



Rawtenstall Masterplan Consultation Report

11th April 2024

PLANIT

Contents

Introduction – page 3

Public Consultations – page 3

Data Collection – page 3 - 4

Written responses – page 4

Advertising sessions – page 4

One to one sessions – page 4 - 5

Session 1 – page 6 - 7

Session 2 & 3 – page 8 - 10

Session 4 & 5 – page 11 - 12

Additional session – page 13

Conclusion – page 14

Appendices – page 15 - 20

Introduction

Rossendale Borough Council and Lancashire County Council officers have jointly commissioned PlanIt to produce a masterplan for Rawtenstall.

A series of drop in sessions were organised by council officers, in order to discover the public's feedback on several new proposals for Rawtenstall.

Public consultations

Concept ideas gathering

Thursday 30th November 2023 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 50+ attendees

Wednesday 13th December 2023 – Sophie's Boutique – 1-3pm – 40+ attendees

Monday 4th December 2023 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Stakeholder Session – 30+ attendees

Concept Proposal Sessions

Thursday 15th February 2024 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 90+ attendees

Thursday 22nd February 2024 – Rawtenstall Library – 4-7pm – 300+ attendees

Tuesday 19th March 2024 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Chamber of Commerce – 40+ attendees

The earlier drop in sessions were an information gathering exercise. They allowed officers to collect ideas from both the public, and stakeholders. The suggestions and concerns collected gave officers an idea of what Rawtenstall town users would like to be improved or maintained in the centre.

The following drop in sessions then allowed officers to demonstrate those ideas as a concept design for Rawtenstall, and how it could look if suggestions were made a reality. Further comments were then collected to reflect upon and possible changes can be discussed by officers as next steps.

Data collection

Whiteboards were used at each drop in session to allow for visitors to write down thoughts. The notes were captured and documented, per each session. Attendees to all of the public drop in sessions were guided to the Rossendale council's economic development email to send detailed feedback.

They were advised that the comments would be added to documents and be used constructively when considering the masterplan concept designs.

Written responses

The economic development email has received 21 emails, containing feedback from both stakeholders and the general public who visited the drop in sessions wanting to give feedback. These emails were received from between the beginning of February, and the beginning of April.

The town centre regeneration officer at RBC has received feedback through email after sharing plans with stakeholders who attended the session in December. Three stakeholders including a councillor shared their feedback regarding the concept designs.

A response has also been received from the planning department at Rossendale Borough Council.

Please see Appendix 1 for email response comments.

Advertising sessions

The information and details about each session were advertised via the council's social media pages, on posters and display banners distributed throughout the town, and in the local newspaper- Rossendale Free Press.

This allowed for all age groups to hear about the drop in sessions and gave each session a well-rounded view from the public.

One to one sessions

It should also be noted that stakeholders were given the opportunity to meet with officers on a one to one basis, giving them the chance to talk more in depth about proposed plans if they so wished.

This being the case, the town centre regeneration officer from Rosendale Borough Council met separately with Civic Pride Rossendale.

The chair of the group requested to meet in order to discuss further the green elements of the masterplan. Currently there are flower beds throughout the town centre, which the group kindly tend to. The chair was happy with the outcome of the discussions, and further explanation of other elements of the concept designs running through the masterplan.

The town centre regeneration officer from Rosendale Borough Council took a call from a resident who lives around the Grange Road estate Rawtenstall. The resident explained he had been to one of the earlier drop in sessions and wondered if there was an update. The officer explained there was now a concept design being put

together, and that they could access this through the Rossendale Borough Council website and feedback is encouraged.

The resident also informed the officer that the Grange road estate residents had formed a group, due to the ongoing rat-running and speed problems they are facing, and were due to meet with the deputy crime commissioner to speak further on the matter. The resident mentioned they have spoken with LCC officers as well as both local councillors and MP regarding the matters.

The Head of Housing and Regeneration and the Town Centre Regeneration Officer met with the team at Ryder and Dutton's Rawtenstall branch. The estate agent's manager felt it was important to clear up any questions after the stakeholder session, as they would need to inform any prospective buyers of changes happening in the town.

There have been many email received from business owners in Rawtenstall, explaining their concerns. It was deemed appropriate that the town centre regeneration officer visit those businesses in order to speak in person.

This allows any concerns to be ironed out with more understanding than could be written in an email reply. The businesses have been grateful for the continual interaction and updates when possible.

These businesses include-

- Sophie's Boutique
- Isabakes
- Casked
- Nushu
- Luvin'It
- Ivy Label
- Scentish
- Eyestyle Studio

Both the public and those with an economic interest in Rawtenstall who were not able to attend the drop in sessions, were guided to view plans online and submit comments to the economic development email.

Session 1

Monday 4th December 2023 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Stakeholder Session – 30+ attendees

Officers felt it was necessary for a separate session with key stakeholders to Rawtenstall, as they have a particular interest in Rawtenstall, for slightly different reasons. Officers invited local business owners, market traders, local councillors, local interest groups and local transport coordinators.

Attendees were presented with concept ideas by PlanIt, and asked for feedback which was noted by officers, and organised into categories:

Aesthetics	Transport	Safety	Pedestrian movement	Community
Line Bocholt Way and St. Mary's Way with trees	Improve transport networks	Substantially improve the lighting in the town square	Free 3 hour disc parking to be introduced again with enforcement	Use any old buildings or closed retail to change of use
Disguise the strip lighting in the lower car park at Asda by putting a pelmet construction around the lower end of the upper car park	Make Bank St one way from the market end down to the dual carriageway	Improve the seating in the town square	All LCC signage to be updated	Incentivise landlords, retailers and offices to improve fronts of properties in the town centre
Improve the aesthetics on Bacup Road to make it a more integral part of the town	Flatten new hall hay cricket ground and build a carpark	Fill in the subway	Further retail opportunities to be located on New Hall Hey	
Make more of the river	Advertising on buses		Improve the bridge which leads from Tesco to Bury road	
Encourage LCC to attend to the maintenance of Rawtenstall Library				
The town square to remain as a lovely public open space				

The key themes identified from this particular feedback are safety, transport, community, pedestrian movement and aesthetics. There was a clearer theme of community from the stakeholder group session as many attendees represented a small number of community groups currently involved in Rawtenstall.

It was therefore highlighted to officers how important the community within Rawtenstall is to stakeholders. It was therefore considered one of the main subjects running throughout all the concept designs forming the masterplan.

There was also a large consideration of aesthetics. This shows that the stakeholder's care how the town looks, and feel it is an important part of improvements. It was explained by many that how a town presents itself is important. When visitors arrive for the first time, they form first impressions based on what they see. The stakeholders therefore placed importance on routes into the town being attractive.

There was also a great emphasis on improving the natural asset Rawtenstall currently has, including making the river more visible and improving the site lines down Bank Street.

As part of ASDA's planning permission it is written that they have to provide parking for town centre users. In this case, it was suggested that further advertising of this could be done, to inform new visitors. Small business owners were unsure of this being a practical solution, and questioned if this would just encourage visitors to shop in ASDA instead of venturing into town.

It is hoped that the addition of a crossing from outside ASDA over to the back of Bank Street will allow better accessibility for those town centre users who do park on ASDA's car park.

Officers concluded from this session, that parking needs to be greatly considered. If new plans are to be implemented, it needs to be made clear that the town centre can handle an increase in visitors.

The stakeholder's suggestions follow a pattern throughout, making the town centre a nicer and safer place to be for both residents and visitors, from the improvement of travel infrastructure and encouragement of landlords to improve empty buildings, to small yet important aesthetic improvements, and enhancing Rawtenstall's natural assets further and have the town be known for these attributes.

Session 2 & 3

Thursday 30th November 2023 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 50+ attendees

Wednesday 13th December 2023 – Sophie’s Boutique – 1-3pm – 40+ attendees

Similarly, the two public drop in sessions held in November and December 2023, gave us themes comparable to those from the stakeholder session; safety, transport, community, pedestrian movement and aesthetics.

Safety	Transport	Community	Pedestrian movement	Aesthetics
Better crossing facilities for bikes	Improve traffic on Burnley road	Market the Whitaker in town- integrate assets	Cars park on pavements and dipped curbs so wheelchair accessibility is hard	More litter bins
Better railings	Improve traffic light flow	Music clubs Youth clubs Toddler groups Art clubs	More dips in the pavement for wheelchair access across roads, including double yellow lines!	Do something with the space on the square
More CCTV in town	Need a bus stop on Burnley road	Churches need more financial support	Paving needed at the bottom of Bank Street	Name the town square
Zebra crossing on Bank Street	Not enough buses in the day to Ramsbottom	Night time economy could be better	More awnings outside shops	Shops on Bury road are poor
More lighting on the town square	Need a bus stop after the Spar before the market- it's a long walk	More events on the town square led by community groups	Covered areas for when it rains	More trees on St Mary's way
Not enough traffic wardens	Traffic lights on gyratory need resequencing	Rawtenstall market social media needs improving	Paving on Bacup road needs improving	Hide ASDA with trees
Speed on Haslingden road	More and reliable buses	Have Rawtenstall market open more days	Re-lay Kay street paving	More seating on the square
20mph on Grange road	More buses to Bolton	Attract market stalls at weekend and close the road	Make one pavement wider than the other so cafes can have outside seating	Continue Christmas lights all the way to the market

Motorway lighting	Asda needs an alternative entrance and exit	Rawtenstall is crying out for an artisan market every month. It would be so busy	Paving outside of St Marys church needs re-laying	Sort drainage outside the carpet shop, the pavement floods regularly
Can Grange road have speed bumps	Trains in town	Need a playground for children to play	Roundabout at the bottom of Newchurch road Bank street and Burnley road	Widen path on Bacup road
Missing pavements around Loveclough/ Newchurch	One way on Bank Street would help with Grange Road issues	Improve the leisure centre	Better links with Ramsbottom	More wayfinding around the gyratory
Secure bike storage with CCTV- somewhere central like the town square	Can ELR extend to Manchester?	The pavement below where the old Estoria club was, include wayfinding with information about the club. Maybe include 'stars' of bands who played there, much like Hollywood walk of fame	Yellow box junction needed where the library is as pulling out of that junction onto the gyratory is really difficult	Cobbles on Bank street need relaying
Cameras near where crossings, people get hit by cars running red lights and there is no evidence	Improve the bus service between Manchester and Ramsbottom	Market feels catered more towards visitors	Cycle route to Bury	Cyclists don't use the roads because they are too busy and dangerous
	Lines need repainting on gyratory	Improve infrastructure across Rawtenstall	A crossing at Sparrow park	More lighting from Blossom to TESCO
	Reconfigure traffic lights and crossing times	Theatre or cinema	Cycle link to the Halo	More lighting between Mimi's and Lidl
	No on street parking	Farmers markets on the square	Want better crossing at TESCO	
	Disc parking in car parks	More spill out space for restaurants		
		More community events		

Holding these two drop in sessions at different venues allowed officers to attract a larger audience range, resulting consequently, with a larger variety of suggestions.

Younger residents came with suggestions such as making the town centre safer at night, by adding more lighting down particular cut-through points, increasing the spill out spaces for restaurants, more travel links and increased events in town.

Officers spoke to residents who spoke of living in Rawtenstall over a long period of time. They expressed positive view of the new plans, and explained that any new plans must consider those who may struggle to get around town. One resident in particular spoke of pushing her elderly mother through town in a wheel chair and struggling to cross the road due to a lack of dipped curbs, or cars parked over them, leaving her without access. She also spoke of uneven surfaces both on the Bank Street cobbles and pavements, expressing support for them to be re-layed.

Residents from Newchurch and Grange road estate visited the drop in sessions. They have both set up groups in order to raise awareness of the issues they have with speeding and rat-running in their neighbourhoods. They mentioned contacting the Police, local councillors, MP and county council in order to explain why they believe traffic calming measures are much needed. They hoped that perhaps some of this could be picked up in the masterplan design.

In this case, it was then considered as to how a possible change in direction of Bank Street and possibly Kay Street could help alleviate some of the issues the residents face.

Session 4 & 5

Thursday 15th February 2024 – Rawtenstall Market – 11am-2pm – 90+ attendees

Thursday 22nd February 2024 – Rawtenstall Library – 4-7pm – 300+ attendees

At the market drop in session, it was hoped that the comments of natural shoppers could be collected, as well as those who were attending specifically to discuss views of the concept designs.

Key:

Further suggestions – orange

In agreement with the change – green

Disagree with the change – blue

Safety	Transport	Community	Pedestrian movement	Aesthetics
More lighting on the streets	The new light controlled pedestrian crossing on Bury road – cause a queue entering Bury Road which will back up onto the gyratory	Make Bank Street pedestrianised	All the pavements through the town centre need re-laying and maintaining afterwards!	Don't fill in the subway
More CCTV	The bus gate will help	Need an art hub	Road markings throughout town centre need re doing	More seating on town square
Block off Grange Road half way up	If the multiple traffic lights are coordinated the traffic will flow easier – at the minute they are why the traffic gets so bad	Youth hang out areas	Rethink the cycle route	Move the fire station
Concerned about cyclist and pedestrian shared space	Make the bottom end of Bank Street two way – from Kay Street down		Consider those with limited mobility when removing parking from Bank Street	
There is not enough parking in Town	Bank street one way needs to be from the market down not up		Keep Kay Street direction the same	
Anything new on the square like a park,				

will attract more antisocial behaviour				
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Throughout the session, officers noted that there were a few stand out comments made by members of the public. It was noted that the majority of attendees spoke of their disagreement to change the direction of Kay Street. They spoke of the longer journey time this would mean for residents who live in the Crawshawbooth direction. There has been a concern raised from the Baptist church on Kay Street, about the directional change affecting how they will operate during a funeral, considering the potential double parking whilst a funeral or wedding is ongoing with the event cars needing to be placed right outside the church.

The general feel of the one way direction being implemented on Bank Street was positive, although the public generally expected the one way to feed from the top of Newchurch Road down towards ASDA not the other way round which is currently being suggested.

One positive comment made by many, was the welcoming of the bus right turn change. This allows the bus to turn right, rather than having to travel around the gyratory. Residents told officers it would help with traffic flow, as well as journey time for bus users.

One surprising suggestion made by the public was an improved link between venues such as St Mary's Chambers and East Lancs Railway to the town centre and the Market. They said if they were unfamiliar with the area they feel it would not be obvious where anything is, and encouraged more wayfinding and signage to what Rawtenstall has to offer. This can be addressed within the Rawtenstall Connected scheme.

Additional Session

Tuesday 19th March 2024 – Unitarian church Rawtenstall – 6-8pm – Chamber of Commerce – 40+ attendees

A concern from some of the business owners was if the main shopping street is made one way it may affect a customer's choice to shop in the town centre.

A one way would make it harder for them to not only park but navigate the roads in order to visit a particular shop. They could then alternatively visit ASDA which has specific parking and has everything in one place. This is interesting to note as the majority of businesses based on Bank Street are in favour of the one way system, but the four businesses situated on Ormerod Street were all completely against it.

Another big theme from the Chamber meeting was that of loading and servicing, if Bank Street was to be made a one way. Another part of introducing the one way includes the widening of the pavements and increase the café culture on Bank Street.

As a result, the businesses had several questions around if a time limit would be implemented for servicing, as vans for most shops will need to park directly outside. They had concerns over how this may affect the availability of the companies they currently use, if a strict time limit for loading was introduced. This has been looked into carefully as to how the use of loading bays could be implemented, so that the one way traffic is not disrupted.

A large proportion of the discussions that took part on the evening, followed the theme of parking in the town centre. Many businesses have called for increased parking spaces in town, as customers mention it while shopping in their business. The hope of some changes included in the concept plans for the masterplan, include taking the priority cars have, away from the town centre, making it a safer place to be. The hope is this will encourage more visitors, including families.

It has to be considered therefore, where the parking that may be lost on Bank Street should be moved to, not gotten rid of completely – highlighted as imperative by business owners.

It was highlighted to us that the businesses have concerns over making the availability of parking in ASDA for town centre users more obvious and taking away the parking from Bank Street would further push potential customers to shop in ASDA rather than venturing onto the high street.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the feedback received by all officers involved with the drop in sessions held, has contributed towards creating an overall picture of what both residents and visitors want from a masterplan for Rawtenstall.

There have been many opportunities for the officers to capture as much feedback as possible, however due to the popularity of the drop in sessions there has always been a chance of some being missed. As much as it was encouraged for people to send in feedback formally via email, not everyone will have the chance or time to sit down and do this.

It is the hope that due to the amount of drop in sessions held, there has been enough opportunity given for feedback to be collected.

Business owners have mentioned they have struggled especially and in this case benefitted more from the various catch up sessions with officers, where informal notes were taken instead.

The officers are happy with the turnout of each drop in session, they believe the way in which each session was advertised, allowed for a range of ages and groups to attend and give feedback. This means any analysis and conclusions made from the feedback is accurate and representation of the general population.

Because the feedback featured both support and concerns it has allowed officers to consider altering concept designs, as well as considering options that perhaps were not originally thought about. By placing all the feedback into categories, officers were able to further analyse the priority of the feedback given. Those who attended the public sessions had a stronger focus on the community and transport benefits of the concept designs. Whereas stakeholders considered aesthetics, pedestrian movement and transport, during their drop in sessions.

Further to the feedback, there can now be continued discussions with officers, as to the current concept plans for Rawtenstall's masterplan and how it can be created to feature suggestions from all those with an interest in Rawtenstall town centre.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – responses through email received

Keep Kay Street in the same direction

Bank street direction – from Newchurch road down to ASDA

Town square redevelopment – does it need to be a priority

Parking – should be free, charge for out of hours parking and there should be dedicated business parking

Ensure businesses throughout Rawtenstall get attention when it comes to improvements, Bacup Road, Kay Street, Ormerod Street

If a cycle path is being added in on Bank Street it should be a no car zone altogether

I would like to see some highlights in the Masterplan both celebrating the richness and commemorating the hardships of Rossendale's Heritage.

Perhaps a visitor Heritage Map (mentioning ELR trips to Rawtenstall etc) with routes and overnight accommodation.

Pedestrianising Bank Street would stop people nipping in – reduce customers

Creating a pedestrianised, cycle friendly town will only cater for people wanting a free day out, it certainly won't attract people who want to shop and spend money.

Making Bank street one way would make shops receiving deliveries more difficult

Making Bank street one way diverts the traffic away from the centre not towards it

We feel by making Bank Street a One Way System would help with the traffic flow especially with all the double parking.

Which a lot of the double parking is to due with Greggs bakery to be honest

Force cars going to Waterfoot along Bacup Road, rather than Bocholt Way. This could be achieved by making Bocholt Way two way only as far as the right hand turn up to Hall Carr and the small riverside industrial estate. From this point onwards the road would be one way ONLY coming from the direction of Waterfoot.

Install traffic lights to allow free flow of traffic up Bocholt Way for vehicles coming from the bypass and Haslingden. There are similar lights that allow access onto St Mary's Way from the Asda deliveries door near the carpet showroom.

Sort out the sequence of the lights throughout the gyratory

Need a rail link to Manchester

Use only one side of Bank Street for parking

Something needs to happen on the town square as to tackle anti-social behaviour

The junction of Haslingden Old Road/Newchurch/Burnley Road, is a very dangerous place to try to navigate as a pedestrian you have to time when you are able to run across the road.

The plans focus only on one area and do not include shops along Bacup Road.

The area from Rawtenstall to the retail park is not a pleasant place to walk as the pathway only extends half way so the other half is muddy and unpleasant, meaning most people have no option other than to drive.

The proposed single stage crossing at the end of Bacup Road (where the bus gate is) feels too long without any separation from traffic, like an island or something in the middle, even if it is still possible to cross in a single stage.

Road markings need redoing throughout the gyratory

Plans for the gyratory must marry up to those for Bank Street

Further high quality pedestrian crossing points on Bank Street are needed to encourage the free flow of movement on both sides of the street i.e. further road narrowing, raised tables, coloured surfacing.

Mr Fitzpatrick's is highlighted as a key Rossendale asset but capacity in the venue is quite limited. The environment outside is not very attractive generally and, in particular for children. There is way too much street furniture around the car park generally and nowhere near enough seating to comfortably accommodate eating your food.

Are we genuinely "showcasing local businesses..... and giving the community space to come together and celebrate their shared spirit" (as per the vision) or are we retaining 13 car parking spaces so people can nip to the bank or pick up a prescription? I bank with Santander and I've never used the car park.

A proper car parking strategy would appear warranted. My understanding is the Asda car park was granted so large so it could also serve Rawtenstall - this should be clarified and made clear to people.

The plans do not seem to say much about how sense of place/public realm could be enhanced on the row between 'Blossom' and the old cinema on Bacup Road

A better pedestrian crossing point of Bacup Road at Blossom towards Mr Fitzpatrick's could encourage more footfall from Tesco.

The plans for 2 lanes on to the A682 look like they could provide a real benefit to the flows of traffic at busy times.

Ensure that improved pedestrian crossings of the side roads to the north of the fire station roundabout are provided as well as the focus on the south side shown in the masterplan.

Make Bocholt way eastbound as far as tesco otherwise make it westbound only.

Filter lane – Bank Street

More developer contributions

The one way needs to go down from the market not up

Need more parking not less

Need yellow box junction where the library joins the gyratory

Is a shared cycle space with pedestrians safe?

The valley of stone name is wrong – its called the valley of stone greenway

Haslingden road side of gyratory goes into one lane and then back to three there are not enough lanes for those coming off the M66

Organisation called Living Streets – deals with accessibility of pavements etc for wheelchair users

The crossing at Haslingden old road is unsafe

The crossing at Newchurch road – view of Burnley road southbound is usually obstructed so can't see if the traffic is turning left

At the asda junction – existing crossing encourages unsafe behaviour - the wait is too long and frustrating to wait in the middle

Burney road – lots of congestion here especially into and out of prospect road and Spar will always have impacts back into the town centre – seems to have been overlooked

More pedestrian islands heading north and on Burnley road– safe to cross

Parking restrictions at Alder Hey ignored making it unsafe for children

New housing developments don't have enough travel facilities – just encourages them to drive. They don't encourage walking as here are no footpaths or ginnels joining estates

Masterplan point 10 – connection from north through the cemetery – path is falling apart and all links through the cemetery are broken and muddy

In general, I am very supportive of the plans. In particular the need to make Bank Street a less car dominated environment and to support the uptake of sustainable transport for people of all ages - especially to give independent mobility to younger generations and to avoid all future residents of Rossendale believing that the car is the only attractive transport option.

The plans for the gyratory MUST co-ordinate with those for Bank Street

If Bank Street becomes one way south to north and Kay Street west to east, there would not be a need for signals at the bottom end of Bank Street. This could reduce the complete cycle time for the signals at Asda aiding the overall traffic circulation around Rawtenstall

Can we consider adding a layby outside of Kay Street Baptist church for hearses or wedding vehicles, as they presently have issues with having to double park opposite another car – this is especially the case when it's a funeral.

Firstly, any move to make the area less car-centric is great. However, from a pedestrian point of view, I believe the proposed single stage crossing at the end of Bacup Road (where the bus gate is) feels too long without any separation from traffic, like an island or something in the middle, even if it is still possible to cross in a single stage.

I also love the secure cycle parking near the bus station — this is a must and probably the biggest barrier from me cycling instead of driving to Rawtenstall more often.

If the direction of flow were altered, then, any traffic within the Kay Street area would have to go to Bacup Road, and then, if they wish to go northwards, go around the main roundabout including six set of traffic lights. If someone wished to go south then, currently, it is possible from most of Kay Street to go via the front of the bus station and down Lord Street to Bacup Road.

A lot of traffic from the south turns right off St Marys Way at Asda traffic lights into Bank Street and then turns right into Grange Road for housing to proceed to Newchurch Road for housing along that road or in order to reach the roads to Lumb, Waterfoot etc. This saves traffic going to the market area including two more sets of traffic lights.