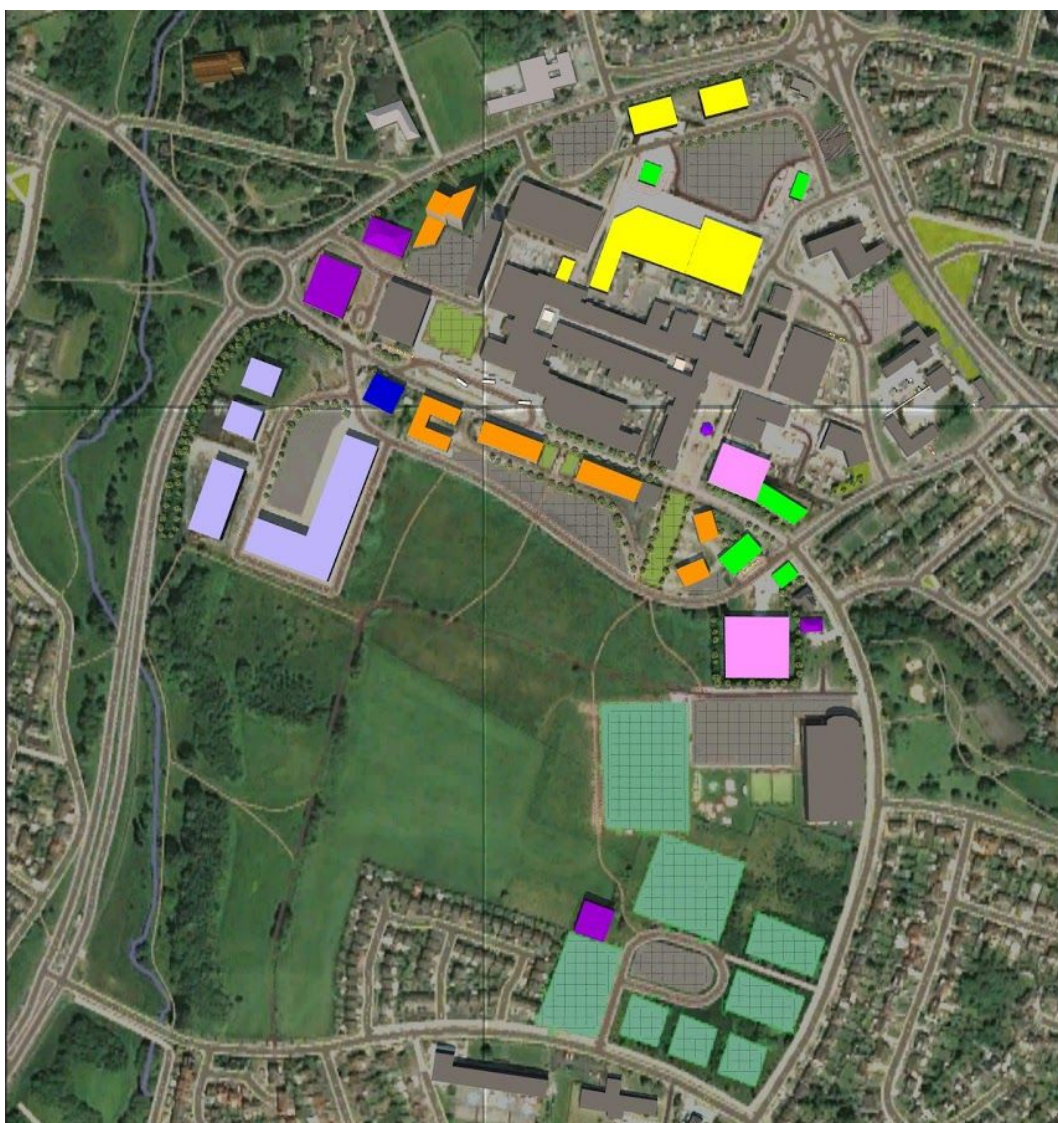


3D Model

We have created a 3-dimensional model of our initial proposal for the future of Kirkby Town Centre. A plan view of the model can be seen below and a 3D snapshot view of most of the site can be seen on the front cover of this document.

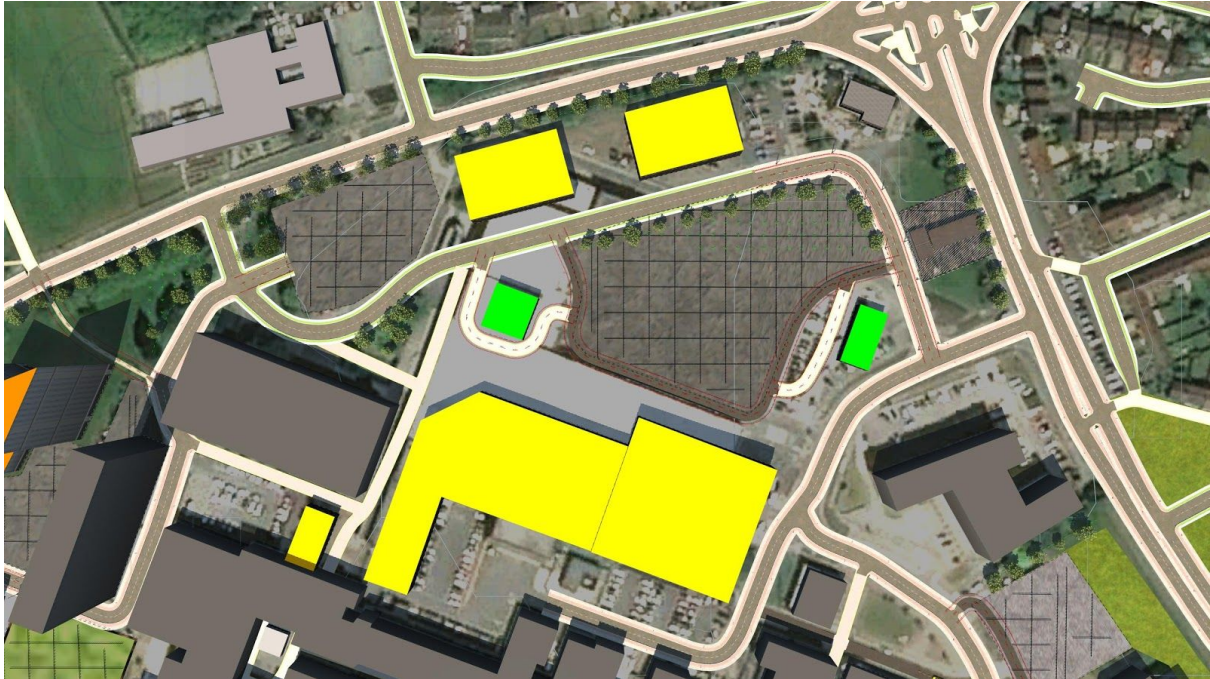
Key to the 3D model

- Yellow: retail only
- Orange: mixed retail, business and residential
- Pink: entertainment
- Bright green: restaurants, bars and pubs
- Dark green: community sports grounds
- Dark purple: civic and community facilities
- Light purple: education, training, and technology park
- Dark blue: business start-up hub



North of Cherryfield Drive

Retail development



We support the delivery of most of the existing plans for the site of the former ASDA and InShops without change:

- a new Morrisons supermarket;
- new additional retail units adjoining Morrisons;
- a new petrol station;
- two new drive-through fast food restaurants, including KFC.

However, we believe there is a case for modifying some of the existing plans:

- retain and renew the car park opposite Kirkby C of E School which is depended upon heavily by both the school and other users, and preserving an open view in front of the school;
- retain through access on a re-routed Telegraph Way, with traffic calming measures, providing road network redundancy that would otherwise be lost, placing further demands on the road network around the town centre;
- relocate the additional retail, whose service yard was due to back-on to Kirkby C of E School, to the northeast, so that the two units are parallel to Hall Lane and opposite housing, with a shared service yard between them.

The retail development should be named after something of local significance - “Telegraph Retail Park” after the existing Telegraph Way has been one suggestion.

Leisure development

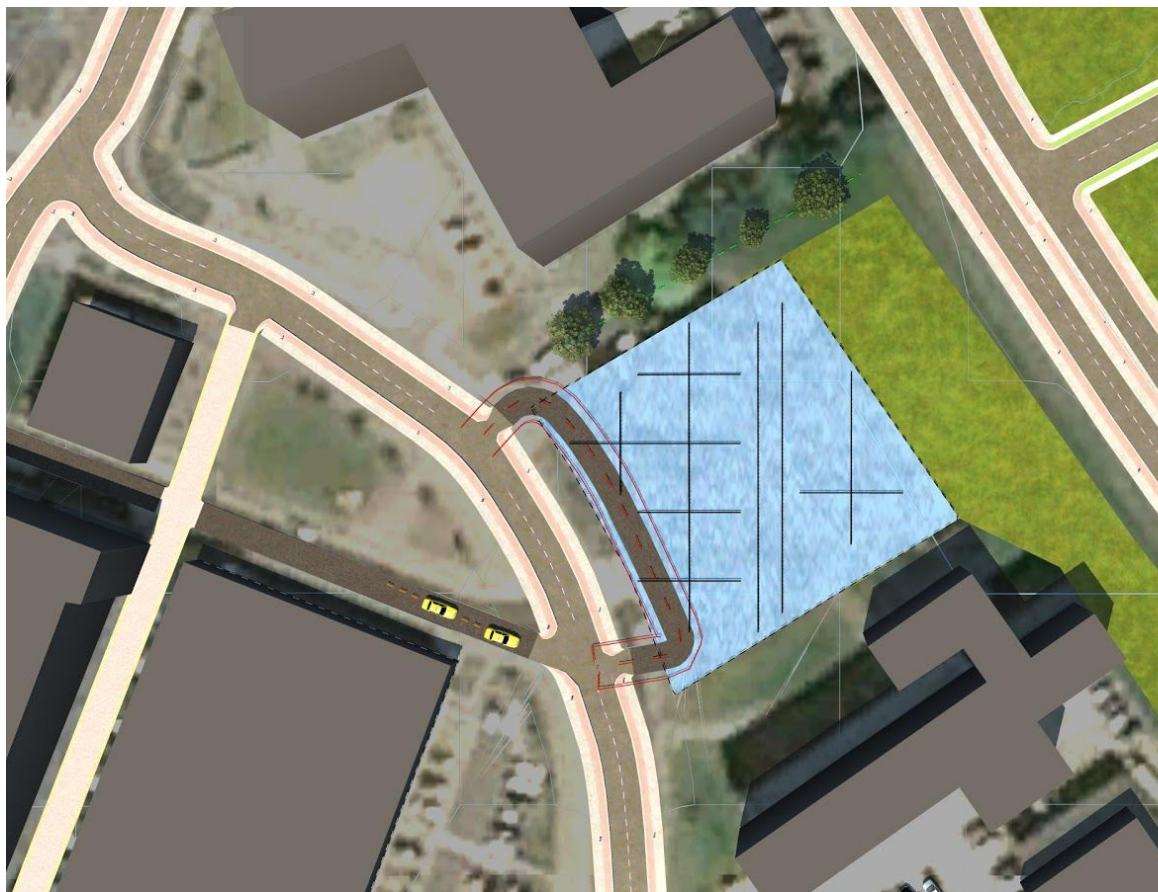


Proceed with the leisure development as soon as possible on the corner of Cherryfield Drive and Webster Drive as planned:

- a 6-screen cinema which Reel Cinemas has been touted as the lead for;
- a selection of restaurants and bars as part of a wider complex for those visiting the cinema and the wider town centre.

This development would be the springboard for further development of leisure facilities south of Cherryfield Drive, and would help support existing businesses, especially around Newtown Gardens.

Kirkby Outdoor Market



Kirkby used to effectively have two spaces for small market stalls: the outdoor Kirkby Market and the indoor InShops. The InShops was closed around the same time Kirkby Market was rebuilt in its current form reducing total floorspace significantly. With the demolition of the former St. Chad's Health Clinic/LINK Centre to make way for a temporary car park, we propose using this opportunity to reintroduce a Kirkby Outdoor Market:

- to provide a low-cost, low-maintenance space for a temporary market like we used to have prior to the amalgamation of the InShops and Kirkby Market into the indoor space it is today;
- provide a full-stage of business development – from temporary outdoor market stall, to permanent indoor market stall, to shopping parade shop – within Kirkby Town Centre to encourage the development of new businesses;
- be located close to the Kirkby (Indoor) Market which aspires to 6 day operation;
- bring a long-term use to a temporary facility without major changes being required.

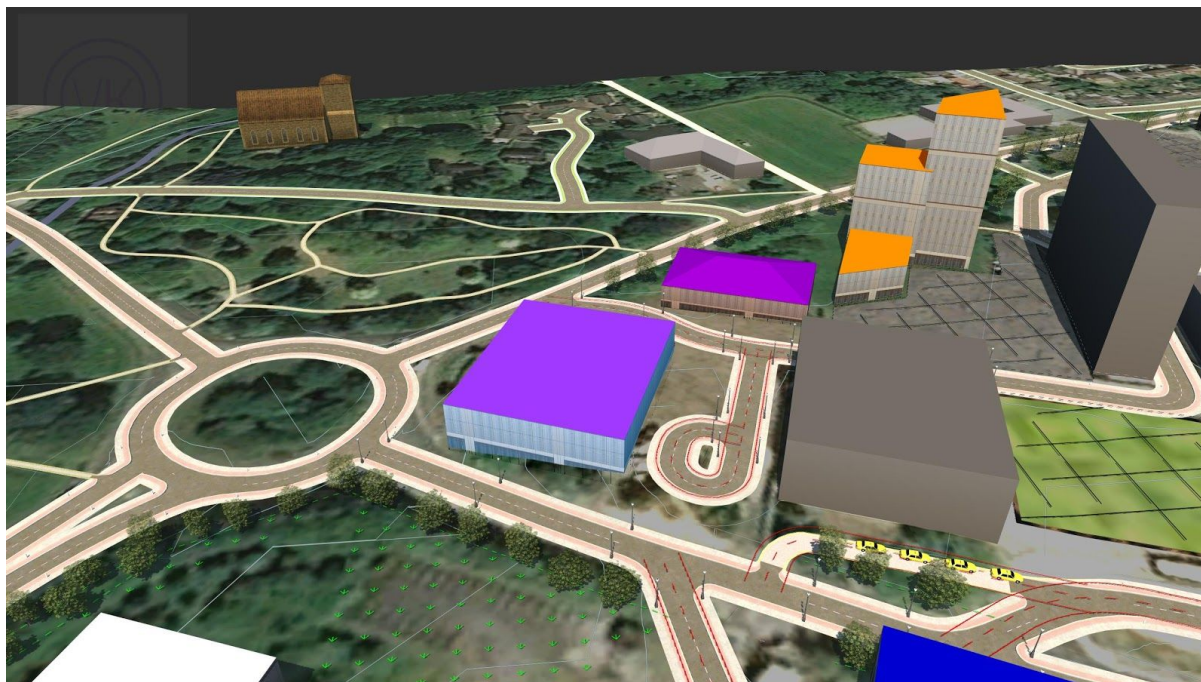
Newtown Gardens



The people of Kirkby deserve for Newtown Gardens to become a place to be proud of again. Whilst there are mixed feelings about the elephant in a boat sculpture, the iron casting of a tree from outside the town is widely disliked. We proposed that the tree be removed and that it be replaced with a new focal point:

- The tree never met its design brief:
 - It is not a positive focal point, instead it is widely disliked;
 - It does not provide shelter, as the golden disc has proven to be purely decorative;
 - It no longer provides seating, as this has been removed.
- A new covered seating area, like the old bandstand, would be a useful replacement which can bring some pride back to the area. There should be community involvement in the design and specification of this new focal point and be something that can be used to support local events.

New Civic Quarter



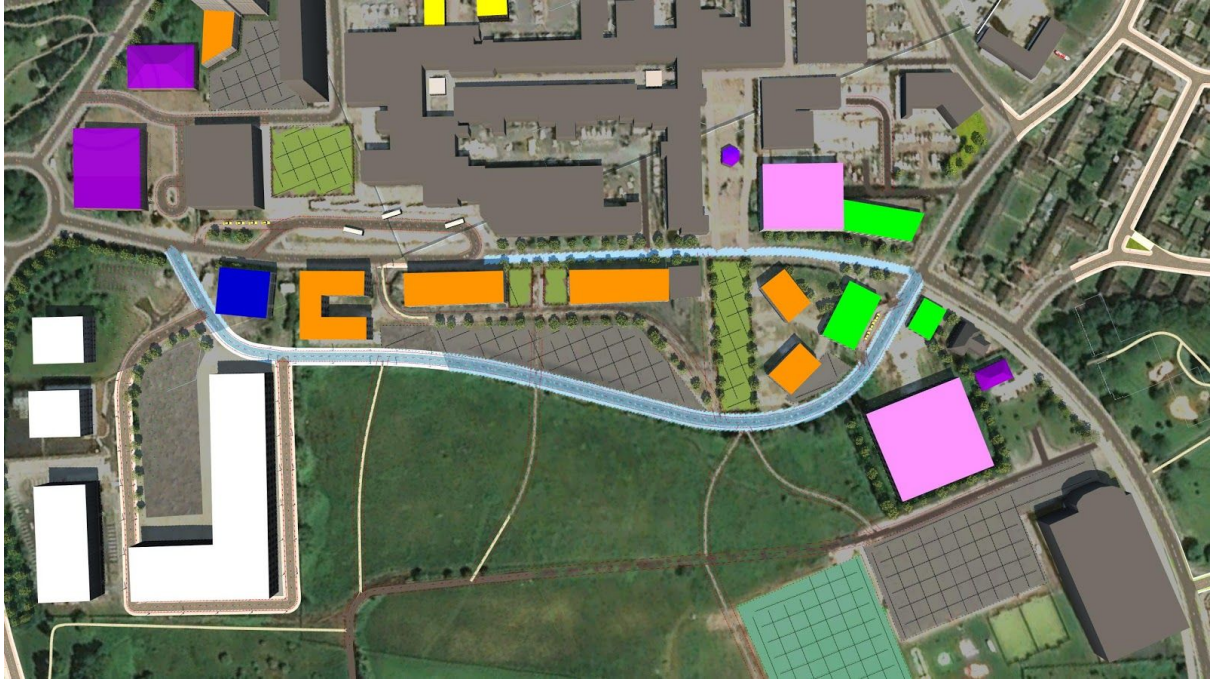
We propose a long-term plan to bring the land formerly containing the Kirkby Civic Building and former Kirkby Swimming Pool back into use as:

- A new mixed-use, tiered high-rise development next to Barclaycard containing space for retail (such as Aldi or Lidl) on the ground floor, perhaps business space on the first, and residential above;
- A new Kirkby Town Hall, replacing the function rooms, stage and dancefloor facilities lost with the conversion of the Kirkby Suite to house the library and OneStopShop. This would be a project for a future Kirkby Town Council: aiming to develop a financially self-sufficient hub for the whole town: the local community, businesses and attracting visitors;
- A new central Kirkby Community Centre designed for use by multiple groups, to be developed, delivered and led by a volunteer-led organisation.

This would create a revitalised Civic Quarter next to the bus station, across the road from new educational and business facilities which could help drive sustainable use of these community facilities throughout the day.

South of Cherryfield Drive

New Road and partial pedestrianisation of Cherryfield Drive



Build a new road that runs through part of the Kirkby College site, along the edge of the existing Cherryfield Drive brownfield site and connects to the Cherryfield Drive and Webster Drive junction. This would:

- Allow for partial pedestrianisation of Cherryfield Drive, which would be reserved for buses and taxis, and improve safety for pedestrians crossing into the new development south of Cherryfield Drive;
- Maintain a normal traffic route through the south of the town centre (previous Tesco plans would have stopped this access altogether);
- Provide a clear southern limit of the built environment and a natural border for the large greenspace to the south, with appropriate walking routes into a 'Kirkby Valley Park';
- Provide excellent access for construction traffic for the southern development of the town centre.

Could this road perhaps be called 'Cherryfield Crescent'?

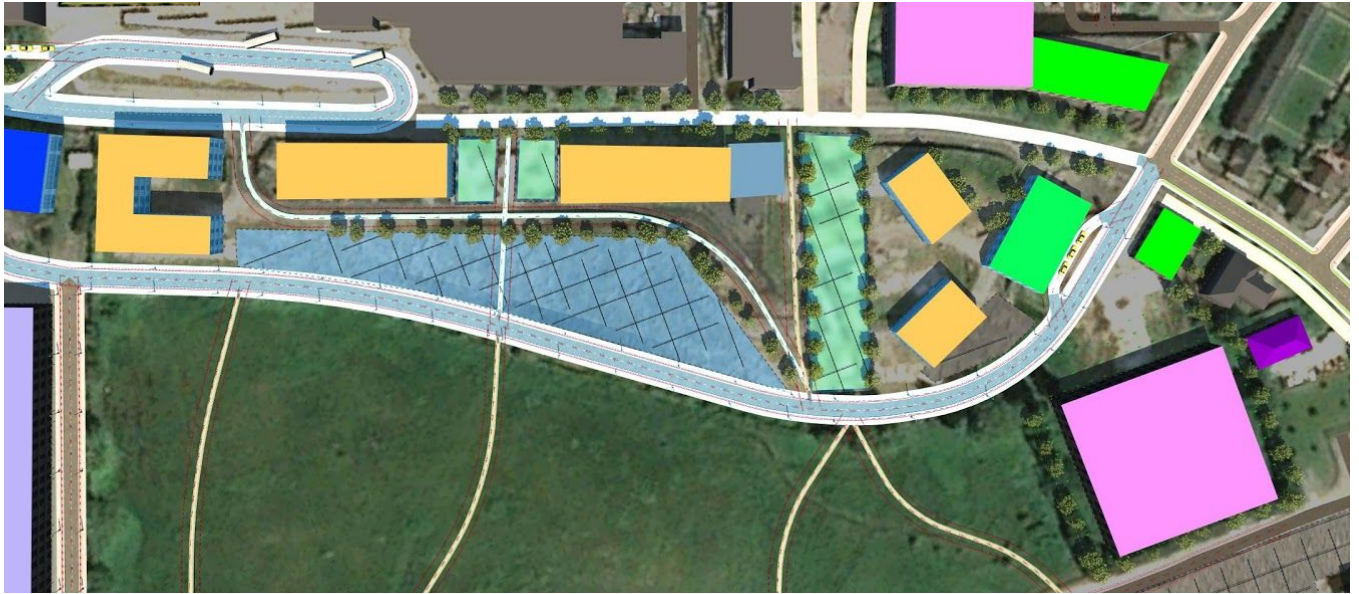
College Site



Develop a new specialist technology park with a mix of education, training, sports technology and wider technology business spaces. The aim would be to attract investment, develop talent and capitalise on nearby presence of the Liverpool FC Academy and the redeveloping Kirkby Industrial Estate to create a world-class hub:

- Repurpose the last remaining college building to a technology training hub;
- Build a new catering training college, including restaurant looking out over Kirkby Valley to the west, supporting the growing leisure offer in the town;
- Build a new sports technology training centre;
- Build a new facility designed for mixed-use development between education, training and business use, co-located employment opportunities with training opportunities, the outside of which would overlook a new 'Kirkby Valley Park';
- Build a new business start-up facility aimed at supporting new businesses starting in the area.

Cherryfield Crescent site



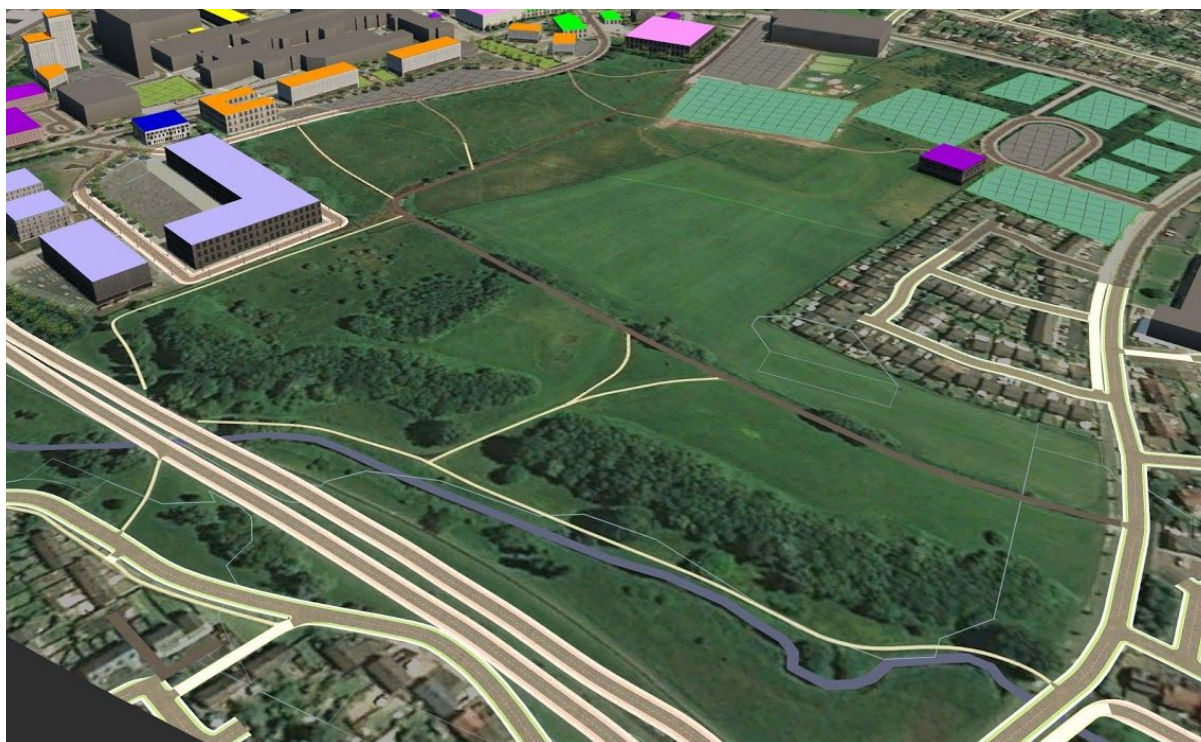
Develop a mixed-use area between Cherryfield Drive and a new 'Cherryfield Crescent' which includes, described from from west (left) to east (right) on the map above:

- A new hotel next to the Kirkby College site and Civic Quarter to enable visitors to stay in the heart of Kirkby;
- 2 x mixed-use buildings with retail/bars/restaurants on the ground floor and residential above, with views over 'Kirkby Valley Park' to the south. One of these could house a new social venue with a Royal Navy theme, building on the heritage of the former Royal Naval Association on this site;
- Retention of the existing Lloyds Bank, plus improvements to the rear aspect which is currently surrounded by a demolition zone;
- Extension of Newtown Gardens southwards creating a green-link with the new 'Kirkby Valley Park' to the south;
- A further 2 x mixed- use buildings with retail/bars/restaurants on the ground floor and residential above, with views over 'Kirkby Valley Park';
- A new family pub at the junction of Cherryfield Drive and the new 'Cherryfield Crescent', perhaps inheriting the name 'The Golden Eagle'?

To the southeast, across the road from 'The Golden Eagle' pub, build:

- a fast food venue, perhaps a coffee house;
- next-door to a new Kirkby Bingo Hall;
- bring the old RSPCA clinic site back into use for a community organisation.

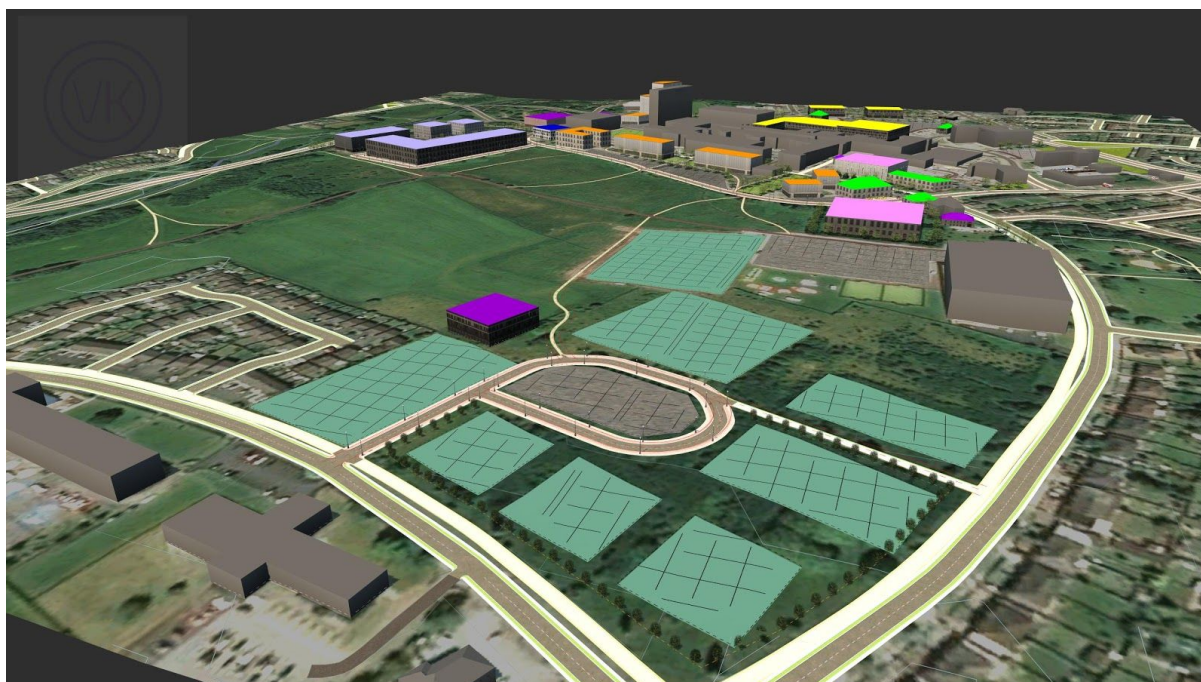
Kirkby Valley Park



Retain one of the last few large open and freely accessible spaces in Kirkby as part of a wider 'Kirkby Valley Park':

- Remove the large stretch of fence put up for the Tesco development;
- Restore existing walking routes and paths;
- Add additional walking routes to link across 'Cherryfield Crescent';
- Include appropriate measures to prevent anti-social behaviour, such as K-bars at the entrances to the area to deter motorbike use;
- Enhance access to the only major playing fields that are not fenced into a compound;
- Tie in greenspace development with being overlooked by surrounding education, business, residential and sporting use.

Kirkby Community Sports Centre



Using the former All Saints Secondary School site on the corner of Cherryfield Drive and Bewley Drive, develop a new community sports facility managed by a new volunteer-led organisation to provide a range of sports clubs for all ages, such as:

- Bowling green club
- Racket sports club
- Cricket club
- Football and Rugby club
- Hockey club

This would be supported by:

- Access would be through existing overgrown routes and much of the perimeter fence preserved
- This would lead to a central car park facility and a club house containing:
 - A café and bar
 - Changing facilities
 - Provide facilities to support the sports clubs
- Retain as much of the existing woodland for Forest School type activities



Summary

Kirkby Town Centre is currently a source of anger, frustration and dismay for the people of Kirkby. Due to decades of failed development and management, it currently does not offer the retail, leisure and services to serve the entire population of around 50,000 people. Knowsley Council currently plans to build more and more housing - including at the heart of our town - even though services have long since failed to meet the needs of the existing local community.

This can change.

Our proposal, bringing together a wealth of ideas from the local community, provides a potential Vision for Kirkby Town Centre that would breath fresh life into the heart of our town: increasing footfall, attracting businesses and visitors, restoring pride, and leading to economic and social regeneration that we have needed for decades.

We invite discussion, debate and feedback on these proposals and are willing to work with those willing to make it happen.



Appendix

Various photos of different areas of the 3D model

