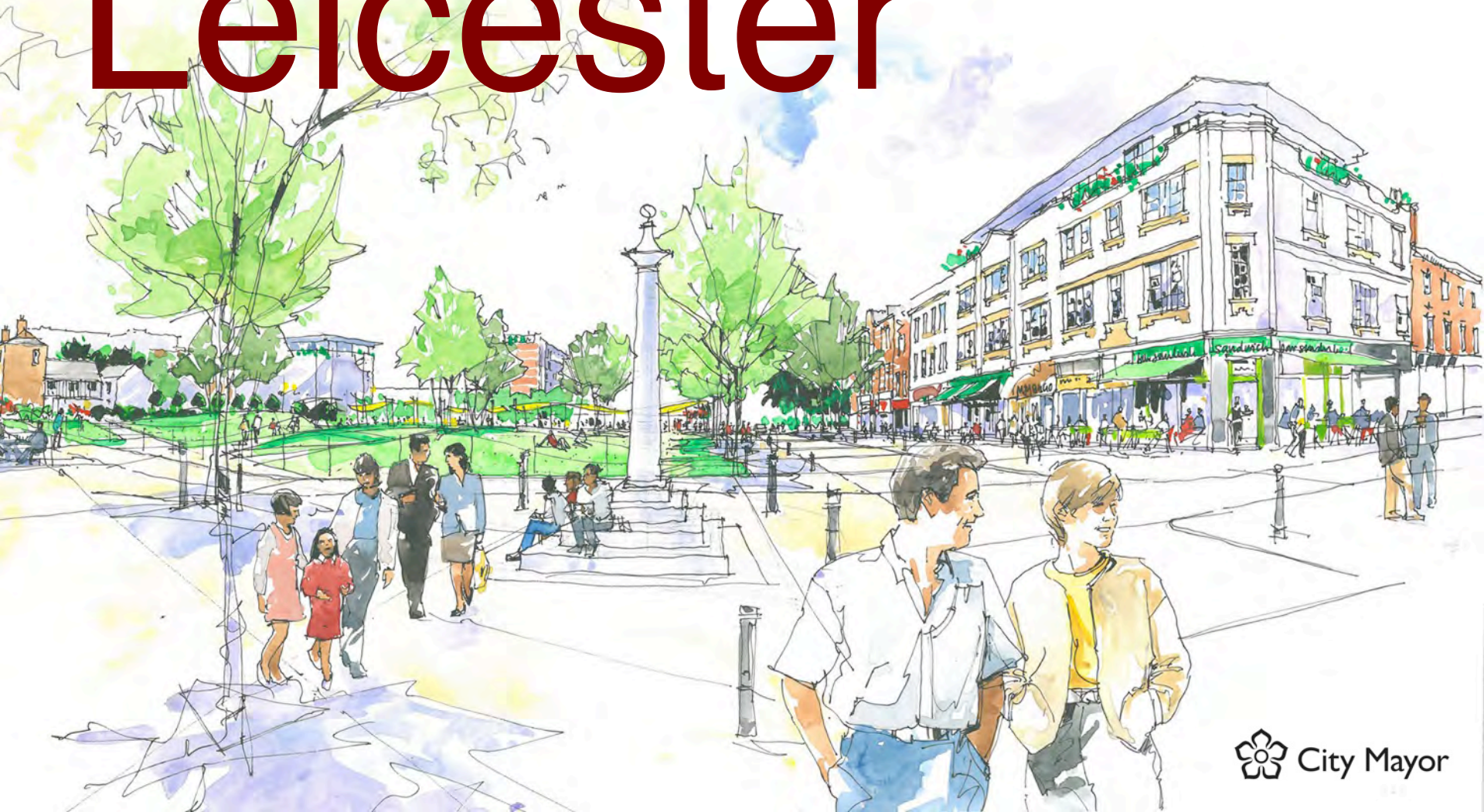


Connecting Leicester



Connecting Leicester

Leicester

A city with a rich heritage and many gems...



...but they are poorly connected, with many barriers that prevent people from moving around the city.

Future of our city

So far the story of Leicester has been about our past.

But we also need to look to the future of our city.

I believe we have the chance to make Leicester an even better place to live, work and to visit, as well as making sure it grows and prospers.

This presentation will tell you more about our plans. But first of all we want to hear your thoughts and opinions.

*Sir Peter Soulsby
City Mayor*



The city centre

is the heart of Leicester – both for local people and visitors

We need to encourage more people to shop, work, live and spend their leisure time here.

If we plan our investment carefully, we can encourage others to invest in our city, creating leisure facilities, new shops and places for businesses to thrive.

This will mean more jobs for Leicester people and more money for people to spend in the city, which will help us to develop the local economy.



Creating

a stronger, vibrant city centre

Like many cities, Leicester faces a number of threats and challenges. Out-of-town shopping, internet retailing and other nearby cities all compete for business.

So, if Leicester is to succeed in the future, we need to respond positively to these challenges.

Our plan is to deliver some key projects over the next few years, through a programme called '**Connecting Leicester**'.

But before we do anything, we would like to listen to your views.



Firstly, we all recognise
that our city has many
strengths and assets
we can be proud of:

Strengths and assets...

Retail and leisure

We have a unique mix of shopping and leisure experiences which make Leicester an attractive destination.

A **retail heart** offering quality modern shopping at Highcross; unique independent retailers in the Arcades and the Lanes areas; a traditional retail area including Haymarket, Market Street and high street shopping; and an established and busy market place.

A wealth of **leisure opportunities** that include the Showcase Cinema de Lux, Phoenix Square, Curve, De Montfort Hall and a wide choice of bars, restaurants and clubs across the city centre.



Strengths and assets...

Old Town and heritage

Leicester's historic Old Town, with the Cathedral and the Guildhall providing a high quality environment at the edge of its retail heart.

A rich mediaeval and Roman heritage across a historic area that includes Jewry Wall, the Castle and gardens, St Mary de Castro church and the Magazine Gateway.



Strengths and assets...

A rich and diverse cultural offer

- A **cultural quarter** that includes Curve theatre, Athena, Phoenix Square and a growing range of bars and restaurants.
- **Festivals and events** staged throughout the year celebrating Leicester's culture and diversity.
- **Belgrave Road – the city's Golden Mile**, with a vibrant, authentic mix of Asian restaurants, sari shops and jewellers attracting thousands of local people and visitors to the area.



Strengths and assets...

Waterside and green spaces

Just west of the city centre and only a short walk away are the River Soar and the Grand Union canal. **The Waterside** environment provides an opportunity for leisure and routes to quality green space close to the city centre.

Abbey Park is Leicester's premier park, just ten minutes' walk north of the city centre. The River Soar divides the park into two distinct areas: to the east lies the formally-planted Victorian part of the park, to the west are the remains of the twelfth century Leicester Abbey.

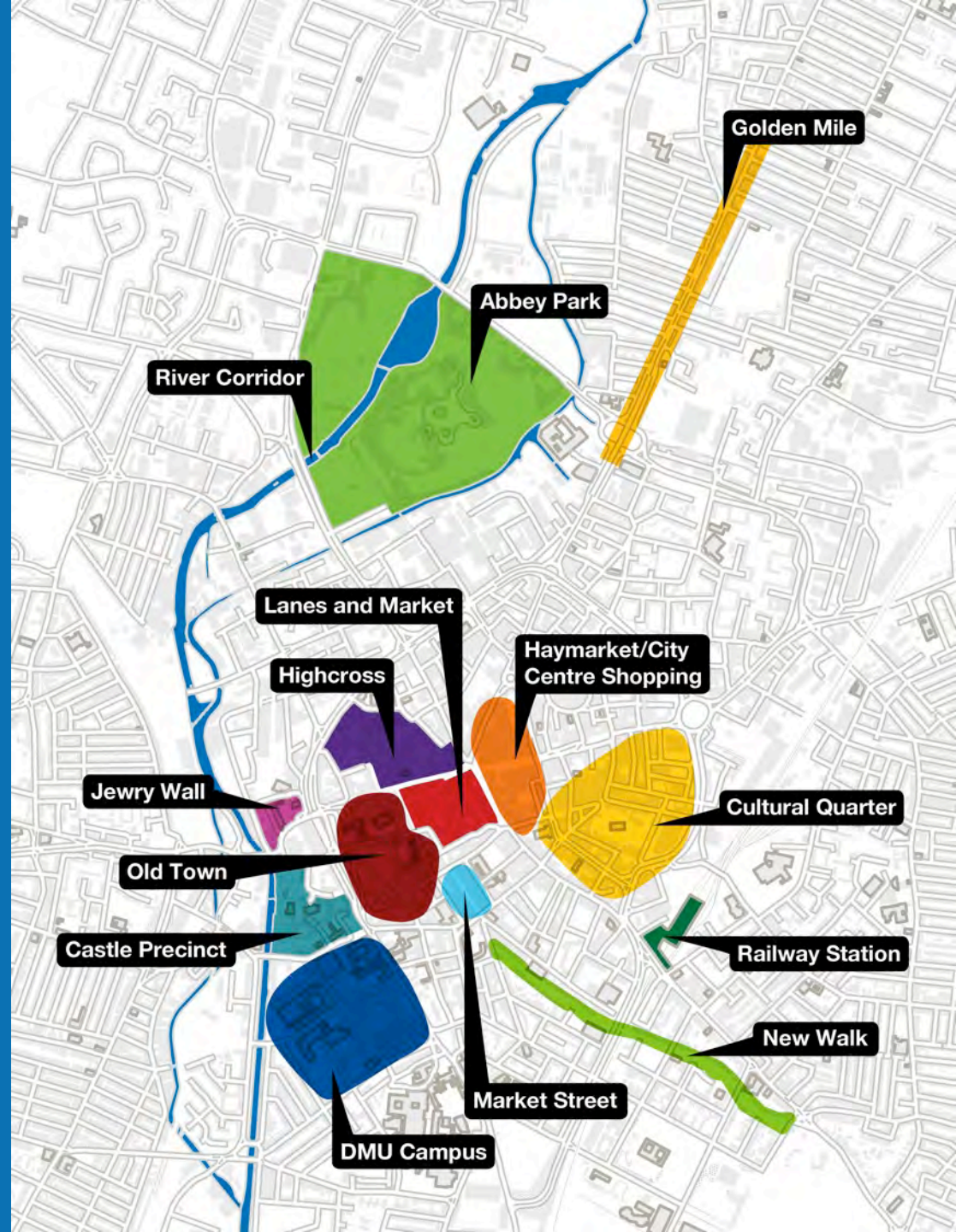
Victoria Park is within easy walking distance of the city centre via the historic New Walk and provides a variety of attractions as well as a focus for community and cultural festivities.



Together these different areas make up our great city

Stronger links between these different areas within the city centre, along with key 'stepping stone' projects, can create exciting opportunities to reconnect our city.

Here's how...



Connecting the city



Why this is important...

To create a strong and vibrant centre we need to focus on improving the links and connections between the different areas, as well as the communities and neighbourhoods close to the city centre.

Connecting Leicester is our focus for bringing together the highlights of our city, through a series of priority projects which will make Leicester an attractive destination for shoppers and visitors, support businesses and encourage investors.

Creating a strong and vibrant city centre has wider benefits for Leicester's economy, creating jobs and economic growth.



We need to remove barriers and make connections

Whilst Leicester benefits from a flat, compact and walkable central area, less sensitive development in the past has created **barriers** which affect our perception of distances and how easy it is to move between different areas.

Our priority is to establish good foot and cycle connections that link these areas together, to provide a safe, secure, family-friendly city centre.

Travelling by car will remain important to the accessibility of the city for some people, but we need to look at how we can reduce the influence of the car and the barriers the current network creates.



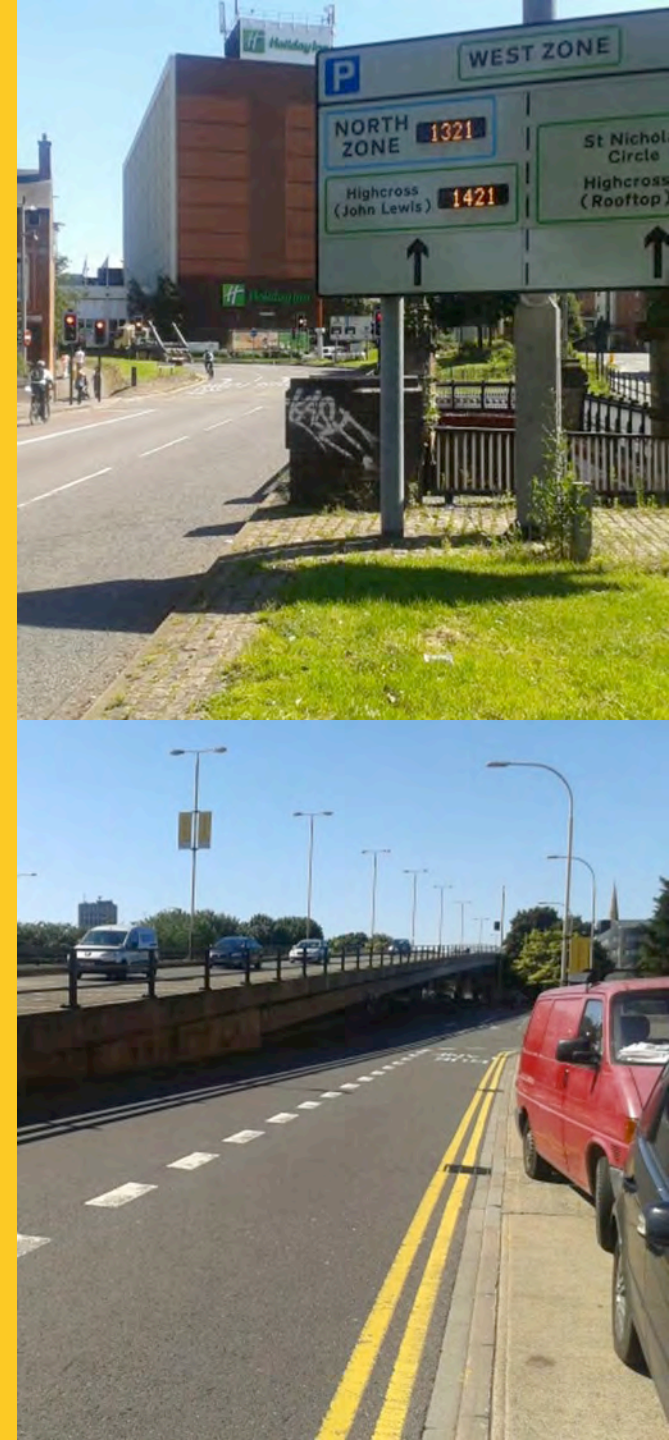
We must also

improve the gateways into
Leicester

We know that some of the gateways to our city are poor.

These entrances and gateways to the city for those arriving by car, public transport or on foot need to create a sense of arrival.

By creating attractive and well-signed entrances into the city centre, which remove the barriers created in the past, we can make our city more attractive to visitors and also improve links with the surrounding neighbourhoods and communities.



Making the connections...

We need to make it much easier to move from place to place within the city. By connecting some of these key **projects**, we can enhance the whole of the city centre, encourage more people to visit and make it more attractive for investors.

There are good opportunities to connect the shopping, heritage, leisure, green spaces and waterside areas across the city centre



Opportunities and projects we've started

The Story of Leicester – we want to enhance the city's heritage by improving interpretation and the heritage buildings themselves, as well as the historic environment. We also want to increase access to the council's own heritage buildings.

Heritage open days are taking place in September 2012.

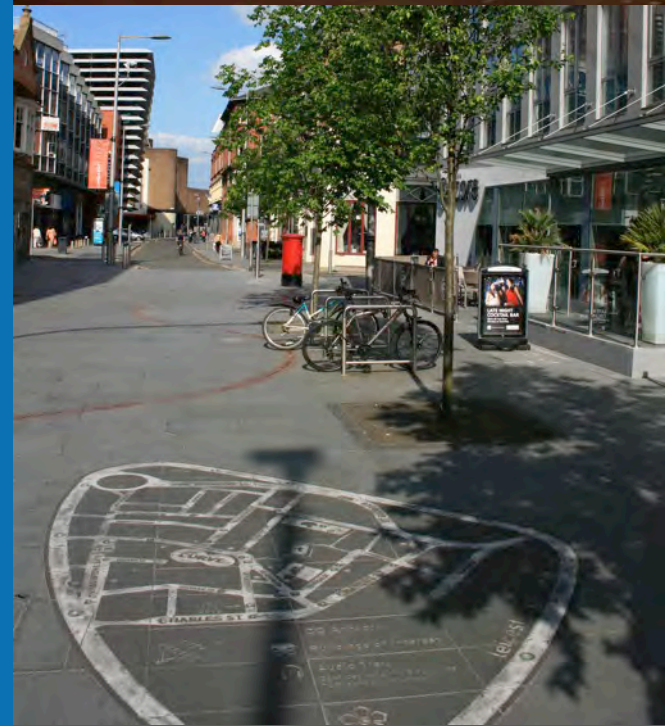


Opportunities and projects we've started

Humberstone Gate East – significant highway and other improvement works are already happening as part of a project to reduce congestion, improve the area for pedestrians and make access to buses easier.

The Golden Mile regeneration programme – we're improving the public spaces and how traffic is managed in and through the area. Together with more attractive shop fronts and improved marketing, this will enhance the visitor experience in this area.

The **St George's Cultural Quarter** – we're developing Makers Yard, a new workspace on Rutland Street. This will add to the other workspaces we've already developed for creative businesses in the area.



Opportunities

and projects that will follow

Improved connections with the High Street through to Leicester Market will encourage visitors to explore the Arcades, the Lanes, St Martin's Square and the market.

Leicester Market – redeveloping the market and improving the surrounding public realm gives us an opportunity to create an attractive destination, drawing more shoppers and visitors into and through the area

The Arcades – the council-owned **Malcolm Arcade** is to be refurbished. **Royal Arcade** is currently being refreshed.

The privately-owned **Silver Arcade** was built in 1899 and is the only four-storey Victorian arcade in England. This is being refurbished to attract small, independent retailers.

The owners of the **Odeon Arcade** have plans to improve the entrance from Leicester market.



Opportunities...

Jubilee Square will be a destination in its own right, but it will also form an important stepping stone between the Old Town, the retail area and the area beyond the inner ring road, including the Waterside, Jewry Wall, the Castle area and the Magazine gateway. It will form a gateway to the city centre.

The new square provides an opportunity to open up the frontage of **Wygston's House**, helping to bring this important building back into economic use.

A programme of **pedestrian improvements** is being developed to complement Jubilee Square. These will allow people to move more easily around the city centre.

Cathedral Gardens – a project led by the Cathedral that will provide new public gardens and a high quality space, framing the Cathedral and the Guildhall. Linked pedestrian improvements to Peacock Lane and Guildhall Lane make this another important stepping stone within the heritage area.



Opportunities...

Extending New Walk – We want to create an enhanced pedestrian thoroughfare, widening the pavement on Newarke Street, linking to the pedestrian route from Jubilee Square and making it easier to cross the inner ring road to the Magazine Gateway.

We also want to create a route along **Pocklington's Walk**, **Berridge Street** and **Greyfriars**, linking to the **main retail area** and **Highcross**. This would feature widened footways and improved crossings for pedestrians at junctions.

The 'John Biggs' island in front of the current council offices needs to be redesigned to accommodate **high quality crossings** between New Walk and the new routes.



Opportunities...

Extending the city centre pedestrian zone to **Hotel Street** and **St Martin's** will provide a high quality pedestrian link between Market Street, the Lanes area and High Street.

Church Gate, Belgrave Gate, Gravel Street, Horsefair Street and **Belvoir Street** will all be improved as developments or traffic management changes take place.

Developing further improvements to streets will create new and **pedestrian-friendly routes**.

We're finding ways to extend and redevelop the **Haymarket Bus Station** to provide a greater number of bus stands in an improved environment.



Opportunities...

The Golden Mile is one of the most famous and well known parts of Leicester.

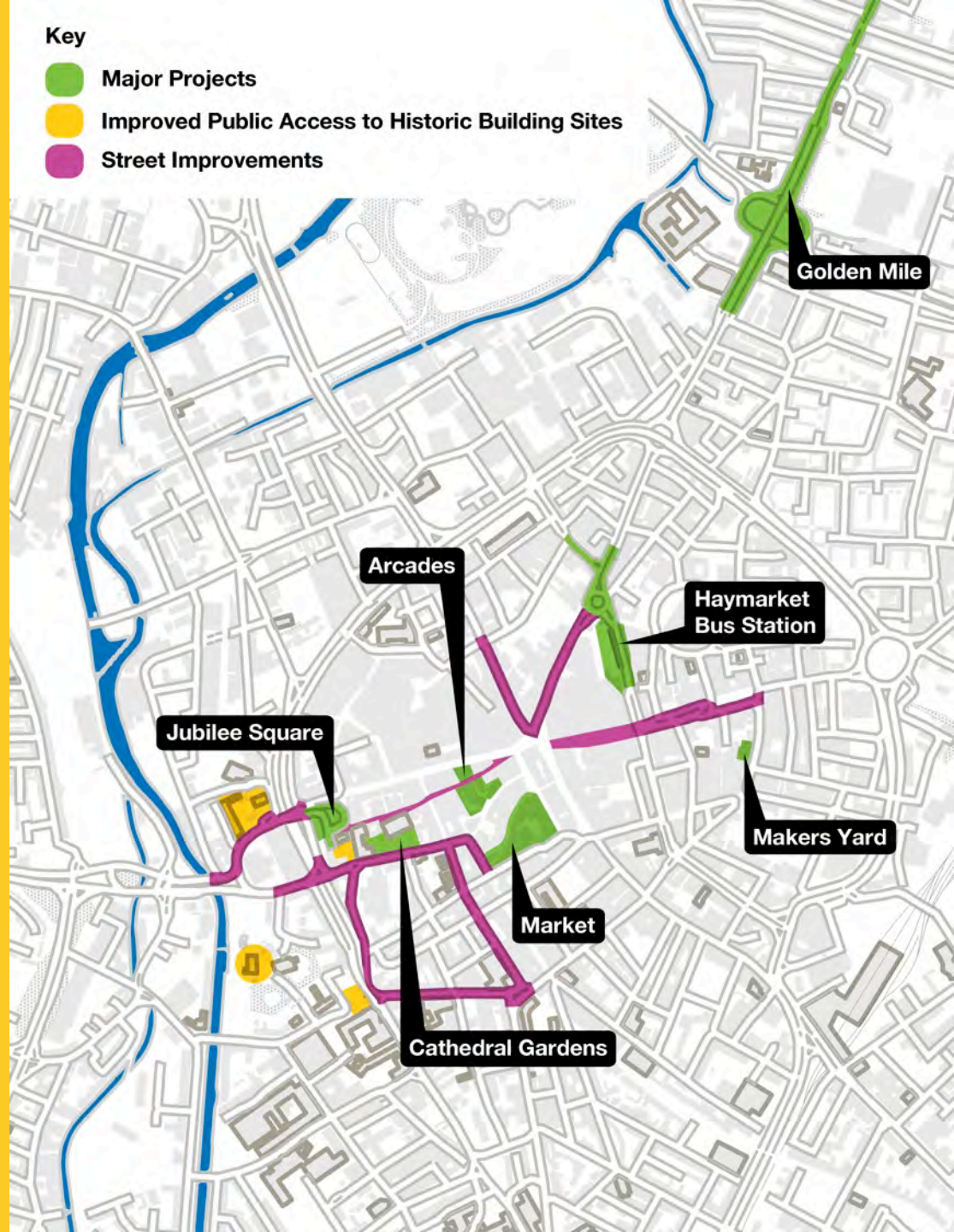
The removal of the **Belgrave flyover** and the redevelopment of the Sainsbury's site provides the opportunity to enhance this gateway to the city, greatly improving the connection between the city centre and the Golden Mile.

Residents of Belgrave will benefit from better connections to the city centre.



Projects

These are some of the major projects we will be working on over the next five years that will help deliver our *Connecting Leicester* vision.



What next...

From now until 31st October we are asking you to tell us your views on our vision for *Connecting Leicester*.

A number of projects are already happening, other projects are still being worked on and will be delivered over the next five years.

Consultation for other *Connecting Leicester* projects will continue beyond October, as individual projects move forward.

Your views...

We're keen to hear what you think of our vision for *Connecting Leicester* and the project we have identified which we believe will help deliver this vision.

You can let us have your comments by:

- Filling in the online consultation form at:
leicester.gov.uk/connectingleicester
- In person at one of the events we're organising from August onwards
- By post – send your views to:

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