

# A PLAN FOR CONSETT TOWN CENTRE

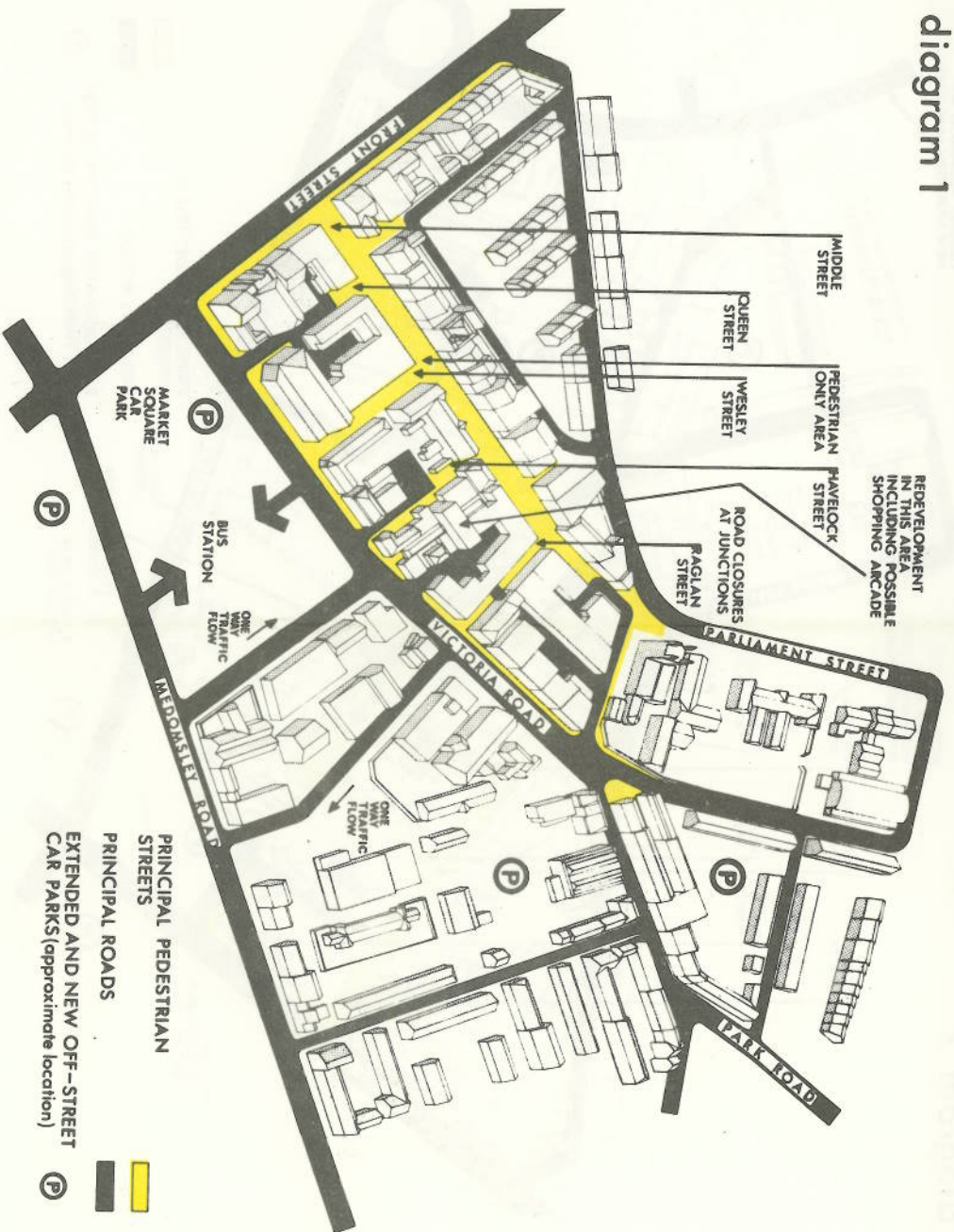
When visiting Consett Town Centre at present you are probably aware that the streets carry a lot of motor traffic at times, and that there are still a number of old and unsuitable buildings. The Urban District Council and the County Council are considering ways and means of improving the centre and they would like to have your views on what can and should be done. For this purpose a questionnaire is enclosed with this leaflet. A full report on the town centre has been prepared and copies of it can be seen or bought at public libraries or at the Council Offices. This leaflet summarises the main points of the report.

## the study

In Consett, even if the population does not increase, the amount of motor traffic is likely to increase by almost half as much again by 1972 and by more than double by 1981. Whilst most of the roads in the town centre should be able to carry this extra traffic up to 1981, there will be other problems. For instance, the noise and fumes of heavy traffic will increase and pavements will be more crowded. Crossing the road will take longer, particularly for older people and young children, and the risk of accidents to pedestrians is already greatest in the main shopping streets.

The increase in traffic will also lead to a greater demand for car parking spaces, especially as it becomes necessary to restrict parking on streets to allow the traffic to flow. The main concerns of the study for the next few years are to make the town centre safer for pedestrians and provide more car parks. The study has shown that in some of the main shopping streets most premises have adequate rear or side access. As alternative routes are available, it may, there-

diagram 1



fore, be possible to improve conditions for pedestrians by removing motor vehicles from these streets; this is one of the main aims of the proposals described below.

## the first stage

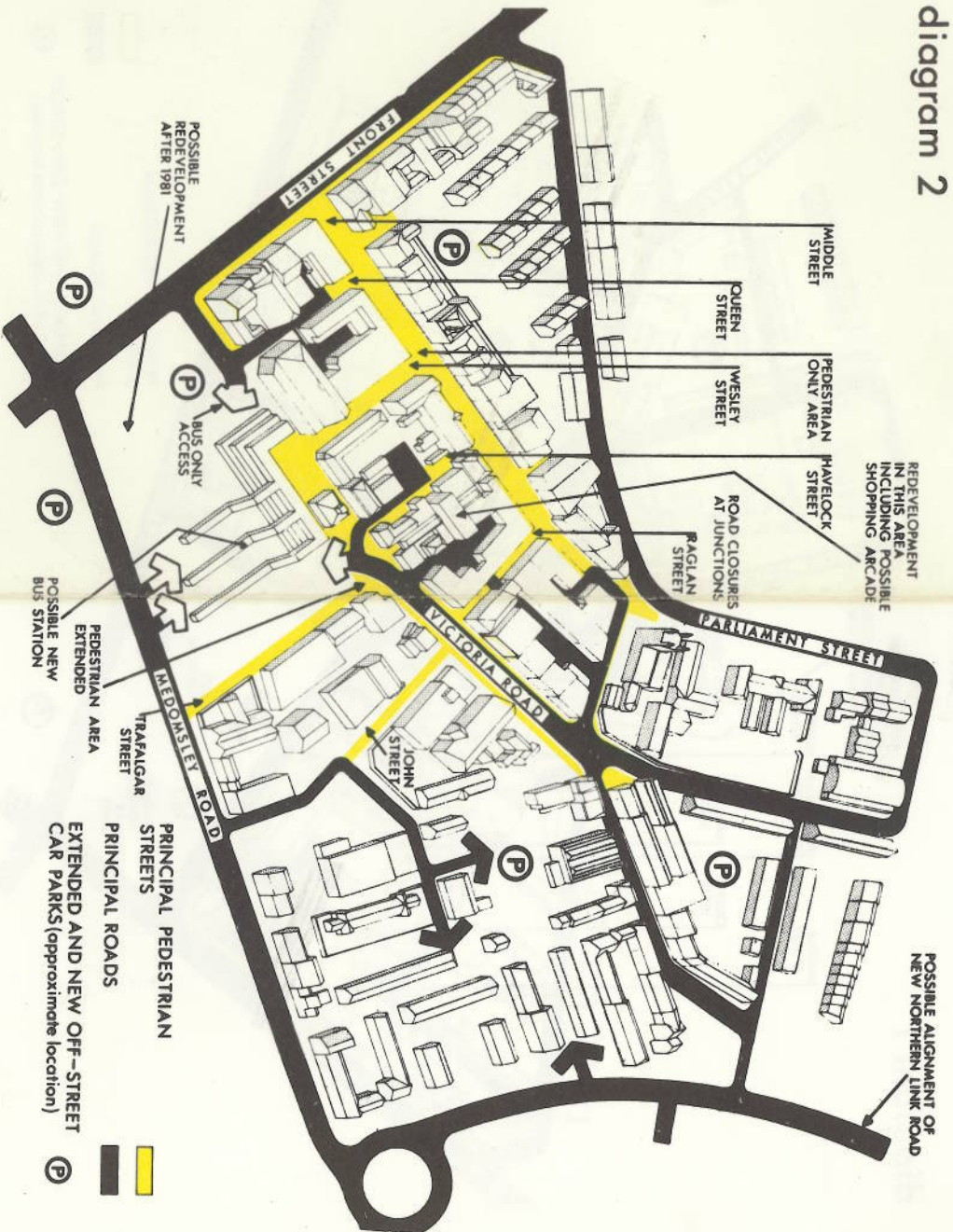
Diagram 1 illustrates what could be done by 1972. Middle Street, Havelock Street, Wesley Street and Raglan Street could be 'pedestrian only' streets closed to all motor vehicles. Deliveries to shops in this area could be made from Nile Street on the west side and from

improved service roads off Victoria Road on the east side. The shops between Raglan Street and Havelock Street could be redeveloped and a new service road provided. Traffic on Church Street could be reduced by closing the junction with Albert Road. A comprehensive 'face-lift' could be carried out in Middle Street. This would involve the improvement of signs, advertisements, fascias, street furniture and the paving of the street surface.

Further parking restrictions would be needed on all main traffic routes to improve the flow of



## Diagram 2



traffic. As a result of these restrictions and street closures about 240 off-street parking spaces would be required in the areas shown on Diagram 1.

### the second stage

Possible further action in the period 1972 to 1981 is shown on Diagram 2. A section of Victoria Road could be closed near the Bus Station to provide a safe route to the main shops. John Street and Trafalgar Street could also be made 'pedestrian only' streets. A new road between

Park Road and Medomsley Road would divert traffic from Victoria Road via Medomsley Road and Front Street. A subsidiary north-south route via Bertha Street, Parliament Street and Albert Road would mainly serve new car parks.

Possible areas in which multi-storey or surface car parks could be built for 1,300 cars to meet expected needs by 1981 are shown on Diagram 2. Because of the problems of crossing busy roads, new shops would be discouraged on the east of Medomsley Road and south of Front Street and more pedestrian crossings may be necessary on these streets.

## beyond 1981

Despite the strong case for closing Front Street to traffic for the benefit of pedestrians, the substantial expenditure involved cannot be contemplated before 1981. It seems likely, however, that by 1981 Front Street will be overloaded and it will be necessary to provide an alternative route. This could be done either by widening Front Street or building a by-pass. Any shops affected could be rebuilt in the Market Square. However the final decision must await more detailed studies nearer the time when Front Street becomes overloaded by traffic.

These proposals are NOT yet finalised and have been publicised to find out your views. Before proceeding further we intend to consider fully any problems or suggestions raised.

