

Introduction

The Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm strategy is a collaboration between Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council. The aim of the strategy is to build upon and realise the vision for Lancaster city centre as outlined in the District of Lancaster Highways and Transport Masterplan and meet the requirement set out in the Bay Gateway Development Consent Order (DCO) to implement an...

... “Action plan [that] must aim to prevent road traffic growth within the central Lancaster area increasing to predicted “do minimum” levels between the opening and design years of the link road (thereby negating planned relief)”

Since the publication of District of Lancaster Highways and Transport Masterplan progress has been considerable, with the opening of the Bay Gateway and a major expansion of housing and employment proposed as part of Lancaster City Council’s recently adopted Local Plan. As part of this expansion, Bailrigg to the south of Lancaster was allocated Garden Village status with an expectation of delivering over 3,500 dwellings.

As part of the March 2020 budget, the Government announced the prospect for substantial funding through the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to implement a number of sustainable transport measures linking the new settlement to the city centre. Further to this, during this period there has been considerable residential growth within and on the periphery of the city centre.

Most recently Lancaster City Council has declared a Climate Change Emergency with the intention of the district being carbon neutral by 2030 and in recent months restrictions imposed as part of the COVID-19 pandemic are leading to a reevaluation of how transport and, indeed, cities themselves will function in the post-lockdown era.

Collectively these elements provide a once in a generation opportunity to begin the process of reimagining a city centre for the future, one that places sustainable transport at the heart of the city.

To achieve this, this strategy will be guided by the vision outlined in the District of Lancaster Highways and Transport Masterplan.



The purpose of this engagement on the Lancaster City Centre Movement and Public Realm Strategy is to present

- An assessment of the current situation
- Illustrate a number of opportunities in terms of movement and public realm
- Seek views to assist selection of a preferred option from eight possible routes in the city centre

Vision for Lancaster City Centre

In 2016 Lancashire County Council adopted the Lancaster District Highways and Transport Masterplan.

Prior to adoption, the masterplan underwent considerable consultation with the public, stakeholders, politicians and the wider business community across the Lancaster district. A core element of the masterplan was a vision for the city centre that aimed to reduce through traffic, increase active and sustainable travel and improve the public realm. The consultation showed that there was broad support for this vision with 61% of respondents agreeing with the intention to reduce traffic from the city centre to make it a more attractive and healthier place to be.

This strategy aims to build upon this. To do this it adopts the original vision for the city centre from the Lancaster Highways and Transport Masterplan

The Vision for Lancaster City Centre

In 2031 Lancaster city centre is a vibrant and successful core to the district, where earlier issues of poor air quality and congestion have been tackled. Pedestrians and cyclists can move around easily and freely, through safe and attractive public spaces. This is because the centre is largely free of traffic. There is much less through traffic and most of the vehicles that do need to be there are ultra-low emission. The city has become an attractive destination for visitors from near and far.



The Current Situation

Refer to pages
44-83 of the
**Lancaster Movement
Strategy** document for
further analysis of the
current situation

To assess movement and quality of place the strategy uses the 5 following themes:



Inclusive Environment



Ease of Movement



Quality of Place (Public Realm)



Safety and Public Health



Economic Benefit

A review of previous studies, policy documents and a comprehensive audit of the study area revealed the following **key issues**:

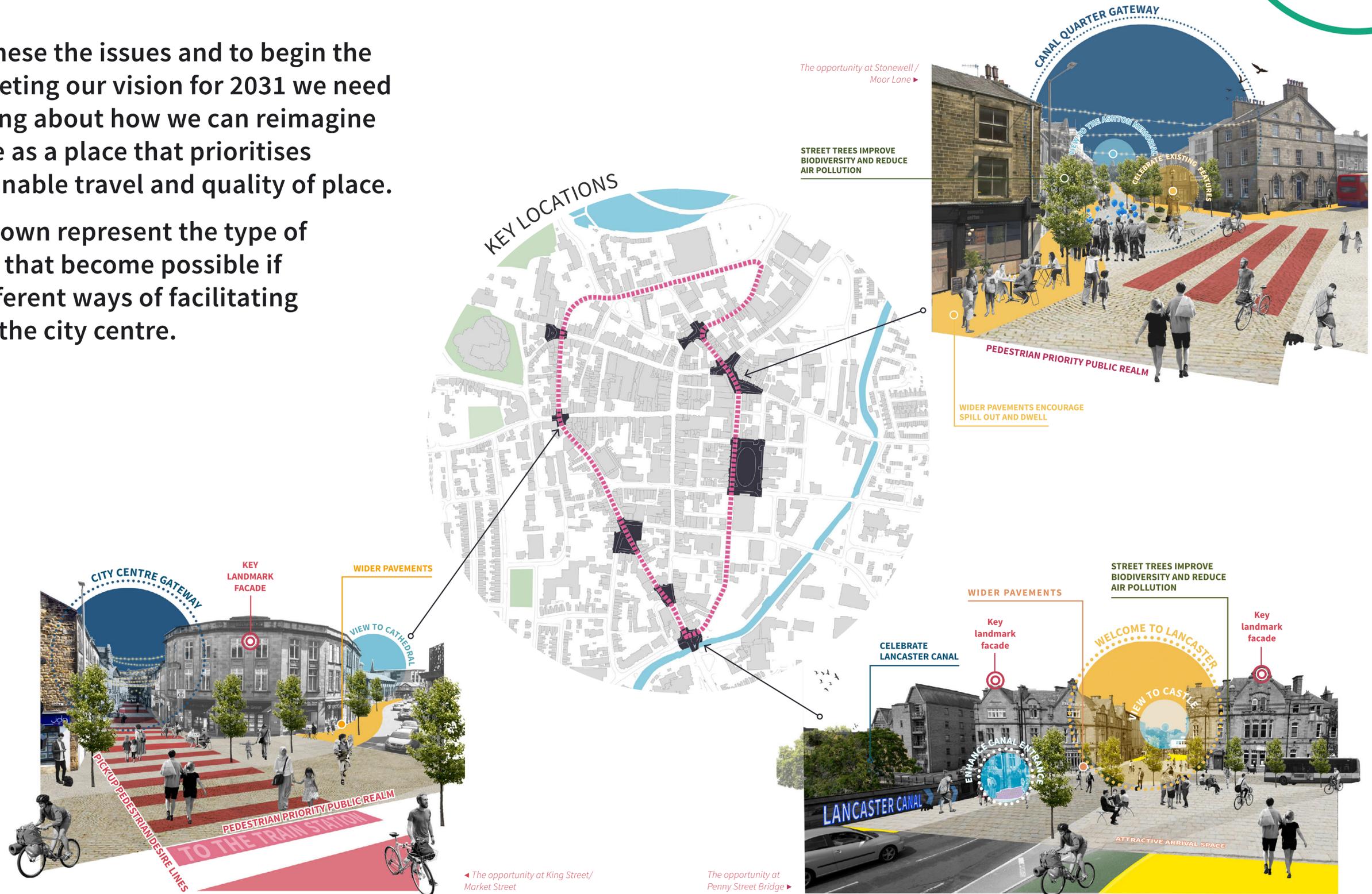
- The gyratory creates a significant barrier between residential areas and the city centre core; this is compounded for those who are mobility or visually impaired
- Elements of the western arm of the gyratory are not fit for purpose regarding pedestrian movements
- Current crossings of the gyratory do not reflect desire lines
- Access from the railway station into the city centre is poor with a lack of priority for pedestrians leading to congestion at King Street/Meeting House Lane Junction.
- To access the residential and industrial areas to the west of the gyratory (including tourism hubs such as Lancaster Castle and sustainable transport hubs like the Railway Station), a journey around the majority of the gyratory network is often the outcome
- Access to the city centre on foot is restricted and key crossings into the retail core do not prioritise pedestrians
- Cycle provision in the city centre is poor and this hampers longer journeys between housing and key employment sites
- Whilst access to the city centre is good for vehicular traffic and pedestrian circulation is good within the core city centre area, the gyratory forms a physical barrier with high levels of severance limiting movements to the south, east and west of the city centre
- Lancaster city centre has a rich history with an abundance of heritage assets. However, despite this, it is hard for residents and visitors to appreciate them due to the quality of the public realm and the impact of traffic
- A number of key public spaces are not used to their full effect due to severance and the proximity of substantial amounts of traffic
- In addition to the impact on key public spaces, the dominance of private vehicular traffic throughout the city centre prevents effective strategies for the creation of new areas of public space being pursued
- The district as a whole has the worst accident record in Lancashire with a significant number clustered within the city centre and in particular the gyratory
- Lancaster city centre gyratory is a declared Air Quality Management Area. Without significant intervention to limit engine-based traffic within the city centre there will be little opportunity to reverse this and provide good air quality for residents
- Although Lancaster has a relatively strong retail offer and in recent years has started to make better use of its historic assets and public space for economic effect, these are unprecedented times for the high street.
- Deliveries within the city centre have an impact in terms of congestion, air quality and safety because there is no coherent, integrated Delivery Strategy for the city
- Current levels of parking provision in the city centre are counterproductive to any effort to encourage modal shift.
- Taxis play an important role in the mobility needs of all residents but especially those without access to a vehicle
- HGV access is problematic especially to key industrial sites to the west of the gyratory

Opportunities

Refer to pages 86-123 of the Lancaster Movement Strategy document for further details on the opportunities

To deal with these the issues and to begin the process of meeting our vision for 2031 we need to start thinking about how we can reimagine the city centre as a place that prioritises people, sustainable travel and quality of place.

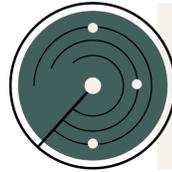
The images shown represent the type of opportunities that become possible if we look at different ways of facilitating movement in the city centre.



Objectives

To meet the vision and realise the opportunities set out, Lancashire County Council and Lancaster City Council agreed the following key objectives:

Key Objectives



Inclusive Environment

- Reduce severance across the city centre between key public transport nodes.



Ease of Movement

- Improve the reliability of journeys made by cyclists, pedestrians and public transport which pass through the city centre.



Quality of Place (Public Realm)

- Lessen the impact which engine based transport and the congestion it creates has on the public realm and city centre environment.



Safety and Public Health

- Ensure travel is, and feels safe for users of all modes.
- Alleviate air quality issues and minimise air pollution within the city centre.
- Increase the amount of active travel for access to the city centre, improving health and quality of life for the population.
- Reduce carbon emissions from transport within the city centre.



Economic Benefit

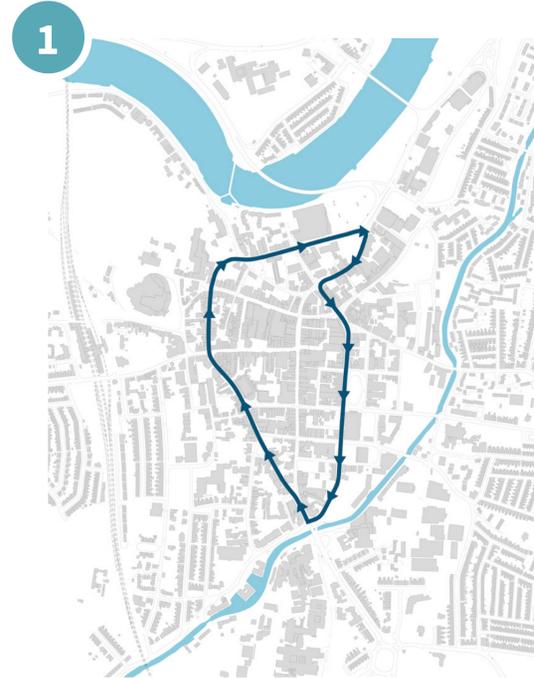
- Ensure parking and deliveries are managed effectively in a way that supports the sustainability of Lancaster city centre.
- Increase footfall and support city centre functions.
- Provide an environment that is able to adapt to future mobility trends; e.g. electric vehicles, intra urban mobility (electric bikes, scooters), autonomous vehicles.

Route Options

Refer to pages 130-163 of the Lancaster Movement Strategy document for further details on the route options

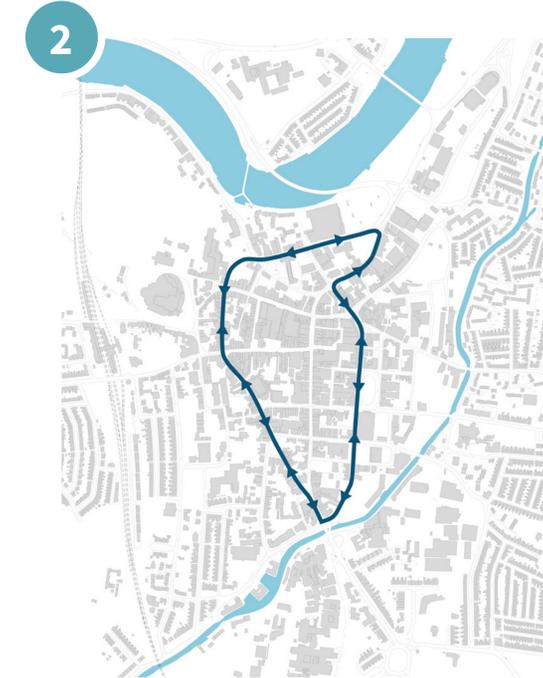
The options identified as part of the M6 Junction 33 link offer a real opportunity to reduce traffic in the city centre. This means we can start to think about how the opportunities illustrated on the previous board can be implemented.

To realise these opportunities we have prioritised 8 key route options, that to varying degrees aim to facilitate movement, improve key areas of public realm and contribute towards the city centre's quality of place.



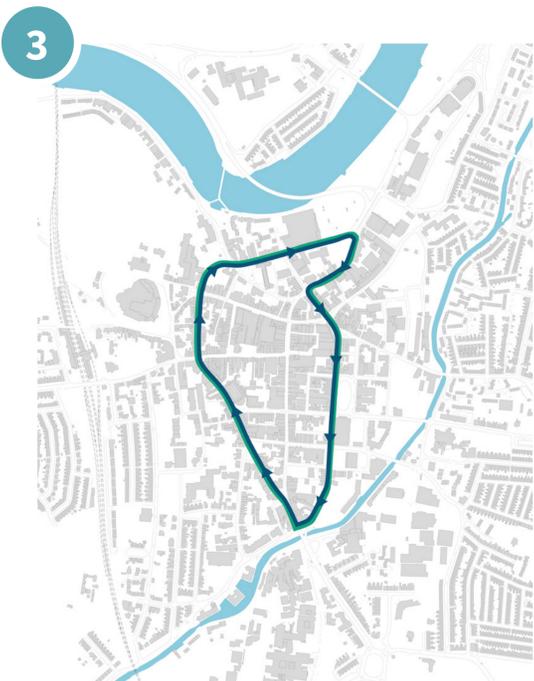
Existing One Way Gyratory

Do minimum. To include changes to the Pointer Roundabout through funds already received through the Safer Roads Fund. The one-way gyratory system that is currently in place remains predominantly unaltered in form. Any future measures will need to be funded by any development contributions that are secured.



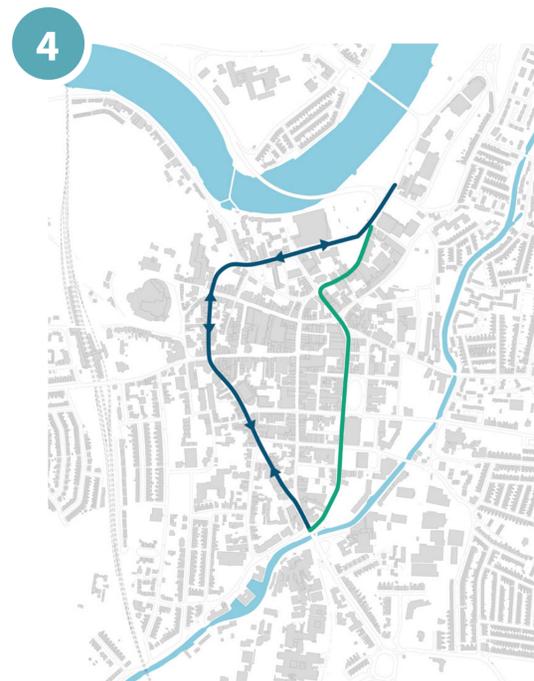
Two way Gyratory

Proposes altering the gyratory away from its current one-way system, to allow two-way traffic for all modes. This would result in a shift away from two lanes of one-way traffic to two-way traffic on both arms of the gyratory.



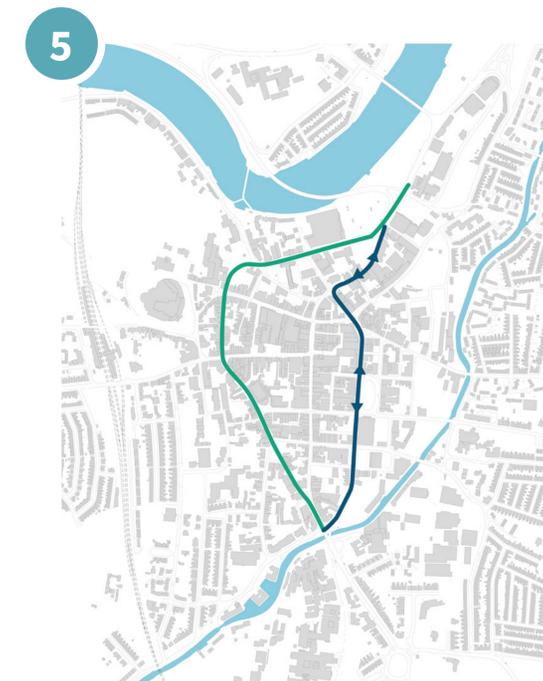
One lane and one way gyratory for vehicular traffic with second lane dedicated to sustainable travel

A reconfiguration of the gyratory that maintains the current one-way direction, but reduced to one lane for general traffic with the second lane dedicated to buses, cyclists and emergency vehicles (also one-way).



Sustainable Travel Corridor East

Two-way traffic for all vehicular traffic on the western arm of the gyratory, with the eastern arm prioritised for buses, cyclists and emergency vehicles only.

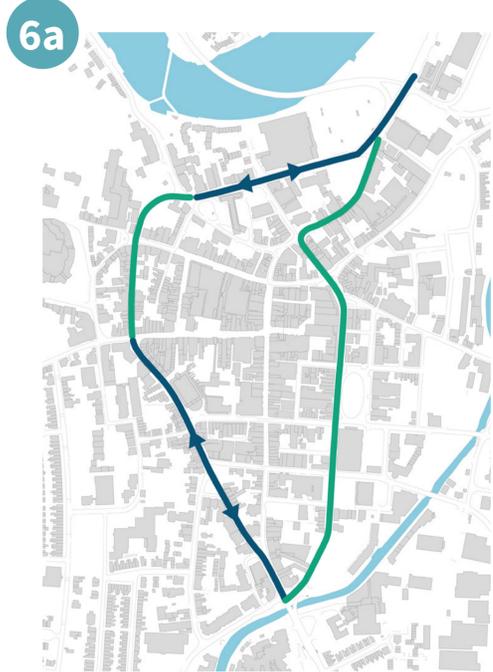


Sustainable Travel Corridor West

Two-way traffic for all vehicular traffic on the eastern arm of the gyratory, with the western arm prioritised for buses, cyclists and emergency vehicles only.

Route Options

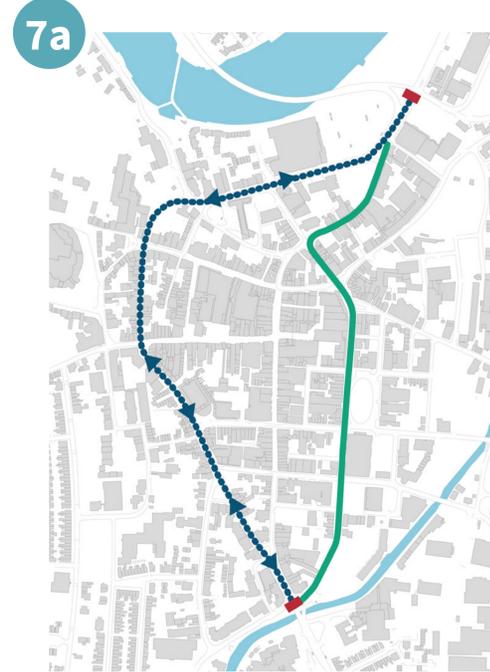
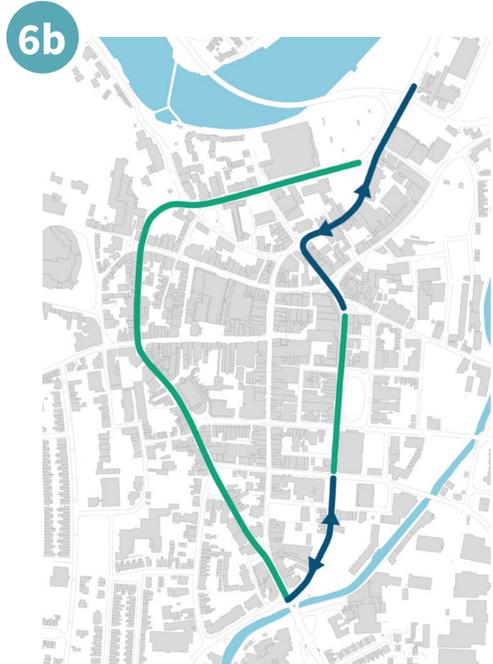
Refer to pages 130-163 of the Lancaster Movement Strategy document for further details on the route options



Principle of No through City Centre Traffic

This option would limit through traffic using the city centre. Either the western or eastern arm of the gyratory would be two-way with a section at either China Street or Dalton Square fully pedestrianised. Then either the eastern or the western arm of the gyratory would be for sustainable travel only as indicated in options 4 and 5.

Option 6a shows this permutation for a sustainable travel corridor to the east and pedestrianised area to the west. Option 6b shows a sustainable travel corridor to the west and pedestrianised area to the east.

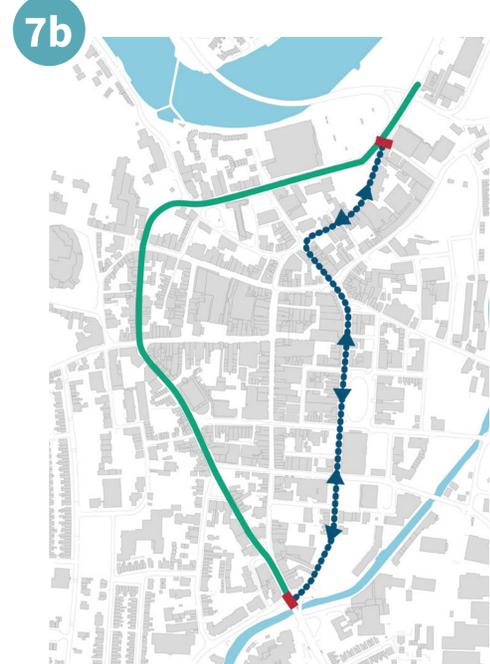


7a

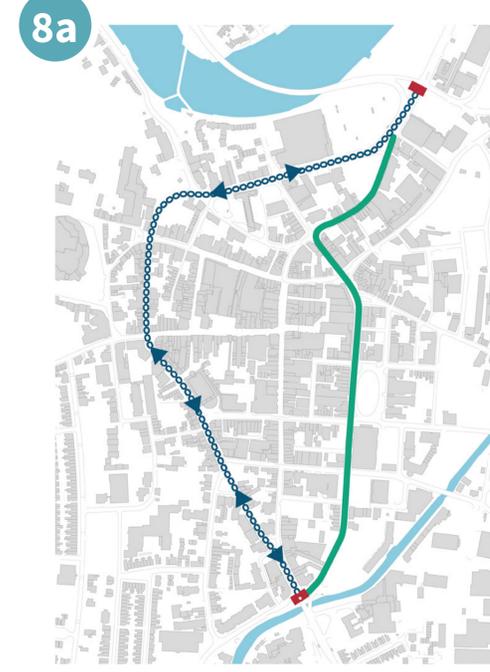
Gyratory Closed to through traffic except for exemptions

No part of the gyratory would be available for private vehicles for onward traffic in any direction for an 11 hour period between 7.30am and 6.30pm six days per week (Monday-Saturday). Travel to the city centre and west Lancaster neighbourhoods is permissible but travel through the city centre is not. Controlled by APNR Access Gates. Any vehicle can enter and gain access from the north or the south but cannot complete a through journey within two hours of driving past the APNR gate (they can shop, visit services etc. and then travel through if not returning).

Option 7a shows this permutation for a sustainable travel corridor to the east with permitted traffic to the west. Option 7b shows a sustainable travel corridor to the west and permitted traffic to the east.



7b

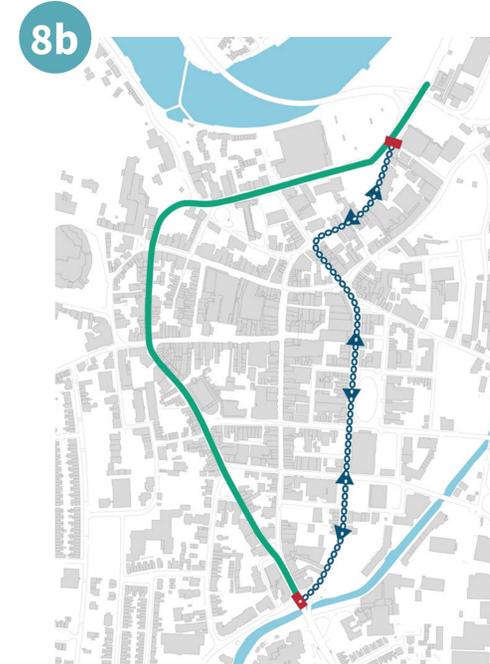


8a

City Centre Clean Air Zone

The city centre would become a Clean Air Zone. All traffic travelling through the city centre would be subject to a £12 charge except for the following exemptions. As with option 6 and 7 the western arm could be used for vehicular traffic utilising the clean air zone with the eastern arm used as a sustainable travel corridor. Alternatively the eastern arm could be for vehicular travel utilising the clean air zone with the western arm acting as a sustainable travel corridor.

Option 8a shows this permutation for a sustainable travel corridor to the east with the western arm of the gyratory operating as a clean air zone. Option 8b shows a sustainable travel corridor to the west and the eastern arm of the gyratory operating as a clean air zone.



8b

We want your thoughts

Refer to
the **Lancaster
Movement Strategy**
document for more
information

We recognise that many of the route options we have identified represent radical change for the city centre and we want to know what your thoughts are.

We would welcome comments on the strategy as a whole and would particularly welcome your thoughts on the different routes presented in the city centre and if you have a preferred option. This will help us reduce the number of options so that further detailed analysis can take place to assess the impact of movement in the city centre of the different route options.

Once we have reduced the number of route options we can begin further analysis that will include transport modelling. The modelling will take into account the measures to be implemented as part of the HIF award and the impacts upon the wider Lancaster highway network. The assessment will also consider the air quality implications of the options modelled. Once this assessment has been completed we will engage with the wider community to present a preferred option.

Please fill out the questionnaire to let us know your thoughts.