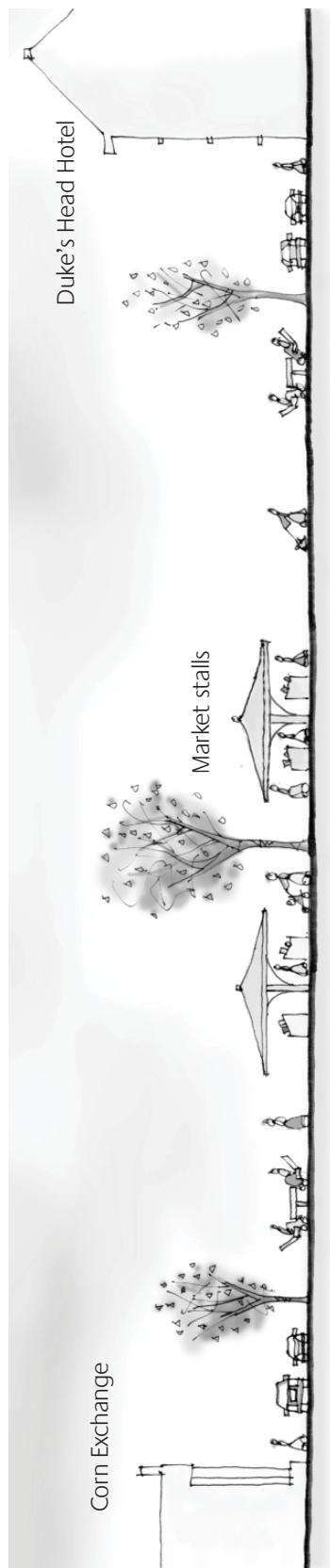


Tuesday Market Place Sketch

Tuesday Market Place Section



Implementation and delivery

The extent to which the Port Authority are able to release land, and the continuing operations of the Timber Yard will determine the development timescales and phasing strategy for this site. The southern part, under the control of the Timber Yard, is anticipated to come forward for redevelopment more readily, and we understand this to be in single ownership which should make delivery more straightforward as there is no need for large scale land assembly.

As early meeting with the landowners should be arranged, to discuss the outline development brief proposals, and investigate their priorities for the site. The outcome of this will influence the method of delivery adopted, and whether an open market disposal approach is implemented, or whether there are partnering opportunities.

It is likely that any development in this area will be residential-led, so residential developers should be approached in the first instance. There are a number of the volume house builders who have developed niche skills in relation to quality high-density residential developments incorporating commercial uses at a ground floor level, who may have not been active in King's Lynn previously, but may be persuaded if an opportunity within their area of expertise and which fits their income profile requirements can be secured.

The nature of this site offers potential for waterfront properties, which usually command a premium price. Combined with the ability of this site to offer higher density, high value apartment-style living, this could be a site which is financially able to make strong S106 contributions. We would suggest any scheme is financially appraised to assess the probability of this, but if monies were available, these could put towards improvements in the immediate locality, such as landscaping and public realm improvements to Tuesday Market Place, the restoration of heritage assets in the locality and town centre parking facilities on site.

Any new parking development could be done in conjunction with a residential developer of the site, which would assist in funding its development, the incentive being offering part dedication of the final car park to resident parking and/or car share scheme parking for any residential development. This also has the dual effect of minimising the area given over to parking spaces in the town, and also preventing large areas of underused parking spaces which are dead outside of daytime hours.

The history of the site is also likely to mean that there may be archaeological interest on the site, and early desktop and trial pit investigation would be useful in identifying any show stoppers to development and may avert delays further down the line.

Austin Fields Analysis

Austin Fields

Existing Situation

Austin Fields currently houses a variety of uses. Some of these include a collection of light industrial units, a Royal Mail sorting office, a scattering of houses, surface car parks, and office units. Also within this area is a restaurant, and several retail units. Although this site lacks an identity, it is dominated by the large electricity station on Austin Fields which is quite visually over-bearing and creates an unattractive environment.

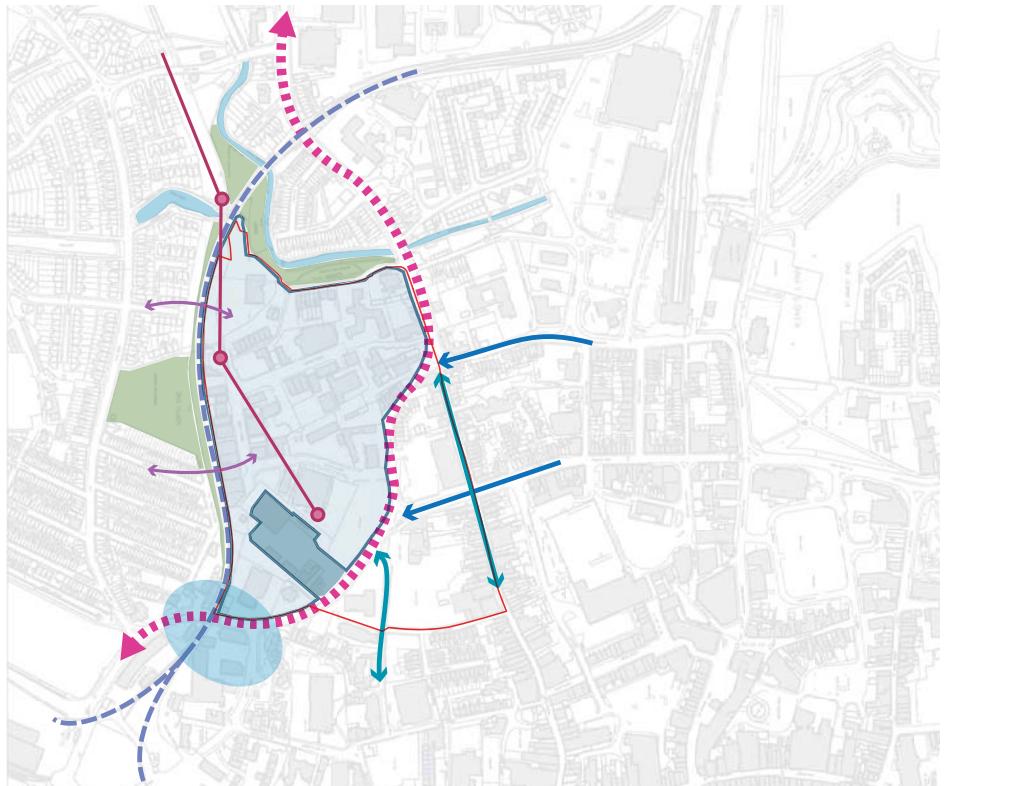
The location of this site creates good access to the town centre, train station, and bus station. However, John Kennedy Road which leads to Austin Street and Littleport Street and the vehicular traffic they carry does restrict the ease of movement for pedestrians to the town centre.

The Austin Fields area arises as an entrance point to King's Lynn town centre for visitors from the north and from the east, and so creates the first impression of the town for visitors to King's Lynn. Due to the industrial nature of the buildings, this first impression is poor.

Access to the area is primarily from the busy main road, and from the north can only be accessed by a crossing over the disused railway. The combination of this railway track, and the main roads, John Kennedy Road, Austin Street and Littleport Street mean that Austin Fields appears quite severed from both town centre activity and pedestrian movement from the residential area surrounding North End recreation ground.

The area itself holds no substantial green space, but is bordered to the east by allotment gardens, the Gaywood River and Kettlewell Lane recreation ground. To the north is the North End recreation ground and the disused railway, which provides a valuable wildlife habitat. The Town Wall also runs through, and along the east of Austin Fields.

The character of the area is poor and its proximity to the town centre has a detrimental effect on the character of the town centre



Austin Fields Appropriate Development Responses

1. The proportion of the area devoted to residential land uses should be increased. The proximity of the town centre and the fact that the site is a prominent one make some of the industrial land uses inappropriate. Given the right incentives, it may be possible to encourage some of the businesses in this area that do not benefit from a town centre location to move to a more easily accessible location such as the Hardwick Industrial Estate Extension. Some businesses benefit from 'walk-in trade'. Their presence should be retained.

2. Retain the area accommodating the electricity station, cost factors make removal implausible, and the existing character of the area supports retaining this as its location.

3. Retain an area of commercial use immediately surrounding the electricity station. By doing this, any nearby residential development will not lose appeal and desirability.

4. Office space in this area will be well located, close to the bus and train station and to the town centre. Through targeted, innovative and affordable design with clear marketing to small business users and service providers this area could be developed and managed with a focus for targeting new employment sectors for the town centre

5. Austin Fields presents a suitable site for multi storey car park. This will serve visitors from the east, and will provide a convenient termination of vehicular journeys into the town centre. Subsequent pedestrian movement from the car park should then be safe and easy in accessing the town. An ideal location for this could be Austin Street.

6. Retain areas of green space along the railway, and continue this towards the town centre through careful planting and creation of a new green route. The railway line is ideal for following as a cycle link and can help with the continuity of cycle movement around the town.

7. Some on street parking will be provided for residents in the area.

8. A strong frontage should be created to front the main road (John Kennedy Road, Austin Street and Littleport Street). This should be continuous as far as possible, and the large road junctions fed by Blackfriars Road and Railway Road should be faced by strong built form.



Austin Fields Concept:

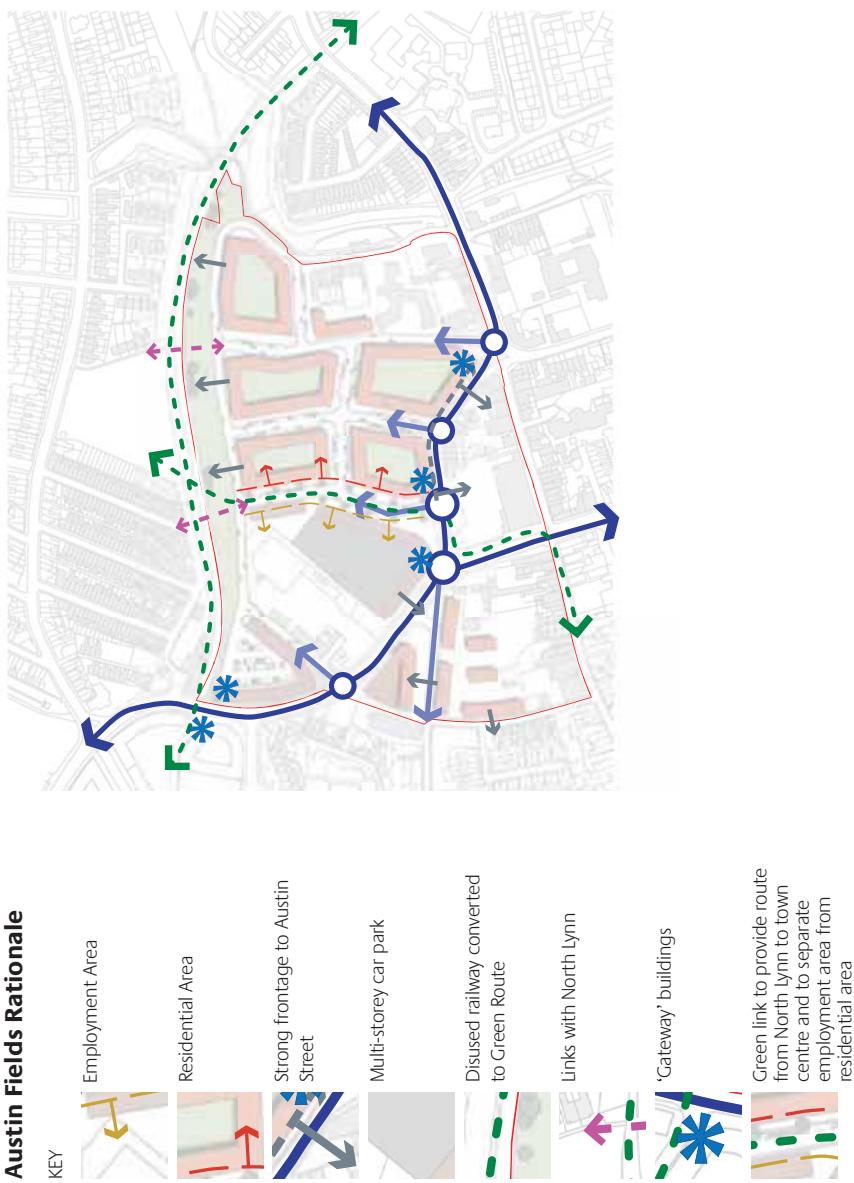
- Establish and extend green route to the east and west, and to the north and south
- Strengthen links across railway track
- Create a strong identity to northern gateway
- Retain electricity station, and assume re-routing of pylons
- Area of commercial development
- Area of residential development
- Reinforce street frontage
- Create a strong focal point fronting busy vehicular junction



9. Create an appropriate gateway to King's Lynn to the north west of the site for visitors approaching from the north by implementing careful use of scale and well designed buildings.

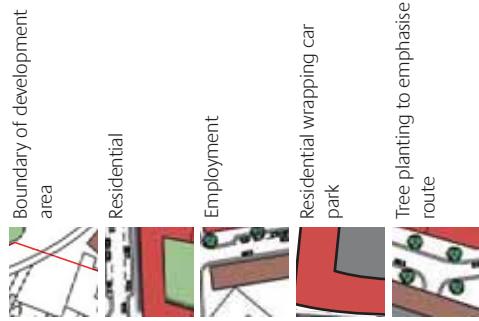
10. Retain existing established housing and further buildings of value to east of the site. However, should Austin Street be returned to two way traffic, it is assumed that a small number of houses on the north side of the street may have to be demolished to allow road widening.

11. The scale of the buildings should respect the surrounding character of two three and occasional four storey buildings. Strong frontage to Austin Street however may warrant four or five storeys whilst development to the north should be more in keeping with the two storey terraced houses to the north.



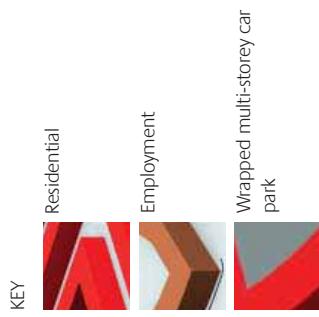


Austin Fields Example Response





Austin Fields Perspective



Implementation and delivery

Being in active industrial use, this site presents some difficulties in terms of delivery, and if this site is to be brought forward for alternative uses, then a strategy for land assembly and acquisitions needs to be developed. Title/ownership should be investigated as a priority. The electricity substation and power lines are likely to mean there are wayleaves/easements running across the site, which may inhibit development and configurations, and any opportunity to relocate these, such as under road widening schemes, should be investigated. We understand that whilst parts of Austin Fields may be owned by KL&WN BC, there are also a number of other freehold interests, with some industrial units being owner-occupied by local businesses, as well as there being national corporate occupiers such as Royal Mail on the site, all of which will need bringing together to create a package which is suitable for redevelopment.

Freehold acquisitions can be done either through compulsory purchase, or by negotiation, utilising notice periods identified in statute to gain vacant possession where properties are tenanted. Either way, it is likely to be a protracted and costly process, as the value in existing use of the interests is likely to be relatively high, even before issues such as resourcing acquisitive expertise, compensation and relocation costs are considered.

Therefore we would suggest this site is either a longer-term redevelopment priority, to be considered for redevelopment when the existing uses are approaching obsolescence, or a monitoring priority, with an ongoing approach to aligning and acquiring interests. This is something which could be taken on by KL&WN BC, or it is a potential partnering opportunity with a developer who may have the resources to commit to land assembly through a mixture of pro-active and opportunistic acquisitions.

Alongside the latter approach, there should be a plan prepared for relocating businesses, so that employment uses which have been successfully operating out of Austin Fields are not lost from the town entirely. Suitable sites should be identified with input from the tenants, and the concept of relocation floated positively with a programme of business support. Where sites are not as favourable as their current location, this could include grants subsidising rates on new space for an initial period (particularly where new units are utilised to house relocated tenants, which may be more expensive than those they currently enjoy). Alternatively local authority partnerships on new industrial developments could be explored so an income is enjoyed by KL&WN BC at the same time as supporting

tenants through offering sub-market rates.

The mix of uses on this site should also be considered in relation to the strengths of the market at the time of redevelopment, as commercial uses, particularly good quality office space may generate as high values as residential uses. This is particularly true given the good town centre location and lack generally of modern town centre office stock (most being small retail-style or above retail units) in King's Lynn. Service providers would currently struggle to find suitable office space in the town even if they could be persuaded by other merits of the location, so developing such stock here could underpin the aim of diversifying the employment economy, perhaps again done through a partnership approach to retain income to the Council.

Once the site has reached the stage of being able to be redeveloped for alternative uses, the presence of the highly visible electricity sub-station should be given some thought. In its present state it may deter residential purchasers and some commercial occupiers and whilst the cost is likely to be prohibitive to relocation, configurations of uses should be orientated so as to not make a feature of this element. Contributions from development in the area should be sought and landscaping around this area should be investigated to maximise the market interest.