

**Public Inquiry into Outline Planning
Permission for Canal Corridor, North
Lancaster**

**Proof of Evidence on Tourism,
Local Identity and Inheritance**

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Submitted on Behalf of It's Our City

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This proof of evidence is presented by John Walton. It was commissioned by and is presented on behalf of It's Our City (IOC).

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1. Introduction

This proof of evidence examines the impact of the proposed development on tourism, local identity and inheritance. It demonstrates that, not only is the development contrary to existing policy guidance and strategy, but that it ignores its impact on tourism and, if permitted, would severely reduce opportunities to enhance visitor experience and so increase both the numbers and spend from tourists. This proof also presents evidence about the impact of loss of historical and familiar buildings on residents and visitors and how this compromises identity and sense of place within the city, its ability to attract tourists and attract and retain skilled and professional workers. The final section of this proof of evidence describes how the proposed development would impoverish the inheritance of future generations of Lancastrians by putting public land into the hands of private companies for 250 years.

2. Tourism

This section describes the scale and character of tourism in Lancaster and how the proposed development fails to assess its impact on this important industry. It discusses some possible consequences of allowing the development to proceed and the opportunities ever to develop tourism that would be lost for if that happened.

3. Tourism and the Economy

In this section, we give evidence of the importance of tourism to the local economy and what is known about its characteristics, and question why it has not been considered by the developer. We demonstrate how the proposal is contrary to the area's tourism strategy.

The Lancaster District is home to a £224 million tourism industry supporting over 4,000 jobs and with more than 4.6 million visits a year to our main visitor destinations of Morecambe, Lancaster and the rural areas.

(I/T-01, Tourism Strategy, Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006–2010 2008 Update, p1)

4. Tourism is an important aspect of Lancaster's economy as demonstrated by the following statistics. The latest available figures from the Council (2007) (Doc) show that the revenue from tourism to Lancaster City amounted to £84.04m, 31% of the District's total revenue from tourism. Other figures appear to be available only for the District and are not disaggregated for the City. The following tables show the totals for the District and the City's tourism (I/T-02, Copy of the STEAM Report, Lancaster City, sent by Tourist Office 14th May 2009). This provides sufficient indication of the order of magnitude of tourism's importance to the local economy. In the light of this evidence it is very strange that the Council has not considered tourism in its assessment of the impact of the Canal Corridor project.

Table 1: Total Tourism Revenue by Area of District

(£'s millions)		%
Lancaster City	84.04	31
Morecambe	131.77	49
Lancaster Remainder	51.19	19
TOTAL	267.00	100

Table 2: Analysis by Sector of Expenditure

(£'s millions)	Total for District in 2007	Lancaster City 2007
Accommodation	29.36	10.84
Food and drink	50.92	15.55
Recreation	8.47	2.59
Shopping	64.53	19.51
Transport	18.93	5.81
Indirect Expenditure	64.53	20.24
VAT	30.16	9.50
Total	267	84.04

Table 3: Revenue by Category of Visitor

(£'s millions)	Total for District in 2007	Lancaster City in 2007
Serviced Accommodation	84	29.87
Non-Serviced Accommodation	69.51	17.85
SFR	14.62	6.80
Day Visitors	98.88	29.52
Total	267	84.04

Table 4: Tourist Days

(Thousands)	Total for District in 2007	Lancaster City In 2007
Serviced Accommodation	766.16	257.45
Non-Serviced Accommodation	1620.38	404.77
SFR	554.51	257.91
Day Visitors	3769.78	1,125.43
TOTAL	6710.83	2,045.56

Table 5: Tourist Numbers

(Thousands)	Total for District in 2007	Lancaster City 2007
Serviced		
Accommodation	371.21	129.90
Non-Serviced Accommodation	245.53	61.16
SFR	233.41	108.61
Day Visitors	3769.78	1,125.43
TOTAL	4619.93	1,425.10

Table 6: Sectors in which Employment is supported

(FTE's)	Total for District in 2007	Lancaster City In 2007
Direct Employment		
Accommodation	979	233
Food & Drink	1060	324
Recreation	214	65
Shopping	1226	370
Transport	176	54
Total Direct Employment	3655	1,046
Indirect Employment	886	278
TOTAL	8196	1,324

5. In summary, this shows that tourism is a highly significant industry for Lancaster, employing the equivalent of over 1,000 full-time people, generating revenue of £84 million and hosting nearly 1,500,000 visitors for over 2,000,000 visitor days. Statistics of this kind are always 'soft', but they are the Council's own figures, and they show very clearly that tourism has considerable significance as an employer and income generator in Lancaster City.
6. The 2001 census (I/T-03) recorded that 6.72% of Lancaster and District residents aged 16-74 and in employment were employed in Hotel and Catering. (This includes residents working outside the area, but excludes residents from outside the area working within it.) The number of people employed in tourism-related industries in Lancashire rose from 49600 in 2001 to 55,800 in 2007, a 12.5% increase and Lancaster is likely to have experienced a similar rise. (I/T-04 Tourism and Leisure 2007 http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/sectors/tourism.asp?sysredir=y accessed 08/05/09)
7. Unlike other sectors of the economy local tourism can flourish in recession as domestic tourists stay closer to home, some going for days out rather than paying for accommodation. It also benefits from a weaker pound, making the UK a more attractive destination for tourists from overseas.

8. The Proposed Development and the Visitor Economy

The evidence of the economic importance of the tourism is given, because it appears that tourism has been barely considered by proposed development. The retail assessment anticipates only 14% of the turnover will be from outside zones 1-6, including that from visitors and tourists. (CD16 Retail Assessment) No assessment has been done on whether the proposed development would impact on the quality of visitor experience, numbers of visitors or the amount they spend.

9. Types of Visitor and Lancaster as a Visitor Destination

More information about the type of tourist visiting Lancaster is given by the Northwest Visitor Segmentation Research by Arkenford and Locum Consulting (I/T-05). This indicates that Lancaster is possibly the fourth most visited city in the North West after Manchester, Liverpool and Chester by people in the region and ranked 28th most-visited destination, having been visited by 21% of the survey respondents in the previous two years. The first of these rankings is based on a definition of a 'city' that excludes Blackpool; but the results remain impressive, especially the proportion of respondents who had visited the city. The majority of these visitors were day-trippers.

The age profile was:

18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
10%	15%	23%	26%	24%	3%

10. 67% were from social-economic groups ABC1, 20% C2DE and 12% retired.

Couples made up 59% of visitor groups and 9% included another adult family member, 10% included a child under 16 years of age, 5% a grandparent and 22% an adult not from the same household. Lancaster ranked 15th most popular city in the North West to be visited by families with children.

11. Figures 1 and 2 show the proportion of people corresponding to the each Ark Leisure segment who visit Lancaster for staying visits and day trips. The segment definitions are as follows:

Table 7: Definition of Tourist Segments

<p>Style Hounds</p> <p>Young Free Single, Impulsive, Fashion counts, Brand counts Looking for fun with friends Most not seriously sporty</p>	<p>High Street</p> <p>Main stream early adopters Followers of high street fashion Care what others think Happy to buy packaged options</p>	<p>Followers</p> <p>Strongly influenced by what others will think Don't want to be seen as old fashioned Less active Slow to adopt Avoid risk</p>	<p>Habituals</p> <p>Largely inactive, low spending group Very traditional, strongly resistant to change Risk adverse Value relaxation, peace and quiet</p>
<p>Cosmopolitans</p> <p>Strong, active, confident Style & brand important, but as an expression of their self-made identity. High spenders especially on innovation and technology Looking for new challenges, new experiences, Globetrotters</p>	<p>Discoverers</p> <p>Independent in mind and action Little influenced by style or brand but interested in new options Buy on function and value to them Looking for new and educational experiences</p>	<p>Traditionals</p> <p>Self reliant internally referenced Slow to adopt new options Strong orientation towards traditional values Value individual attention & service</p>	<p>Functionals</p> <p>Self reliant Price driven Value function over style Traditional values, but interested in new experiences, not risk adverse</p>

Northwest Visitor Segmentation Research by Arkenford and Locum Consulting (I/T-05)

Figure 1: Segments of Staying Visitors

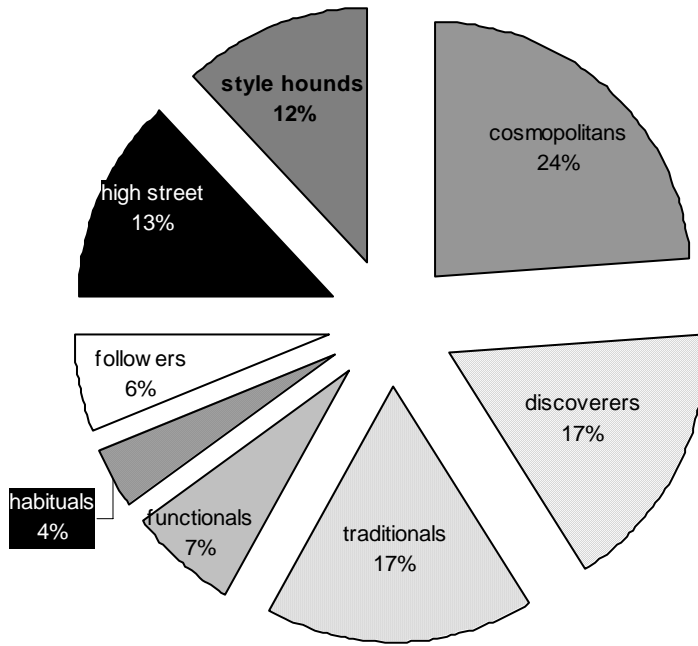
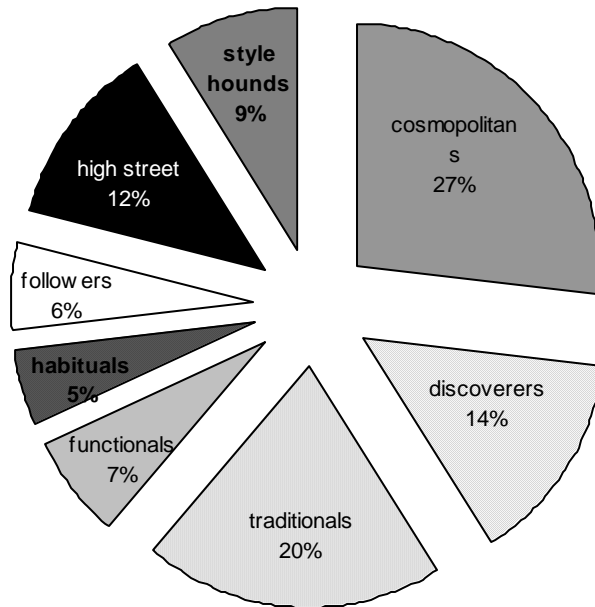


Figure 2; Segments of Day Visitors



Northwest Visitor Segmentation Research by Arkenford and Locum Consulting (I/T-05)

12. This shows that Lancaster's tourism market is largely independent and innovative rather than 'mass-market' (Northwest Visitor Segmentation Research by Arkenford and Locum Consulting I/T-05, p9). Around 60 per cent of it falls into the 'traditionals', 'discoverers' and 'cosmopolitans' categories, people who seek distinctive locations and individual experiences. This is the market targeted by Lancaster's Tourism Strategy (I/T-01) and may well be true of people who choose to come and live in Lancaster.

13. **Corporate Vision:**

"Lancaster will be recognised as a nationally and internationally important learning city with an envied quality of life, rich heritage, strong economic opportunity and social cohesion".

(I/T-01 Tourism Strategy for Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006 – 2010)

14. **Tourism Vision for Lancaster:**

For tourists, Lancaster will be recognised as a historic city focussing on its built heritage ,attracting higher spend visitors interested in history, culture and education. Lancaster will be seen as one of the major historic cities of the north west. More accommodation will be provided to accommodate growing visitor numbers linked to cultural events, expanding nightlife, business tourism and students/visitors to the higher education establishments. Lancaster will have growing numbers of overseas visitors supplementing the domestic market for heritage and culture. The cultural history of Lancaster will be the main growth area for visitors to the district and to north Lancashire.

(I/T-01 Tourism Strategy for Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006 – 2010)

15. Among the most popular activities for visitors were:

Explore on foot	91%	Visit scenic places or	50%
Food/drink	61%	Refreshment at coffee/tea shop,	53%
Soak up ambience/	69%	Visit/browse the local	54%
Gentle stroll	71%	Visit a museum or heritage	54%
Stroll along the seafront,	72%		

(I/T-05, Northwest Visitor Segmentation Research by Arkenford and Locum Consulting)

16. While 41% ate out in independent run/local restaurants only 13% are in a branded restaurant. This ties in with Lancaster's Tourism Strategy, whose Vision Board see

"Tourism, heritage, culture, and quality of life" as playing a major role in the future economic prosperity of the District. The heritage offering of Lancaster, and the potential role of the Castle in particular, are seen as a key opportunity".

17. ((I/T-01 Tourism Strategy for Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006 – 2010, p5)

Whilst Lancaster attracts almost a quarter of its visitors from the AB social group, just over a tenth of respondents to Morecambe are from this social group.

((I/T-01 Tourism Strategy for Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006 – 2010, p17)

18. Further evidence of the focus on heritage and culture comes from the report ‘Historic Towns and Cities in England’s Northwest: Position Statement’ commissioned by English Heritage and the North West Development Agency in 2007 (I/T-06). This examines how a small number of historic towns and cities could help improve the region’s tourism offer and through being given strategic priority for long-term heritage related tourism infrastructure and product development support economic growth and regeneration in accordance with the Regional Economic Strategy (Key Activity 10.3) (I/T-06 Historic Towns and Cities in England’s Northwest: Position Statement, p5)

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy provides a supportive policy context. It seeks to encourage plans, strategies, proposals and schemes to deliver improved economic growth and quality of life through sustainable tourism activity in the Northwest and identifies Chester, Carlisle, Bolton, Lancaster and Birkenhead as a focus for heritage related tourism development (Policy W6 – Tourism and the Visitor Economy).

(I/T-06 Historic Towns and Cities in England’s Northwest: Position Statement, p5)

19. Lancaster was one of five cities studied and the three cities having ‘strategic fit’ with the Regional Economic Strategy in the report which describes how visits to heritage sites, museums and related attractions form a high proportion of domestic leisure trips. It comments that:

The unique sense of place which historic towns and cities have supports the economy. People value the sense of place which a historic built environment creates. Well maintained historic centres prove attractive locations where a quality retail, leisure and food/drink offer can develop.

(I/T-06 Historic Towns and Cities in England’s Northwest: Position Statement p5)

20. The report notes:

The consultants’ vision for Lancaster is to build on its Georgian heritage to position itself as the ‘Bath of the North’. The quality and style of the Georgian heritage should be used as a backdrop to a stylish and distinctive retail and leisure activity.

(I/T-06 Historic Towns and Cities in England’s Northwest: Position Statement, p15)

21. Among its suggestions are that Lancaster should celebrate and market its Georgian Heritage.

22. The dominance of the historic, cultural and heritage tourism market to Lancaster is illustrated by the list of attractions in Lancaster compiled by Information Britain’s list of attractions in Lancashire (I/T-07, [http://www.information-britain.co.uk/county19 /townguideLancaster/](http://www.information-britain.co.uk/county19/townguideLancaster/))

.Lancaster’s attractions are listed as:

- Ashton Memorial
- Cottage Museum
- *Ingleborough Show Cave* (outside Lancaster)
- Lancaster Castle

- Lancaster City Museum
 - *Lancaster Leisure Park*
 - Lancaster Maritime Museum
 - Peter Scott Gallery
 - Ruskin Library
23. All but two of these (in italics) are connected with heritage and culture. Likewise the official tourist information website for Lancaster (I/T-08 <http://www.citycoastcountryside.co.uk/site/historic-lancaster> accessed 08/05/09) describes it as:

The historic city of Lancaster is a small, vibrant university city, and rich in cultural heritage. Lancaster's history can be traced back thousands of years and has so much to offer, from castles and museums, where Lancaster's past comes to life, to great shopping, entertaining theatre and swish eateries.

(I/T-08, <http://www.citycoastcountryside.co.uk/site/historic-lancaster>, accessed 08/05/09)

This is illustrated by a picture of St Mary's Gate, depicting the historic backdrop.

24. The TourUK website (I/T-08, http://www.touruk.co.uk/lancs/lancs_lanca.htm, accessed 05/05/09) says:

Lancaster, on the county border with a background of the Lake District, an old town with cobbled streets and intriguing passages.

With its history based on its port and canal, Lancaster has a lot to offer the casual visitor and tourist, and has some nice leisure parks.

(I/T-08, http://www.touruk.co.uk/lancs/lancs_lanca.htm, accessed 05/05/09)

and lists the following attractions:

▶ *Lancaster Castle, Castle Hill, 12th century Norman fortress, the scene of witch trials and hangings, 18th century Gothic Shire Hall, shop, etc, Tel: 01524 64998*

▶ *Priory Church, Castle Hill, Lancaster, 14th & 15th century on an even older site.*

▶ *Maritime Museum, at St George's Quay, Lancaster, modern displays of the area's maritime past, audio-visual, shop, etc*

▶ *Judge's Lodgings, Lancaster, elegant 17th century building, with old furniture in restored rooms, and a museum of childhood with a dolls collection, shop, etc*

▶ *City Museum, Market Square, Lancaster, Georgian building houses the town museum in this former Town Hall, shop, etc*

▶ *Cottage Museum, Lancaster, 19th century house*

▶ *Ashton Memorial, 38 acres of parkland with a building displaying life in Edwardian times, butterflies, plants, birds, shop, etc*

▶ *Canalside Craft Centre, at Galgate, A6 south, farm buildings with crafts next to a nice canal,*

25. The pictures in the Lancaster City, Morecambe & Coast Lune Valley & Countryside Visitor Guide 2009 (I/T-10) produced by Lancaster City Council echo the themes of a long historic narrative, culture, “*cobbled streets and hidden alleyways*”, with pictures of the Castle, Quay, Museum, Aston Memorial, Dalton

Square and the Cathedral and Canal. The only modern architecture depicted is the Millennium Bridge, an iconic structure.

26. Impact on Tourism of Proposed Development

In the absence of any assessment of the impact of the development on tourism, it is difficult to predict how such a development will be received by the types of visitor attracted to Lancaster. It is noted that the project is offering few of the type of independent and distinctive cafés, tea and coffee shops, pubs, restaurants and shops favoured by the type of visitor coming to Lancaster. There are at least three consequences which will adversely affect the quality of Lancaster's tourism offering: the demolition of a large cluster of historic buildings, an increase in traffic, the extension of the retail centre away from the existing centre and the 'Historic Quarter' where the majority of Lancaster's tourists visit.

27. Demolishing Historic Buildings

The proposal involves demolishing most of the older buildings in an area of 5.4 hectares adjacent to the City Centre. This includes the familiar façade of Stonewell, at the bottom of Church Street, one of the main and most attractive thoroughfares for pedestrians leading from the Historic Quarter. These buildings, constructed in local materials, are from a variety of historic periods and illustrate the organic nature of Lancaster's growth, providing a historic and spatial continuity which links the City Centre with the canal, local housing and leads to Williamson's Park, one of Lancaster's landmarks and popular tourist attractions. To replace them with modern retail outlets and car parks will break that continuity. Not only will it also reduce the City's historic assets for ever, but, by being visible from the Castle area (see photo, I/T-11), it will also diminish the historic 'backdrop, part of the visitor experience and 'gaze'. This is described by Urry:

...what is the minimal characteristic of tourist activity is the fact that we look at, or gaze upon, particular objects, such as piers, towers, old buildings, artistic objects, food, countryside and so on. The actual purchases in tourism (the hotel bed, the meal, the ticket, etc) are often incidental to the gaze, which may be no more than a momentary view. Central to tourism consumption then is to look individually or collectively upon aspects of landscape or townscape which are distinctive, which signify an experience which contrasts with everyday experience.

(I/T-12, Consuming Places, 1995, pp 131-132,)

28. This is part of the vision encapsulated in The Lancashire Environment Strategy 2005-2010 (I/T-13)

The townscape and historic environment

All these sites are important to protect and enhance as they tell us about our history and contribute to the local character and sense of place today. They enrich our quality of life and can be an important driver of economic growth through opportunities to develop tourism. For example well-maintained historic streets and town centres help to attract visitors who then benefit the economy by using local shops, restaurants and other businesses.

(I/T-13, The Lancashire Environment Strategy 2005-2010, p 66)

29. Increasing Traffic

The report 'Historic Towns and Cities in England's Northwest: Position Statement' (I/T-06) identifies the pedestrian severance by the A6 'loop' as a problem for the quality and development of tourism in Lancaster. This loop separates the 'Historic Quarter' containing the Castle, Priory, Roman Baths, Quay and Judges Lodgings from the commercial heart of the city and the majority of the small outlets frequented by visitors. This problem can only be exacerbated by more traffic on that road from people reaching/leaving the 800 parking spaces in the proposed development. The greater the barriers, the fewer tourists will reach the City Centre to prolong their stays and increase their spending in Lancaster.

30. Moving the retail centre of the City

A feature of Lancaster's tourism is the appeal of small and diverse independent traders, cafes, pubs, etc. These are seen as an attraction themselves (see Lancashire Life, February 2009, I/T-14). As the Northwest Visitor Segmentation Research (I/T-05) established, small cafes, tea or coffee-shops, restaurants, pub, small shops and markets were popular with visitors. Such traders usually rely on a mixed trade: local, business and visitor and are sensitive to competition for any of these markets. If the local business is undermined by the proposed development, many of them will be unable to continue and this will reduce the variety and quality of the tourist offering available, and thus the attractiveness to visitors to Lancaster.

31. The Northwest Development Agency's 'A Strategic Marketing Framework and Action Plan' (I/T-15) acknowledges, the role of small businesses in tourism:

'... an area of industry dominated by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), and one that delivers so significant an amount of economic and social benefit...(p3)

32. Small businesses are vitally important in generating and retaining revenue in the area, because they are much more effective at 'recycling revenue' through the effect called the Local Multiplier, described in The Money Trail (I/T-16). This is because they tend to source locally, employ local people and businesses, who in turn spend locally, and are much less likely to 'leak' money to shareholders, consultants and providers outside the area, region or country.

33. A secondary effect of abstracting trade from the City Centre is: empty shops, signs of dereliction and decay, all of which are unattractive to visitors. When falling rents and business rates reduce the budgets for cleaning, maintenance and renewal, the poor environment further reduces visitor numbers and spending.

34. Lost Opportunity

As well as having a detrimental impact on tourism, the proposed development would represent a tremendous lost opportunity to improve tourism in line with District, County and Regional policies and strategies. The relevant ones are detailed below:

35. Lancaster City Tourism Strategy and Update (I/T-01 and CD99)

Most significantly, the Vision Board see “Tourism, heritage, culture, and quality of life” as playing a major role in the future economic prosperity of the District. The heritage offering of Lancaster, and the potential role of the Castle in particular, are seen as a key opportunity.

High profile projects will be the Vision's beacons; a new integrated transport solution to get the district moving again, Lancaster Castle's transformation into a major tourist attraction, developing a sustainable energy industry and leading the way in IT and new media. (I/T-15, p18)

Lancaster will be widely recognised as an important historic visitor destination with its diverse heritage and fine architecture. (I/T-15, p18)

*(I/T-15, p18) **Our vision***

A district which lives, breathes and functions as a single coherent whole, which is greater than the sum of its parts and within which geographical boundaries are broken down –

- known for and is proud of its distinctive world-class assets: the historical and attractive city centre of Lancaster, at its pinnacle a major tourist attraction, the castle; the magnificent seafront, views and leisure opportunities of Morecambe and Heysham; a contrasting landscape of lush valleys and moorland dotted with attractive village communities; and the educational and research prowess of Lancaster University*

....

- well and truly on the map as a quality and enjoyable visitor destination, for both day-trippers and short break tourists, capitalising upon the district's heritage, natural beauty and leisure assets*

- adept at promoting itself, both to its own population and to the world outside Lancaster & Morecambe, generating pride, respect and admiration. Success in this respect emanates from leadership, inspiration and a successfully executed ongoing promotional campaign*

(Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006-2010, I/T-15, p18)

36. Strategic Objectives:

- 1. “To develop the local tourism product and adapt to changing markets”*
- 2. “To actively market the district to our identified target segments in order to attract both staying and day visitors to the district.”*
- 3. “To provide high quality visitor services which exceed customer expectations.”*
- 4. “To integrate local destination management in order to improve the total visitor experience and the ‘look and feel’ of the district”.*

(I/T-15, Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006-2010, p 6)

37. Desired outcomes

- Increase tourist spend by an average of 5% annually across all categories of visitor.*
- Increase the number of staying visitors by average of 3% annually through increasing length of stay, converting day into staying visitors or attracting visitors from new markets.*
- Improve satisfaction levels from average to good across all sectors in the Bike It annual destination benchmarking survey.*

(I/T-15, Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006-2010, p 13)
Action Plan Update 2008 (CD99, Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley – 2008 Update, p 5)

Objective

Actions

To develop the local tourism product

*Enhance Lancaster's heritage offering through the opportunities presented by NWDA's Historic Towns and Cities initiative and the Vision Board
 Development and implementation of a Cycling Tourism Strategy and completion of tow path improvement works.*

To actively market the district to visitors

Increase the emphasis on the City's cultural heritage as a focus in marketing campaigns.

To provide high quality visitor services

To integrate local destination management in order to improve the visitor experience

(I/T-15, Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006-2010 and CD99 Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley – 2008 Update)

For the past decade, this district has been marketed using the "City, Country and Coast" message, emphasising the variety of the local tourism product. With Lancaster's designation as a Historic City, greater emphasis may now need to be placed on the cultural heritage of the district, surrounded by beautiful countryside and coastline.

(I/T-15 Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006-2010, p15)

38. The Lancashire Environment Strategy (I/T-13)

Promote local tourist destinations for local groups to reduce dependence on travel and stimulate the local tourist economy

Northwest Strategies

39. Transport Strategy Objectives (I/T-17)

W6: *Development of sustainable tourism in Blackpool and other coastal resorts; Preston and Lancaster and Rural Areas, including AONBs and Regional Parks*

*Improve the public realm in the North West's regional centres, regional town and cities and key tourist destinations through the introduction of an integrated range of measures to manage travel demand and encourage a shift from the car to more sustainable modes of transport
 Increase journeys by bus and rail*

40. NorthWest of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (CD61)

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should seek to deliver improved economic growth and quality of life, through sustainable tourism activity in

the North West. This should be in line with the principles outlined in Policy W7 and focused on:

.....

Carlisle, Bolton, Birkenhead, Lancaster and Kendal as destinations with emerging potential for heritage related tourism development, where tourism supports and compliments their status as historic towns and cities;

41. (CD61) Policy EM1 (C): Historic Environment

Plans, strategies, proposals and schemes should protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment supporting conservation-led regeneration in areas rich in historic interest, and in particular exploiting the regeneration potential of:

.....

the historic Cities of Carlisle, Chester and Lancaster;

(CD61) Policy CNL 4 Spatial Policy for North Lancashire

Plans and strategies will:

support sustainable growth in Lancaster in line with RDF1, the spatial principles DP1-9, W2 and W3 and CNL1, ensuring development is compatible with the conservation of the historic city;

42. North West Regional's 'The Strategy for Tourism in England's Northwest: Developing the Visitor Economy' (I/T-18)

This document stresses the importance of giving the 'centre stage to the principles of sustainable development' (p3), through offering 'the best quality experience' (p4), 'providing wonderful food, using local produce as much as possible' (p4), 'A public realm that is characterised by high quality design that in places is exceptional' (p4), 'Demonstrating through action that we really care for our environment and for the people who visit our region and its destinations' (p4).

43. The document identifies the importance of individuality of place to attract visitors and stimulate pride amongst residents and of achieving this sustainably.

'A destination's sense of place – the quality of its distinctiveness and its authenticity – is the key to making it stand out for visitors.' (p13)

At the core of the concept of the visitor economy are all of the elements that make for a successful and sustainable destination, for both tourists and non-tourists;

it embraces:

- All of the things that attract people to the place; this means the diverse range of destinations in the region, the natural environment, our heritage and culture and the places that give life to this, iconic buildings, the retail, sport and leisure facilities, food, gardens, events and scenery. In other words, all of the things that make a place special, distinctive and capable of engendering pride, therefore making it a place worth experiencing. (p6)*

We need to raise our standards of design in particular our aim should be to make our region a beacon of high quality design....

The role of local authorities is paramount in creating a strong sense of place; this is the objective through which they can make the greatest contribution to the visitor economy. (P13)

(North West Regional's 'The Strategy for Tourism in England's Northwest: Developing the Visitor Economy' I/T-18)

44. The proposed development, with its dedication to large, chain-store retailing, car parks and universal architecture thwarts attempts to create a unique area with a sense of place, which could offer a high quality visitor and resident experience building on the heritage of Lancaster. This could be achieved by a combination of renovation of the older buildings and new, individual, even iconic buildings which would differentiate Lancaster from other shopping centres. Where buildings and other structures are distinct and yet reflect the locality, they are quickly adopted as symbols of the area. The Millennium Bridge, Ashton Memorial in Lancaster, the Midland Hotel, statue of Eric Morecambe in Morecambe and the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao are all examples of how iconic additions to the townscape generate pride for residents and recognition, even branding, for visitors. Urry (1995) (I/T-12, Chap 10) explains how conservation encourages tourism and makes places better to live in (p 155).

Modern buildings have been particularly unpopular Vernacular buildings by contrast appear very attractive to British people and well worth preserving.
Urry (1995) Consuming Places (I/T-12, Chap 10)

45. Redeveloping the area also presents the opportunity to create more sustainable buildings and flexible patterns of use, which would be more resilient to changing economic pressures and supplies of resources while better reflecting the character and wishes of the community. Again, these could provide an example for other destinations.
46. A report by English Heritage (I/T-19 Heritage Counts, 2003) explains how historic areas can help communities to be more sustainable.

The historic environment has a key role to play in contributing to the Communities Plan, which lists the following as being among the requirements of a sustainable community:

...

Buildings - both individually and collectively – that can meet different needs over time and that minimise the use of resources

.....

A well integrated mix of decent homes of different types and tenures to support a range of household sizes and incomes

A diverse, vibrant and creative local culture, encouraging pride in the community and cohesion within it

A 'sense of place'

(I/T-19 Heritage Counts, 2003)

47. The project also undermines attempts to make tourism more sustainable by encouraging longer, low-carbon/high spend visits and stays through better use of

cycling, walking and public transport, by breaking the continuity of historic architecture along potential routes (to Williams Park, along the Canal) and diverting cycle tracks. (Increasing cycling and capitalising on the City's status as a Cycle Demonstration Town was seen as an opportunity in the Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006-2010, p24 (I/T-15))

48. By ignoring tourism, it has removed considerable potential to improve and increase it.

49. **Sense of Identity**

Lancaster's healthy and buoyant existing tourism market is based on the sort of people who prefer to explore a distinctive urban environment and who are not wedded to 'high street' values. Significant proportions of Lancaster's visitors arrive as family groups, and the demographics do not suggest that this is the sort of visitor profile that would be drawn to the Canal Corridor development. Given the current and potential importance of tourism to Lancaster's economy, as acknowledged by the City's own policies, it is remarkable that the present proposal makes little mention of it. We therefore assume either that the developers accept that this proposal is of no positive importance to tourism in Lancaster, or that they recognise that this evidence is inconvenient to them and would prefer it not to be advanced. It is difficult to see how this scheme would attract people from outside the city, whether as day-trippers or longer-stay tourists, especially given the current profile. There is nothing in the Canal Corridor proposals that cannot be found elsewhere: no iconic buildings, no distinctive atmosphere or sense of place, nothing to encourage anyone to make a journey. Melanie K. Smith, in *Tourism, Culture and Regeneration* (I/T-20) (Wallingford: CABI, 2007, pp. xiv-xvii, 4-5), points out that in order to attract up-market, 'creative' tourists who spend heavily and enhance destination status it is necessary to provide 'more authentic venues', as opposed to what she describes as 'international blandscapes' and the 'serial monotony' of 'standardized developments that could be anywhere. This proposal is 'authentic' only on its own terms, as a standard example of identikit developments characteristic of the early twenty-first century, drawn from a palette of generic designs and planted in a landscape without any concern, still less respect, for its distinctive past. It would only become of interest to tourists of a specialised kind if it ultimately became one of the last examples of the urban regenerationist architecture of the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. If you want discerning people to visit your town, or come and live in it out of choice, the last thing you want is for significant parts of it to look just like everywhere else. The concept of the 'clone town' is as relevant to tourism as to retail, which cannot be kept in separate boxes; and loss of individuality and distinctiveness is recognised as a problem for successful place marketing in a competitive environment. (I/T-21, Report of the New Economics Foundation on Clone Towns, http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/news_clonetownbritainresults.aspx) The proposed development threatens the integrity of the existing Lancaster tourist 'brand' as defined by the city's own tourism department. (I/T-15, Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley 2006-2010 and CD99 Tourism Strategy: Morecambe, Lancaster and the Lune Valley – 2008 Update)

50. The failure to take account of tourism confirms our view that the only market for the retail aspects of this development will be local. The scheme may indeed attract a certain amount of local custom for higher-end purchases and shopping experiences that currently necessitate visits to Preston or Manchester. However, it lacks the scale and ambition to compete with (for example) Manchester city centre, which is a retail tourist destination in its own right and has benefited from preserving and adapting distinctive older architectures and street plans. In any event, in the absence of high levels of up-market housing development and increased per capita spending in Lancaster and district, it is inevitable that any success it achieves will entail serious damage to the financial health of the existing central retail district, which is already suffering from current economic problems, unattractive empty premises and (probably) the blight of uncertainty as to future competition from the canal corridor. It is therefore relevant to consider the impact of this outcome on Lancaster's important tourist economy, which happens to be focused on the existing historic central retail district and, as we have seen, to rely heavily on the sort of visitors who would not be interested in the proposed development. The attitude of Edinburgh's City Council may be instructive:

Edinburgh has also been awarded a range of accolades: for the best quality of life in the UK, for the highest level of resident satisfaction (95%) in the UK, and for the best UK visitor destination. Clearly there is something very good here but what is it that makes us special?

PLACE is our Unique Selling Point. It is something which nobody can replicate and which has given us a unique advantage over our rival cities, both far and wide. PLACE is our urban landscape, our architectural fabric and our heritage.

(I/T-31) Buchanan (2008)

http://www.eh8.org.uk/tom_buchanan_s_heritage_development_speech
(accessed 05/05/09)

51. As making a successful tourism-based case would have been very useful to the developers, we suggest that their failure to construct such a case reflects their understanding that this is a damaging area for them. The canal corridor development is likely to be unsuccessful on its own terms, but in the process it may divert sufficient local demand away from the existing central retail and tourist district to undermine its viability. This would in turn reduce the attractiveness of central Lancaster to tourists. In order to maximise profits for its investors, the proposed development will need to try to concentrate as much local consumption as possible into its own area. It will therefore come to resemble a gated tourist resort in a developing economy, siphoning profit out of the locality to external investors and providing only a small number of poorly-paid retail jobs in return, while removing existing ones in the town centre. There are many existing critiques of such developments elsewhere: '...a reliance on outside entrepreneurs, especially big business, from distant metropolitan centres or foreign countries, often is seen as an initial economic booster that has little beneficial long-term effect on the local economy because of the leakage and dependency created in such relationships. Relying on external capital and entrepreneurship naturally weakens the local returns and control, as dividends flow back to the capital's source...' (I/T-22, Murphy, A. *Strategic Management for Tourism Communities*,

Clevedon: Channel View, 2004, p.149) Any talk of ‘creating jobs’ under these circumstances is illusory. As this proposal is aimed at redistributing existing local demand, with an increment for certain kinds of shopping that were not available hitherto (but could easily be made available in the historic city centre, in vacant premises like the old Co-operative emporium/ Woolworths complex or the threatened Market Hall if there were real demand for them), it is bound to destroy jobs and businesses elsewhere in the city. It will thereby exacerbate existing problems of empty retail premises, damage the city centre ambience and undermine Lancaster’s real competitive attraction for up-market tourists, whether as a destination in its own right or as a staging-post to the Lake District and Scotland. One telling analogy is with recent developments in Thanet, where the Westwood Cross shopping development has siphoned off enough local demand to exacerbate the problems of existing historic retail and tourism districts in Margate and Ramsgate, and contributed to a situation in which those areas can be perceived as dominated by a ‘bad element’ whose presence deters more up-market shoppers and tourists. A recent (but pre financial crisis) survey (I/T-23) found less than 9 per cent ‘empties’ in Westwood Cross, but between a quarter and one-third in Margate and Ramsgate. The ‘fit’ is not perfect: Margate and Ramsgate were already in decline as tourist destinations, but on the other hand the Westwood Centre is out of town rather than being on the urban fringe. (I/T-23) (<http://thanetstar.com/article/thanet-s-reaction-to-westwood-cross>) If anything like this were to happen in Lancaster it would do serious damage to (in this case) a vibrant existing tourist industry. This appears not to have been considered.

52. Towns that compete successfully as tourism destinations rarely flourish in competitive market circumstances unless they have distinctive environmental assets that make them ‘worth a detour’ to see and experience things that have no counterparts elsewhere. A good example is the success of Whitby, North Yorkshire, in winning the *Holiday Which* ‘Best Seaside Resort’ title in 2006 (I/T-24, <http://www.whitbygazette.co.uk/news/Whitby-voted-best-seaside-resort.1499452.jp>). Whitby’s success at this time was part of a wider renaissance of small British seaside resorts which were perceived to have distinctive character and atmosphere, interesting historic buildings, and family-run shops, restaurants and pubs that displayed local character, and to be the bearers of attractive, evocative traditions from the history of the English seaside, into the beginning of the new millennium. (I/T-25, (J.K. Walton, ‘Whitby: une station balnéaire, du XVIIIe au XXe siècle’ (Whitby: a seaside resort from the eighteenth to the twentieth century’), in Y. Perret-Gentil, A. Lottin and J.-P. Poussu (eds.), *Les villes balnéaires d’Europe occidentale du XVIIIe siècle a nos jours* (Paris: Presses de l’Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2008), pp. 233-59: English translation provided). Tourism in Lancaster itself is based on this model, as the Council itself, wearing a different hat, recognises; and the closer the city approximates to a ‘clone town’, with standardised architecture and shops meeting current developers’ expectations, the less competitive it will be. The proposed development, on the fringe of the attractive city centre, will add nothing to Lancaster’s existing assets while undermining their own viability by leaching away some of the spending that is currently allocated to the historic centre.

53. To lose the older buildings not only has an emotional cost, but a financial one.
English Heritage report (I/T-26, The Economic Value of the Historic

Environment, in Heritage Counts (2003) English Heritage) that ‘*individuals and communities derive identity and meaning from the historic environment*’ but enjoy living in older properties, being willing to pay more to do so. They use evidence from a survey by The Nationwide Building Society which compared the prices of older and newer houses and found that a pre 1919 house is worth, on average 20% more than its modern equivalent (I/T-26, The Economic Value of the Historic Environment, in Heritage Counts (2003) English Heritage).

Urry (1995) (I/T-12, Consuming Places, 1995, p 156) notes that:

Preservation also need not be of a building- it can be of a road layout or of the shape of an original building.normally conservation is sought in relationship to some aspect of the built environment which is taken to stand for or represent the locality in question. It is not merely that the object is historical, but that the objects signifies the place and if the object were to be demolished or substantially changed, then that would signify a threat to the place itself.

54. He illustrates his point with examples from Morecambe and Lancaster (The Winter Gardens and the siting of Lancaster Market) (I/T-12, Consuming Places, 1995, p 156)

55. Inheritance

The plans allow for the developing company and its successors to have control over the land for the duration of a 250 year lease. This effectively privatises the area for numerous generations of Lancastrians and permits commercial organisations to govern what and who is allowed on that land. Even if the current developers adopt an inclusive policy, their successors may not. David Sibley (I/T-27) writes about the alienation encountered by adolescents excluded from shopping malls because they do not fit in with the ambience of the development.

Exclusion may be an unintended consequence of commercial development. Adolescents will be acutely aware of the discrimination against them, while their exclusion is much less likely to impinge on the consciousness of conforming adults. P xii

56. There are already examples of such companies banning young people wearing hoodies (I/T-28, Guardian, 13th May 2005) in shopping centres selling the garments because they make it difficult to identify people from CCTV images. As well as young people, many other groups, such as ethnic minorities, do not feel welcome in new, purpose-built shopping areas. The alienation created can cause disaffected groups to gather in other areas, where they are perceived as intimidating by other residents and visitors.
57. Anna Minton (I/T-29, The Privatisation of Public Space) sees the controlled environment and need to exclude ‘undesirables’ as a consequence of creating a high quality consumer and consuming space. This also paradoxically also results in a ‘sameness’ of such spaces, despite their claims to uniqueness.
58. The potential of such discrimination does not sit happily with most people’s vision for Lancaster, nor make them proud to belong to the City. The anger felt by not

being consulted about this site has every chance of being repeated time and time again if the citizens of Lancaster are given no control over its management.

59. Adam Caruso argues that;

'density of ownership' and the resulting heterogeneity that results is 'characteristic of and necessary to a liberal and democratic society', as it is the only way of ensuring the diversity necessary to city life.

(I/T-29) Quoted in Minton, *The Privatisation of Public Space*

60. The proposed development also undermines, for residents, regular visitors and the important (though unquantifiable) constituency of revisiting students, that sense of familiarity with a well-loved urban environment that the geographers Tuan and Relph defined as 'topophilia', to Tuan 'the affective bond between people and place', and to Relph 'a homeward directed sentiment, one that is comfortable, detailed, diverse and ambiguous without confusion'. (I/T-30, P.R. Hay, *Main Currents in Western Environmental Thought*, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 157). This is particularly apparent at the point where Stonewell meets the one-way system, as a 'comfortable, detailed, diverse' group of historic buildings, characteristic of historic Lancaster in date, complexity and architecture, is threatened with demolition and replacement by something completely 'placeless', to borrow another concept coined by Relph. This threat forms part of an enduring piecemeal erosion of that historic character of Lancaster which, as the Council recognises, is what makes it attractive to growing numbers of high-spending tourists. These demolitions are also completely unnecessary, unless we are to view the developers' scheme in its entirety as such a sacred work of art that no compromise can be entertained, even at the fringes. The privatization, for 250 years, of land that is currently accessible to the public, and the excision of an existing complex street plan, also undermines the historic distinctiveness of this area.

61. Cllr Tom Buchanan, Convener of the Economic Development Committee of Edinburgh City Council, outlined the priorities in his speech (I/T-31) in November 2008.

Yet all our efforts to stimulate investment and nurture sustainable growth will be futile if we are ourselves unresolved as to whether or not development is right for Edinburgh. If we portray an image of being closed to development and are seen to be fighting with ourselves, then we stand to lose out to our rivals. That is not to say that we must welcome all development. There will be those who propose ill-suited projects and who seek merely to make money at our expense, but if we take a proactive approach and work to drive the process of change, then we will have a much greater opportunity to shape the future of our city.

.....

We must become champions of change, 'development friendly', though by no means individual developer friendly.

.....

If we bury our heads in the sand it is most likely that development will happen regardless. However, if we determine our own vision and act as development facilitators then we have a much greater chance of achieving our vision.

62. This is not to argue that the canal corridor area behind the Stonewell, as it stands in all its neglect, is attractive to tourists in its present state. But we need to examine alternatives to the present scheme, because the opportunity costs of its adoption are very damaging to the future of tourism in Lancaster. If an alternative scheme were to be adopted that respected the historic scale and complexity of the existing site, and offered the mix of comfort, detail and diversity (not least in retail) that Relph associates with topophilia, it could become an asset rather than a liability for the future development of tourism in the city. It would attract rather than deter the kind of tourists Lancaster seeks, and assist it in competing in the regional, national and international tourism market place. As Tom Buchanan said about Edinburgh (I/T-31)

A city that is complete is a dead city. Edinburgh is not complete but is a living organism and must therefore continuously evolve and adapt. Yet heritage is what makes Edinburgh special and gives this city a competitive edge over rivals both near and far.

.....
As much as we do not seek to become a tourist theme park with heritage as the only string to our bow, we do not want to see unchecked development dilute our Unique Selling Point. We do not want to be Anytown, Anyplace, Anycountry.

63. In making this point we also issue a reminder that It's Our City is an organization with a positive outlook, and that its goal is the real improvement of Lancaster in ways that offer a distinctive blend of tradition and innovation which respects the city's past as well as adapting to changing times and anticipating future needs. In Buchanan's words (I/T-31):

It is not a question of heritage or development. There should be no battle. We can, and must, preserve the heritage of the past whilst adding the heritage of the future

Conclusions

64. **Tourism is an important component of the economy of the city of Lancaster, as employer and income generator.**
65. **Lancaster's visiting public is drawn disproportionately from middle-class families with an independent cast of mind and an interest in seeking out distinctive places and experiences.**
66. **The Council's tourism policy acknowledges these points, and has incorporated them into its tourism strategy.**
67. **It is therefore surprising that the Canal Corridor makes no mention of tourism. This suggests that the proponents do not expect the scheme to have a positive impact on Lancaster's tourism volume or profile.**
68. **We argue that the Canal Corridor proposal, if adopted, would damage Lancaster's tourism economy by undermining the viability of the existing central commercial district, which is also the main tourist area, and**

rendering it less attractive to the kind of visitor on which Lancaster's strong and growing tourism industry depends.

- 69. As part of this process the scheme would undermine Lancaster's historic distinctiveness, contribute to the erosion of attractive historic townscapes, and compromise the capacity of the city centre to generate feelings of comfort, affection and familiarity among residents and repeat visitors.**
- 70. An alternative proposal on a more human scale, showing respect for the historic environment and offering detail, texture, diversity and individuality, could become a positive attribute in developing Lancaster's tourist economy; and the present proposal therefore carries an additional weight of lost opportunity.**

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