

Appendix 2 Market Asset Management (Doncaster) Ltd: Doncaster and Mexborough Markets Strategy and Vision



# DONCASTER AND MEXBOROUGH MARKETS: STRATEGY AND VISION

MARKET ASSET MANAGEMENT (DONCASTER) LTD

# Vision statement

Doncaster Market is one of the best markets in the North, and still one of the largest in the country. We wish to see it returned to its historic significance on a regional and national level.

Both Doncaster and Mexborough Markets must return to their roles as central community hubs, not just for mercantile transactions but as social, community, leisure and education destinations. We want to restore the market as **the beating heartbeat of the town, by locals and for locals.**

As the country moves past the far-reaching impacts of Covid-19, it is **community, localism and entrepreneurial spirit which will pave the way for recovery.**

With an already **excellent fresh food offer, a destination street food and entertainments venue, creative enterprises and independent retail**, the Doncaster Market is well placed to act as a catalyst for community driven initiatives and incubator space for small and start-up businesses.

Mexborough Market is a key part of the town centre, providing vital fresh food sales. It is well placed to assist with the regeneration of the town centre, providing a focus for new residents when moving to Mexborough, providing high-quality independent retail and an exciting street food offer.

We want to put together **services to help our local independent businesses** grow, build facilities to **encourage creators and artists to thrive**, design initiatives to offer **experiences and education to young people**, and **collaborate locally** to enable Doncaster, Mexborough and their Markets to thrive.

By giving each distinct area of the market a distinct character and unique selling point, whilst ensuring they are seamlessly connected and encourage circulation, the market will thrive.

**Fish Market and International Food Hall** - A unique collection of independent food retailers, offering excellent value for locally sourced, quality food produce.

**Corn Exchange** - The home of culture and creatives, in which independent artists, makers and skilled tradespeople can all be found under one roof.

**Wool Market** - A shopping, dining and leisure venue offering boutique retail and services alongside an exciting international street food offer and entertainment venue.

**Mexborough Market** - A modern community market offering a range of retail, fresh food and hot food to service the local populace, with potential to add an exciting street food offer.

**Goose Hill** - Traditional market offer, with independent market traders, combined with a new hot food offer on 'Market Top'.

**Sunny Bar** - The Sunny Bar end of the International Food Hall needs to be repurposed from vacant stalls and storage to being a focus of food and drink production in the heart of Doncaster.

**Market Vaults** - Convert the old market cellars under the Sunny Bar end of the International Food Hall to be a unique specialist Jazz/Blues bar, combining small live music performance with a unique atmosphere.

## Key Elements:

## Physical improvements

- Wool Market
- Outdoor Market
- Mexborough Market
- Lock Up Units
- Corn Exchange
- Goose Hill
- Sunny Bar

## Commercial

- Wool Market Business Model
- Creator Pods
- Delivery Service
- Incubator Space and Lettings
- Sunny Bar
- Market Vaults
- Mexborough Ground Floor

## Community

- Building a Social Media Community
- Developing Opportunities for Young People
- Doncaster Market Online
- Creative Groups
- Local Collaborations
- Arts and Creative Hub

## Resources

- Podcasting and Digital Media
- Social Media Training
- Workshop Space
- Business Development
- Incubator and Pop-Up Space

Mexborough Market has been historically neglected, although it has continued to trade with a nice mix of traditional market traders. As a result of the Coronavirus crisis, and a couple of traders expanding into High Street shop units, there are now going to be a number of vacant units in the market.

Reducing operating overheads for the market should be a priority, and refocusing resources is a key way of undertaking this. At present gazebos are used on the outdoor market which is labour intensive, while the fixed stalls in the market square are not used. Market gazebos will no longer be used within the square and the existing market stalls will be used by the businesses going forward. This will also increase sight-lines to the surrounding shops.

The Fish Market has two vacant units which are not being utilised. These could be converted to maximise income potential, either as storage units, garages, takeaway or lock-up units.

While our letting activities are producing results within the market hall, lack of footfall and interest from the public in the market is a larger issue for the market and increasing the range and number of the users needs to be a key focus.

### **Street Food Events**

Mexborough Market would benefit from a programme of events in the town centre, starting with a Street Food Night Market along the High Street or in the car park to the rear of the Market Hall.

Stalls could be erected with a range of Street Food, and benches spread around to encourage dwell time. Local bands could be invited to play and create a relaxed, family friendly atmosphere.



### **'The Basement' Food Hall and Venue**

The ground floor storage area of the market hall only provides very cheap storage options for retail businesses. This area could be converted into a Food Hall, along the lines of the Wool Market in Doncaster, creating space for 3 or 4 kitchens and a bar, with communal seating and a performance area for live bands.

Creating a family friendly but exciting atmosphere, in a safe and secure environment, expanding seating into the area to the rear of the market hall.

It would be a trimmed down fit-out, using the base materials of the building and filled with lights, plants and street art, to provide a backdrop for exciting food and drink.

The street food kitchens will also be able to provide a takeaway service to the wider area, increasing income for the market and the street food traders.

Space to the rear of the market could be incorporated into an outdoor seating area, with a balcony area as well, potentially connecting the two parts of the market.

Using the Wool Market as an example of how new users have been introduced to the market area and the town centre in general, the new food hall would be an exciting addition to Mexborough.

This could provide a key reason for people living in the area around Mexborough to visit the town centre.

### Timescale

At present, there are complications with road closures, however street food events could be put in place for Spring 2021.

Signage can be installed in the short-term, building on the newly created Mexborough Markets logo.

The food hall could be undertaken to be open for Spring/Summer 2022.



## The Wool market

### Key Issues:

There is **too much retail space** in the Wool Market, which has not been fully filled despite a lot of interest in lettings and discounted rents. Customers do not circulate to the stalls opposite the open space, and these units look vacant and detract from the offer. Stalls 24 and 25 at the front of the market have never been let, and block sight-lines.

As we come out of the Coronavirus crisis, more space is needed for people to sit, spread out and enjoy themselves. The seating area regularly becomes full on a Friday and Saturday night and during Bank Holiday weekends. **More space is needed for seating to increase covers in the venue and promote social distancing in the mid-term.**

Since the opening of the Wool Market, it does not generate enough income to cover its expenses, which include heating and electricity, security, live entertainment and on-hand cleaning staff into the evenings.

More commercial terms must be developed.

### **Street Food Proposal:**

Turnover rent levels of 1.5%, rising to 5%, over takings of £1,500 per week were initially agreed by DMBC and Market Consultants Quarterbridge, as a way to stimulate the launch of the venue and allow businesses to become established. However the unanticipated levels of success the Wool Market has enjoyed from its launch have meant this is no longer sustainable. In the 2019/20 financial year, the Wool Market Catering units turned over £1,595,000 between the twelve units. Of this, they collectively paid £35,256 in rent, which is not sufficient to cover security and entertainment costs alone.

As street food units come off their original contracts, and new businesses join the Wool Market, they will be signed on **more commercial turnover terms. The flexible space on the left of the market can be developed into a new, primary seating area** with stalls 1-2 replaced by a main stage. The central seating area and stage can be spread out and comfortable furniture items like sofa's and armchairs can be integrated to increase dwell time.

Stalls 12, 13, and 15 can be amalgamated to create a bar which extends onto this area as a craft beer and bottle bar, and stall 3 can be converted to a pop-up tiki bar on favourable commercial terms.

New terms must be developed which increases the proportion of turnover and removes the weekly threshold. Other food halls offer rents of 15-25% of net turnover.

As new leases are agreed and the additional bars added, these will be on terms of 7.5% - 10% of turnover with no threshold. *(To illustrate the commercial impact this would have, if this had been in place in Year 1 it would have equated to rental income of £119,625 -*

*£159,500.)* **Creator Pods and Digital Media Studios:**

The aim is to create a space designed for a plug and play experience, where creators can produce podcasts, videos and other forms of social media content. The Creator Pods would be kitted out with several vital pieces of equipment allowing creators to come along with just their laptops and cameras ready to create.

The Creator Pods are not just a fantastic facility for the community to take advantage of, they give us the tools to create new, better and more content to promote not only the markets, but Doncaster as a town.

In addition to Creator Pods that give us the facility to create content for the markets, we can then use them in conjunction with our Content Creation & Social Media Strategy Consultations, a service we want to offer to local independent businesses as well as



# The Wool Market:

## Boutique Retail Focus Option

A boutique, curated and focused retail offer should still be an option for the Wool Market. Focused in on an offer and style that is attractive to people after a different kind of shopping experience.

**A strong brand needs to be built for the retail element of the Wool Market**, along the lines of a 'boutique street' theme, promoting indie and creative retail. All of this would open sight-lines, increase revenue and could be done collaboratively with most of the existing retail tenants. Hanging overhead festoon lighting, bunting, feature ropes and lanterns over the walkways will enhance the atmosphere, with comfortable seating areas to provide time and space to relax.

By condensing the retail area to one side of the Wool Market alongside reducing the size of available units to make smaller niche independent boutique units, targeted marketing and specialist shopping events, footfall will improve for the retailers in there.

The number of retail units will be reduced on the side facing the event area. A recent increase in interest means that the remaining retail units will be fully let, although some existing tenants have expressed they may not be looking not to renew their leases. These tenants would be replaced by targeted replacement businesses and start-up businesses that fit within the curated theme of the Wool Market boutique retail experience. The aim would be to create an exciting and enjoying base for retail businesses as their public face, supported by their online promotion and sales.



## Beauty Lifestyle Focus Option

# The Wool Market:

With Service and Lifestyle businesses continuing to grow (notwithstanding the present crisis), the Wool Market could become **a destination for luxury, almost spa like experience, where you can get quality international street food and pampering**, in the form of beauty services, hair-cutting, tanning and spa services, along side rentable treatment rooms and more alternative offerings such as tattoo artists.

A critical mass of these services could be created, aimed predominantly at women, whether by themselves or in groups, the **Wool Market could be developed as a noted leisure destination**. This could open into the evening and support the street food units, as family groups use the space for different purposes.

Aphrodite Day Spa and a new barbers (which is joining the market shortly) already exist in the Wool Market. This could be added to with additional and distinct beauty offers such as masseuses, reflexologists and hairdressing.

The combination of the dining experience and lifestyle businesses, allows for a family to visit and enjoy the street food and entertainment, while a treatment is offered nearby. Operating on turnover rents, this provides an opportunity to enhance the income from the Wool Market Units and provide a focus.

We have identified units R9-11, and R20-25 (all units within the RHS of the Wool Market) as being in a prime position to create an atmospheric area, that provides luxurious touches, with sofa seating and relaxation areas as well as privacy.

Water and drainage would need to be sourced within the area via high level, and units repurposed to provide privacy and comfort.

The area is currently a mix of vacant units and existing retail, the some of the existing retail would be relocated within smaller vacant units within the Wool Market, or offered space within the wider estate.

## Experiential Focus Option

Millennials and Gen-Z's are particularly keen on spending their money on experiences rather than physical goods, a trend which is increasing as these generations increasingly



have the most spending power.

# The Wool Market:

We can incorporate experiential leisure options into the building offer which enhance the multi-use element of the Wool Market. This would provide an additional attraction, driving footfall and supporting the catering units and retail/service core.

By creating fun spaces to relax, which are also attractive, the Wool Market would gain an 'Instagrammable' feel, which would enhance its overall brand.

This could include escape rooms, dart games, mini-golf, selfie pods and rage rooms, alongside many more, all based on lucrative turnover rent systems.





## The outdoor market

### Key Issues:

**Outdated metal stalls block sight-lines across the square, attract anti-social behaviour and do not promote customer circulation across the square.** Although they are convenient for trading, stall tops must be removed and replaced on a daily basis, taking up staff time and resources.

### Proposal:

**Remove all metal stalls from the Market Square and Market Top.** Leave in place ground electricity points which can be used for events and pop-up markets and winter trading. The outdoor **market can operate on a self-erect basis with traders operating from gazebos**, in a configuration designed to optimise the sightlines across the square to the Wool Market and Corn Exchange. This also allows more **opportunities for streetscaping the square to become an attractive place to spend time**, further helping the businesses surrounding the square as well as the market. In the wake of coronavirus, open, public spaces provide significant opportunities for community cohesion which would be enhanced by the opening up of the Square and establishment of social distancing 'pods' through floor markings.

Inevitably some traders will not continue trading or be unwilling to use gazebos, so it is anticipated outdoor trader numbers may fall initially. This will result in an initial loss of income, but allow us to build the market back up with more modern, vibrant offers.

### Timescale:

This work could be undertaken **as soon as possible**, in order to maximise the opportunities presented for a socially distant market square where people can dwell. Some outdoor traders will not come back in the wake of coronavirus, so it limits income loss to one hit rather than coming later down the line.



## The Corn Exchange

### Key Issues

Despite being one of Doncaster's most iconic buildings, and home to a number of quirky independent retail stalls, **the Corn Exchange does not enjoy very high footfall, with a perception that the building is closed** or open as a through route to the International Food Hall. The Corn Exchange suffers from a lack of brand identity, which has not helped to attract footfall.

A number of traders in the building moved there when decanting from the Wool Market for the redevelopment, and rent structures have remained largely varied, with some traders paying disproportionately higher rents than others.

The addition of the Artists in Residence programme has enlivened the Corn Exchange and brought a good atmosphere to one side of the building, but this could go much further.

The mezzanine level is home to several craft units, which sit alone and do not attract footfall up the stairs.

### Proposal

**The Corn Exchange needs to build a strong brand identity as being a home for artists and creative makers.** Vacant units should be let as studio space on basic rents, and a couple of traders relocated to Goose Hill, where they will benefit from the Traditional Market atmosphere, however most in the Corn Exchange lend themselves to the 'creative' image.

**The Mezzanine level should be cleared**, with craft units relocated to units downstairs.

This would clear ample space for **an Arts Cafe, a coffee shop run on the mezzanine with a variety of tables and desk style seating, where creatives can be encouraged to spend time in the historic environment and work on their projects.** This will require initial investment in seating and heating to make the space desirable. The cafe could be run as a Joint Venture with existing coffee shop tenants, and the upper mezzanine levels could be converted to gallery space.

Regular (monthly) open studios / meet the artist events could be held, encouraging networking amongst the arts community and with champagne receptions to encourage visitors to enjoy an **evening of arts and culture.** Acoustic musicians could be invited, and the Corn Exchange kept open into the evening.

Filling the vacant units downstairs would enable a full rent review to take place to **equalise the rents traders are paying, based on the type of stall and floor space available.**

Service businesses (such as the hairdresser, beautician and cobbler) already in the Corn Exchange would be encouraged to stay in situ.

### Timescales

This would need to occur in stages. At present the vacant units are being used to store stock and allow for social distancing, but as these units become available, traders on the mezzanine can be relocated downstairs and the remaining units filled as studios.

Traditional retail traders can at this point be relocated to Goose Hill on favourable rent deals. A rent review will be undertaken to determine appropriate rents for the units on the ground floor.

The mezzanine can then be converted into a cafe gallery space, and opened to the public to stimulate the creative element, and a strong publicity campaign to relaunch the Corn Exchange as a home for the arts.



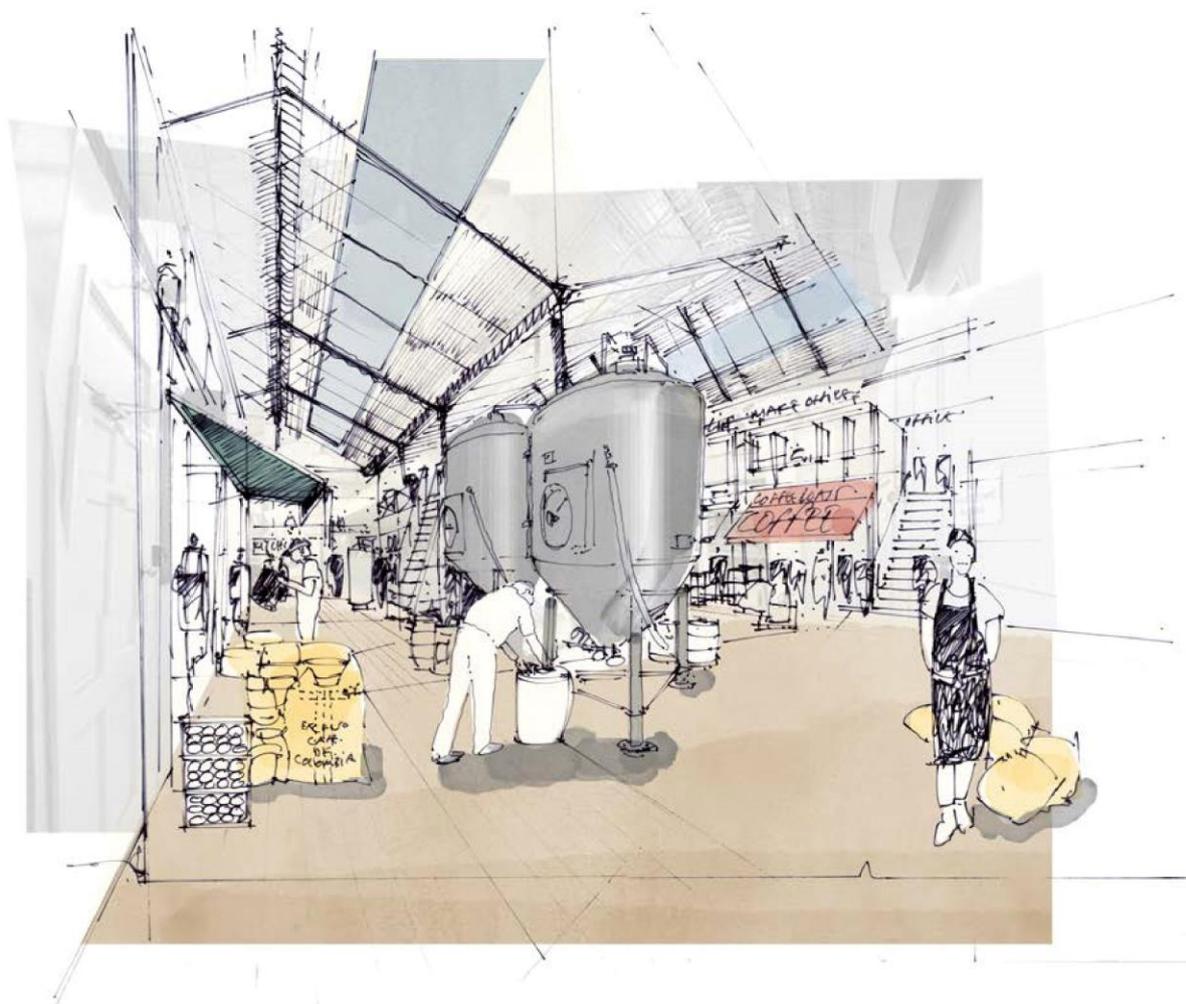
## Sunny bar

The back of house area at the Sunny Bar end of the estate, is currently vacant and hoarded off. This is partially used for storage, but it mostly wasted space. The food hall offers an already excellent mix of food producers selling meats, cheeses, grocery and deli items, however Doncaster lacks a strong core of artisan food makers, to supply local people, and a wider community of businesses.

The area will be redeveloped in a phased approach:

Phase 1: The site will be converted and let as storage units and dark kitchens - 2021

Phase 2: The full development of Sunny Bar Productions, a home for independent food producers and makers to prepare fresh food in the heart of Doncaster. This could include a brewery tap room, chocolatier, artisan baker and coffee roaster (to name a few) who operate primarily through online and B2B sales, can use their units in the International Food Hall to sell their products to the public, and develop some theatre to encourage people to visit the market to watch artisan food being prepared - 2025



## MARKET Entrance: Fruit & Veg Corner

The fruit and veg corner of the market is the highest footfall area of the market, yet beyond the stunning

'flashes' of fruit and veg displays, the lock-up units block the view of the Fish Market and the International Food Hall, forcing the fruit and veg traders to move forward further, restricting footfall and blocking two vital entrances to the Fish Market and International Food Hall, reducing footfall to the businesses within.

We plan to demolish the 1950's and 60's lock-ups, opening up the market, replacing them with a feature entrance to the estate and creating a key, modern trading area for a fish restaurant, taking inspiration from the Fish! concept in Borough Market. All run on a turnover rent basis, to provide support to the business and maximise income.



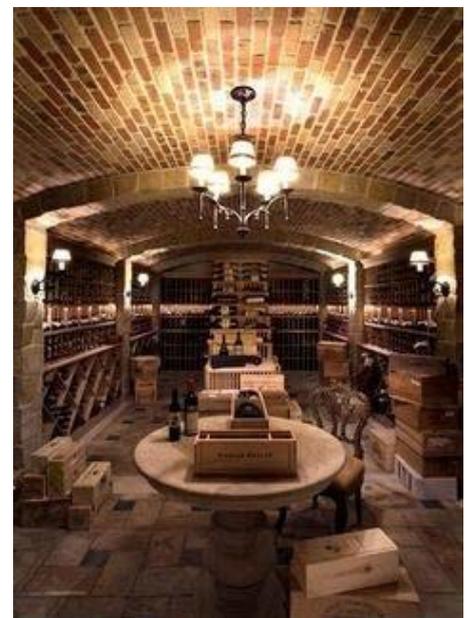
## MARKET VAULTS

The vaulted cellars below the Sunny Bar end of the food hall offer a significant opportunity for redevelopment, lending themselves to a high-end Jazz Bar, serving quality drinks with food delivered from the Wool Market. This would be reminiscent of ruin bars and vaulted bars elsewhere in the country which prove extremely popular.

In the same way that has been achieved by the Clam and Cork, Market Vaults would add a notable bar to the centre of the town, which would differentiate Doncaster and develop its' regional and national appeal. This bar also offers significant income opportunities, which could make the market estate financially viable.

Although there is currently concern around enclosed and underground spaces, as recovery get underway the market is convinced that people will return to pubs and bars, with a key difference in behaviour being that people seek out higher quality experiences.

This development is however proposed for 2022, by which time a more 'normal' way of life will have resumed.



## Building community

### Local Collaborations with people, groups and businesses:

Collaboration is a running theme throughout our vision, using our facilities to boost local people and businesses, and our platform to offer more of the same.

We already collaborate with several local groups including Mother Hookers, Doncaster Emerging and Professional Art Fair, Doncaster Rovers, Visit Doncaster and Doncaster Mumbler, but we are looking to do more.

If we expand our facilities to the wider community, it gives everyone a chance of growing their business and getting more people into the town centre. More meet-up groups to enjoy the plethora of international foods and drinks we already have available. More educational events to help people start their first business, grow their current business or introduce new exciting ways to run your business.

We believe that collaboration is the way forward, so teaming up with other Doncaster based businesses to use our facilities to show case what they have to offer is a genuine focus. Whether it be education, entertainment or just for fun, we want to be the venue it's at.

### Youth focus groups:

Putting together a panel of young people to have as a focus group and a voice for young people in our area would offer a great insight into what the next generation both want and need.

It's vital that young people in today's world have options, so we want to get them involved to help us create options for them. Is there a specific event we should look to create or bring in to Doncaster, are there facilities they need that we don't yet have?

Let's get them involved and ask them.

### **Using social media (Facebook & Instagram) to build and engaged audience:**

We're already growing our audience across Facebook & Instagram on a daily basis. People want and need to stay up to date on the latest news and events around the market. Putting initiatives, events and projects together as discussed throughout this document, would give us further content to create and share across our social platforms.

Through creative content designed to engage with our followers, customers and audience, we can build our brand and gain trust. We want to be seen as a brand not just a business. Through building our brand and trust via social media, it gives us a fantastic starting point to launch further initiatives and projects, giving us the best chance for them to succeed.

### **Make it easier for the community to get and feel involved:**

Selfie booths, a trending hashtag and physically promoting our social media tags through posters and banners, are all methods to get people involved and in turn promote our brand.

Add this to the Youth Focus Group discussed earlier and the fact we have facilities that are designed for everyone to use, all of sudden you have a community feel to everything we do. People feel they are a part of it, it's there's to use, shout about and be proud of.

### **Giving opportunities to young people and local people:**

Further to an earlier point of working with schools and colleges, we want to offer opportunities on a day-to-day basis to young and/or local people. If we need a guest speaker, a host or presenter, photographer or videographer, we want to look at giving these opportunities to our own first.

We will look to shout-out on social media for talents we're searching for and offer the job/experience to the intended people.

### **Young performers:**

At The Wool Market we already host a Young Performers session on a Thursday evening. We're looking to better promote and utilise this initiative in conjunction with our ever growing social media platform, to elevate the young performers in our town.

We've designed a specific process for booking young performers and guiding them through social media promotion to get the most out of the experience.

## Celebrating local

### **Doncaster Market online:**

All of our plans, initiatives and creative content would need a place to live. We want to redesign and relaunch our website to make it a fun informative and interactive platform. Social media is the powerhouse that puts us on the map, but ultimately isn't designed to achieve everything we want to make available online for our customers and community. A redesigned website would allow us to launch a booking system for event spaces, private parties, Creator Pod sessions, Click & Collect and much more. Engaging trader content focusing on fresh food, recipes and personal stories will be the anchor of the site, regularly updated and across various platforms. This could then broadcast the market on a national stage, and tap into the fresh food audience which is extremely popular on social media.

### **Doncaster based podcast:**

Podcasting isn't the next big thing, it's the NOW big thing. We want to create a Doncaster based podcast in form of a weekly show that discusses the market, business and Doncaster as a whole.

We would primarily use the platform to boost the online footprint of the market and all of our traders within it. We would look to record segments such as 'Trader Stories' and 'What's On This Week'.

There would be room for guests to come on the show from both within and outside of the market. Leading up to big local events we would invite organisers, performers and interesting personalities to take part in our episode.

Guest hosts and hopefully a few celebs could get involved. With the plans to build Creator Pods, we would have the facilities too.

We would plan to monetise the podcast at a future point by way of sponsored segments.

### **Content Creation and Social Media Consultations**

We want to use our expertise in content creation, social media and building businesses, to create consultation and training packages for councils, organisations and local independent businesses. We want to help you grow your brand and your business online using digital media platforms.

This service offers so many benefits, helping our market traders grow their online presence and ultimately bring in more customers, consulting with councils and organisations to put you on the front foot in terms of forward thinking digital media and bring in new clients to use our Creator Pods facilities.

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