

Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans SPD

1: Introduction to the project

The text on these boards provides a summary of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), offering an overview of the proposals. For complete details, please refer to the full document available on the website, accessed by scanning the QR code.

What is the SPD and how it will be used? Vision

The purpose of the SPD is to build upon Local Plan policies and the Town Centre Vision 2032 (approved by Bracknell Forest Council in January 2019) in order to add greater detail and facilitate delivery of the two strategic locations and a redundant multi-storey car park. The three masterplans within this document cover the Southern and Eastern Gateways, that form key approaches to the centre and have direct links into the heart of the centre, and the High Street Car Park site. All three sites can significantly improve the town centre perception and connectivity.

The SPD will provide a framework to demonstrate how the three sites should be developed in the future. Once adopted by the Council this SPD will become material consideration in the determination of any future planning applications for the sites which will have to demonstrate that they are in accordance with this document. The adopted SPD will sit alongside the Council's planning policy documents such as the Local Plan.

Following completion of The Lexicon, the Council published the Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032 setting out the vision for the continuing redevelopment of the town centre. The document sets out broad strategies for future development including housing, retail and workspace.

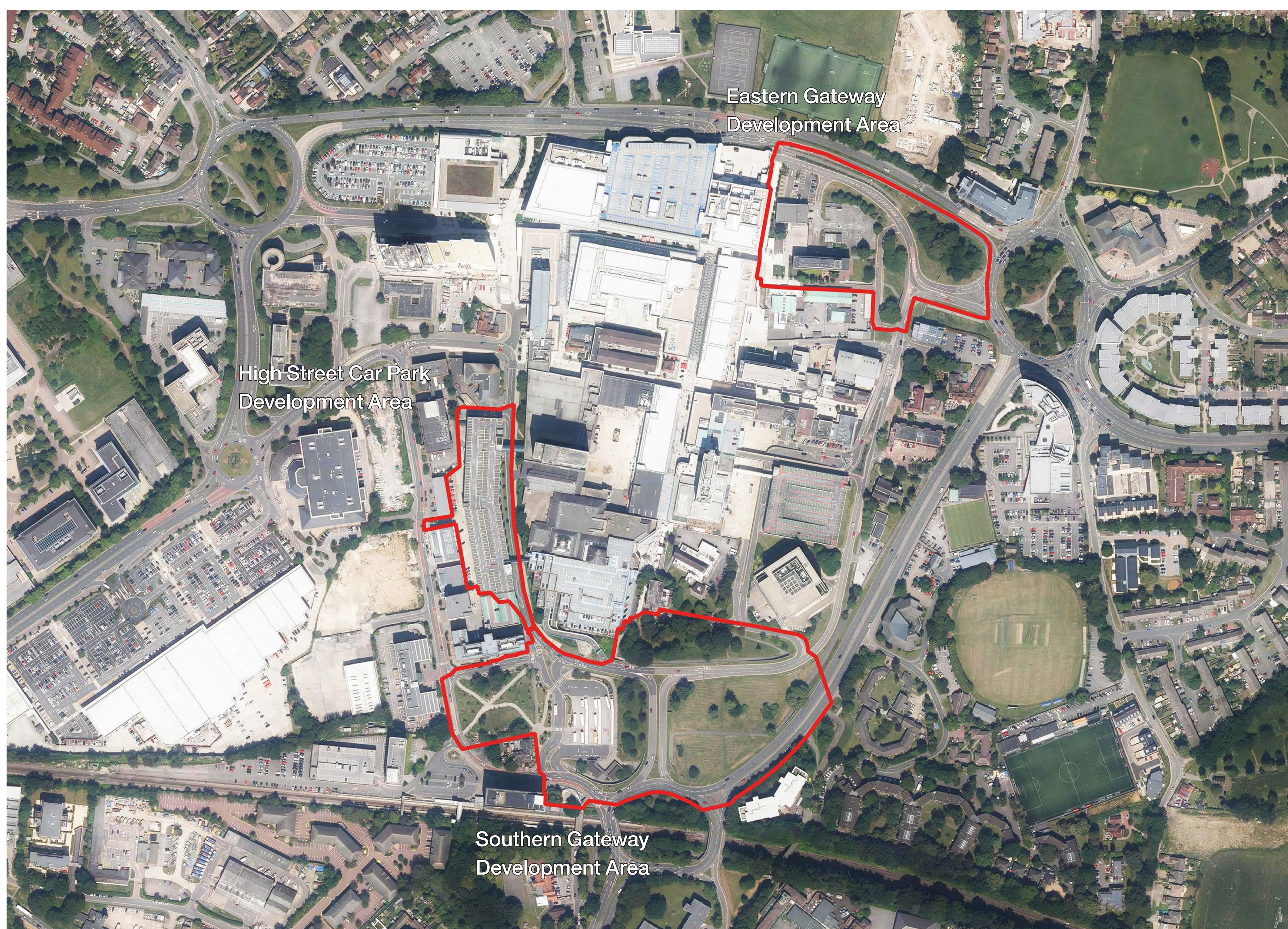
The importance of connections and wayfinding is firmly established with an expectation that people will be able to get around Bracknell town centre safely and actively on foot, bicycle or by public transport. This town

Bracknell
Town Centre
Vision 2032



centre-wide concept has influenced the masterplans for the Eastern and Southern Gateways and the High Street Car Park ensuring that development considers the town centre as a whole.

The sites today



Take part

Public consultation: 8 April – 20 May 2024

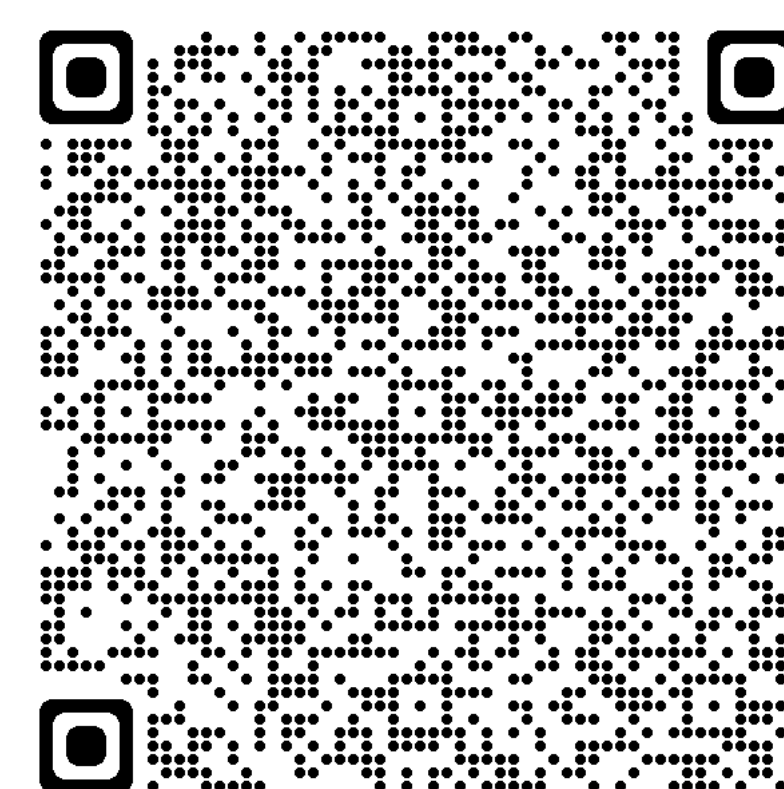
Comment in the online survey:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/town-centre-masterplans>

Alternatively, write your comments on post-it notes and stick them to the boards.

Fill in paper copies of the survey, available here or at the borough's libraries and parish councils.

Scan the QR code to
find out more



Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans SPD

2: Southern Gateway

The Southern Gateway Development Area is allocated for development by Local Plan Policy LP10, and consists of the land between the train station and town centre, including the bus station.



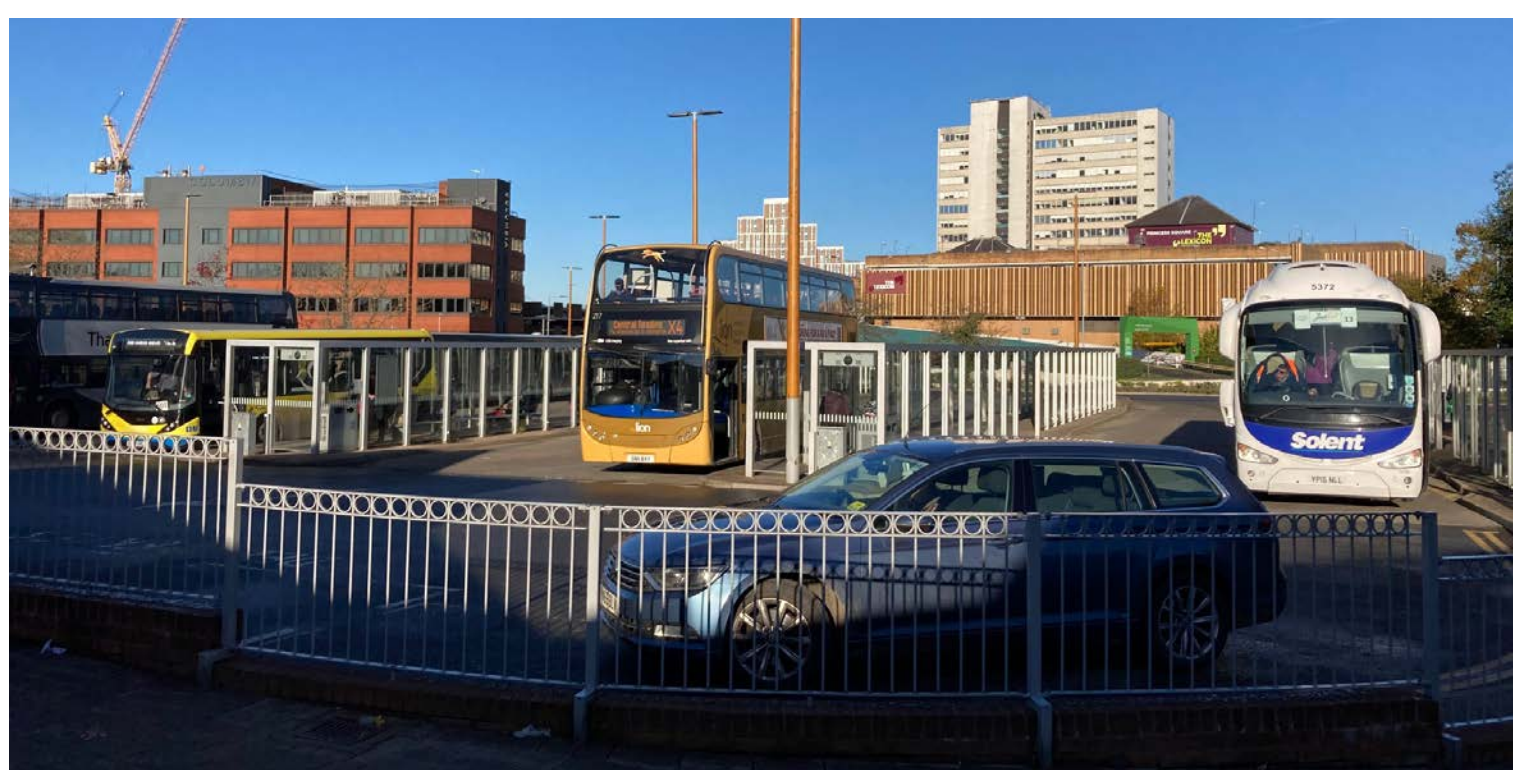
Site Ref LP10 - The Southern Gateway Development Area

Policy LP10

- Approx. 600 dwellings (35% affordable)
- 22,300 m² office floorspace (Class E* – restricted)
- 1,500 m² floorspace for use within Class E (unrestricted)

* Class E includes such uses as shops, cafés restaurants, offices, medical and recreation.

Key Site Features



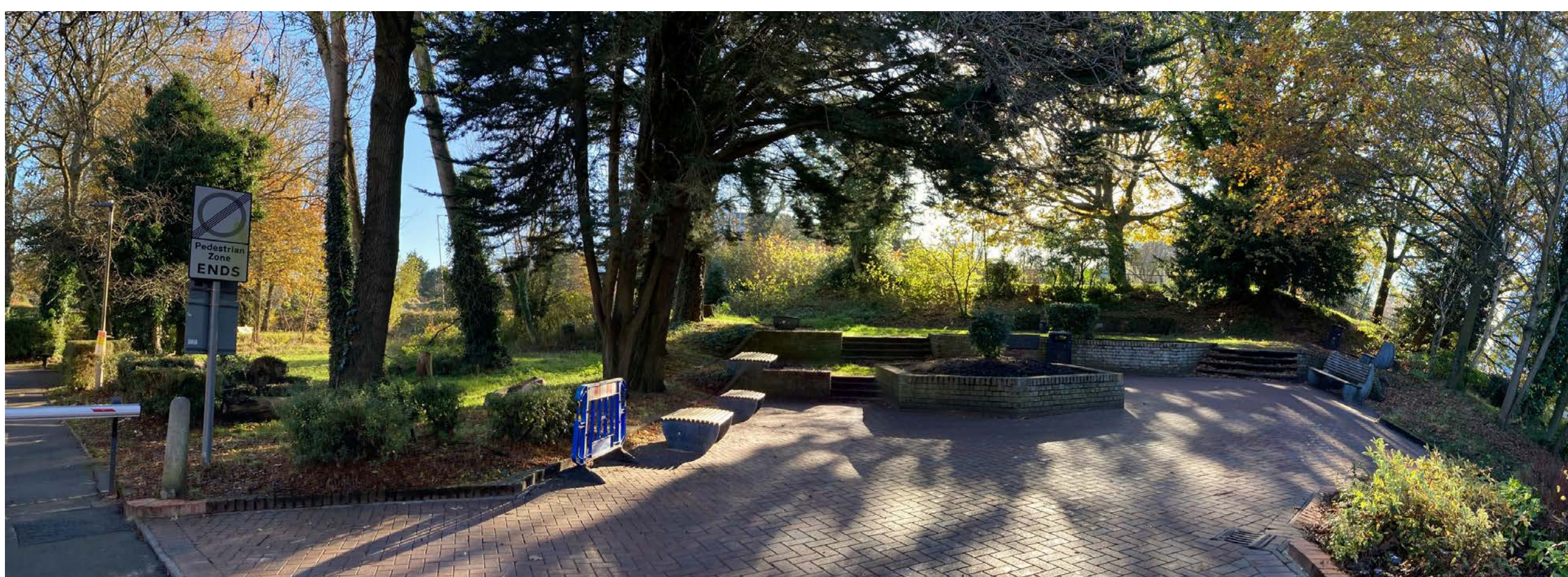
Bracknell Bus Station - a network of subways link it to the surrounding area and the town centre.



Station Green is a park on an area of previously disused land near Bracknell railway station and bus station. The park was intended to provide public open space to replace Jubilee Gardens which at the time was expected to be developed as part of the regeneration of the town centre.

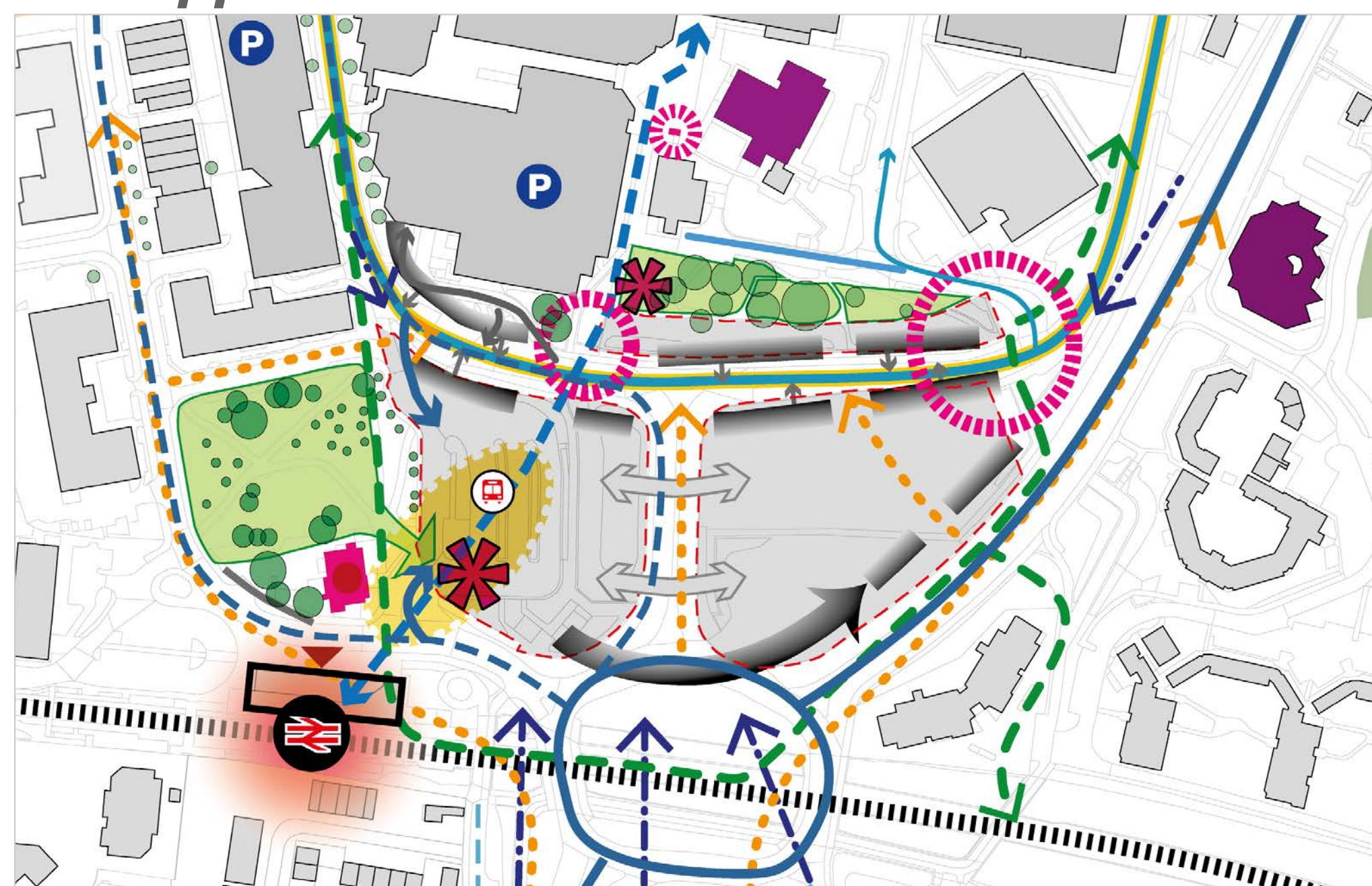


Market Inn – locally listed.



Jubilee Gardens is a green space containing mature trees and a small seating area. It provides a unique pocket of nature within the town centre.

Site Opportunities



Southern Gateway - Opportunities

The site offers a number of opportunities through a comprehensive development, as follows:

- Relocation of the bus stops onto Station Road, Station Way and Market Street;
- Direct at-grade pedestrian and cycle route from the Station to the Town Centre;
- Realignment of The Ring to create good-sized development plots in front of the retained Jubilee Gardens and create good enclosure to the street;
- Change of alignment and character of The Ring in front of Jubilee Gardens so that it becomes an attractive two-way tree lined 'green' street;
- Reduction of Station Way in width to become a well proportioned street defined by built edges on either side;
- Clustering of parking spaces in a central location to help reduce pressure on development blocks and create a less car-dominated environment;
- The creation of landmark buildings marking the approach to the town centre and gateway around the station area;
- Introduction of an extensive at-grade pedestrian and cycle network enabling better links to and from the town centre and wider area, including a new eastwest pedestrian/cycle link connecting to the eastern neighbourhoods;
- Relocation of Station Green to create a higher quality and more usable space within the centre of the site; and
- Integration of green and blue infrastructure throughout the site including opportunities for active informal play within the public realm and retention of existing mature trees within Jubilee Gardens.

KEY

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-------------|---|--------------|
| Site boundary | Trees | Cyclist | Landmark |
| Railway station | The Ring | Direct connection between the station and town centre | Market Inn |
| Railway line | Access road | Views | Heritage |
| Green space | Pedestrian | Frontages | Religious |
| Gateway / node | | | Public space |



Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans SPD

3: Southern Gateway

Illustrative masterplan



Play and Green infrastructure

Jubilee Gardens and Market Square act as the main open spaces within the masterplan and form part of a wider open space network which the masterplan aims to connect to. New green routes will link into the existing green infrastructure network and to open spaces within a 10 minute walk from the site. There will also be enhancement of existing routes and the provision of small amenity areas within the local street network created within the development as well as the communal and private open spaces within the development blocks. Children's and youth play spaces will play a major part throughout the public realm and will be fully integrated within both the hard and soft landscape areas to maximise the opportunity for play activities.



Children's play along a pedestrianised route

Children's playground

Uses

The Southern Gateway's excellent location to the transport hub appeals to a high-density mixed-use development with employment space incorporated within the lower floors of mixed-use buildings as well as stand-alone buildings if the demand is there. This mix will contribute positively providing active edges along the streets and spaces helping to animate the public realm and contribute to the safety and security of the area.

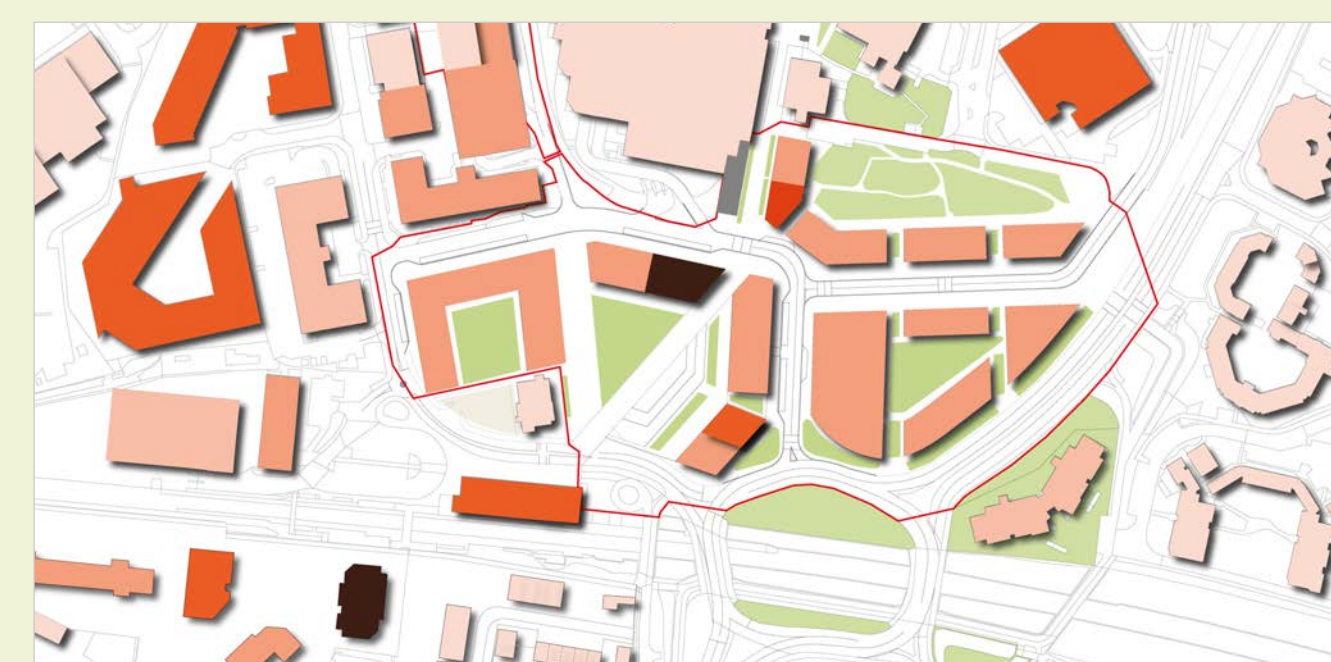


Proposed Land uses

KEY			
Leisure	Food and beverage	Religious	Private car parking
Office	Education	Community	Residential with ground level workspace
Retail	Residential	Public car parking	Children and youth play

Heights

Heights generally range from 6 – 8 storeys stepping down to 4 storeys towards the Market Inn. Taller buildings are clustered at the north end of Market Square within the centre of the Southern Gateway masterplan area up to a maximum of 17 storeys. Changes in height and massing will be used to add visual interest and aid navigation through the area.

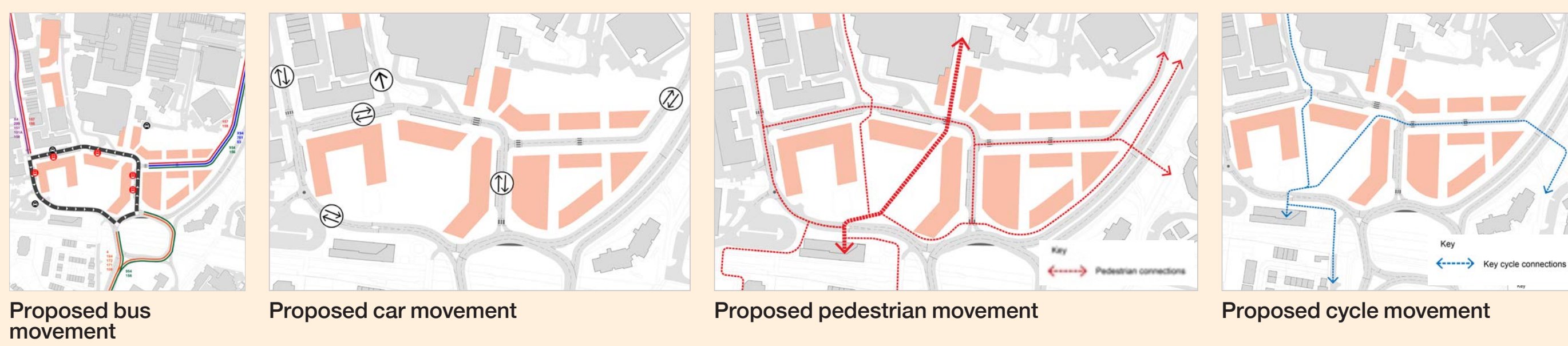


Proposed building heights

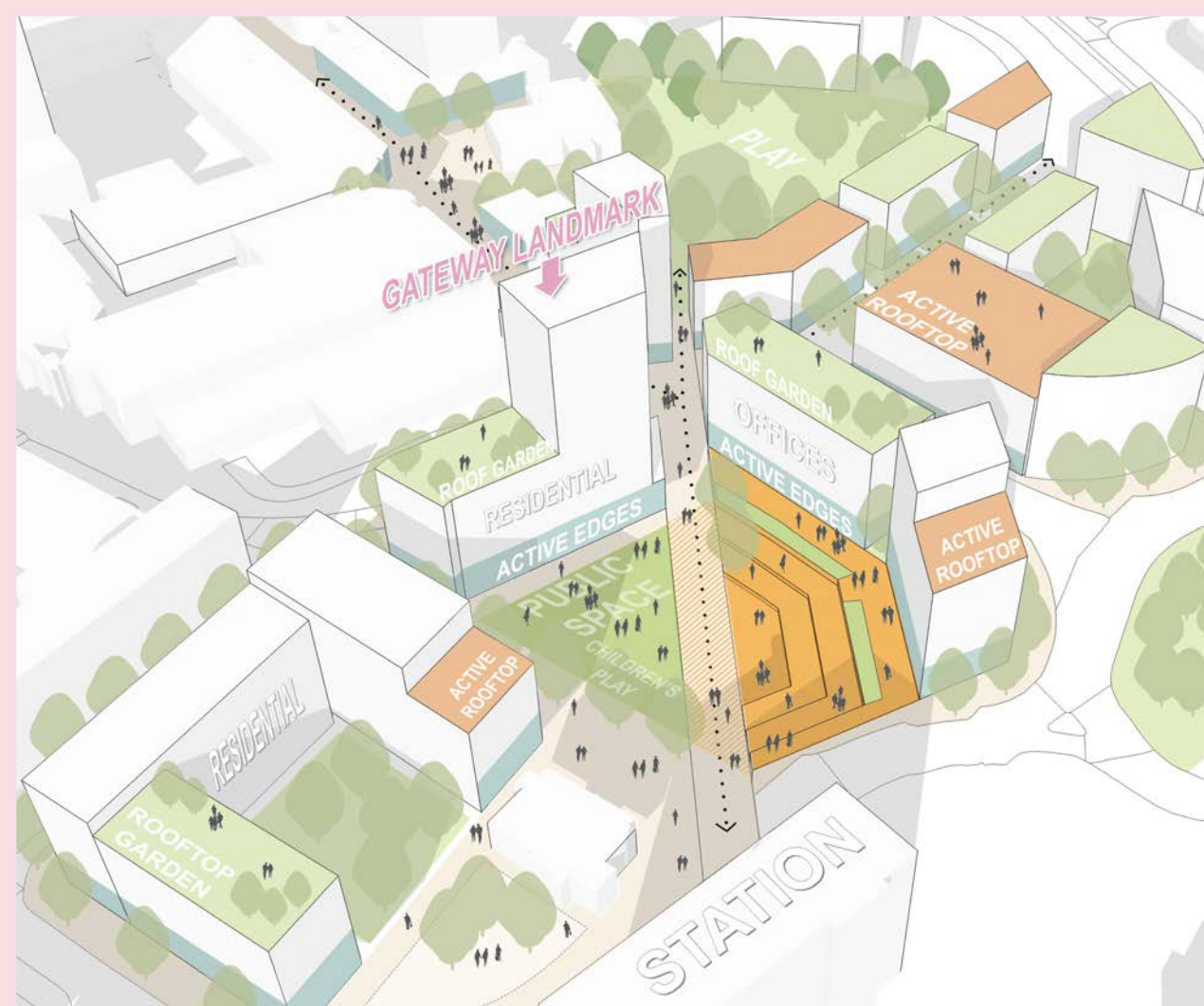
KEY		
2-3 Storeys	9-11 Storeys	14 Storeys
4-5 Storeys	12-13 Storeys	15+ Storeys
6-8 Storeys		

Access

The present dominance of vehicular traffic will be minimised by the introduction of a new movement strategy favouring pedestrians and cyclists. A two-way operation will be returned to all streets in the area, specifically along Station Road and the section of The Ring east of this. Station Way will be redesigned to improve pedestrian experience and allow for two-way traffic flow, including northbound bus operations. Car parking for the site will be accommodated in a multi storey carpark accessed off The Ring and at the eastern end of the square, utilising the existing level difference between the public square and Station Way.



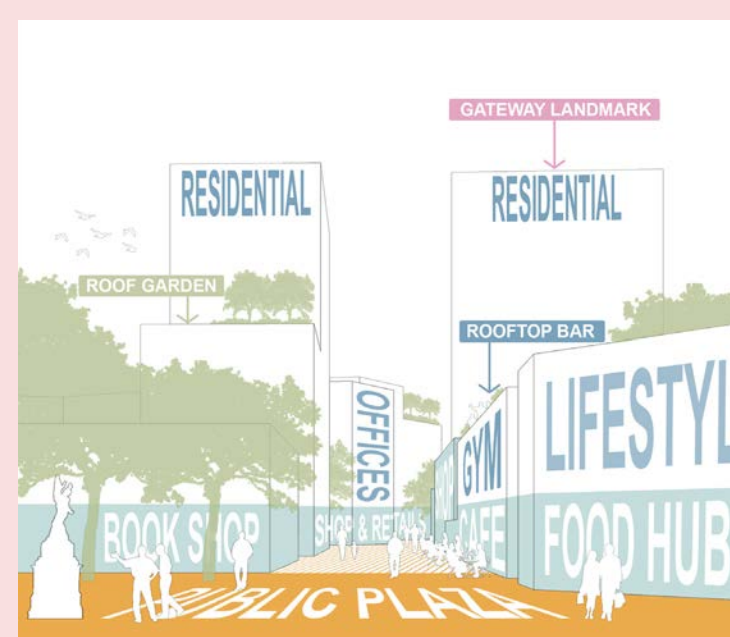
Key public spaces



Market Square plan and aerial view from the south-west

Jubilee Gardens:

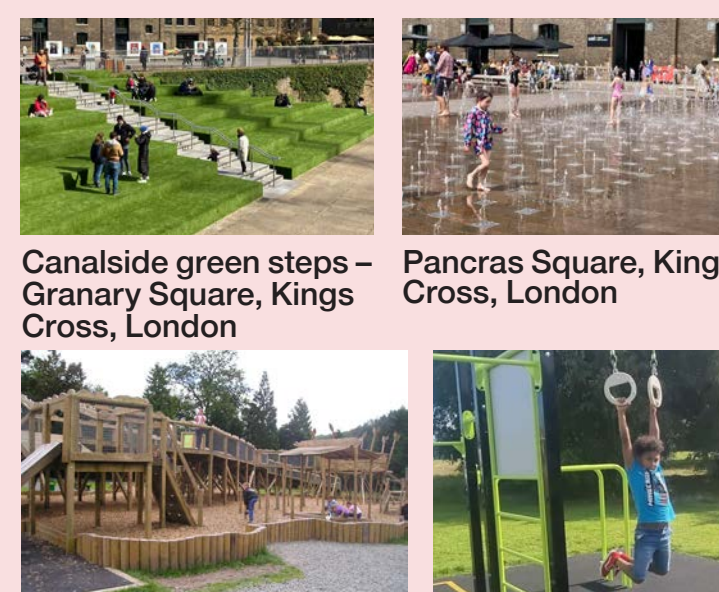
Mature green space offering an area for relaxation within a natural environment. The space will accommodate a children's playground and youth play facilities.



New pedestrian route at Princess Square entrance looking at the tall buildings marking entrance to the public square. The route is defined and framed by tall buildings

Market Square:

The square lies between the rail station and the town centre. It is both a community space and celebration space, accommodating markets and events, with playground and youth play facilities enriching the area's vibrancy and vitality.



Canalside green steps – Granary Square, Kings Cross, London

Pancras Square, Kings Cross, London

Children's and youth play facilities

Central Spine:

The primary route from the station to the town centre will be car-free offering direct access and visual connections to the bus stops. A coherent and unifying public realm strategy will provide legibility and create a safe, inviting environment for passers-by and people wanting to spend time in the area.



Cafe and restaurant external seating animate the public realm

City North Place, Finsbury Park



Street furniture within the public realm



The Eastern Gateway Development Area is allocated for development by Local Plan Policy LP9 and consists of the land at Town Square and The Ring, Bracknell, and includes Easthampstead House and Bracknell Library.



Site Ref LP9 – The Eastern Gateway Development Area

Policy LP9

- Approx. 210 dwellings (35% affordable)
- 3,160 m² office floorspace (Class E* – restricted)
- 8,600 m² sqm floorspace for use within Class E* (minimum of 500 m² unrestricted) and Class C1 (hotel use)

* Class E includes such uses as shops, cafés restaurants, offices, medical and recreation.

Key Site Features

Bracknell was designated a new town in 1949 with a predominantly post war built environment. There remains some new town heritage in the form of the library building and Easthampstead House. Both are modernist blocks on the Eastern Gateway site. They are considered unique in their architectural character and positive heritage features from Bracknell's new town heritage.



Library

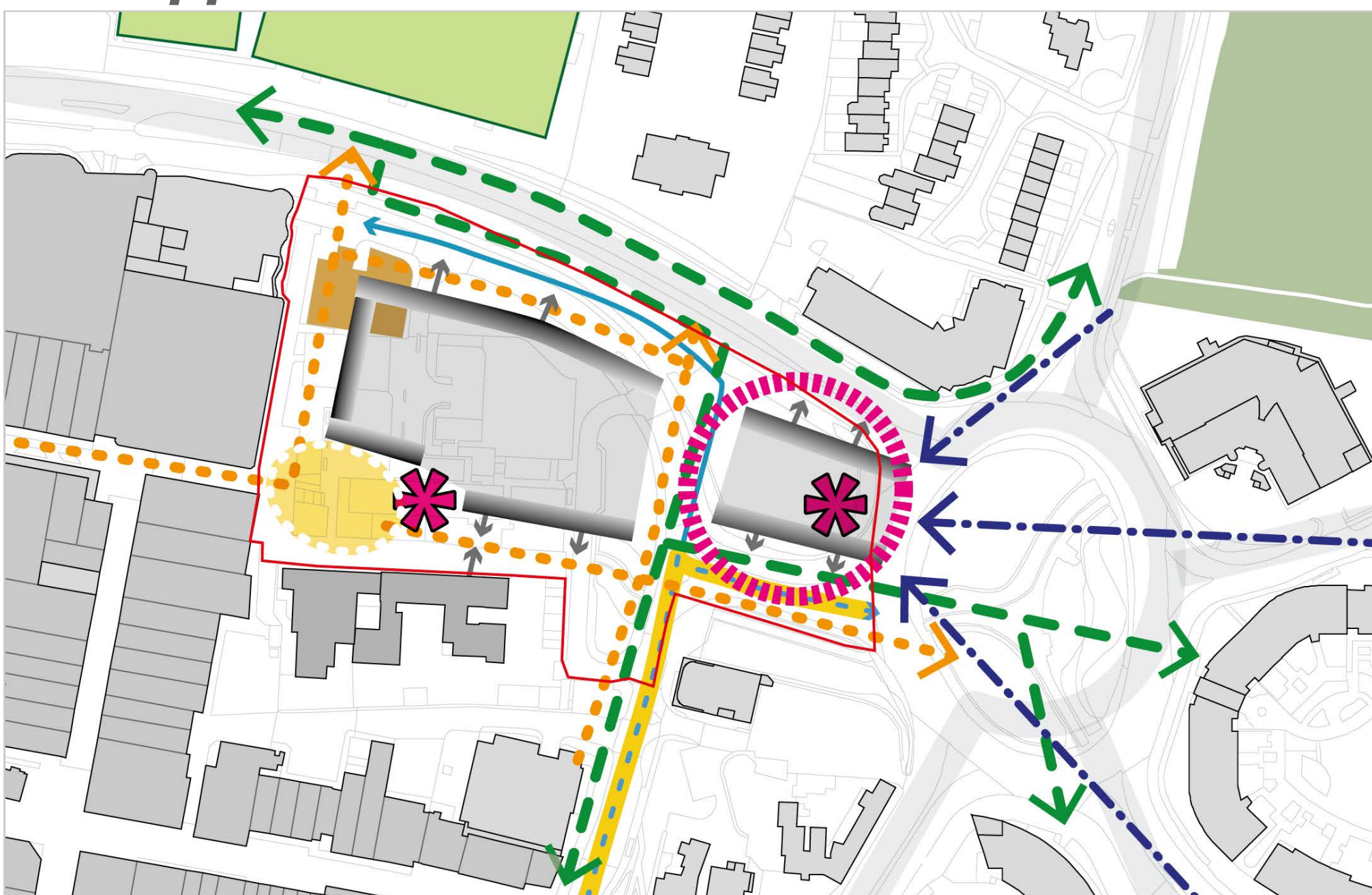


Easthampstead House



Existing surface car park fronting Easthampstead House and the library

Site Opportunities

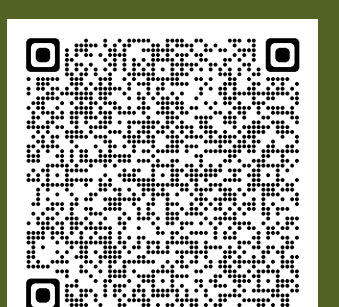


Eastern Gateway - Opportunities

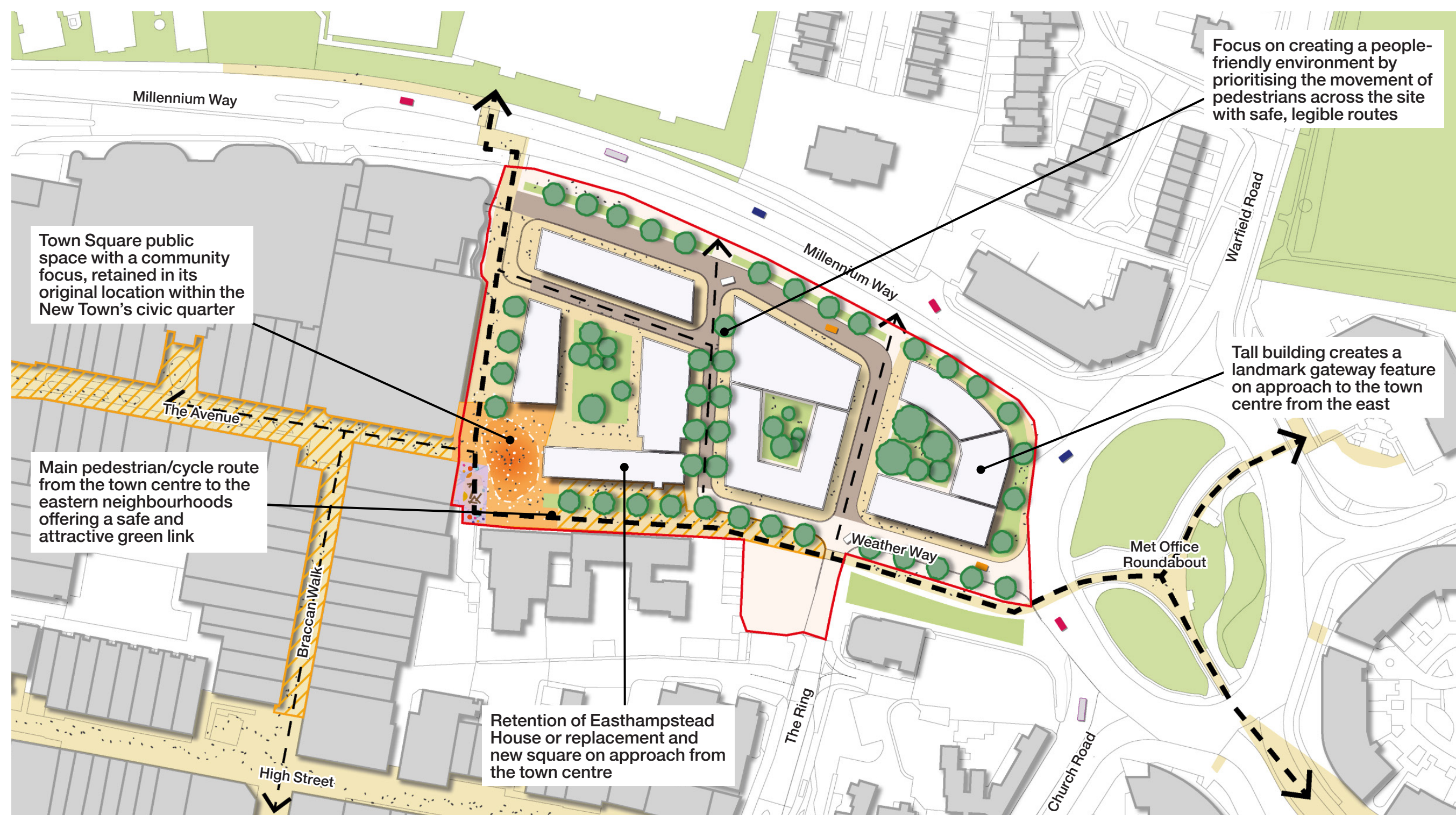
- KEY
- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---|--------------|
| Site boundary | Access road | Direct connection between the station and town centre | Gateway |
| Green space | Pedestrian | Frontages | Public space |
| Trees | Cyclist | Landmark | |
| The Ring | Views | | |

The opportunities for the comprehensive development of the Eastern Gateway comprise:

- The retention of Easthampstead House and Town Square to keep part of the New Town's history and celebrate the architectural style of that era.
- The refurbishment and / or retention of Easthampstead House provides a more sustainable and less carbon intensive opportunity. Potential uses include hotel accommodation with a roof level extension providing bar/terrace to guests and visiting public as well as cafés/ restaurants at ground level to reinforce the building's presence as a focal point along the axial route approach from The Lexicon.
- The reinforcement of the existing pedestrian connection from the east to the town centre by providing at grade connections overlooked by positive frontages and an attractive public realm.
- The provision of communal internal shared courtyards within the blocks for residents.
- The creation of a positive gateway into the town centre from the east and strong positive frontages onto Millennium Way.



Illustrative masterplan



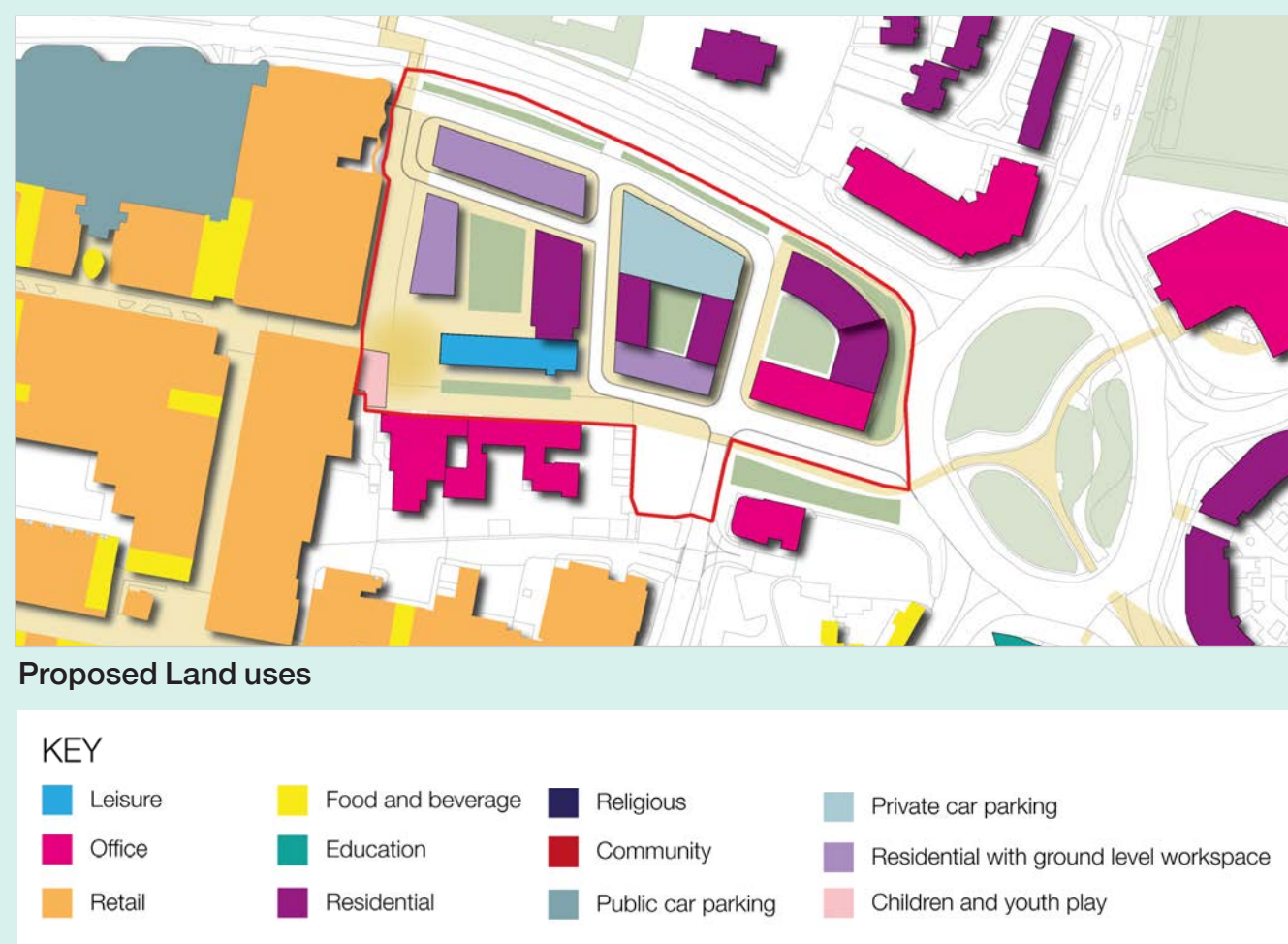
Play and Green infrastructure

The site proposals present a major opportunity to integrate with the existing green infrastructure network. This includes improvements along the Eastern Spine and providing open spaces that accommodate formal and informal play. Additionally, the proposals include communal and private open spaces associated with the development blocks.



Uses

The Council's planning policy aims to regenerate the area as a vibrant and sustainable mixed-use area. The Eastern Gateway, formerly the Civic Quarter, provides an opportunity for hotel, leisure and residential uses, as well as employment space incorporated within the lower floors. This mix will contribute positively to town centre vibrancy and provide active edges along the streets and spaces, helping to animate the public realm and contribute to the safety and security of the area.



Heights

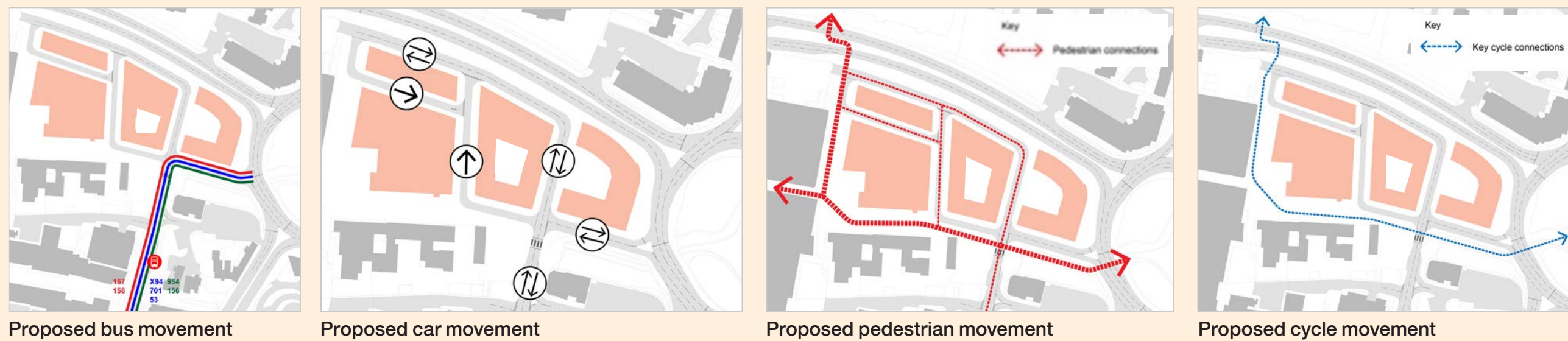
General heights may reach up to 8 storeys with a single taller building up to a maximum of 16 storeys in height located on the eastern edge, overlooking the roundabout. Changes in height and massing will be used to add visual interest and aid navigation through the area.



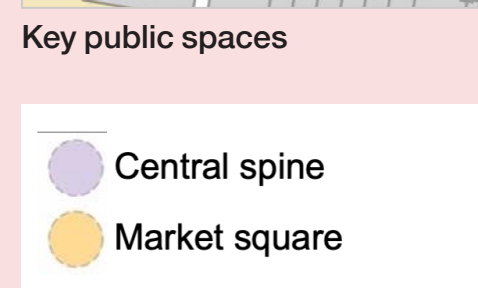
Access

The street network around the site is currently fragmented and does not use town centre land efficiently. To enable improved cycle and pedestrian movement through the area, the proposals include the realignment of The Ring as it runs through the northern site to create a more urban street grid that enables lower speeds and provides

more space for public realm and development. Two-way operation along The Ring, Weather Way and within the Town Square service streets allows for a more simplified traffic management system and consolidated car parking within a single car park, accessed off The Ring.



Key public spaces



Town square:

Any new development must retain the original layout of the New Town's civic quarter maintaining Easthampstead House or a replacement building in its location and setting. The space will function as a community focus and space that invites relaxation, meeting and community interaction away from the buzz and bustle of the core town centre.



Linear park offering space to relax and enjoy



Soft landscape, public art, old and new buildings contribute to form a quality environment



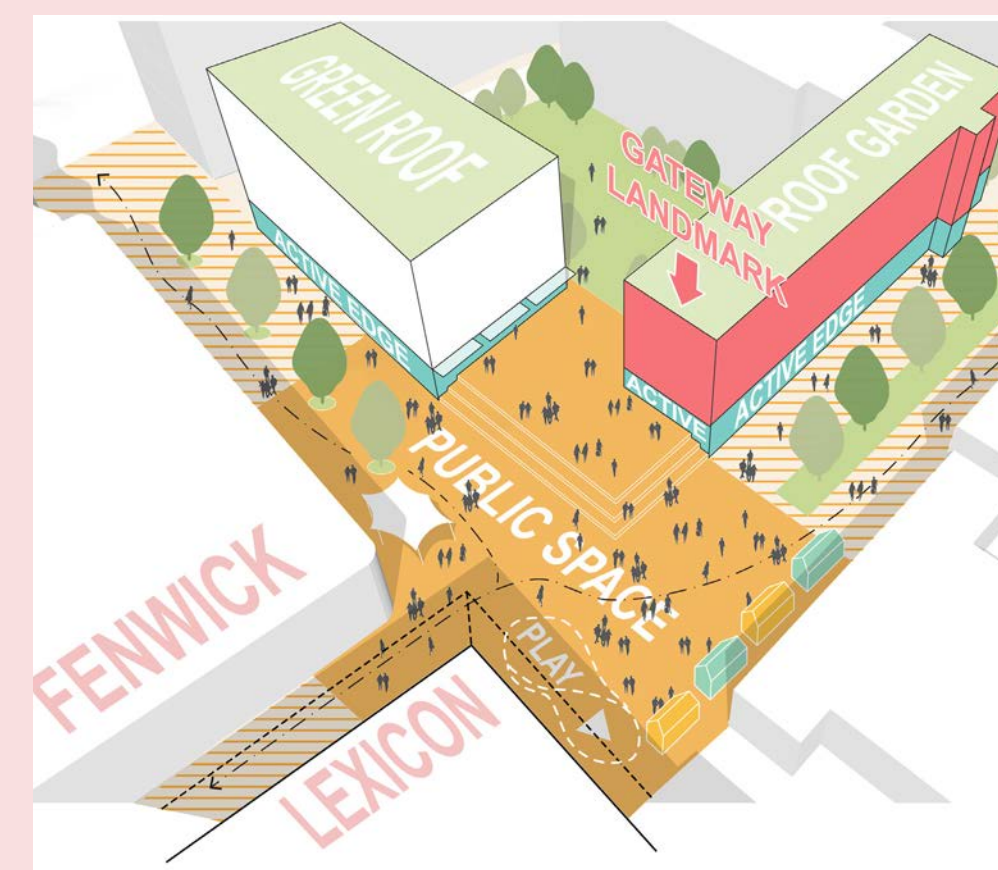
Pavilion cafe within a square



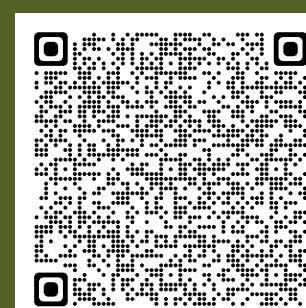
Cyclists

Eastern Spine:

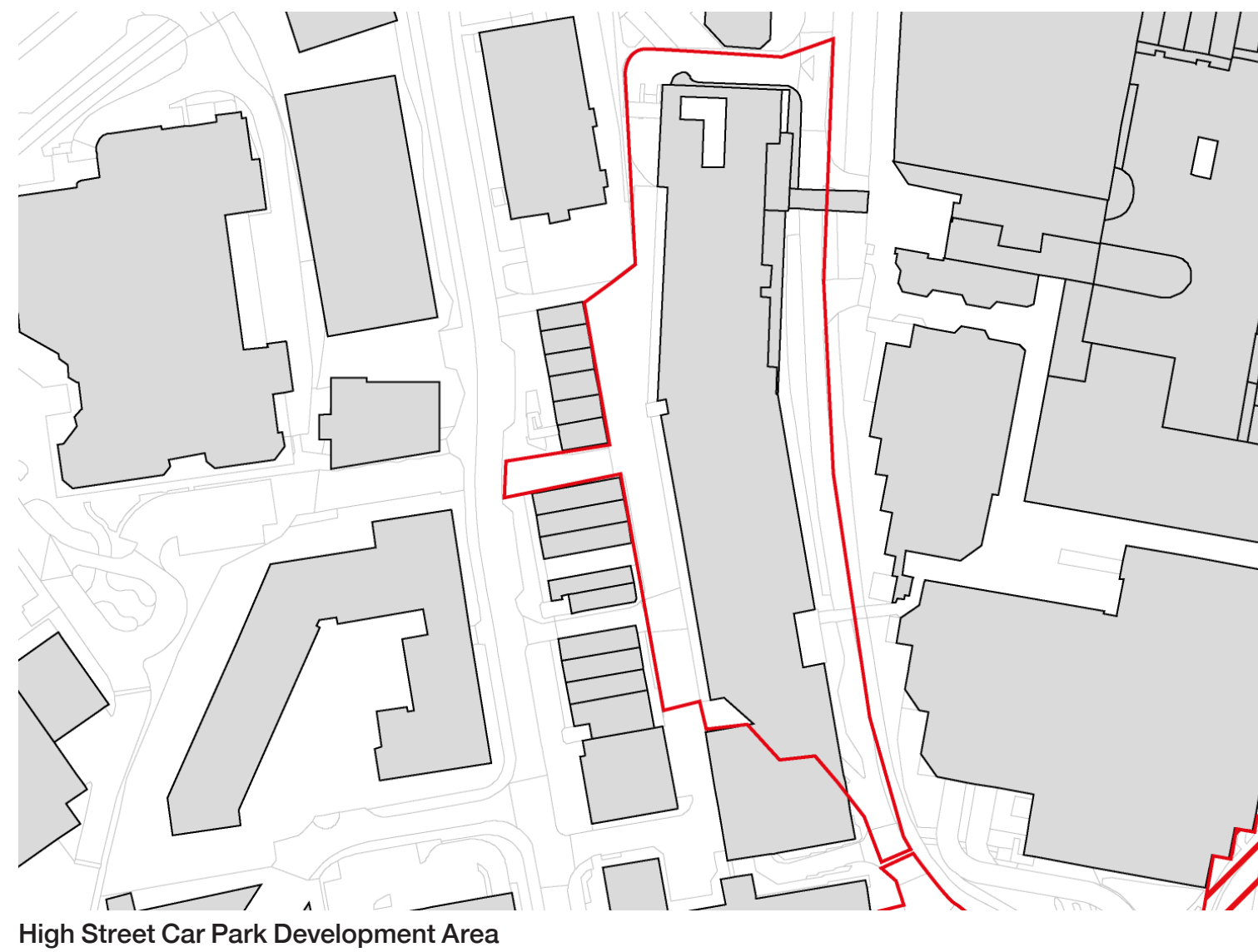
This route provides the main pedestrian / cycle approach into the town centre from the east. It will be a pedestrian priority space where people feel safe and comfortable walking and cycling through.



Town Square plan and aerial view from the south-west



The High Street Car Park site is located between The Ring and Market Street. The current multi-storey car park structure is failing and has recently closed. The site will therefore require redevelopment. The site is not allocated and sits outside the BFLP policy but guidance is included in the SPD given its proximity and significance as a natural continuation of the Southern Gateway development. It will also provide the opportunity for a key connection between the town centre to the east, and Market Street and Peel Centre to the west.



High Street Car Park Development Area

- 142 dwellings
- 2,284 m² commercial floorspace

Key Site Features

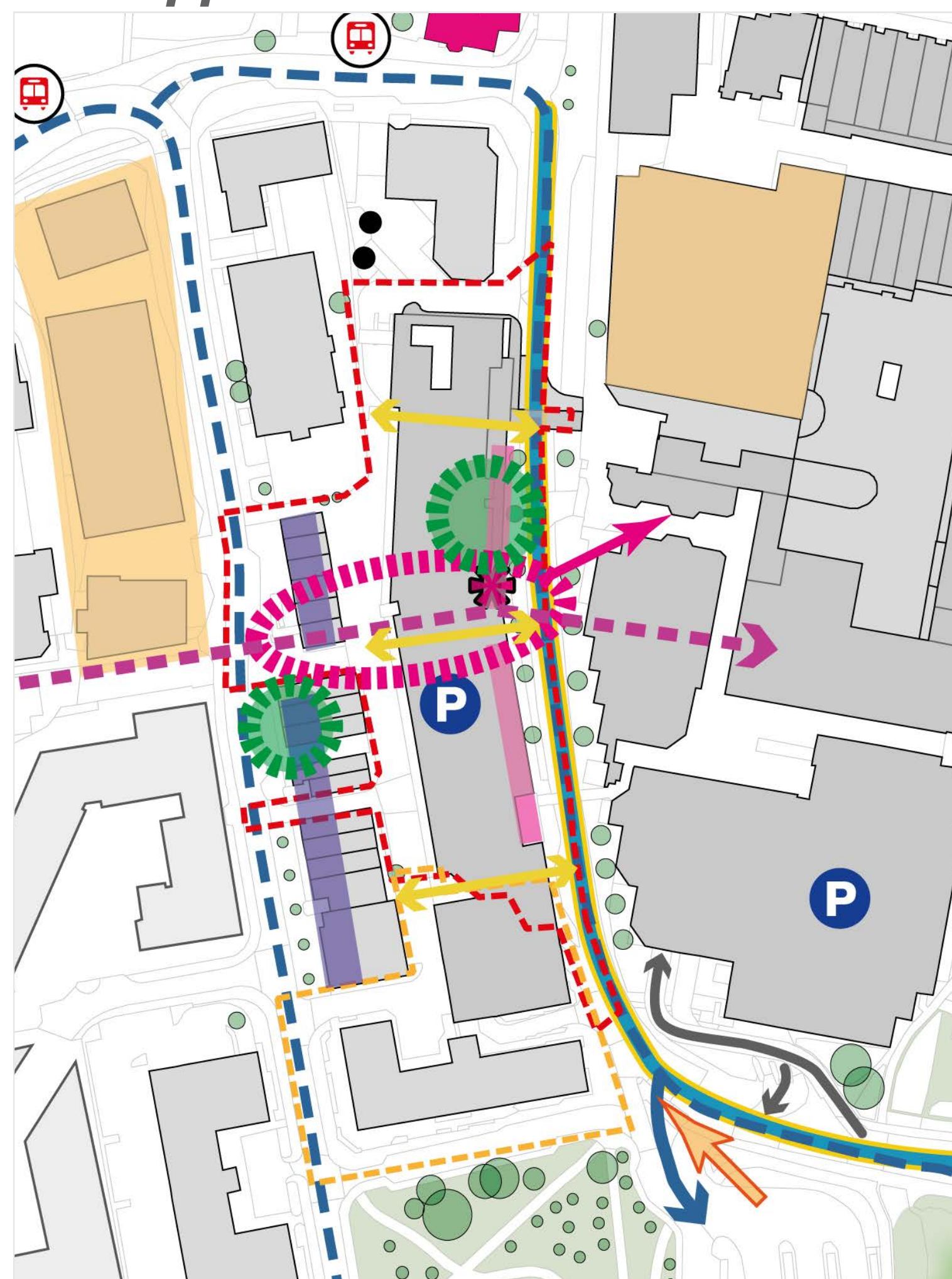


High Street Car Park – recently closed



Market Street retail units

Site Opportunities

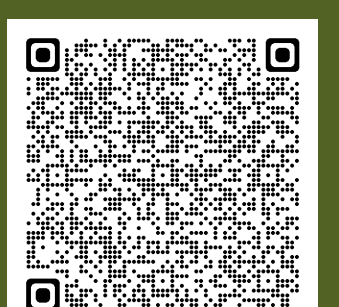


High Street Car Park - Opportunities

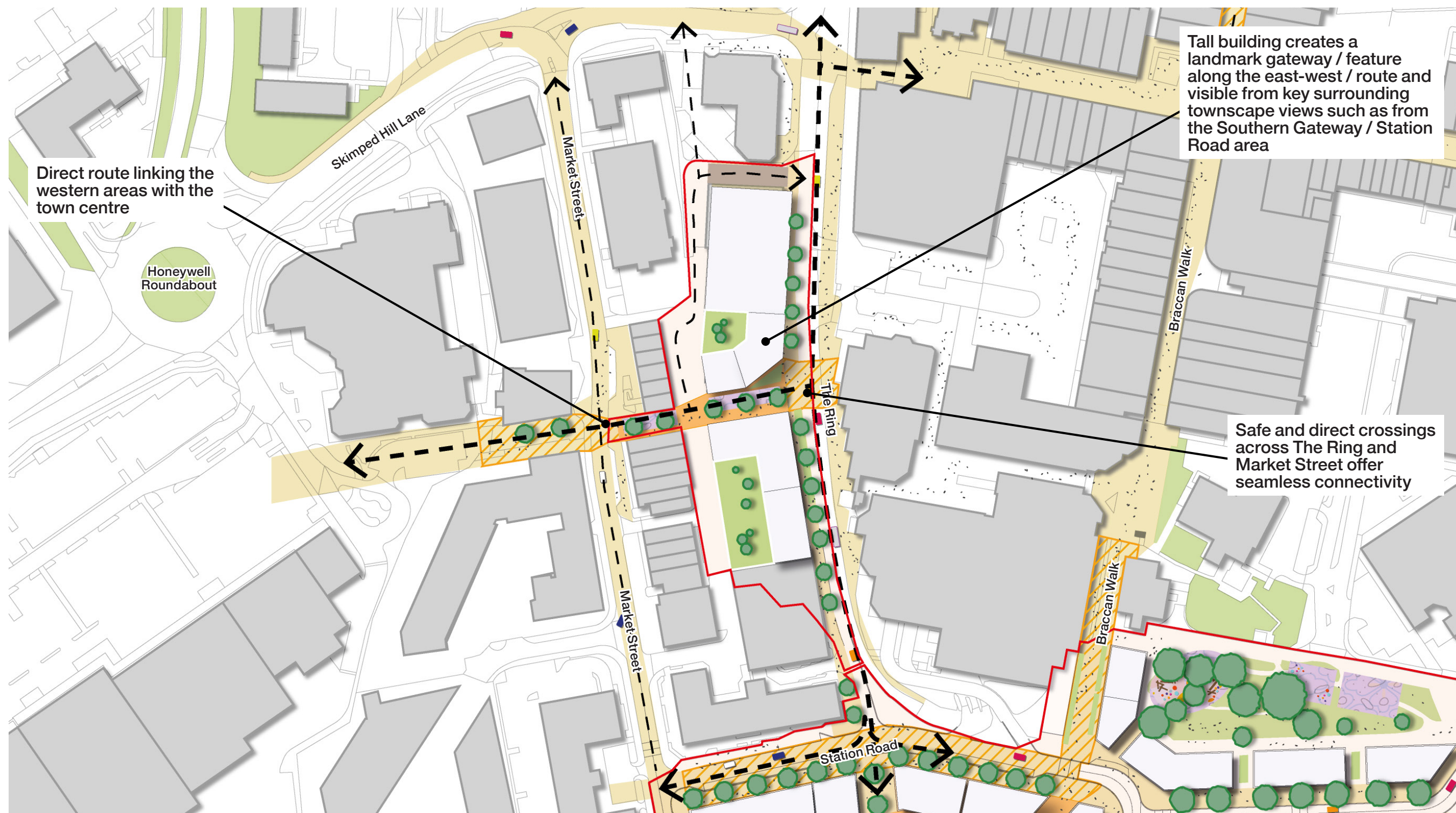
- KEY**
- Green space
 - Trees
 - Bus stop
 - Car parking
 - Access road
 - Heritage
 - Key view from the south
 - Opportunity for an elevated connection, into The Lexicon, through an attractive public route integrated within the development
 - Substation
 - Landmark gateway along East / West route
 - Landmark site
 - Connectivity straight across the site from The Peel Centre to The Lexicon Shopping Centre
 - Breaking up continuity to combat 'the canyon effect' and increase light
 - Important frontages and corners to make an impression
 - Addressing frontages onto Market St, considering servicing areas
 - Addressing frontages onto The Ring
 - Possible boundary
 - The Ring

The opportunities for the comprehensive development of the High Street Car Park comprise:

- The break down of the canyon effect that the current structure imposes on The Ring by its continuous and impermeable form;
- The creation of a new east-west pedestrian and cycle route connecting The Peel Centre and western areas with The Lexicon shopping centre and the eastern areas of the town centre - opportunity to connect the two spaces through the new development taking advantage of the minimal level difference that exists half way along the site;
- Tying together the new developments by creating a strong new neighbourhood - the strategic location of this site opens up opportunities to connect and knit together the new (present and future) developments in the area with the surroundings and beyond;
- Making an impact on key frontages and corners - opportunity to create strong edges both on The Ring and Market Street, addressing key corners and contributing positively to the street scene enriching the streetscape and adding to the visual impact and experience for residents and passers by;
- Landmark/gateways along east-west route - opportunity to mark the east and west approaches to the site with landmark buildings, creating a gateway and celebrating this important connection and establishing a visual connection;
- Key view to the site from the south - opportunity for an attractive built form to connect visually with the Southern Gateway; and
- Ensure the integration of green and blue infrastructure throughout the site.



Illustrative masterplan



Play and Green infrastructure

Proposals offer an opportunity to integrate with the existing green infrastructure network by the introduction of a new east-west link connecting to the green link along The Ring and the wider green infrastructure network. This link will provide an element of public open space including informal play as well as communal and private open spaces associated with the development blocks.



Informal play integrated within a green link

Uses

The site's proximity to the Southern Gateway and the station appeals to a high density predominantly residential mixed-use development. This would include commercial uses at ground level and the re-provision of the existing facilities at the ground level of the car park currently accessed from Market Street. This mix will contribute positively to the town centre vibrancy and provide active edges along The Ring helping to animate the public realm and contribute to the safety and security of the area.

KEY	
■	Leisure
■	Office
■	Retail
■	Food and beverage
■	Education
■	Residential
■	Religious
■	Community
■	Public car parking
■	Private car parking
■	Residential with ground level workspace
■	Children and youth play

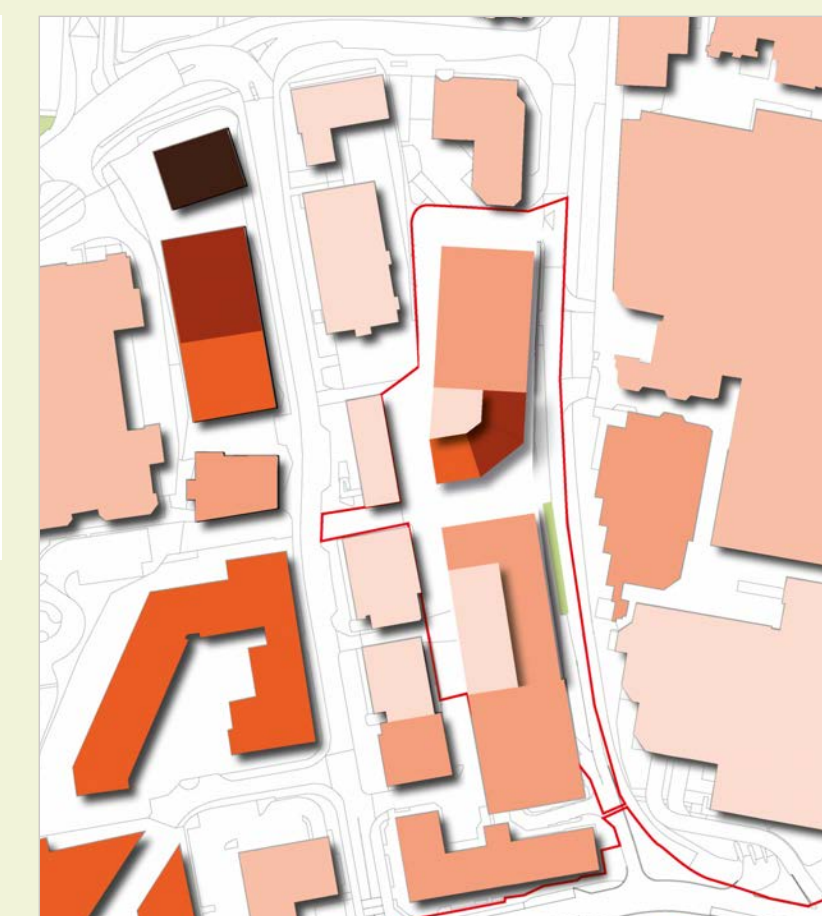


Proposed Land uses

Heights

A landmark building up to a maximum of 12 storeys should be located along the east-west route fronting The Ring and in direct view from Southern Gateway. The design of the building must respond positively to this view. The majority of the remaining area may be up to 8 storeys in height in the southern block and up to 9 storeys in the northern block. Changes in height and massing should be used to create visual interest and avoid long 'walls' of the same height.

KEY	
■	2-3 Storeys
■	4-5 Storeys
■	6-8 Storeys
■	9-11 Storeys
■	12-13 Storeys
■	14 Storeys
■	15+ Storeys

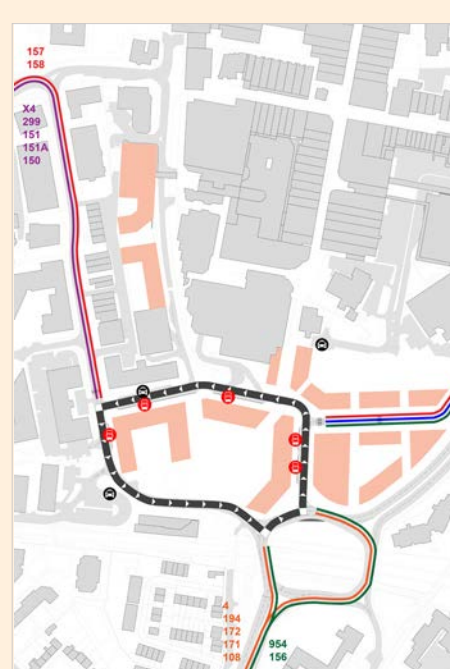


Proposed building heights

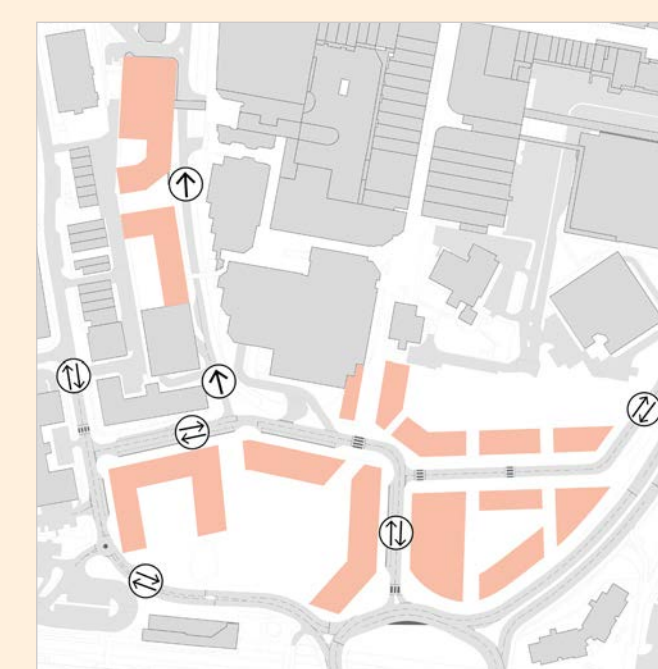
Access

The Ring, running east of the site, will remain one way northbound. The junction at the northern boundary of the site will be simplified and reduced to one lane northbound, with rain gardens and SuDS being used to separate turning traffic from passing traffic. North of this junction, the carriageway could be reduced to one lane to reduce severance and reduce speeds.

The street running to the north of the site will be widened to accommodate effective footways on both sides of the street, along with SuDS and tree planting. A new car park building will be located to the north of the site accessed from the north off The Ring.



Proposed bus movement



Proposed car movement



Proposed pedestrian movement



Proposed cycle movement

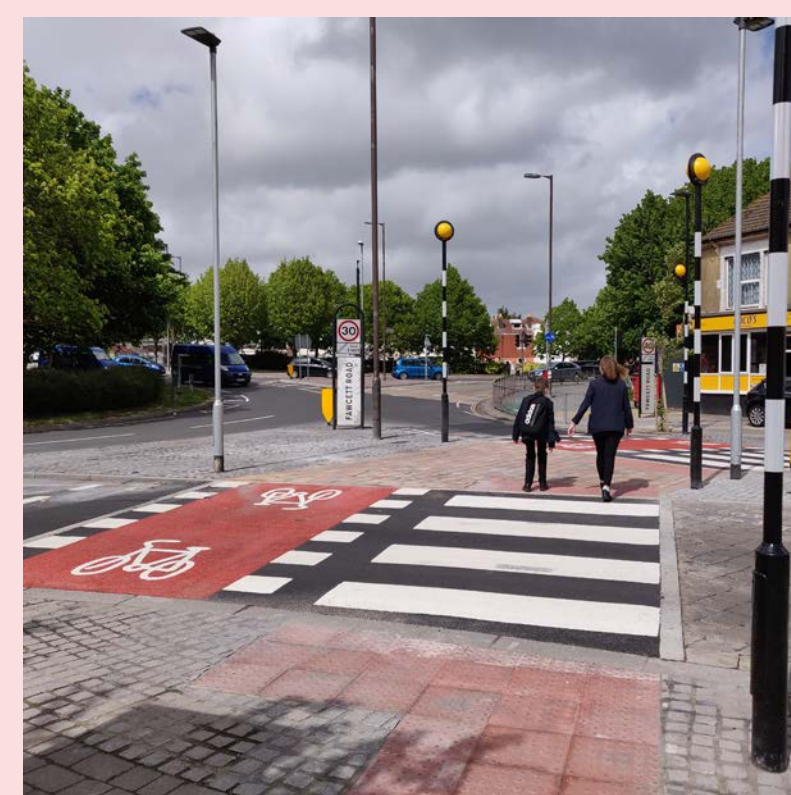
Key public spaces



Key public spaces

East west route:

A direct pedestrian and cycle route will connect the Peel Centre/Market Street and The Ring ensuring comfort and safety for walkers and cyclists. A new zebra crossing on The Ring will align with this new route and at the Market Street end the new route will line up with the existing signalled crossing to provide a seamless connection between the two thoroughfares. Cycling will be accommodated as part of the pedestrian space, designed to encourage low speeds and considerate behaviour. The route will be lined by active and animated commercial and / or residential ground floor frontages. The new courtyard service area will be designed as a pedestrian priority space and zebra crossings will be used where necessary to give pedestrian /cyclists priority over service yard movements. Trees lining the route will help with legibility as well as contributing to the green infrastructure network in the area.



Zebra crossing forming a safe seamless connection

