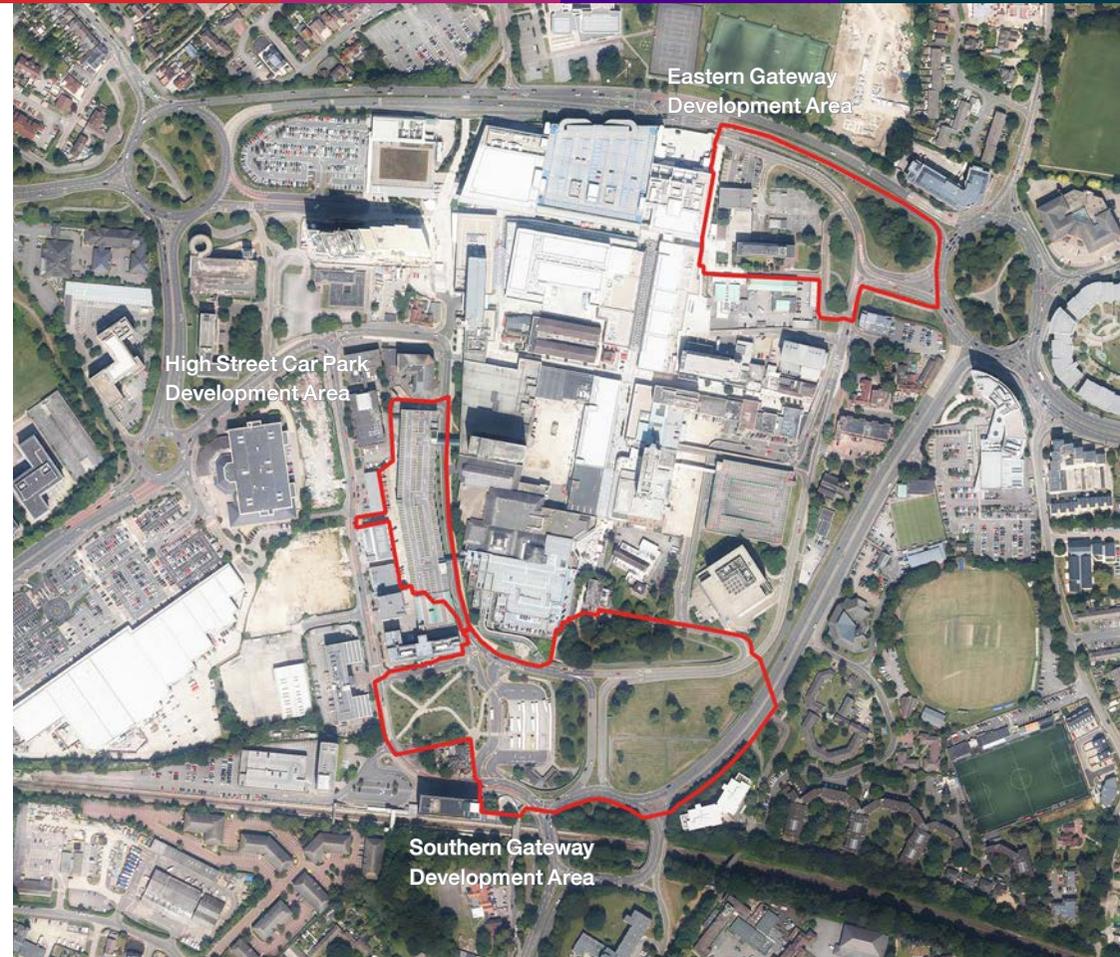


Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans Supplementary Planning Document

October 2024



Ordnance Survey Copyright Statement for Maps Containing OS Data

© Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey AC0000814058.

You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to, or interact with, the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-licence, distribute or sell any of this data to third parties in any form.

Quality Assurance	
Project title	Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans
Document title	Supplementary Planning Document
Client	Bracknell Forest Borough Council
Checked by Project Runner	MH
Approved by Project Director	KS
Project number	5839
Location of file on server	TPUD – Main/Job Server/5839 Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans/5839 4.0 Design Work/5839 4.4 Reports & Output/5839 4.4 indd/InDesign

Revision History		
Revision	Date	Status
1	06-02-2024	Draft
2	13-02-2024	Consultation Draft
3	03-09-2024	Draft
4	06-09-2024	Draft
5	10-09-2024	Draft
6	01-10-2024	Final Draft

Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design
30 King's Bench Street
London SE1 0QX

Telephone
020 7089 2121

mail@tibbalds.co.uk
www.tibbalds.co.uk



Tibbalds Planning and
Urban Design



CampbellReith



Aspinall Verdi



Urban Movement

Contents

1. Introduction: Vision and Purpose	3	5. Southern Gateway	27
Purpose	3	Illustrative masterplan	27
Vision	5	Opportunities and constraints summary	28
2. Planning Policy Context	7	Southern Gateway strategy	32
Planning Policy	7	6. High Street Car Park	47
Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)	8	Illustrative masterplan	47
3. Town Centre Context and Analysis	9	Opportunities and constraints summary	48
Introduction	9	High Street Car Park strategy	51
Heritage and character	11	7. Eastern Gateway	60
Movement and access	11	Illustrative masterplan	60
Open space and landscape	13	Opportunities and constraints summary	61
Heights	15	Eastern Gateway strategy	65
Land use and ownership	16	8. General Design Principles	74
4. Town Centre – Wide Concept	19	Built form	74
Introduction	19	Public realm	79
Heights	21	Sustainability principles	83
Movement	23	Public art	86
Landscape and open space	26	9. Phasing and Delivery	87
Land use	26		

List of Development Principles

5. Southern Gateway	27	6. High Street Car Park	47	8. General Design Principles	74
SG1 – Movement	33	HSCP1 – Movement	53	GD1 – Frontages and edges	74
SG2 – Key frontages and Edges	37	HSCP2 – Key frontages and Edges	55	GD2 – Façade treatment	76
SG3 – Heights and Landmarks	38	HSCP3 – Heights and Landmarks	56	GD3 – Landmark buildings	77
SG4 – Land use	39	HSCP4 – Land use	57	GD4 – Rooflines	78
SG5 – Play and Green Infrastructure	40	HSCP5 – Play and Green Infrastructure	58	GD5 – Pedestrian priority environments	79
SG6 – Market Square	42	HSCP6 – Public Spaces	59	GD6 – Informal street environments	80
SG7 – Jubilee Gardens	45	7. Eastern Gateway	60	GD7 – Enhanced street environments	81
SG8 – Central Spine	46	EG1 – Movement	66	GD8 – Planting	82
		EG2 – Key frontages and Edges	67	GD9 – Active travel	83
		EG3 – Heights and Landmarks	68	GD10 – Green and blue infrastructure	84
		EG4 – Land use	69	GD11 – Buildings	85
		EG5 – Play and Green Infrastructure	70	GD12 – Materials	85
		EG6 – Town Square	71	GD13 – Public art	86
		EG7 – Eastern Spine	73		

1. Introduction: Vision and Purpose

Purpose

1.1 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been produced to support the [Bracknell Forest Local Plan \(BFLP\)](#)¹ (adopted in March 2024) and will facilitate development of three strategically important locations within Bracknell's town centre.

1.2 The purpose of the SPD is to build upon Local Plan policies and the Town Centre Vision 2032 (approved by Bracknell Forest Council (BFC) in January 2019) in order to add greater detail and facilitate delivery of two sites allocated for redevelopment in the Local Plan, and a redundant multi-storey car park.

1.3 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 that hinders direct and legible access to the town centre from the west. All three sites can significantly improve the town centre perception and connectivity.

1.4 This SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications within the sites.

1.5 Applicants for developments within these areas will be required to produce a more fine-grained Masterplan, informed by detailed baseline surveys and Design Code, that respond to this SPD and Development Principles, and should be submitted as part of any planning applications for the sites. This would help to ensure that the site is delivered comprehensively, from a design and infrastructure perspective.

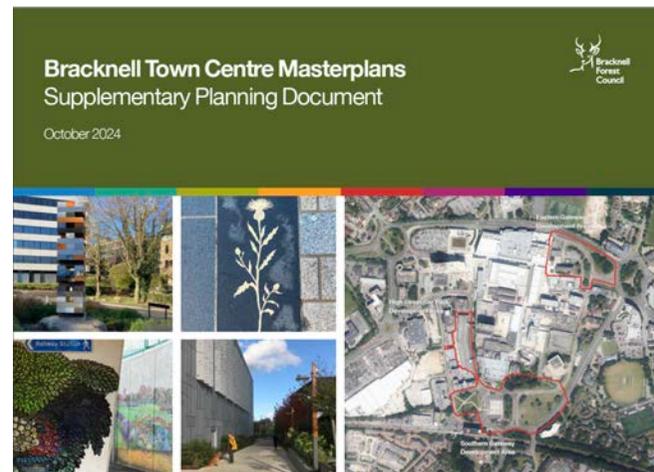


Figure 1.1: Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans – Supplementary Planning Document

¹ <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning/planning-policy/development-plan/bracknell-forest-local-plan/about-bracknell-forest-local-plan>

1.6 **The Southern Gateway Development Area** is allocated for a comprehensive well-designed mixed-use development by Local Plan Policy LP10, and consists of the land north of Market Street and Church Road, south of Station Road and The Ring, and Jubilee Gardens. The area includes the Bus Station (refer to figure 1.2).



Figure 1.2: Site Ref LP10 – The Southern Gateway Development Area

1.7 **The Eastern Gateway Development Area** is allocated for a comprehensive well-designed mixed-use development by Local Plan Policy LP9 and consists of the land south of Millenium Way and west of the Met Office Roundabout, and includes Bracknell Central library, Easthampstead House (former Council office) and Town Square (refer to figure 1.3).



Figure 1.3: Site Ref LP9 – The Eastern Gateway Development Area

1.8 **The High Street Car Park** site consists of land between The Ring and Market Street. The current multi-storey car park structure is failing and has recently been closed and no longer functions as a car park. The site therefore requires redevelopment. The site is not allocated for development by 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 (refer to figure 1.4).

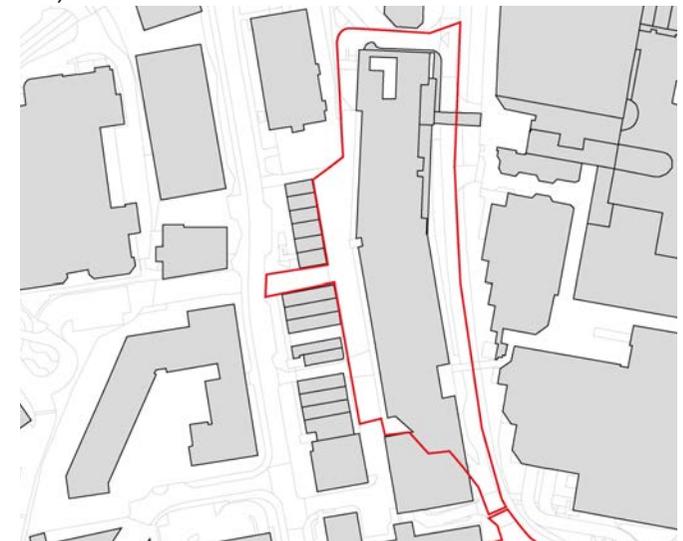


Figure 1.4: High Street Car Park Development Area

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)

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)

- 142 dwellings
- 2,284 m² commercial floorspace (TBC)

Vision

1.9 Following completion of the Lexicon, the Council published the [Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032²](#) setting out the vision for the continuing redevelopment of the town centre. The document establishes high level approaches to future development including housing, retail and workspace.

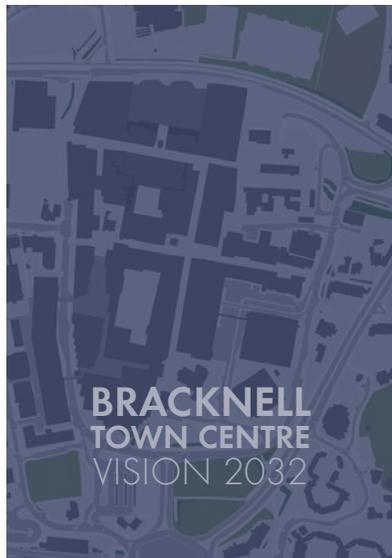


Figure 1.5: Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032

² <https://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-09/bracknell-town-centre-2032-vision.pdf>

1.10 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.

1.11 The Vision also defines a key legacy of the new town as one where landscape and the built environment are integrated, establishing the assumption that this be embraced as part of any new development.

1.12 It identifies a range of opportunities and interventions to help deliver this which will take some years due to the scale of development proposed.

1.13 Included in this and allocated within the Short-Term section of The Vision are the two strategic eastern and southern gateway locations covered by this SPD, with an expectation that development will come forward in the near future. Within the Vision, the Southern Gateway is referred to as the Station Quarter and the Eastern Gateway is addressed as the Civic Quarter.

1.14 **The Southern Gateway Development Area** (in the Vision referred to as the Station Quarter)

1.15 The framework for this area proposes:

- redevelopment of the bus station site by moving the bus stops to on-street locations to create a direct connection between the station and the town centre;
- realignment of The Ring and the introduction of new urban blocks establishing a network of two way streets and spaces; and
- predominantly residential development with a mix of supporting commercial, leisure and community uses.

1.16 **The Eastern Gateway Development Area** (in the Vision referred to as the Civic Quarter)

1.17 The framework for this area proposes:

- a strong pedestrian and cyclist connection with the town centre and integration with the existing and proposed network of streets and spaces; and

- mixed use development and new cultural activities if the library is to be replaced.

1.18 **The High Street Car Park** site is mentioned as an opportunity allowing the introduction of a connecting route from Market Street through to the town centre.

1.19 Overarching, relevant points from the Town Centre Vision are summarised below:

- Bracknell will realise its potential as a strong town centre, serving a prosperous and dynamic area;
- Bracknell will draw on its twentieth century New Town character and blend this with its deeper legacy as a historic town to create a hybrid which captures the benefits of both worlds;
- the strong retail centre which has been carefully developed will be extended with complementary uses, supporting a diverse and resilient economy;
- new cultural activities, leisure uses, hotels, high quality offices and homes will form a major part of ensuring that the town centre feels vibrant and welcoming;
- Bracknell will respond to its role as an important hub for tech industries by addressing the needs of a smart, modern workforce;
- the inner town centre road structure will be remodelled to establish a better-connected

network of sites, encouraging walking and cycling routes, creating a more legible centre;

- a phasing strategy to accommodate medium and longer term development based on a flexible design to ensure buildings and their uses can evolve to suit the needs for future generations. One of these longer term sites is the High Street Car Park – its redevelopment will allow the introduction of a connecting route from Market

Street linking the Peel Centre and the western industrial areas with the town centre;

- the car will continue to be accommodated, but in ways which anticipate the possibility of significant changes in mobility over the coming generation;
- the resilient urban form will help Bracknell to continue to adapt and develop. The result will be a welcoming, sociable and invigorating place which provides amenity, entertainment and excitement for all.

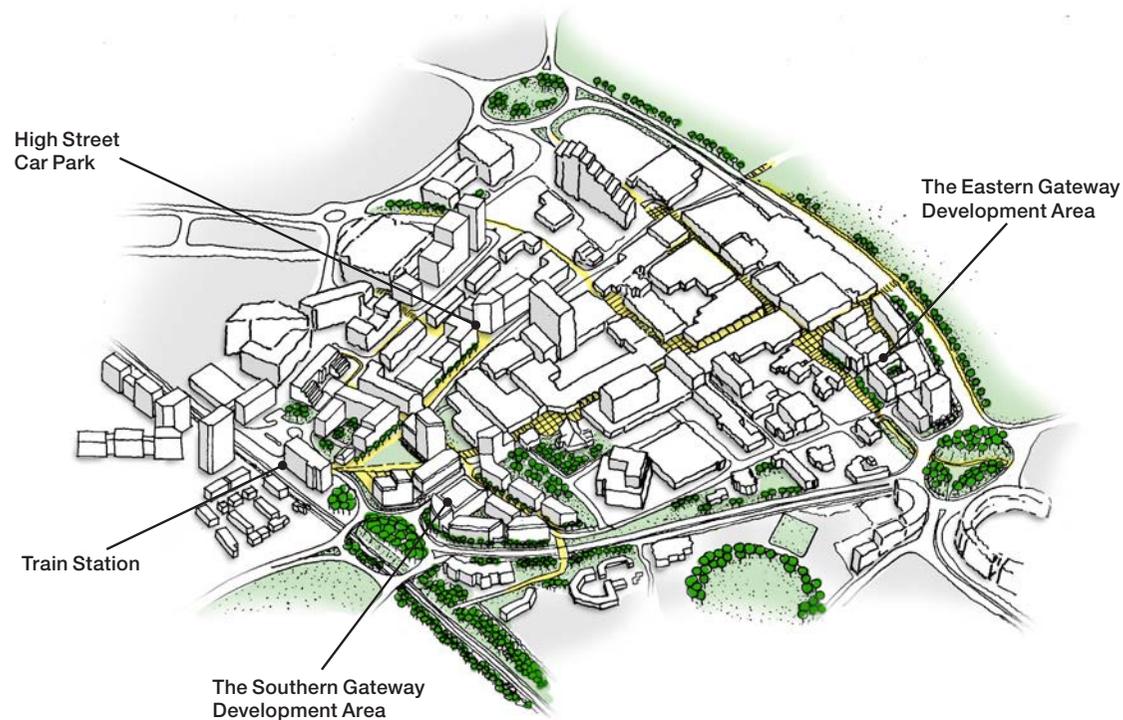


Figure 1.6: Bracknell Town Centre Masterplans – aerial view

2. Planning Policy Context

2.1 This section of the SPD provides an overview of relevant planning policy and guidance.

Planning Policy

Bracknell Forest Local Plan (2024)

2.2 The new Bracknell Forest Local Plan (BFLP) replaced the Core Strategy (2008) and the saved policies in the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan (2002). It covers the period 2020-2037.

2.3 The BFLP includes both site specific and general policies relevant to the SPD sites.

2.4 Key policy principles relevant to the SPD include sustainable development, design and character, tall buildings, green infrastructure, amenity space, trees and transport.

Bracknell Town Neighbourhood Plan (2021)

2.5 Since the designation of a neighbourhood area covering the parish of Bracknell, the neighbourhood plan was 'made' in October 2021. This means that the neighbourhood plan forms a part of the local development plan for the area. Neighbourhood plan policies hold equal weight with local plan policies in the neighbourhood area, though they must be in general conformity with local plan strategic policy.

2.6 The neighbourhood area covers Bracknell town centre and surrounding areas.

2.7 The neighbourhood plan contains policies which cover trees, gardens and open space (EV4, EV5, HO5), community facilities (EV12), streetscape (HO4) and design (HO6, HO7, HO8).

2.8 Policies support proposals which retain or offer alternative provision of Open Space of Public Value. There is an expectation that tree planting is incorporated as part of all new development, particularly at gateway locations such as the sites in this SPD.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

2.9 SPDs build on and provide more detailed advice or guidance to development plan policies. Summarised below are other SPDs for Bracknell Forest which are relevant to the sites in this SPD.

Design SPD (2017)

2.10 The Design SPD sets out Bracknell Forest's commitment that good design is a fundamental quality of development. The SPD lists key principles and best practices for guiding development within the Borough, including the importance of:

- understanding context;
- integrating the site into its surroundings;
- arrangement and scale of developments; and
- setting out principles for streets, blocks, open spaces and landscape, as well as plots, frontages and edges.

Character Area Assessments SPD (2010)

2.11 A number of character areas are appraised, including within Bracknell town centre. The Bracknell character assessment describes the overall character of Bracknell as including pockets of Victorian development, housing estates of varying age, including those developed as part of the new town, and office developments. However, it mainly focuses on areas of Bracknell built before the 1949 new town designation.

2.12 The sites within this SPD are not located within any of the specific area assessments in the Character Area Assessments SPD. Though the Southern Gateway site is adjacent to Character Area A: Church Road, Larges Lane, Bracknell.

(Emerging) Housing SPD

2.13 This SPD provides detailed guidance for new local plan policies related to Market, Affordable, Specialist, and Self and Custom Build Housing. It includes context such as definitions, delivery thresholds, and design considerations.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) SPD (2018)

2.14 The purpose of this SPD is to provide guidance to make sure that new development does not have adverse effects on the SPA. It provides an avoidance and mitigation strategy to show how the effects of new (principally) residential developments on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA should be avoided and mitigated.

Streetscene SPD (2011)

2.15 The Streetscene SPD establishes principles for the streetscene and public realm. Its primary focus is on residential streets, but the principles can be applied to major routes too.

2.16 Highway and street design principles are established for new streets and the document includes chapters on materials, street furniture, clutter, parking, lighting, landscaping, waste and services.

Designing for Accessibility in Bracknell Forest SPD (2006)

2.17 The Accessibility SPD outlines the importance of considering built environment design and its impact on disabled people, older people and parents with children.

3. Town Centre Context and Analysis

Introduction

3.1 This chapter provides an analysis of the opportunities and constraints provided by the wider town centre context, including:

- Heritage and character;
- Movement and access;
- Open space and landscape;
- Heights; and
- Land use and ownership.

3.2 This section applies to all masterplan areas. More site-specific analysis is included in Sections 5, 6 and 7.

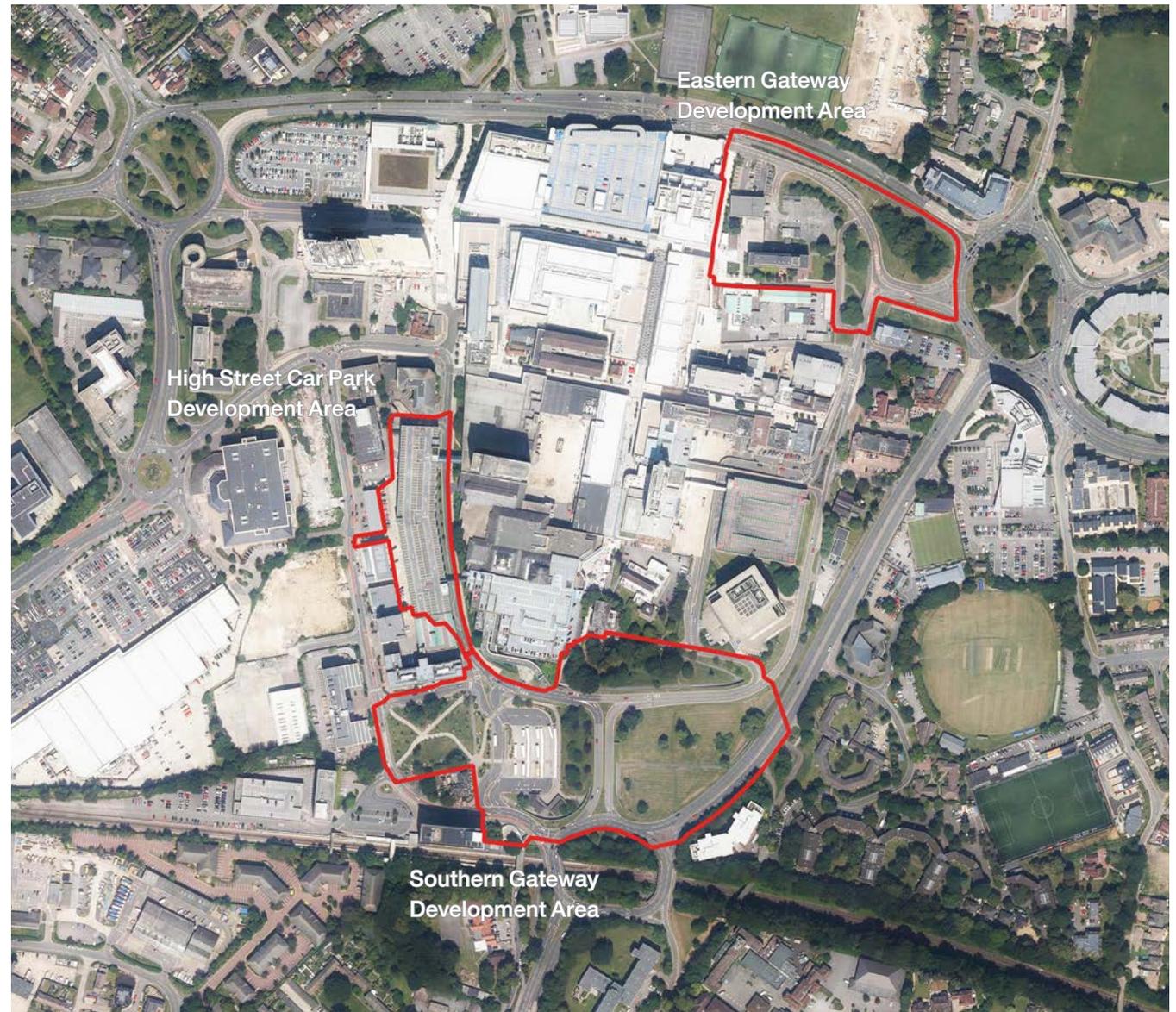


Figure 3.1: Town Centre aerial photo with masterplan site boundaries

3.3 Bracknell town was one of the first New Towns built in post-war Britain. Its layout is based on the town planning principles of that era with the Town Centre boundary clearly defined by the road structure separating it from the surrounding neighbourhoods. Employment areas form separate zones within the urban area and large areas of open space offer a rich and varied landscape to the whole borough.

3.4 The Town Centre lies in the heart of the borough and acts as a transport hub serving the whole of the borough area and further afield. It has seen little development apart from the 1980s when the Princess Square shopping centre was completed but more recently the completion of The Lexicon has fulfilled a large part of the continuing regeneration of the centre. Residential accommodation is increasing through the refurbishment of commercial buildings and further proposals for high density residential-led mixed-use developments are coming forward, or are under construction, both in and around the town centre.

3.5 All these proposals, together with the enhancements of the shopping offer, have made the town centre a more attractive place to visit and spend time in.

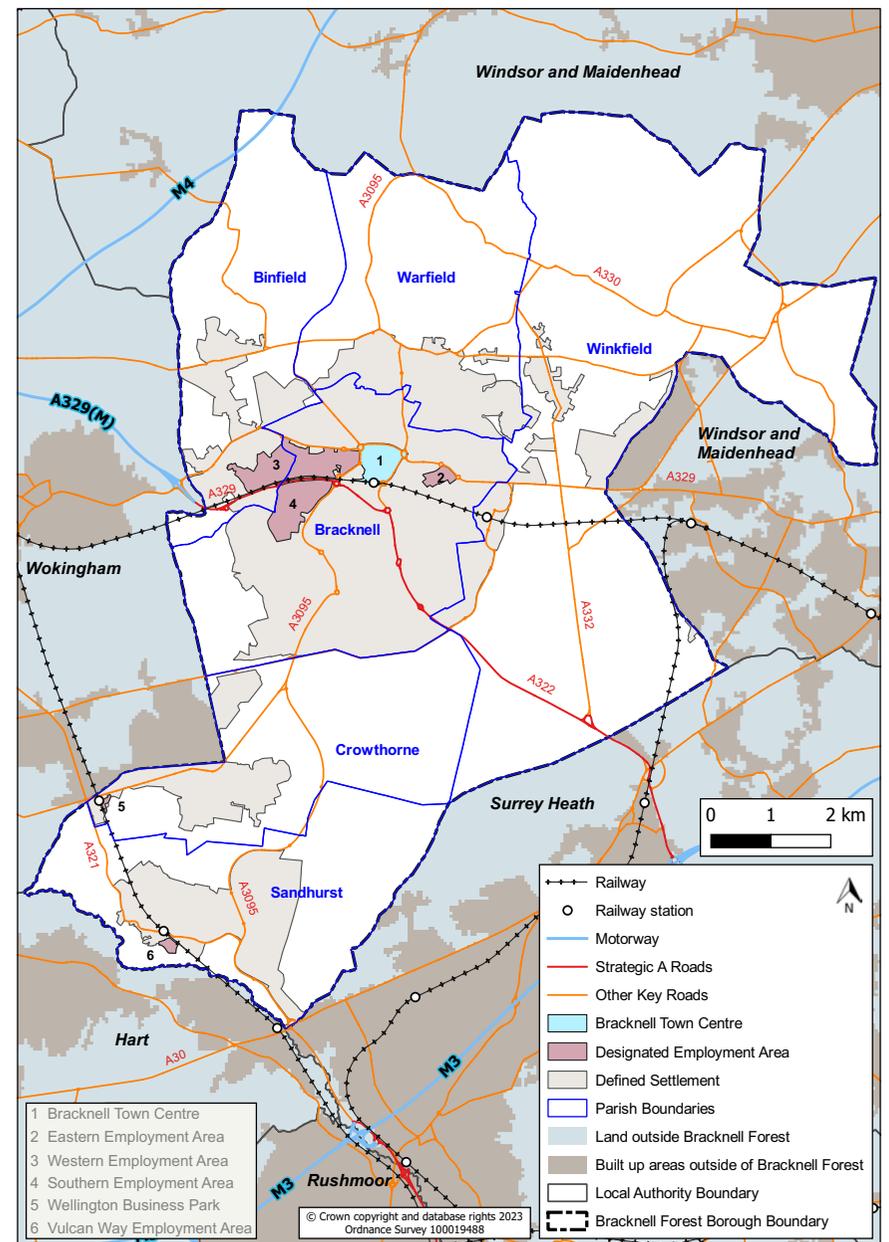


Figure 3.2: Bracknell Forest Council map (extracted from Bracknell Forest Local Plan 2020-2037(March 2024), p22

Heritage and character

3.6 Bracknell was designated a new town in 1949 and developed around the existing small market town of Bracknell. The initial designation intended for a population of 25,000 which was revised to 55,000-60,000 in 1962. Today Bracknell Forest has an estimated population of 125,000.

3.7 The predominant built environment is post-war, with few buildings and features which pre-date the new town designation.

3.8 There are no conservation areas within the immediate surroundings of the masterplan areas, however there are a number of heritage assets and character considerations, as listed below:

- New town heritage remains 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.
- in addition to the modernist new town buildings the Eastern Gateway site includes the Town Square which was the focal point of this former Civic Quarter which since the council offices have moved has lost its status
- the Market Inn which is adjacent to the current bus stop is a locally listed heritage asset.



Figure 3.3: Library



Figure 3.4: Easthampstead House



Figure 3.5: Market Inn – Locally listed

Movement and access

3.9 The highway infrastructure is currently prioritising vehicle movement over the movement of people and town centre experience. This has resulted in the dominance of vehicles, in particular on the arrival into Bracknell town centre. The experience of moving around the pedestrianised shopping centre streets is very different, and it is an environment in which it is pleasant to spend time. Re-balancing town centre streets outside the pedestrianised area to offer a better balance between movement and place quality is a key opportunity.

3.10 Currently the ring road (Church Road and Millennium Way) is duplicating the movement function of The Ring for example. There are future opportunities to rationalise the highway network and reduce duplication in favour of creating active travel and public transport routes. The ring road is currently a barrier to pedestrian and cycle movement.

3.11 Due to this extensive, wide road network, pedestrians and cyclists are forced to use subterranean uninviting underpasses for their own safety and ease of movement. Like other new towns, there exists a clear segregation between people and vehicles. Pedestrians do attempt to cross the carriageway which presents significant safety issues. Between 2017 – 2021 there were 32 pedestrian collisions on roads within the town centre, 30 slight collisions, 1 serious and 1 fatal.

3.12 Bracknell has a network of cycle routes which are traffic-free, but this segregation often means routes do not arrive at destinations people want to get to such as shops and community facilities. This may mean only the more experienced cyclists use core routes to get to the town centre in a direct and efficient way. The Bus Station covers a large area and dominates the southern part of the Town Centre and the station forecourt. It is adjacent to the train station and is part of a potential gateway area into the town centre. However, legibility for pedestrians is currently impacted by the dominance of roads and the bus stopping area which dominates and severs any direct connection between the two stations and beyond.

3.13 Car parking provision in the town centre is sufficient to meet current demand with a number of off-street parking options. These currently operate below their capacity, providing scope for increased demand, and have an impact on the vibrancy of the streets around them which lack attractive, active frontages.



Figure 3.6: Pedestrian crossing Church Road

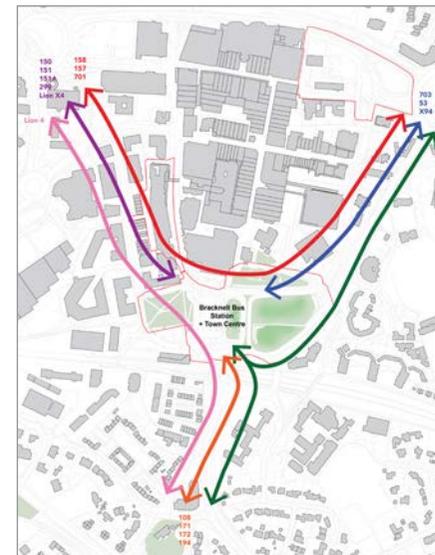


Figure 3.7: Existing bus movement

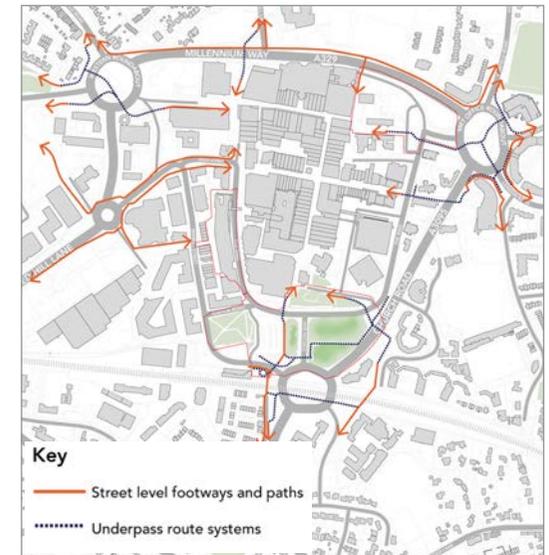


Figure 3.8: Existing pedestrian movement



Figure 3.9: Existing cycle movement

Open space and landscape

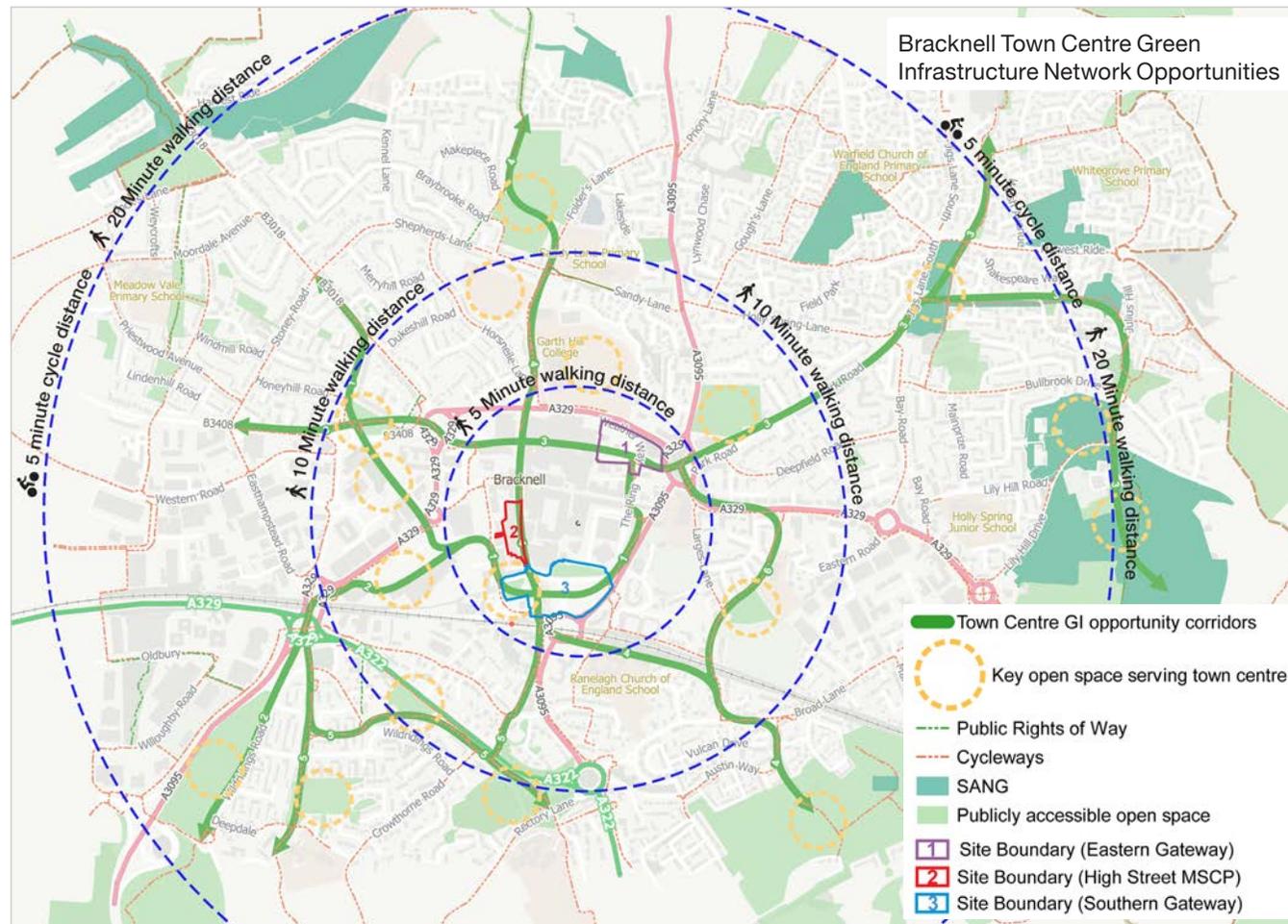


Figure 3.10: Green infrastructure and walking and cycling accessibility

3.14 A key legacy of the New Town is the integration of landscape and nature, and Bracknell retains open spaces and extensive tree planting connecting the town centre with the surrounding landscape.

3.15 Woodland covers approximately 38% of the Borough, making it one of the most densely covered Boroughs in the UK.

3.16 The Borough has 17 key open spaces serving the population. These are predominantly green spaces and include parks, playing fields and other spaces. This mix includes publicly accessible and semi-public open spaces, including school grounds and a cemetery.

3.17 The Town Centre itself, however, consists mostly of hard surfaces with a few pockets of vegetated open space, most notably Jubilee Gardens and Station Green.

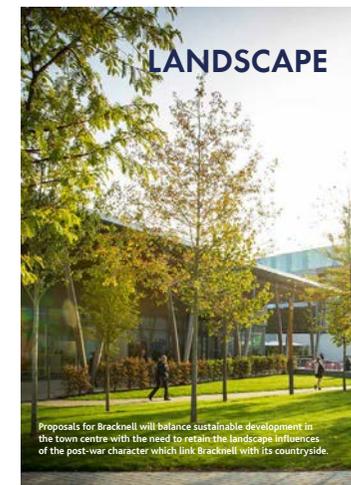


Figure 3.11: Bracknell Town Centre Vision 2032

3.18 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. It is 0.42 hectares (ha) – roughly half the size of a football pitch.

3.19 Jubilee Gardens is a green space located at the southern edge of the pedestrianised area, comprising 0.51 hectares (ha). It contains mature trees and a small seating area and provides a unique pocket of nature within the town centre.



Figure 3.12: Station Green

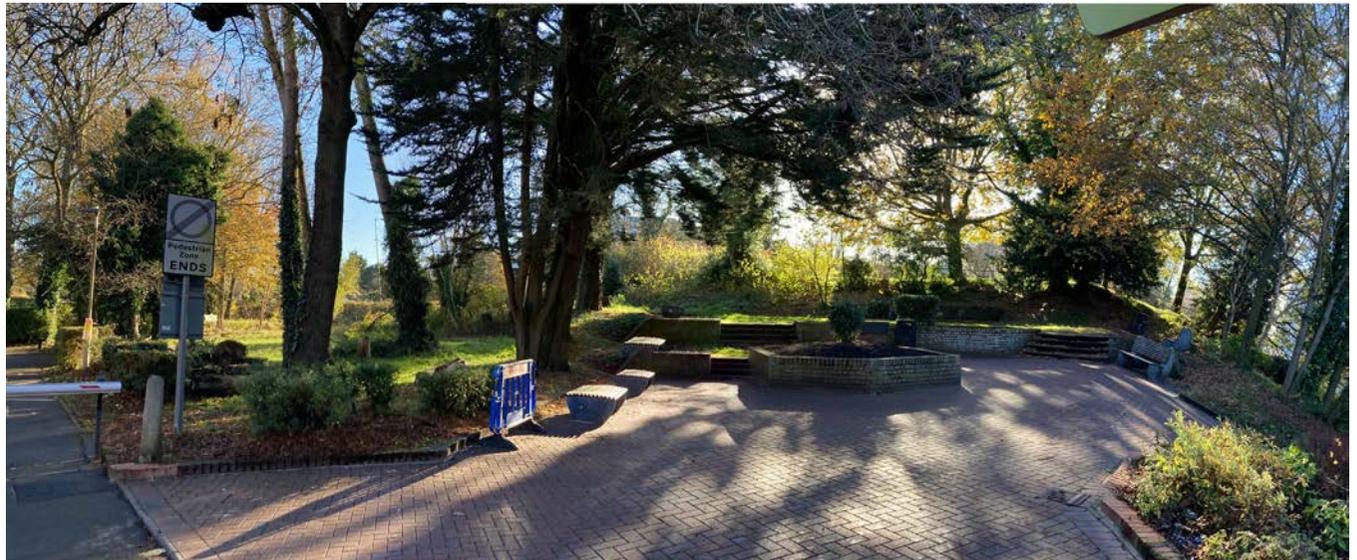


Figure 3.13: Jubilee Gardens

Heights

3.20 Building heights within the town centre generally follow new town principles of lower building heights of around 3 storeys, with a few distinct towers, e.g. Ocean House at 14 storeys.

3.21 The surrounding residential areas generally comprise buildings of 2-3 storeys with a few exceptions where new residential apartments have been built.

3.22 Modern office buildings in the surrounding area, for example the Arlington Square Business Park, tend to be around 4-5 storeys. Buildings tend to step up towards the station and the town centre.

3.23 Within the town centre, newer completed residential-led developments reach heights up to 19 storeys (Royal Winchester House).

3.24 Other recent, but not yet completed, residential developments in the area start at 5 and rise to 11 storeys high, and Bracknell Beeches and the former Bus Station sites are up to 16 and 17 storeys high respectively.

3.25 A review of existing and permitted (some currently under construction) building heights within the area suggests a massing profile that concentrates taller buildings closer to the station and the town centre gateways, with Royal Winchester House marking the western gateway. This is currently the tallest building in Bracknell with the second tallest being Ocean House at 14 storeys.

3.26 Around the station area, commercial buildings are lower than the new residential-led developments and range from: One Station Square – 8 storeys, Columbia House – 6 storeys and Time square – 5 storeys.

3.27 The new Local Plan has listed criteria for defining tall buildings in the borough and includes a list of tall buildings which are predominantly on the outskirts of the town centre.

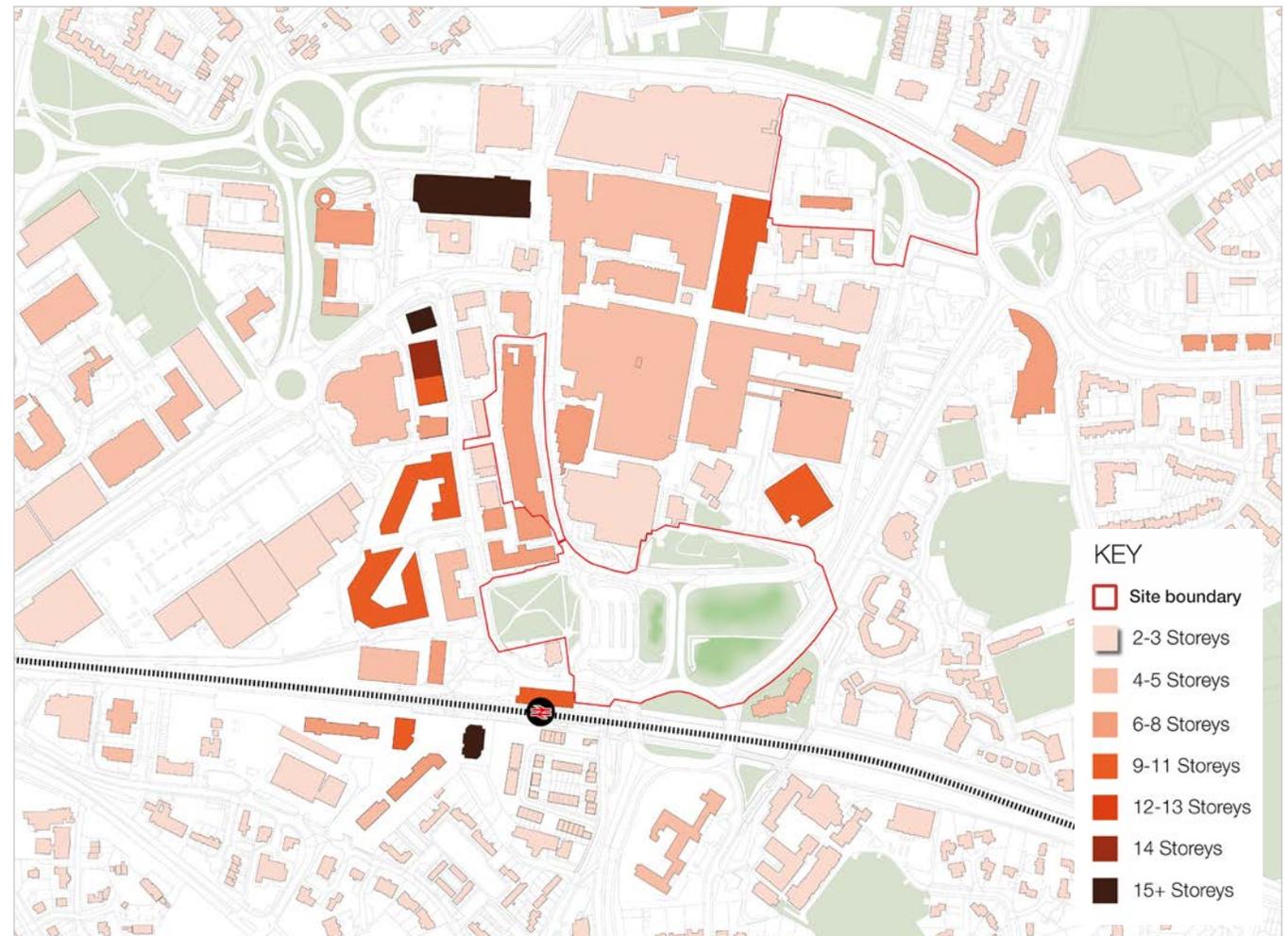


Figure 3.14: Existing and permitted heights

Land use and ownership

3.28 Bracknell has undergone several periods of renewal over the years and the most recent wave has included a new shopping centre, The Lexicon completed in 2017.



Figure 3.15: Lexicon Shopping Centre



Figure 3.16: Existing town centre uses

KEY

 Leisure	 Retail	 Education	 Religious	 Public car parking
 Office	 Food and beverage	 Residential	 Community	 Private car parking

3.29 Uses within the town centre have been diversifying as a result of ongoing regeneration projects. Bracknell remains an important retail centre and the core of retail uses is centred around the pedestrianised Braccan Walk. Several purpose-built office blocks are located within the ring road and Bracknell Forest Council's Time Square office is situated immediately to the west of the Southern Gateway area. The existing town centre leisure offer is headlined by health & fitness uses and the two cinemas but lacks diversity and an influx of permanent residents will lead to additional leisure demand.

3.30 The diagram above (figure 3.16) illustrates the dominance of large footprint retail and commercial uses within the town centre. On the edges, a number of multi-storey car parks support the town centre and commercial uses.

3.31 Market Street has become more mixed-use with residential accommodation amongst the offices and retail uses. Other residential-led schemes are being delivered, including two high density residential schemes with mixed uses at ground level to the west of Market Street.

3.32 Residential uses in the form of high-density urban apartment blocks are further adding to the town centre diversity. Demand for housing has increased in the town centre and several residential developments are under construction or in the pipeline. This is a response to demand for more central living both locally and nationally.

3.33 Masterplan sites covered by the SPD are in the ownership of Bracknell Forest Council. The Council is committed to using its own land ownership to further facilitate town centre regeneration and deliver new homes.

Market analysis – to inform development proposals

3.34 A property market analysis has been undertaken to review the residential and commercial markets in and around Bracknell Town. The review aimed to identify the opportunities that exist for a new development and ensure that the proposed uses within the masterplans reflect demand over both the short and long-term future. The assessment relies on the analysis of property data and consultation with property agents active in the local market. Below is a summary of the conclusions of this analysis:

Residential summary

- opportunity to deliver higher density flatted accommodation due to the location of the sites.
- there is an active rental market in the town centre which provides a diverse range of different products including individual private lets, managed blocks and build to rent schemes. The sales and rental markets demand appears to be driven by smaller units of up to two bedrooms
- senior accommodation could present an opportunity.

3.35 **Private Sales** – There has been a reasonable amount of new build residential development over the past few years, the majority being studio and 1 & 2 bed flatted units mainly through conversion of commercial buildings. There is also a substantial number of new developments coming forward or under construction in the area. Notably there is a lack of larger 3+ bedroom properties suggesting that the demand for this type of unit is focussed in areas outside the town centre. As the town centre changes further, there may be some scope for a different style of residential product in the form of larger 2 bed and/or 3 bed flatted units, duplex apartments or town houses. Overall, the market analysis indicates that the delivery of flatted housing will present an opportunity within the town centre and can be promoted in the masterplan.

3.36 **Rental market** – In recent years, affordability limitations in the sales market have caused the proportion of private tenants to increase. This has been combined with a shifting perception of the rental market, which is now considered a more popular and flexible lifestyle choice. In addition recent growth in the rental market has also been attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic where people have adopted a 'try before you buy' attitude towards the residential market. Review of the rental market in Bracknell Town Centre has demonstrated that demand for rented flatted accommodation is strong.

Retail summary

3.37 It is anticipated that any new residential development could provide opportunities for new smaller-scale convenience floorspace, particularly to the south of the town as part of the Southern Gateway. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the emergence of a trend whereby the public have become more reliant on being able to access their centres primarily for convenience and the term ‘hyper-localism’ has been coined. With the proximity of the site to the rail and bus links, there may be an opportunity for a smaller, express-style convenience offer.

3.38 It is recommended that the retail needs are reassessed once the masterplan has been adopted to ensure that any retail space is proportionate and does not impact upon the existing offer.

Food & beverage summary

3.39 At present it is not anticipated that large volumes of F&B floorspace will be necessary. Over the longer term, and perhaps once new communities and local populations have arrived, F&B uses could play an increased role in maintaining and evolving a sense of place. This may create opportunities for the provision of F&B space as part of new mixed-use development, particularly on the Southern Gateway site which presents a more logical setting considering the proximity to transport links (and therefore a flow of pedestrians) as well as the size of the site.

Leisure summary

3.40 The provision of any such uses must be considered carefully to ensure that footfall is not attracted away from existing hubs. Health and fitness and other leisure uses (for example a nightclub, indoor cycling studio etc.) can be located on an ad-hoc basis. The provision of some of these uses at ground floor level of a residential block may provide an attractive location.

Commercial summary

3.41 The relatively recent completion of The Lexicon has meant the town centre is served by a contemporary and diverse offering that serves the town centre’s catchment. As such, the need for new commercial space is dependent on this catchment expanding or an influx of new permanent residents located within the ring roads. There may be scope for new small-scale convenience offerings and ideally, these can be accommodated as part of the new residential schemes. It is important that the existing centre benefits from the increased population and activity following redevelopment and that these new communities integrate well with the surrounding area to create a better quality of place and stronger local economy.

3.42 Office uses are also likely to be a longer-term prospect once the residential development has been delivered and communities are established. It is anticipated that the key to ensuring the vitality of any office space will be the creation of place; instilling a shift towards locally-

based employment uses as opposed to those to the west of the town centre. Given the volume and diversity of existing office spaces in wider Bracknell, it is not anticipated that office uses will drive the sites forward. However ancillary, flexible space could prove viable dependent on the type of residential development which comes forward.

3.43 Overall, commercial development is not seen as a primary driver for change across the town centre. That is not to say, however, that commercial uses will not play a role in integrating the masterplan sites with the wider town centre over the medium to longer term. Much will depend on the socio-economic changes instigated by any residential development and the demographic characteristics of prospective residents. Regardless, new residents will bring increased demand for local services, as will an influx of part and full-time working populations. This will be further strengthened by the proposed improved linkages between the key sites.

Hotel summary

3.44 For its size and number of annual overnight stays, Bracknell has a reasonable hotel offering. Consultations with various operators have revealed there to be preliminary interest from some of the mid-to-upper brands including Hilton and Jurys Inn. Hilton have expressed a particular interest in meeting with the Council to discuss procurement options should hotel uses be considered a viable use at either of the sites.

4. Town Centre – Wide Concept

Introduction

4.1 This section describes the town centre-wide concept which has influenced the masterplans for the Eastern and Southern Gateways and High Street Car Park and ensures that the sites are developed with a view towards the town centre as a whole. Specific design and masterplan requirements for each area are included within sections 5, 6 and 7 and detailed town centre-wide design principles in Section 8.

4.2 The following concept is shaped around the key objectives and principles set out in the Town Centre Vision:

- Bracknell will draw on its twentieth century New Town character and blend this with its deeper legacy as a historic town to create a hybrid which captures the benefits of both worlds;
- the strong retail centre which has been carefully developed will be extended with complementary uses, supporting a diverse and resilient economy;
- new cultural activities, leisure uses, hotels, high quality offices and homes will form a major part of ensuring that the town centre feels vibrant and welcoming;
- the inner town centre road structure will be remodelled to establish a better-connected network of sites, encouraging walking and cycling routes, creating a more legible centre;
- the car will continue to be accommodated, but in ways which anticipate the possibility of significant changes in mobility over the coming generation;
- the resilient urban form will help Bracknell to continue to adapt and develop. The result will be a welcoming, sociable and invigorating place which provides amenity, entertainment and excitement for all.

4.3 The key destination within the town centre is the pedestrianised Braccan Walk. The Southern and Eastern Gateways provide key gateways and routes into this area. On the southern edge, the train station is another key destination, and connectivity between the railway and bus stations and the town centre facilities is essential. The High Street Car Park site offers opportunity for a key east-west link from the Peel Centre to the Lexicon and beyond.

4.4 The town centre in its nature is generally inward looking and the three masterplan areas provide the opportunity to create a more outward looking and welcoming approach. The key routes from the station into the town centre and the approaches from the east and west will be signified through a series of spaces.

4.5 Routes into the town centre will be clearly framed with attractive frontages and active ground floors. Gateways, landmark buildings, and key views will further enhance the legibility of the town centre as a whole.

Concept Diagram



Figure 4.1: Concept diagram

Heights

4.6 The following town centre-wide height strategy has been applied to the masterplan areas. Taller buildings will act as markers for movement to and through the sites and provide a clear sense of orientation within the urban environment. Proposals will also be expected to comply with the Tall Buildings policy in the Local Plan (LP51).

4.7 The approach to building heights for the area is informed by:

- the consideration of existing building heights and those set by consented schemes;
- the topography of the areas; and
- microclimate and overshadowing.

4.8 Building heights should support the overall approach to movement and urban design and aid wayfinding by:

- locating buildings to respond to and terminate key views;
- creating a cluster of taller buildings close to the station to help provide a physical and visual landmark to signpost this destination;
- stepping down building heights close to the existing two-storey locally listed Market Inn;
- providing a tall building at the east end of the eastern gateway masterplan;
- providing a tall building at the junction between the east-west route and The Ring within the High Street Car Park site; and
- keeping the remainder of the masterplan area within a height range of 5 – 8 storeys in height.

4.9 At application stage, detailed height strategies for each site will have to be:

- tested through wind, overshadowing, sunlight and daylight studies; and
- justified in regard to the urban design strategy, views and their support to achieving greater legibility within the wider town centre.

4.10 Changes in height and massing should be used to create visual interest, long ‘walls’ of the same height should be avoided and building breaks and changes in height should be introduced.

4.11 Landmark locations including key corners, termination points of vistas and the edges along key approaches to the sites may be marked with localised increases in storey heights.

4.12 Broadly the strategy proposes an increase in heights towards each of the gateways. These increases in heights are delivered through a small cluster of taller buildings in the Southern Gateway, a single landmark building in the Eastern Gateway, and a tall element within the development of the High Street Car Park site. This strategy works with the existing and committed developments and ensures that the existing Royal Winchester House building remains a localised high point.

4.13 The strategy also reflects the recent developments on the western side of the town centre – Amber House and the Bus Depot site, which also signify an increase in height towards the Southern Gateway.

4.14 The Massing strategy diagrams below also include future developments such as Bracknell Beeches and Market Street.

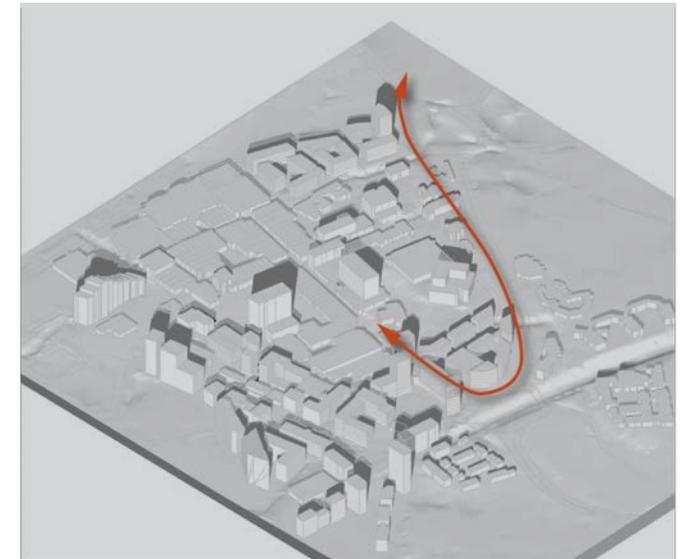


Figure 4.2: Massing strategy (aerial view from the south-west): tall buildings strategically located to act as landmarks and points of orientation for the Southern Gateway (foreground) and the Eastern Gateway (background).

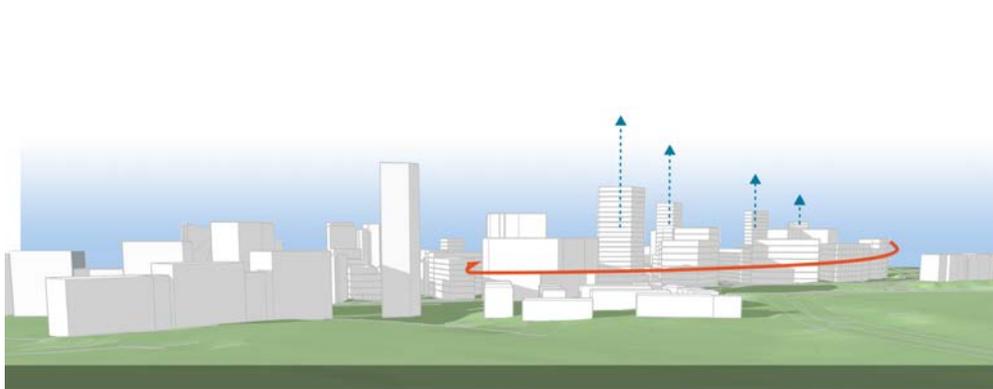


Figure 4.3: Massing strategy – view from the south-west; a series of vertical elements aid wayfinding throughout the town centre area

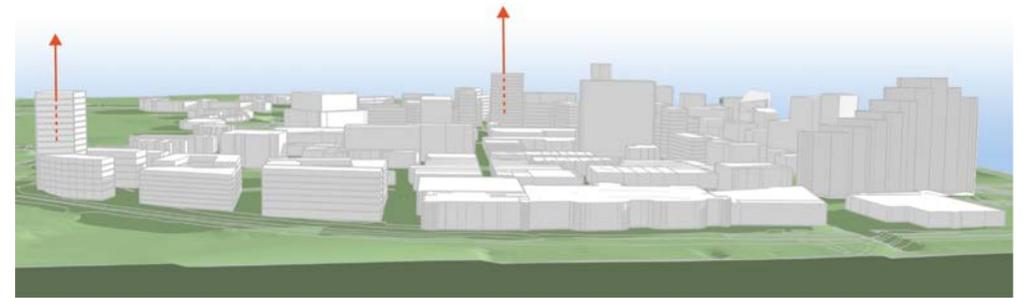


Figure 4.5: Massing strategy – aerial view from the north with the Eastern Gateway to the west and Southern Gateway centrally located in the background

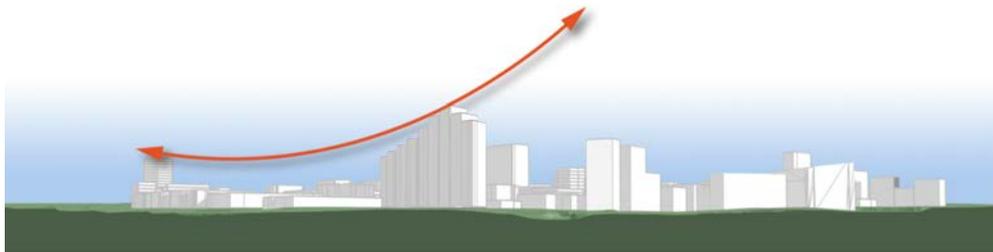


Figure 4.4: Massing strategy – view indicating the eastern gateway massing in relation to Royal Winchester, the tallest building within the town centre area



Figure 4.6: Massing strategy – view from the north-west indicating height distribution within the town centre

Movement

4.15 The Masterplan areas must contribute to and connect into the proposed movement network that is rebalanced towards walking and cycling. The overarching movement strategy is illustrated in figures 4.7 and 4.8.

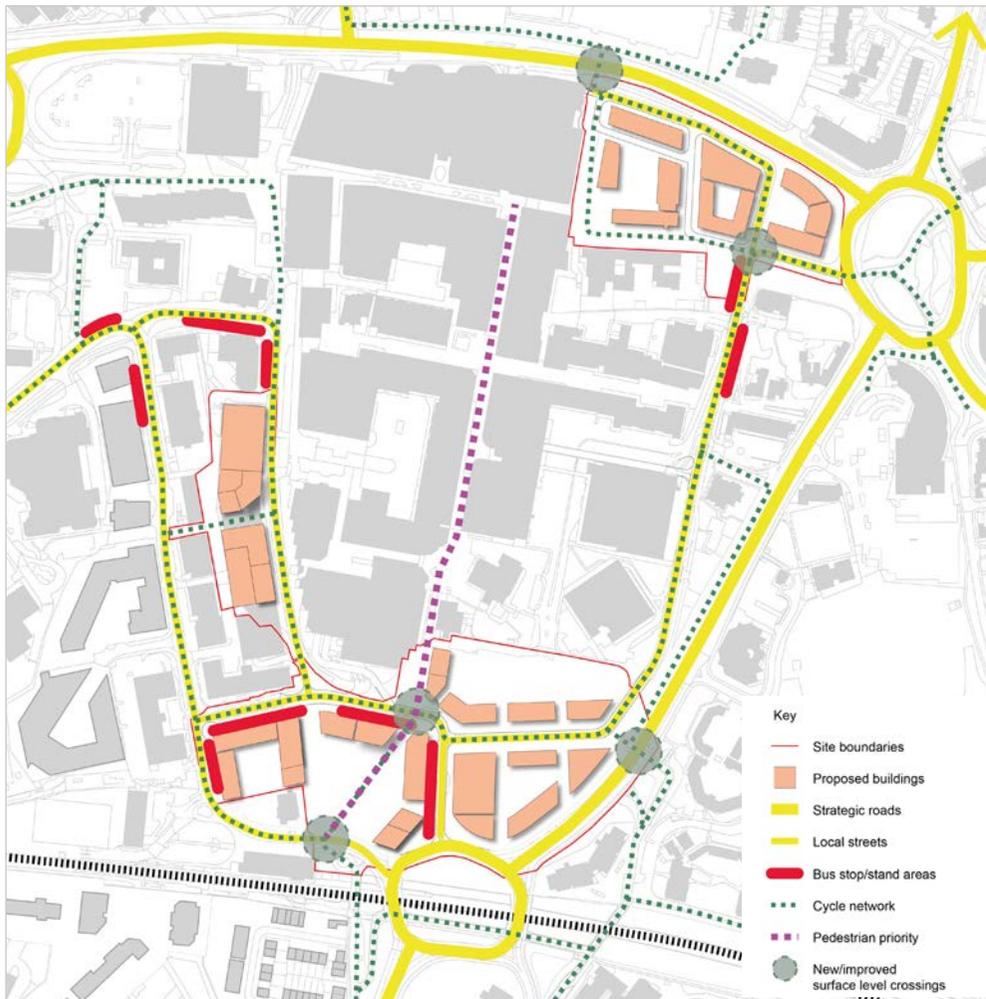


Figure 4.7: Proposed movement

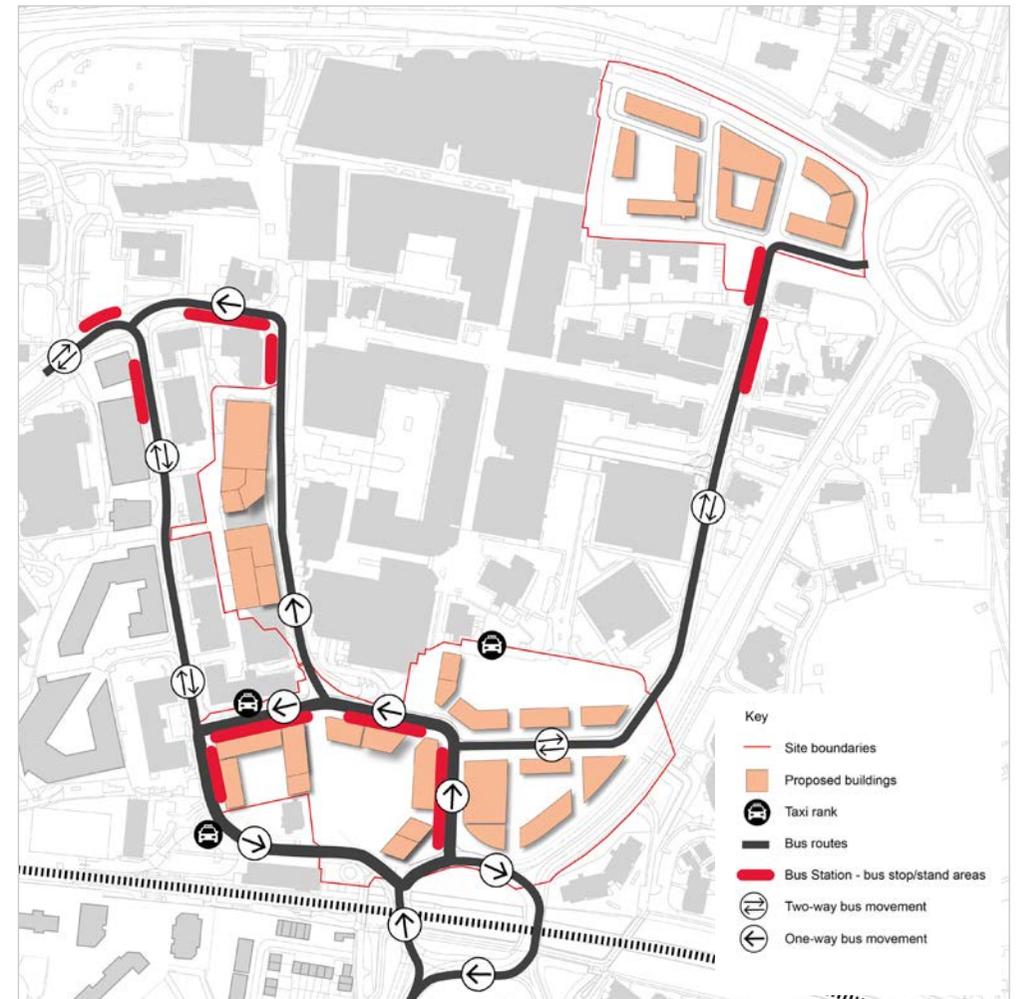


Figure 4.8: Proposed bus movement

General movement routes and connectivity

4.16 A key principle for town-wide movement is to create a network of two-way streets and replace the one-way streets, within the masterplan areas. The reasons for this are to increase permeability, especially for cyclists, as well as reduce vehicle speeds – with two-way streets having been demonstrated to reduce speeds compared with one-way streets.

4.17 Station Way and The Ring will be reduced in width to two lanes. Moving north from Station Roundabout, vehicles can move two-way along Church Road and/or Market Street, with the functionality of Station Road and Station Way now having been consolidated, to unlock development land and public space. General traffic (two-way) and buses (one-way northbound) will use Station Way to access the ring with buses turning west – stopping and standing – before moving north or back south on Market Street. Moving north along The Ring, all traffic is two-way with all accesses maintained. Vehicles can exit onto the strategic highway network at Weather Way and servicing vehicles can continue to access the shopping centre on a realigned access road.

Bus station and movement

4.18 Buses will continue to play a key role in providing mobility to key services and to meeting climate change objectives. The multi-modal public transport hub will be required to be maintained, with bus services continuing to play an important function, alongside rail and taxi services.

4.19 The bus station will be moved from its current location and replaced by new bus stops on Station Way/Station Road and Market Street. Appropriate seating and shelter will be provided to these new stops. Buses will move in an anticlockwise way from the Station roundabout along Station Way/Station Road and onto Market Street (refer to Figure 4.8). Bus layover bays and waiting facilities for bus drivers will be re-provided within the new development on Station Way.

Walking and Cycling

4.20 All subways within the masterplan areas will be removed. Pedestrian and cycle movement will be at street level and facilitate travel along key desire lines via a direct route from the station to the town centre and the surrounding existing networks to maximise connectivity within the town centre and beyond (refer to Figure 4.7).

4.21 Cycling from the station or further south will be accommodated at grade with the spiral ramp being removed. Cycles will cross Market Street via a new Toucan crossing into the new piazza space, proceeding north until The Ring, where they can move into the town centre over a new crossing or move east along The Ring, crossing Church Road on a new crossing to join the existing cycle network.

4.22 Cycling east-west through the northern site will be accommodated at grade for as long as possible, with cycles descending into the Met Office Roundabout underpass east of The Ring.

Parking

4.23 The masterplan strategy is based on a consolidated parking model. Rather than each plot delivering its own parking, spaces will generally be consolidated within each area in a centrally located multi-storey car park which will provide parking for residents and visitors in line with council standards. This strategy has been market tested.

4.24 It is envisaged that most parking for the new development will be accommodated in accordance with this strategy, to minimise the number of vehicles on street and create a more car-free environment within the wider development whilst accommodating parking needs for residents and visitors.

4.25 Parking within the multi-storey car park will be a mix of allocated and unallocated spaces, to enable visitors to park when needed, providing 'off-street communal' parking as per the Manual for Streets (2007) parking classifications.

4.26 Disabled parking spaces will be provided within consolidated parking structures and on-street where suitable to ensure access for all is maintained. Disabled parking bays will be provided in accordance with BFC's Parking Standards SPD.

4.27 Although parking spaces can be allocated to blue badge holders at any time, accessible perpendicular parking bays will be provided, distributed across car parks. As these parking areas are off-street, potential conflicts with vehicles will be reduced.

4.28 Care will be taken to ensure that disabled parking spaces are provided in close proximity of building entrances, taking priority over non-disabled spaces.

4.29 Princess Square Car Park access and egress will remain unchanged.

Landscape and open space

4.30 The landscape and open space concept is formed around a series of new and improved spaces located along the key north-south route leading from the station into the town centre as well as the eastern approach and the introduction of a new east-west pedestrian priority street through the middle of the High Street Car Park site linking the Peel Centre to The Lexicon.

4.31 Spaces will be of varying scale, character and function, contributing to the richness of the town centre as a whole and forming a series of destination spaces visually interlinked with one another (refer to concept diagram Figure 4.1 above).

4.32 Station Green will be replaced by a new Market Square, which is centrally located and will enable the pedestrian and cycle desire line from the station to the town centre. This space will as a minimum be the same area as the existing Station Green (min. 0.42 hectares) and include green and hard landscape to provide a multi-functional urban space.

4.33 The concept establishes the following key spaces, which are described in more detail within Sections 5, 6 and 7:

- new Market Square, replacing the existing Station Green;
- Jubilee Gardens retained and improved;
- new Central Spine, linking the train station to the town centre;
- Town Square retained and improved;
- new Eastern Spine, providing an approach into the town centre ; and
- new East-West route through the middle of the High Street Car Park site.

Land use

4.34 The Council's planning policy aims to regenerate the sites as vibrant and sustainable mixed-use areas that contribute to the town centres vitality. Care must be taken to ensure a good balance with the core town centre offer.

4.35 The Southern and Eastern Gateway areas are seen to be contributing to, but not competing with the core retail centre. At the planning application stage impact will need to be demonstrated.



KEY

■ Leisure	■ Retail	■ Religious	■ Residential with ground level commercial / retail / leisure / community / cultural
■ Office	■ Food and beverage	■ Community	■ Children and young people's play
■ Office with ground level commercial / retail / leisure / community / cultural	■ Education	■ Public car parking	
	■ Residential	■ Private car parking	

Figure 4.9: Proposed land uses within the town centre context

5. Southern Gateway

Illustrative masterplan

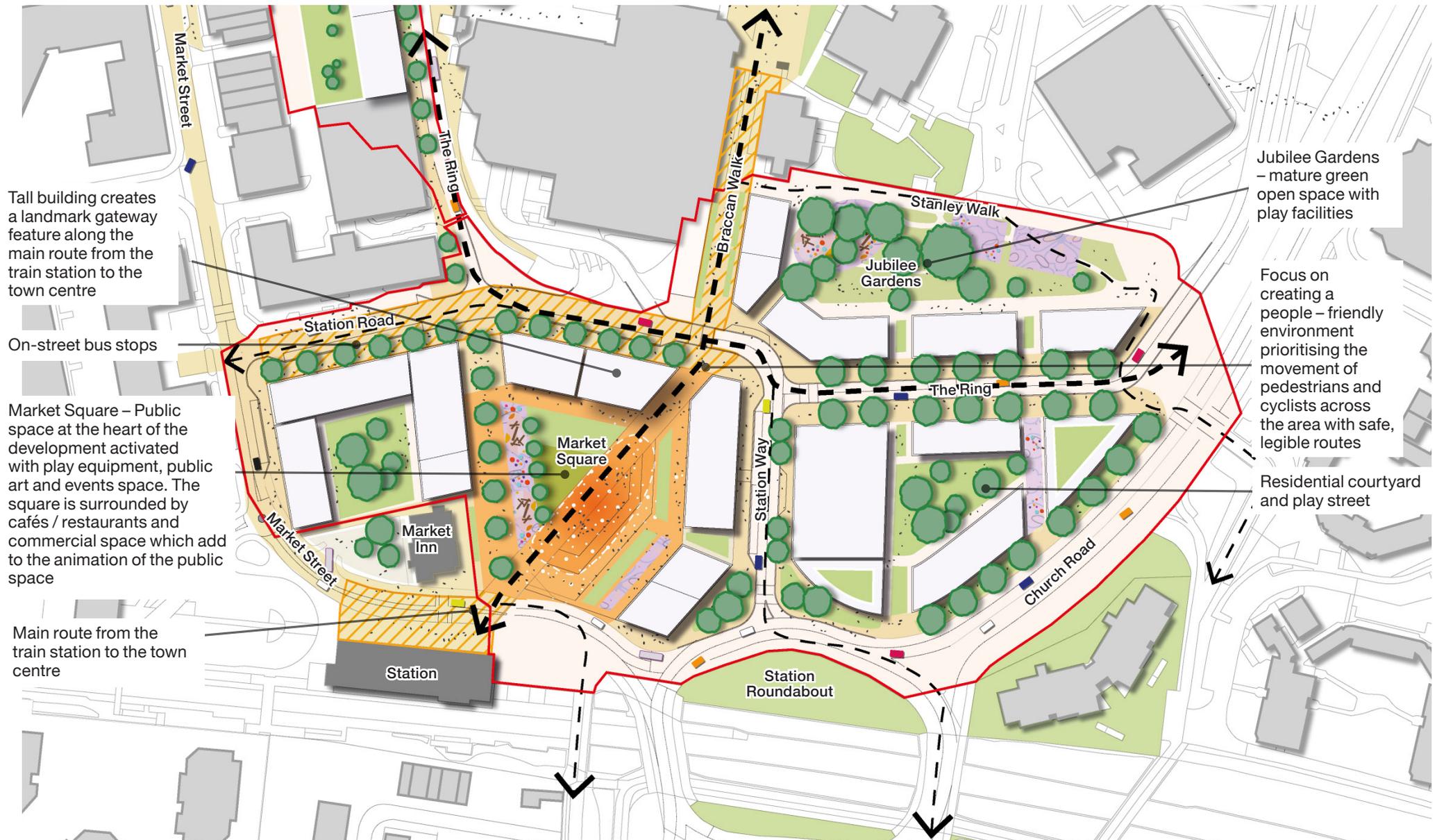


Figure 5.1: Illustrative masterplan

Opportunities and constraints summary

5.1 This section sets out the specific masterplan strategy for the Southern Gateway, which is influenced by the following summary of constraints and opportunities.

Constraints

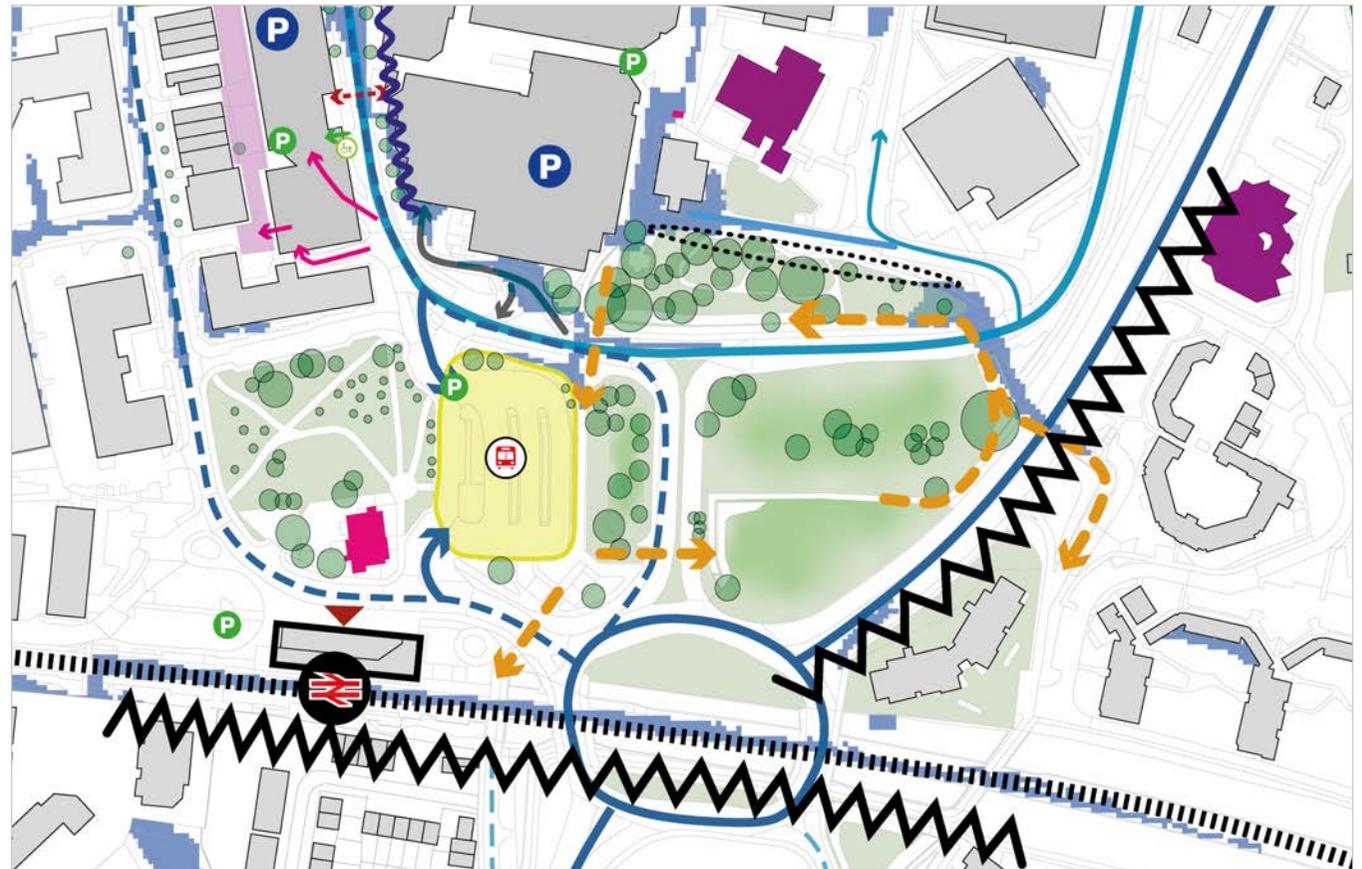


Figure 5.2: Southern Gateway – Constraints

KEY

Underpass	Access to Princess Square car park	Pedestrian access	Shop mobility	Drain
Green space	Major vehicle routes	Service roads	Bus stop	Noise
Trees	Secondary road	Zone made up of backs and fronts	Bus station	Heritage
Car parking	Flooding	Servicing edge	Railway station	Religious
The Ring	Car access	Cycle parking		

Topography

5.2 There are significant level differences across the site: ranging from +69.0 m at the corner of Station Road/Market Street rising to around + 80.0 m in front of the Station.

5.3 Across Jubilee Gardens levels rise from the north (+74.0 m along Braccan Walk to +80.0 m to the south-eastern corner (The Ring). The land between The Ring and Church Road has a gentle undulating profile with levels ranging between +81.0 to +83.0. The sharpest level difference of around 3m can be found between the bus station area and Station Way.

Existing trees

5.4 Jubilee Gardens, consists of areas of mixed woodland, semi-improved grassland and amenity grassland with shrubs and scattered broadleaved trees. The area is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations or Tree Preservation Orders.

5.5 There is the potential to enhance the biodiversity value and habitat connectivity of this green space together with the wider area and woodland habitat network.

5.6 The existing mature trees in Jubilee Gardens also have a function in relation to townscape quality and identity. Thus, Jubilee Gardens is suitable for retention, landscape enhancement and to continue to provide a soft mature green space on the edge of the town centre.

5.7 Station Green is a small (0.42 ha) park next to the rail station with distinct level difference from north to south rising by approx. 10m towards the station. The green space has a number of trees concentrated mainly along its edges but these are not mature or considered to be of significant quality.

5.8 Although, only recently created, this space is considered not to provide the most benefit and relocation of this space will give the opportunity for a better integrated and used space, located on the key desire line from the station to the town centre. It was created to compensate for the previously envisaged loss of Jubilee Gardens which it is now proposed to be retained as open space.

Flood Risk

5.9 Jubilee Gardens lies within Flood Zone 1. 27.5% of the site is at risk of surface water flooding during the 1 in 1000 year flood event and 64% of the site is at risk of groundwater flooding (depth of water level below ground surface 0.025 to 0.5m) during the 1 in 100 year flood event.

5.10 Flooding risk is present to the eastern boundary and northwest of Jubilee Gardens (route of a Thames Water surface water sewer). A risk-averse approach to development would be to retain around 20% of Jubilee Gardens' area for SuDS with swales and/or ponds along the route of the sewer with further enhancements provided by the opportunity to open up the sewer.

5.11 In the rest of the site localised flooding occurs in relation to the subways.

Potential noise from railway and nearby roads

5.12 Due to the site's proximity to the railway and A roads, detailed development proposals must be accompanied by, and take account of, an acoustic report.

Bus station

5.13 Redevelopment of the bus station is established by planning policy (ref. section 1.1). It occupies a prime location in the centre of the site preventing safe direct connection from the station to the town centre and it will be relocated to an on-street bus station arrangement.



Figure 5.3: Bracknell Bus Station

Heritage

5.14 The Bracknell War Memorial is Grade 2 listed. Any development would need to be designed sensitively in order to not negatively impact the memorial. There is an opportunity, however, to relocate the War memorial into, for example, the new Market Square to give it a more prominent position.

5.15 The Market Inn is locally listed and will be retained in its current place and form. There is an opportunity for it to provide a positive landmark building on the route from the station to the town centre.



Figure 5.4: Bracknell War Memorial

Utilities

5.16 There are a number of existing services that will require minor diversion to deliver the masterplan. However, none of them are considered significant enough to undermine the delivery of proposals. These utilities include:

- Cadent (Gas Network) – 6in and 10in diameter low pressure mains along the north side of The Ring and on the eastern side of The Green;
- British Telecom cables;
- SSEN (Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks) – service cable running n/s under the mound to the west of Station Way;
- South East water – 4in and 6in mains; up to 450 mm surface sewer and 150mm foul sewer; and
- Virgin Duct trench and Vodafone cables.

Opportunities

5.17 The opportunities for the comprehensive development of Southern Gateway comprise:

- introduce more residential accommodation into the town centre, and increase footfall, vibrance and viability;
- relocation of bus stops and bus driver facilities onto Station Road, Station Way and Market Street, to maintain a high quality, easily accessible, multi-modal public transport hub;
- provide direct at-grade pedestrian and cycle route from the Station to the Town Centre;
- realign The Ring to create good-sized development plots in front of the retained Jubilee Gardens and create good enclosure to the street;
- change alignment and character of The Ring in front of Jubilee Gardens so that it becomes an attractive two-way tree lined 'green' street;
- reduce Station Way in width to become a well-proportioned street defined by built edges on either side;
- cluster parking spaces in a central location to help reduce pressure on development blocks and create a less car dominated environment;
- create landmark buildings marking the approach to the town centre and gateway around the station area;
- introduce an extensive at-grade pedestrian and cycle network enabling better links to and from the town centre and wider area, including improved north-south cycle link along The Ring, and a new east-west pedestrian/cycle link connecting to the eastern neighbourhoods;
- relocate Station Green to create a higher quality and more usable space within the centre of the site; and
- ensure the integration of green and blue infrastructure throughout the site including opportunities with active informal play within the public realm and retention of existing mature trees within Jubilee Gardens.

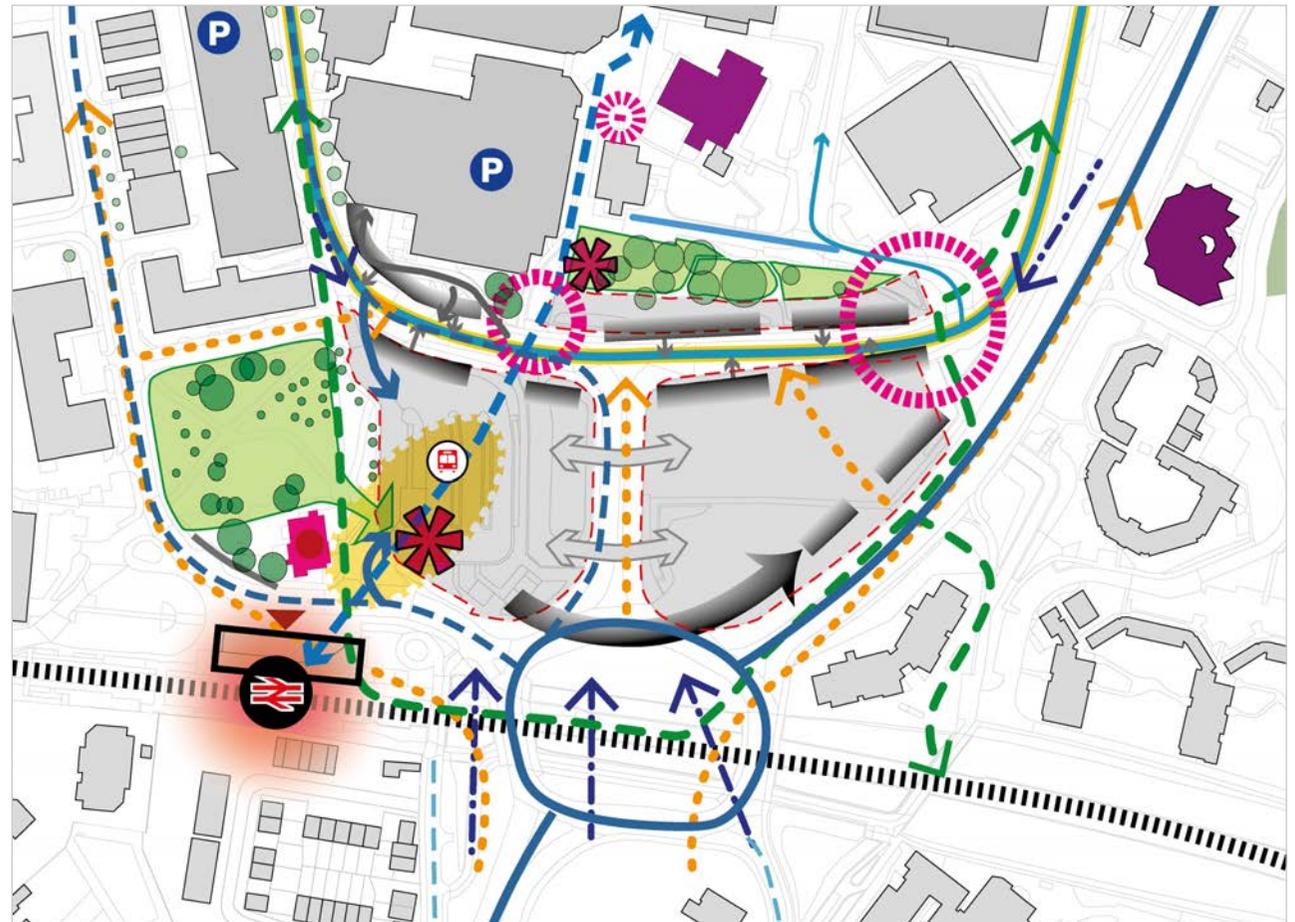


Figure 5.5: Southern Gateway – Opportunities

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			 Public space

Southern Gateway strategy

5.18 This section provides a specific coordinating framework for all new development within the masterplan area. All planning applications are expected to accord with the principles in relation to the following:

- Movement;
- Layout;
- Land use;
- Green infrastructure; and
- Key public spaces

5.19 Section 8 contains general principles that apply across the three masterplan areas and that also must be met.

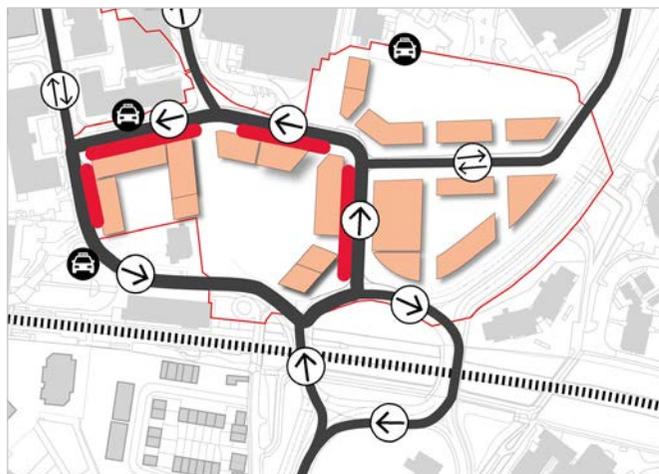


Figure 5.6: Proposed bus movement

Movement

5.20 Please note that, where appropriate, Manual for Streets (MfS) and Manual for Streets 2 (MfS2) have been used to inform the design of the streets and junctions that comprise the development. Unlike Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), which is produced primarily for application to the trunk road network, these documents have been produced specifically for use in urban environments. Guidance on visibility splays, junction spacing, corner radii, swept path analysis and lane widths have all been taken from these documents.



Figure 5.7: Proposed car movement



Figure 5.9: Proposed pedestrian movement

5.21 Two-way operation will be returned to all streets in the area, specifically along Station Road and The Ring to the east.

5.22 Station Way will be improved to reduce highway dominance and be made more pedestrian and cycle-friendly by reducing the severance this currently causes. Two-way movement will be accommodated in addition to northbound (anticlockwise) bus operations.

5.23 Car parking for the site will be accommodated in the car park at F1 (refer to figure 5.8) accessed from the north off The Ring as well as at ground and basement levels of blocks D1 and D2 at the eastern end of Market Square, to be accommodated within the level difference that exists between the square and Station Way.

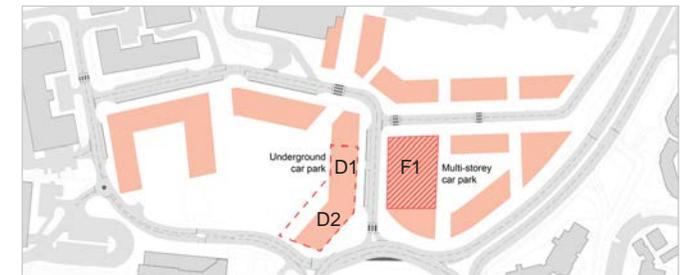


Figure 5.8: Proposed car parking



Figure 5.10: Proposed cycle movement

Development Principle: SG1 – Movement

To enable improved cycle and pedestrian movement through the site (refer to figure 5.11), proposals will need to deliver:

- improved connections with a new formal zebra crossing (1) connecting people walking and wheeling from the town centre to the new public realm over The Ring, and on to the train station;
- improved crossing points (2) along Station Way and The Ring to better connect people through the site;
- new formal signalised crossing point (3) on Church Road to connect people at grade from the site to walking and cycling networks to the east;
- realigned Market Street pedestrian crossing (4) to better connect people to the new public realm and to the town centre, with the option of upgrading this facility to a zebra crossing being explored;
- parallel facilities at the crossing of Market Street to enable station access by cycle;
- enabling safe and slow cycling through all new public realm;
- the main pedestrian spine through the new public realm and accommodate the principal cycling route – both connecting cycles through a new parallel crossing facility (1) to the town centre as well as connecting cycles along Cycle Street conditions on The Ring and through a new parallel crossing facility (3) to the east; and
- reconfiguration of the existing bus station, to provide a linear, on-street bus hub rather than a consolidated bus station (5). All associated facilities (e.g. driver facilities, passenger information etc.) should be reprovided in the new arrangement.

5.24 Drop-off parking facilities for residents and visitors to the town centre should be provided on street where appropriate.

5.25 The new public realm and open spaces provided within the site will deliver on “[Healthy Street principles](#)”³ as well as advancing biodiversity and habitat creation and utilising SuDS as the primary source of managing surface water.



Figure 5.11: Proposed movement – key

³ <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/guide-to-the-healthy-streets-indicators.pdf>

Key street types

5.26 Figure 5.12 sets out the different street types, that contribute to a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment within the masterplan. This includes:

The Ring (1)

5.27 The Ring will be reimaged as an Enhanced Street (ref. 'Key features of Enhanced Street Environments', p81) environment, with tree planting incorporated where possible, alongside seating and placemaking interventions at key locations along the street.

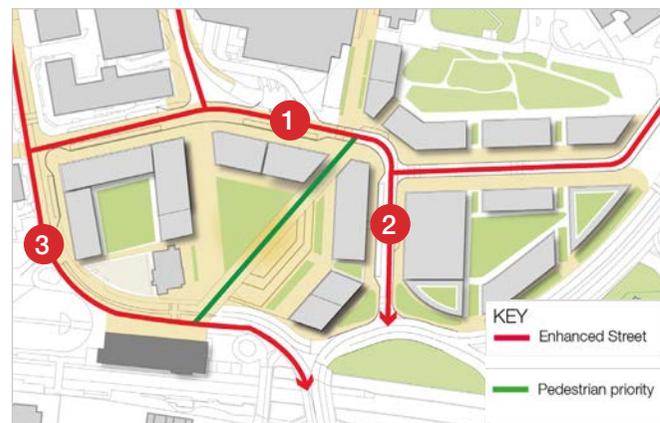


Figure 5.12: Street types

Station Way (2)

5.28 Station Way will be rationalised and reimaged as an Enhanced Street, accommodating two-way operation for general traffic (6m) and a northbound / anticlockwise bus station consisting of bus stops and stands. Delivering an attractive and inviting bus stop waiting environment will be key – maximising placemaking opportunities along the street.

Market Street (3)

5.29 Market Street will remain an Enhanced Street but attention will be focussed on the crossing point from the rail station into the new public realm. This key crossing point will be raised to footway level and deliver pedestrian priority across the street – through material choice and through the provision of a zebra crossing ideally.

See section 8 for general design principles for each street type.

Bus hub

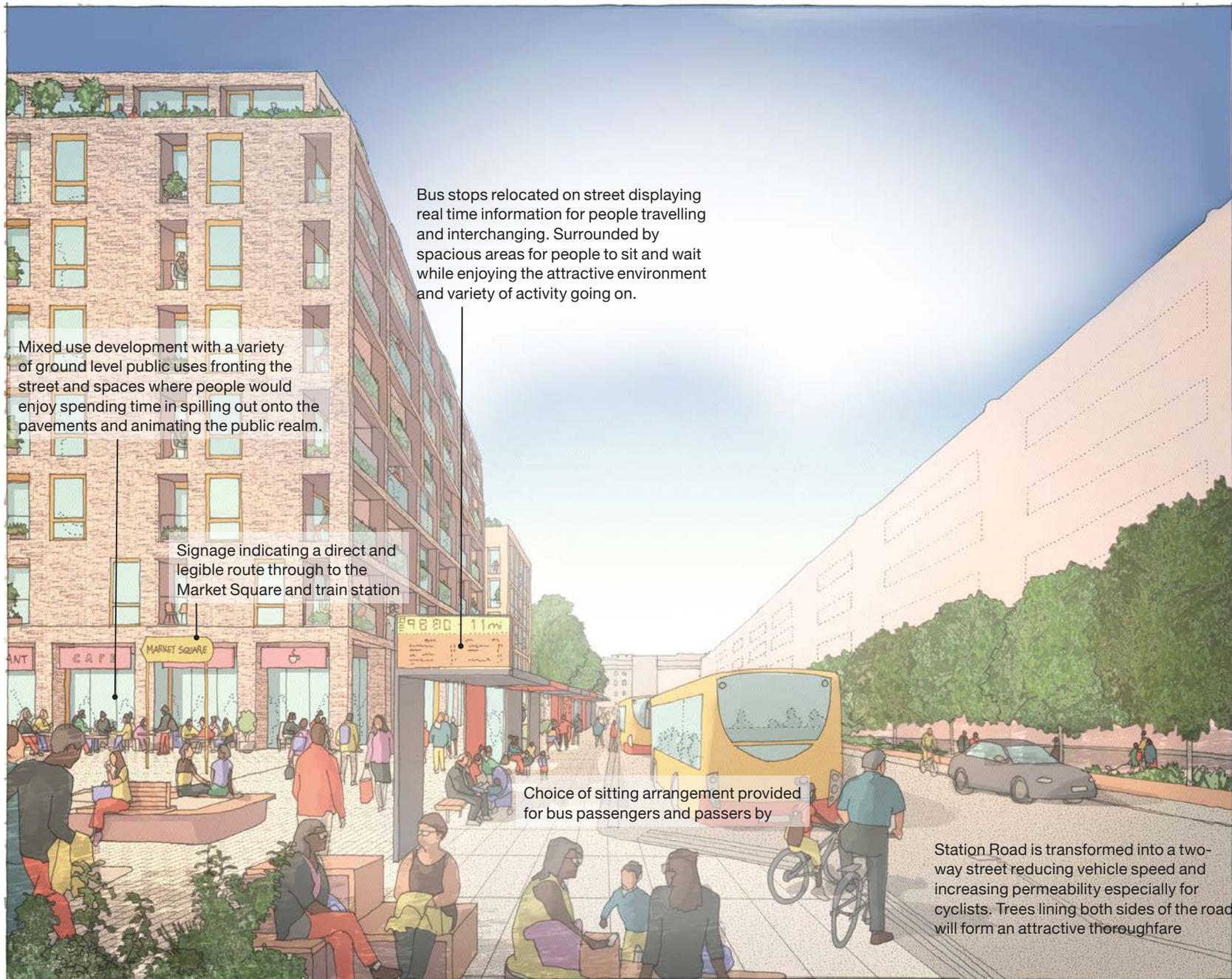
5.30 Buses will continue to play a key role for the prosperity of the town centre and enable people to get around and meet their day-to-day needs, whilst encouraging people to make more sustainable travel choices and contribute towards climate change objectives.

5.31 The existing bus station will be reconfigured from a consolidated to a linear on-street arrangement, unlocking opportunities for new homes and town centre facilities, as well as a new public square and green spaces. This will also enable walking and cycling connections into the core of the town centre to become more seamless and legible.

5.32 The linear bus hub will provide one-way circulation for buses along Station Road, The Ring and Market Street, with bus stop and stand facilities located along these streets. All the functions of the existing bus station will be retained including driver facilities, with enhanced bus stops with seating, planting and high quality bus shelters creating a comfortable environment for passengers to wait. The bus hub will be supported by high quality directional signage and bus service information, enabling easy interchange between bus services, and with the train station.

5.33 As part of the new development, the public realm will provide generous and attractive spaces with seating for people to spend their time while waiting for the bus. High quality soft and hard landscaping will provide a richness and variety for people to want to spend time in as well as a choice of places to sit, eat and drink along the edges of the new development.

5.34 The artist image in figure 5.13, illustrates how the reconfiguration of Station Road could look like.



Bus stops relocated on street displaying real time information for people travelling and interchanging. Surrounded by spacious areas for people to sit and wait while enjoying the attractive environment and variety of activity going on.

Mixed use development with a variety of ground level public uses fronting the street and spaces where people would enjoy spending time in spilling out onto the pavements and animating the public realm.

Signage indicating a direct and legible route through to the Market Square and train station

Choice of sitting arrangement provided for bus passengers and passers by

Station Road is transformed into a two-way street reducing vehicle speed and increasing permeability especially for cyclists. Trees lining both sides of the road will form an attractive thoroughfare

Figure 5.13 Artist's illustration showing how Station Road can be transformed to accommodate a new bus arrangement along its length within a new mixed use development and an attractive public realm where people would enjoy spending time in or passing through creating a real hub of activity and transforming the area south of the station into a buzzing piece of living environment complementing the town centre

Layout

5.35 The Movement and Public Realm Strategy must be supported by positive building edges defining and overlooking the key routes and spaces within the site. Taller buildings and landmark points reinforce the important destination of the station and town centre. This section sets out principles for:

- Key frontages and Edges; and
- Heights and Landmarks

5.36 See section 8 for specific design principles for each frontage type.

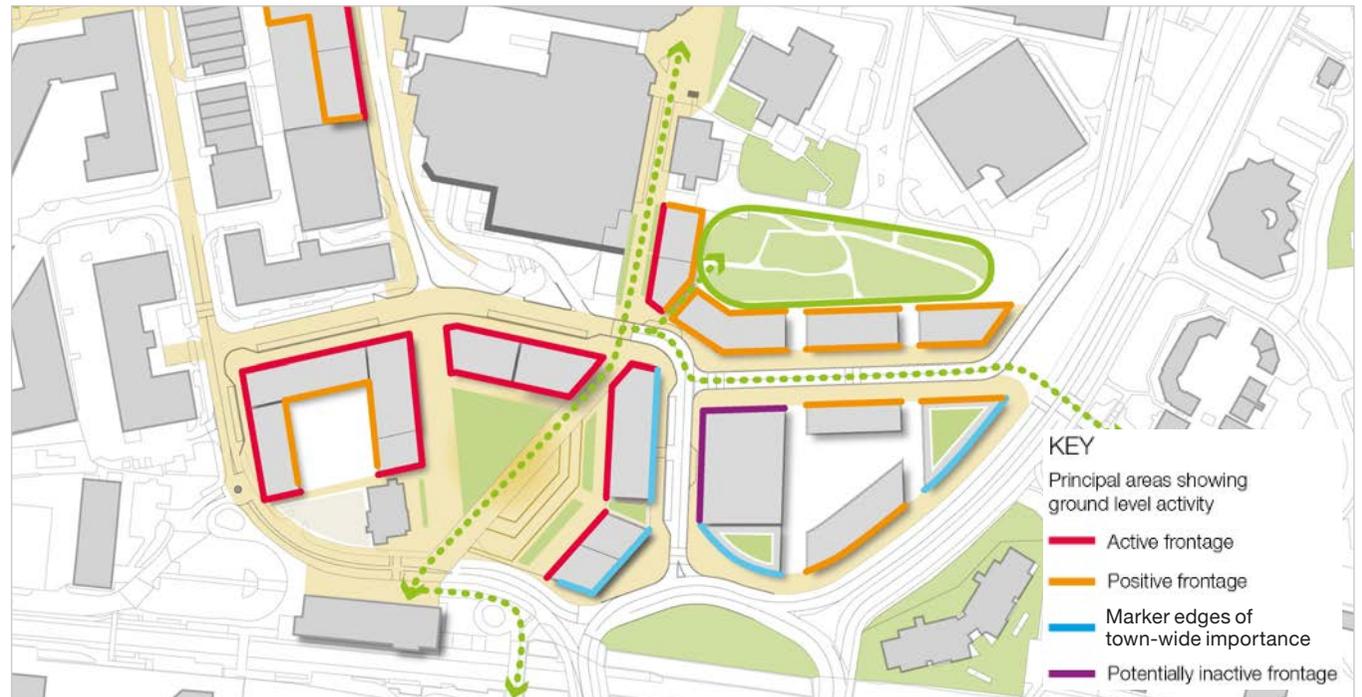


Figure 5.14: Key frontages and Edges

Development Principle: SG2 – Key frontages and Edges

Figure 5.14 sets out a range of different building frontages, that each have a role to play in creating a sense of place. This includes:

- active frontages with predominantly non-residential ground floor uses will be concentrated around the Market Square and along the Central Spine between the station and town centre;
- positive frontages consisting of regular entrances to residential uses will form the majority of the remaining edges along streets;
- marker edges, which define special edge treatment of town wide importance, include frontages overlooking the roundabout and Church Road;
- potentially inactive frontages – A multi storey car park providing parking spaces for the whole of the allocation must be sensitively integrated into the southern urban block, by:
 - being a building of a well-considered architectural merit;
 - minimising negative impact on the outlook of new apartments;
 - avoiding blank, unattractive façades onto Station Way as much as possible;
 - integrating, where possible, active ground floor uses on the corner to the realigned Ring; and
 - utilising creative façade design and planting and create an architecturally high-quality building that contributes to the area.



Figure 5.15: Multi-storey car park – ‘Cheesegrater’ Sheffield
(Photo © Carroll-Pierce cc-by-sa/2.0)

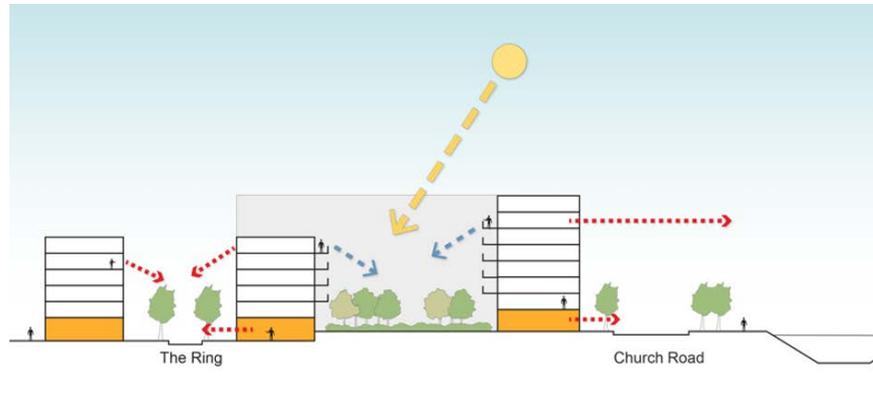


Figure 5.16: Section showing positive frontages at street level

Heights and Landmarks

5.37 New buildings should support the overall approach to movement and connections through the area. Figure 5.18 sets out principles for building height across the core area as follows:

Development Principle: SG3 – Heights and Landmarks

- taller buildings should be clustered at the north end of the Market Square within the centre of the Southern Gateway masterplan up to a maximum of 17 storeys;
- as part of the central cluster, there is potential for a taller building up to 12 storeys in the western corner of Jubilee Gardens marking the entrance to the town centre and stepping down to maximum 6 storeys towards the British Legion building;
- the southern edge of Jubilee Gardens will be clearly defined with maximum 6 storey high buildings;
- building heights stepping down to 4 storeys towards the Market Inn;
- the majority of the remainder of the area may be up to 8 storeys in height;
- changes in height and massing should be used to create visual interest and avoid long ‘walls’ of the same height; and
- where there are opportunities for landmark / focal points located on key view-lines these should be designed to respond positively to these views.

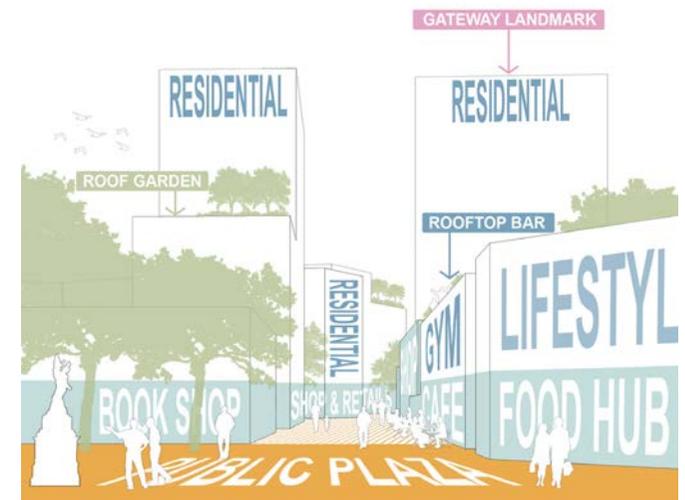


Figure 5.17: New pedestrian route at Princess Square entrance looking at the tall buildings marking entrance to the public square. The route is defined and framed by tall buildings.



Figure 5.18: Proposed building heights

Land use

5.38 The Council’s planning policy aims to regenerate the area as a vibrant and sustainable mixed-use area. 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.

Development Principle: SG4 – Land use

New development should:

- provide employment / commercial uses on the ground and lower floors, defining and overlooking adjacent streets and spaces, with residential above;
- focus ‘active’ commercial frontages, community and leisure uses onto the Central Spine to maximise footfall, activate the public realm and enable uses to spill out into the Market Square;
- locate less active commercial / employment uses, such as offices onto vehicular rather than pedestrian / cycle priority streets as employment tends to be less sensitive than residential uses to noise from passing vehicles;
- create the opportunity for a mixed development including 3 bed units, town houses and older peoples housing;
- enable the opportunity to provide community space both within and outside of buildings with a dedicated external space for young people’s facilities; and
- provide a centrally located, easily accessible to bus users public toilet facility.

KEY

	Leisure		Retail
	Office		Food and beverage
	Office with ground level commercial / retail / leisure / community / cultural		Education
	Religious		Residential
	Community		Residential with ground level commercial / retail / leisure / community / cultural
	Public car parking		Children and young people’s play
	Private car parking		

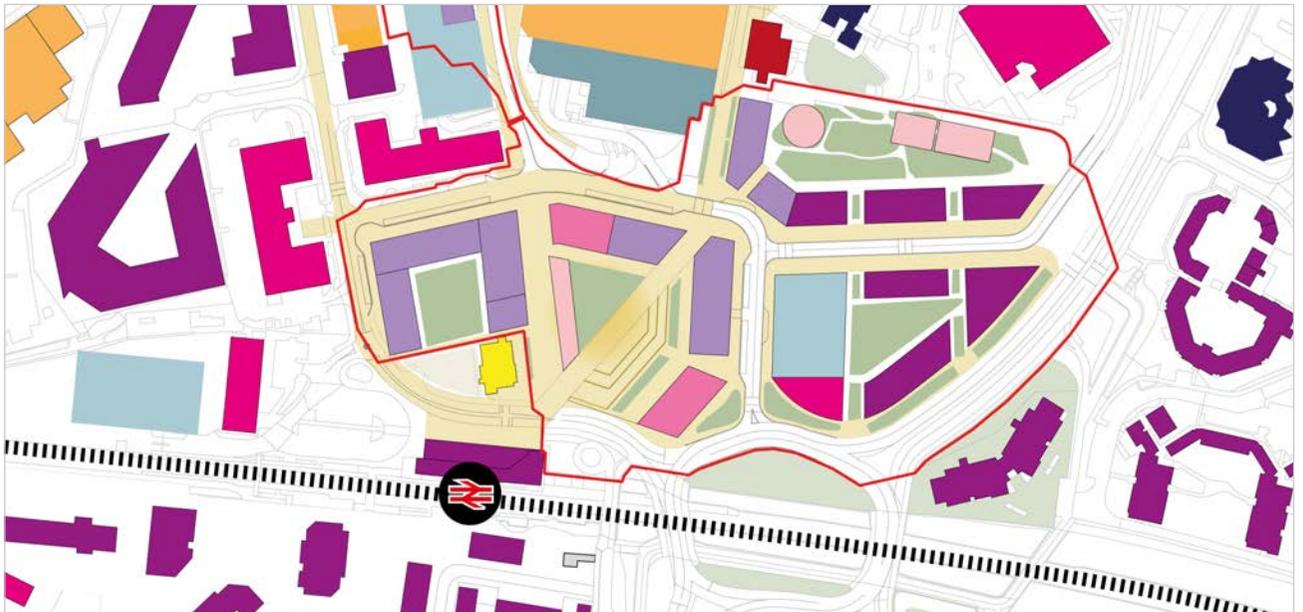


Figure 5.19: Proposed Land uses

Play and Green Infrastructure

5.39 The Council acknowledges that the full open space requirements as set out in the Local Plan will not be achieved in such a central town centre location.

5.40 The proposed open spaces of Jubilee Gardens and Market Square together achieve 1 ha but the design principles that are ingrained within the overall masterplan aim to maximise connectivity between areas of existing and new open space. This will be achieved through the creation of new green routes linking into the existing green infrastructure network within a 10-20 minute walk and/or a 5 minute cycle ride (refer to Figure 3.10). There will also be enhancements to 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 associated within the development blocks.

5.41 Children's and young people's 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; such as table tennis table(s) and other similar activities that will serve a wide age group.

Development Principle: SG5 – Play and Green Infrastructure

New development should provide:

- children's and young people's play spaces integrated throughout the public realm with informal opportunities for play with key focus in Jubilee Gardens and Market Square;
- green and blue infrastructure integrated into the public realm, alongside streets, movement corridors and within public spaces;
- retention of mature trees within Jubilee Gardens;
- relocation of Station Green in its new form as Market Square with increased quality of Market Square through its new location and higher quality public realm; and
- green infrastructure in the form of communal and private gardens, green roofs and walls.



Figure 5.20: Jubilee Gardens: existing mature open space

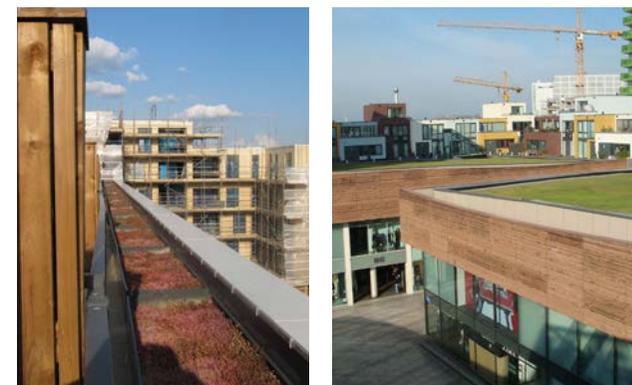


Figure 5.21: Green roofs



Figure 5.22: Green walls



Figure 5.23: Children's play along a pedestrianised route



Figure 5.26: MUGA within a neighbourhood park, Dartford



Figure 5.24: Children's playground



Figure 5.27: Table tennis tables, Stonebridge Gardens



Figure 5.25: Boules tournament in Lewis Cubitt Square, Kings Cross



Figure 5.28: Calisthenics within a neighbourhood park, Dartford

Key public spaces

5.42 The Southern Gateway masterplan is made up of several spaces, that each have their particular character and design requirements. These are:

- Market Square
- Jubilee Gardens
- Central Spine

5.43 In order to deliver the overall masterplan and meet the Council's aspirations the following development principles for each area must be met.



- Central Spine
- Market Square
- Jubilee Gardens

Figure 5.29: Key Public Spaces

Market Square

5.44 The Market Square lies on the promenade between the rail station and town centre. This should be both an everyday community space for life to unfold and town centre celebration space, accommodating markets and events. Alongside these events, children's, young people's and play activities for all ages will contribute to make this a truly multi functional space. Seating should be designed to be both flexible and fixed, providing opportunities for adjacent cafés to spill into the space as well as offering people a chance to sit, relax and take in the life of the town. The square should be softened through extensive tree planting, flowering plants and SuDS to deliver a calming and attractive place to spend time and support increased biodiversity.

5.45 The artist image in figure 5.34, illustrates how Market Square could look like.



Figure 5.30: Cafes, outdoor exhibition and seating in Granary Square, Kings Cross, London

Development Principle: SG6 – Market Square

New development should provide:

- a public space of min. 0.5 ha in size, of good proportions, comfortable and attractive microclimate;
- visual and physical connections between the station and town centre;
- a high degree of enclosure and active, positive ground floors;
- sensitively and discreetly integrated servicing and emergency access;
- a landscape and public realm strategy incorporating tree planting and at least 30% soft landscape;
- the opportunity for children's and young people's play space in the town centre;
- seamlessly integrated level differences along its eastern edge to accommodate underground parking, stairs and seating opportunities; and
- a retained and sensitively integrated Market Inn.



Figure 5.31: Granary Square, Kings Cross, London

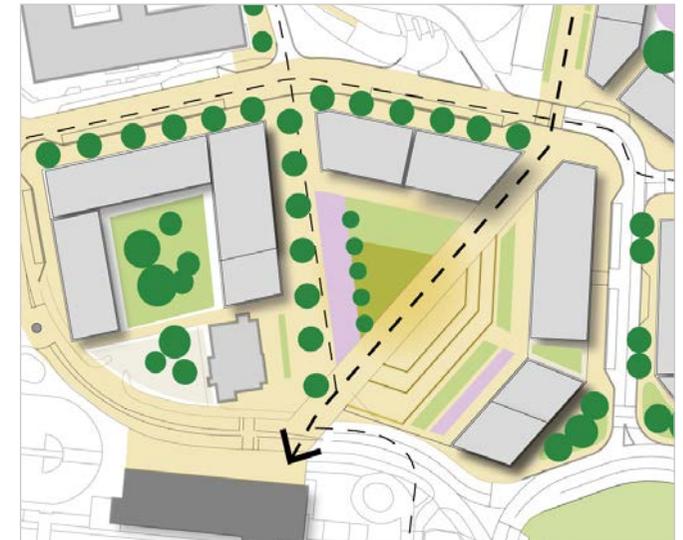


Figure 5.32: Market Square plan – children's and young people's informal play

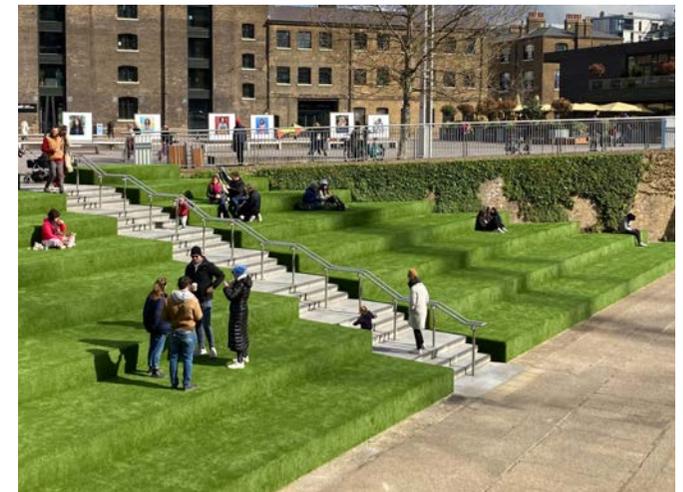


Figure 5.33: Canalside green steps – Granary Square, Kings Cross, London



Figure 5.34 Artist's illustration showing how Market Square could become the real focus for the community accommodating a wide range of activities for all age groups and a rich variety of mixed uses at ground level



Figure 5.35 Cafe and restaurant external seating animate the public realm



Figure 5.36 Play in public square

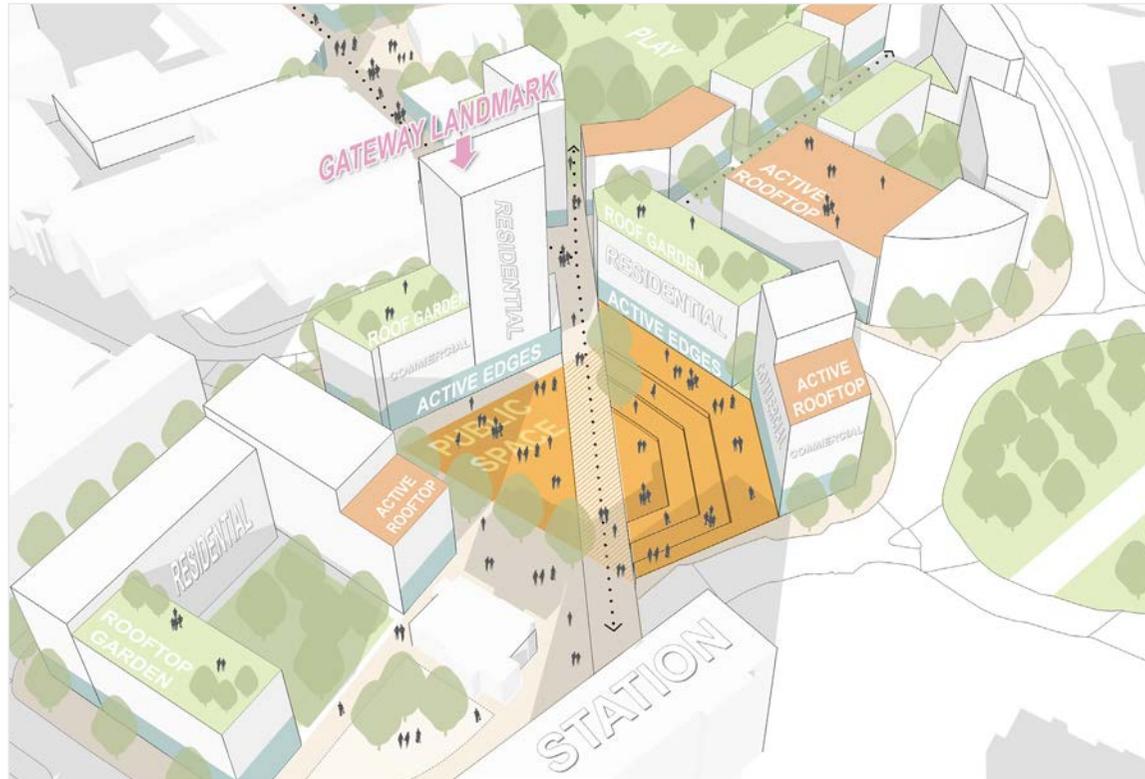


Figure 5.38: Market Square plan and aerial view from the south-west



Figure 5.39: Community events and performances



Figure 5.37: Exchange Square and water feature , Manchester



Figure 5.40: Pop-up public screening



Figure 5.41 Christmas market

Jubilee Gardens

5.46 Jubilee Gardens the mature green space at the northern end of the Southern Gateway development will provide an alternative area for seating and relaxing within a natural environment. A children's playground will occupy the western area of the gardens closer to the pedestrianised route. Along the northern edge of the gardens and fronting Stanley Walk a MUGA and calisthenics will attract young people and other ages to provide an active edge along this part of the development. The space can also accommodate small community fêtes during the year.

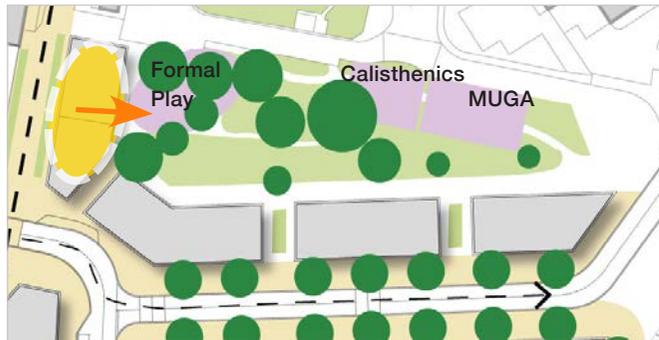


Figure 5.42: Jubilee Gardens plan – children's and young people's play space; public uses at ground level (such as a cafe) overlooking the Gardens



Figure 5.43: Bloomsbury square gardens fête with food/singing/volleyball games

Development Principle: SG7 – Jubilee Gardens

New development should provide:

- for the retention and enhancement of existing public gardens and mature trees to be retained and enhanced for public use including the provision of play space;
- care must be taken to allow regular gaps between buildings and not to overshadow Jubilee Gardens inappropriately;
- create the opportunity for children's and young people's play space in the town centre;
- where ground floor residential accommodation is fronting onto Jubilee Gardens a minimum 5m secure privacy strip in the form of private outdoor space must be provided;
- transition in levels between buildings along the town centre route (Braccan Walk), which are located at +74.0m and the gardens at +80.0m may be achieved through the detailed design of buildings where public uses may occupy the lower two levels with direct visual and physical connection to the gardens such as a cafe; and
- a direct pedestrian connection must be ensured at the western corner where there is a direct visual and physical link with the Market Square and Central Spine route.



© LUC

Figure 5.44: Young people's play



Figure 5.45: Well articulated façades with balconies and large openings will provide natural surveillance to the gardens

Central Spine

5.47 The Central Spine will be the new central route providing the key connection from the station to the town centre. This will form an attractive boulevard through the public space for pedestrians and cyclists forming the main artery of movement with legible connections to the bus stops linking into it.



Figure 5.46: Pedestrian crossing at Goods Way/King's Boulevard, Kings Cross

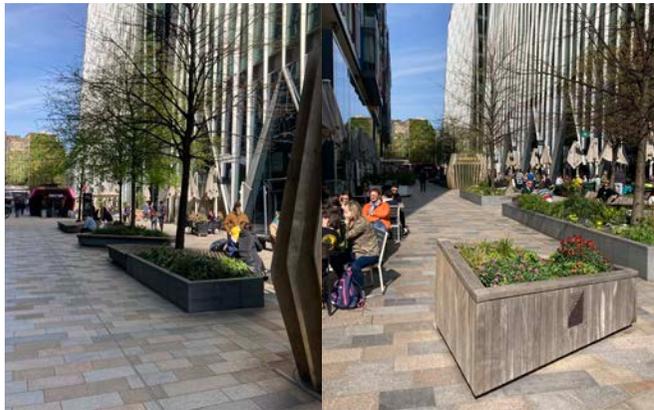


Figure 5.47: Street furniture within the public realm

Development Principle: SG8 – Central Spine

New development should provide:

- direct, visually and physically connected, at grade pedestrian and cycle route between the town centre and the train station;
- the route and associated Market Square will be lined by active and animated commercial and / or residential ground floor frontages;
- physical, accessible and visual links to bus stops must be ensured from this route, with wayfinding to assist; and
- the detailed design must follow a coherent and unifying public realm strategy to aid legibility and meet the aspirations, including:
 - pedestrian priority crossings at street intersections must ensure ease of movement for pedestrians;
 - trees lining the route to help with legibility as well as providing adequate shade and shelter;
 - appropriate width of the pedestrian / cycle route to accommodate the number of people using it, with safe space designated for those pedestrians that do not want to mix with cyclists or people scootering;
 - seats and benches lining the route, to allow adequate space to rest for those less able, and bottle fills (drinking fountain) should be provided; and
 - informal play elements should be worked into the route to enable play-on-the-way activities and encourage families to use the route – using public transport and active modes to reach the town centre.



Figure 5.48: City North Place, Finsbury Park



Figure 5.49: Street furniture within the public realm

6. High Street Car Park

Illustrative masterplan

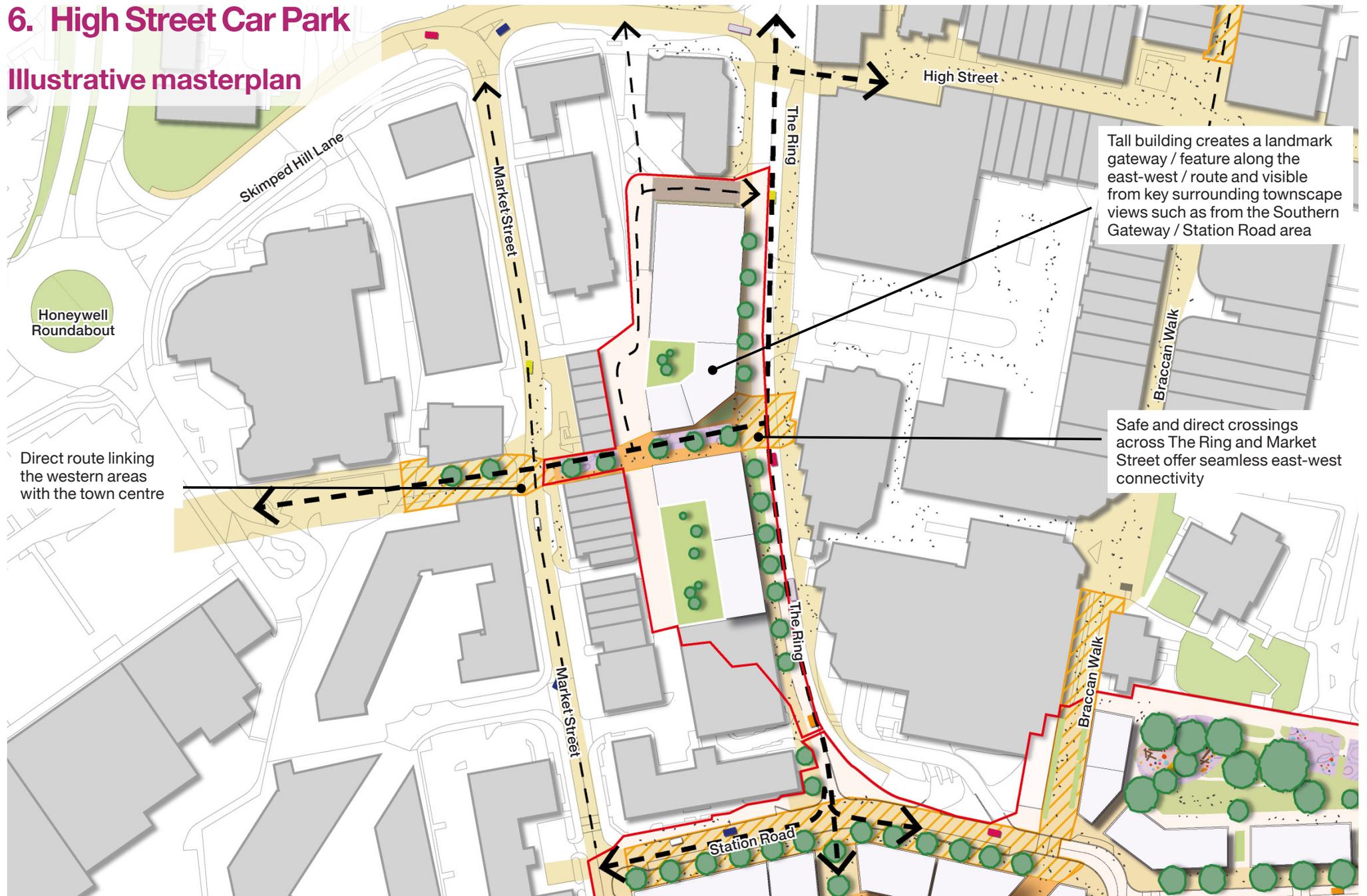


Figure 6.1: Illustrative masterplan

©TIBBALDS OCTOBER 2024

Opportunities and constraints summary

6.1 This section sets out site-specific masterplan principles for the High Street Car Park masterplan, based on a summary of constraints and opportunities.

Constraints



Figure 6.2: High Street Car Park – Constraints

Topography

6.2 The site has to deal with a mixture of natural and man made level changes ranging from 4.2m at the deepest end to as shallow as 0.8m depending on where you are on the site. The highest levels occur along The Ring, with the highest level situated at the southern end of the site close to Station Road at +72.34m AOD. Moving north along The Ring the road drops by around 3.5m half way along the length of the building to +68.82m AOD. The level in this area corresponds best with the levels on Market Street with around 0.8m difference between the two streets.

6.3 The Ring then rises again by about 2m reaching 70.75m AOD at the northern end of the car park building where the exit from the car park is currently located. Except for the trees to the front along The Ring, the site lacks any greenery.



Figure 6.3: Existing service area at the rear of Market Street

Flood Risk

6.4 Flooding risk is present at the north eastern boundary along The Ring. A risk-averse approach to development would be to introduce SuDS along the improved access at the north end of the development as well as extending the greening of The Ring with SuDS, planting and trees.

Market Street service area

6.5 The area to the west side of the site and accessed from Market Street provides servicing for the retail units fronting the main road and parking for the residential accommodation above. This arrangement will need to be taken into consideration in any future development.

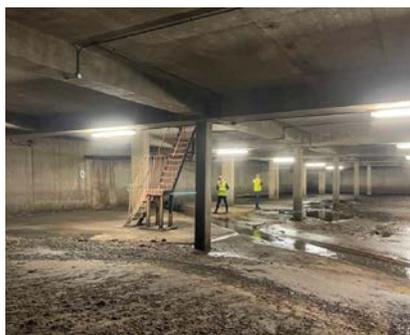
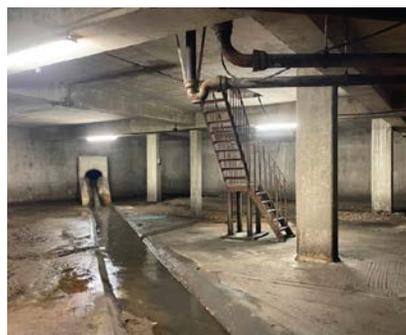


Figure 6.4: Thames Water attenuation tank in the basement of the car park



Utilities

6.6 Due to the site being a car parking facility, there are a limited number of services that would require diversion, including:

- SSEN (Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks): LV service cable running east-west through the middle of the building.

6.7 However, there is one significant constraint that could undermine the viability of the development and would require early stage engagement with Thames Water during the design development proposals:

- Thames Water culverted surface water attenuation tank in the basement of the car park put in place for storing surface water run-off from within the town centre. The same capacity and Thames Water access will need to be maintained within any future development and kept separate from the attenuation required for new development.

Access road north of the site

6.8 Existing vehicular egress from the car park is currently shared with access to the parking of the residential block fronting The Ring. This needs to be taken into consideration in any future development.

Opportunities

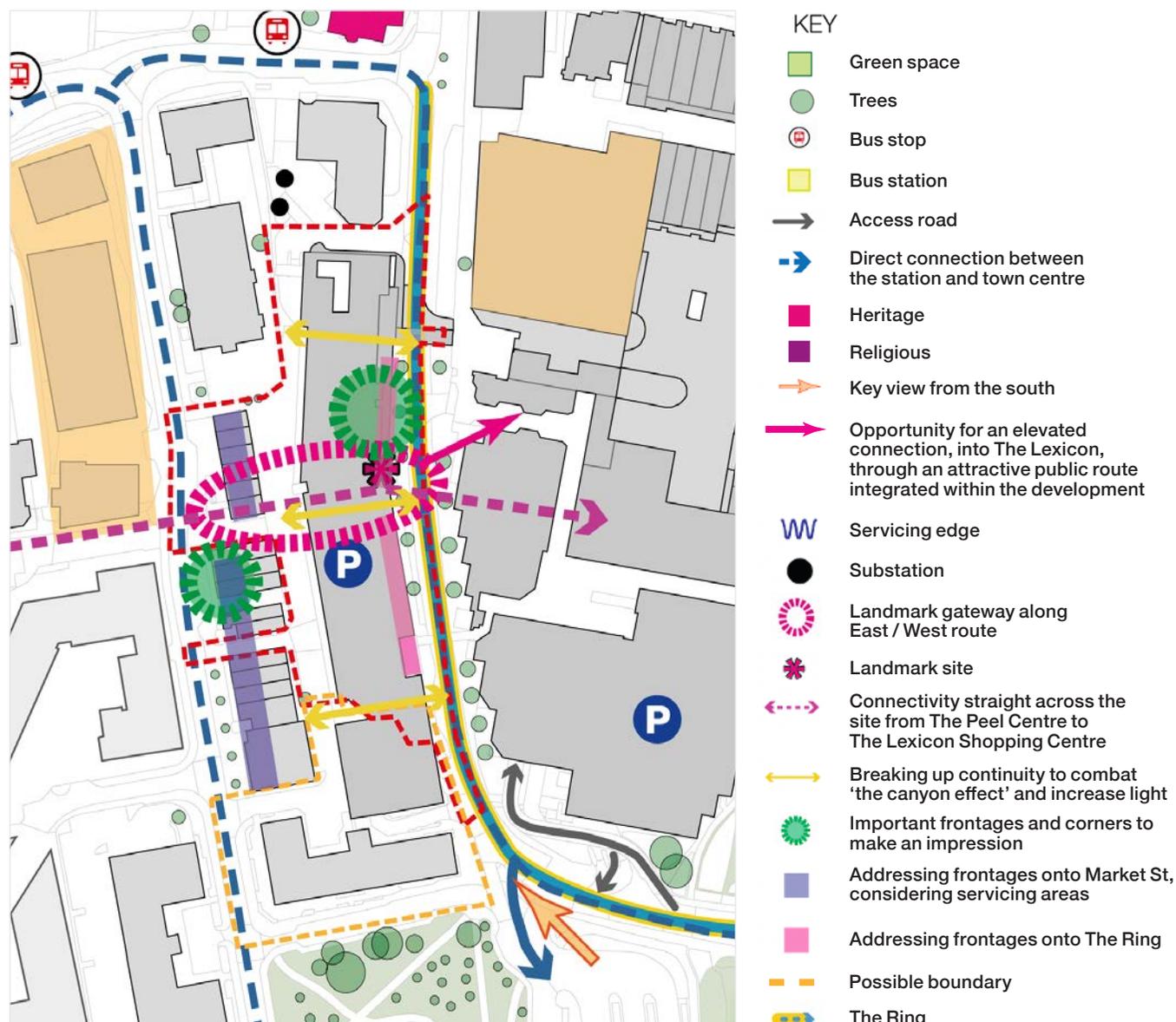


Figure 6.5: High Street Car Park – Opportunities

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

- introduce more residential accommodation into the town centre, and increase footfall, vibrance and viability;
- break down the canyon effect that the current structure imposes on The Ring by its continuous and impermeable form;
- create 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 halfway 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 passersby;
- 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.

High Street Car Park strategy

6.10 This section provides a specific coordinating framework for all new development within the masterplan area. All planning applications and projects are expected to accord with the principles in relation to the following:

- Movement;
- Layout;
- Land use;
- Green infrastructure; and
- Key public spaces.

6.11 Section 8 contains general design principles that apply across the three masterplan areas and that must be met.

Movement

6.12 Please note that, where appropriate, Manual for Streets (MfS) and Manual for Streets 2 (MfS2) have been used to inform the design of the streets and junctions that comprise the development. Unlike Design Manual for Roads and Bridges these documents have been produced specifically for use in urban environments. Guidance on visibility splays, junction spacing, corner radii, swept path analysis and lane widths have all been taken from these documents.

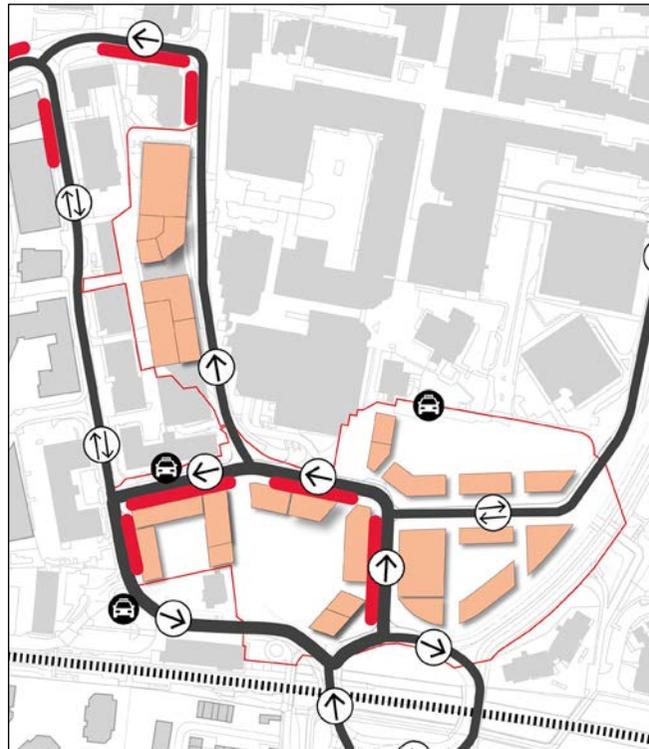


Figure 6.6: Proposed bus movement

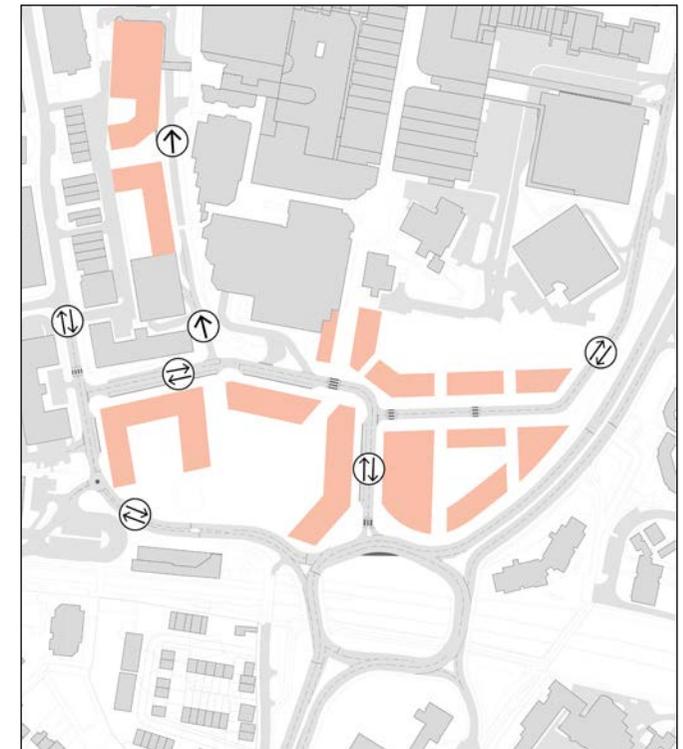


Figure 6.7: Proposed car movement

6.13 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.

6.14 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.

6.15 Car parking for the site and surrounding developments will be accommodated in the parking house at block C1 providing 320 parking spaces and accessed from the north off The Ring. Additional parking for blocks A and B will be accessed from Market Street and will be at ground level only in block B4 and at ground and first floor levels in block A1.



Figure 6.8: Proposed car parking



Figure 6.9: Proposed pedestrian connections

- Key
- Key pedestrian connections
 - Key new/improved surface level crossings



Figure 6.10: Proposed cycle connections

- Key
- Key cycle connections
 - Key new/improved surface level crossings

Development Principle: HSCP1 – Movement

To maximise connectivity in the area and enable improved cycle and pedestrian movement through the site (refer to figure 6.11) proposals will need to deliver:

- a new pedestrian priority street through the middle of the site (1) linking the Peel Centre to the Lexicon; The pedestrian connection will link across Market Street via the existing signalised pedestrian crossing on the desire line before linking through to the new courtyard service area which will be designed as a pedestrian priority space;
- a new Zebra Crossing facility to connect to the east side of The Ring (2). The recently widened footway will then connect pedestrians to the Lexicon through the High Street and Eagle Lane;
- safer and improved pedestrian movement around and through the site by the introduction of continuous footways along The Ring;
- the main pedestrian route through the site, where considerate cycling is permitted but pedestrians given priority. The Ring will provide a north-south cycle route through the area, designed to provide ‘cycle street’ conditions, whereby the design of the street and carriageway gives people cycling a sense of priority over vehicles, with motorised traffic treated as guests;
- a widened street running to the north of the site to accommodate effective footways on both sides of the street, along with SuDS and tree planting (3);
- servicing of the site, to be accommodated both in the rear servicing courtyard as well as on The Ring (4), with the formalisation of the existing loading bay, which will be raised to footway level and incorporated in the verge strip, between trees; and
- one-way northbound bus, bus stop and general traffic movement will be retained and enhanced where needed to accommodate future bus service needs (5).

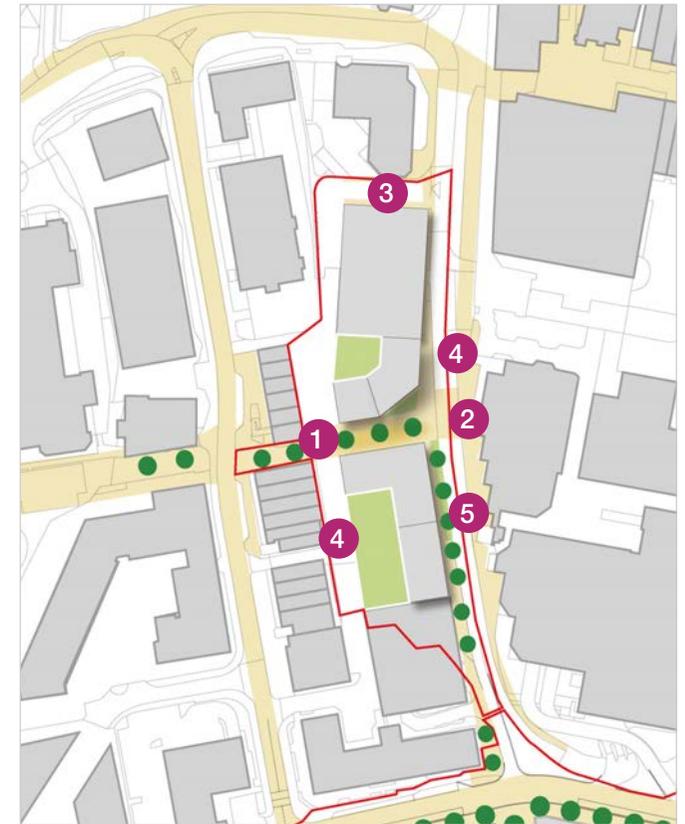


Figure 6.11: Proposed movement – key plan

6.16 The new public realm and open spaces provided within the site will deliver “Healthy Street principles” as well as advancing biodiversity and habitat creation and utilising SuDS as the primary source of managing surface water.

Key street types

6.17 Figure 6.13 sets out the different street types, that contribute to a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment within the masterplan.

East-west link

6.18 The new pedestrian priority street through the middle of the site linking the Peel Centre to the Lexicon will be a pedestrian/cycle environment with level surfaces and no traffic passing through it. There will be a consistent surface treatment building to building and tree planting.

The Ring

6.19 Recent public realm improvements along The Ring have created more space for pedestrians and cyclists. The verge space with tree planting along the western edge of the street should continue the length of the site to create a better walking environment as well as providing a valuable SuDS facility, with space for seats and bike stands within the strip to support new adjacent uses.

New access to car parking building

6.20 The street running to the north of the site will be widened to provide access and egress to/from the new multi-level car parking facility located here and accommodate effective footways on both sides of the street, along with SuDS and tree planting.

6.21 See section 8 for general design principles for each street type.



Figure 6.12: The Ring as it is today following public realm improvements

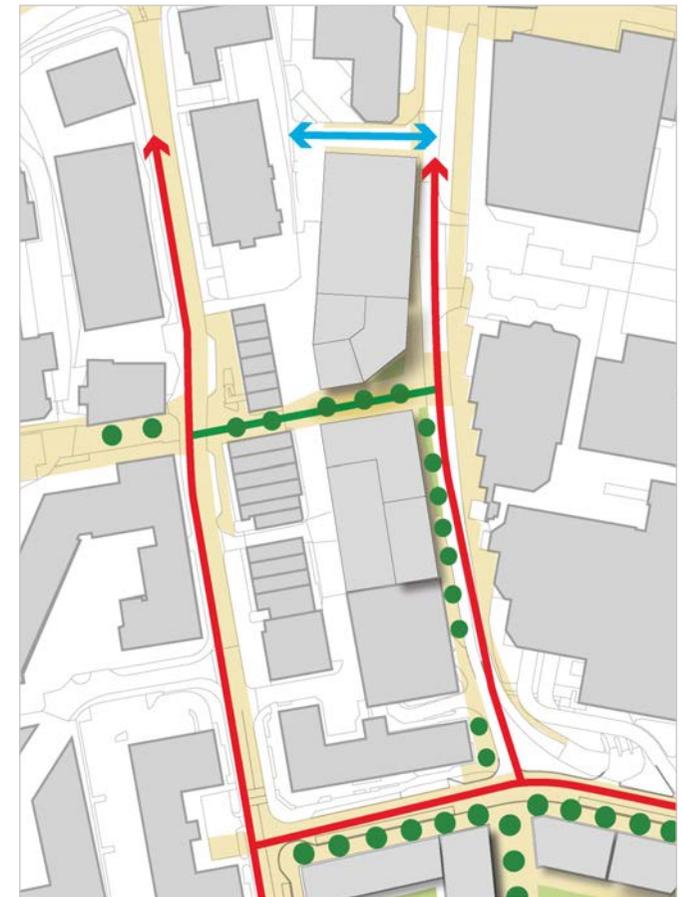


Figure 6.13: Street types

KEY	
	Enhanced Street
	Informal Street
	Pedestrian priority

Layout

6.22 The Movement and Public Realm Strategy must be supported by positive building edges defining and overlooking the key routes and spaces within the site. Taller buildings and landmark points reinforce the important destination of the station and town centre. This section sets out principles for:

- Key frontages and Edges; and
- Heights and Landmarks.

6.23 See section 8 for general design principles for each frontage type.

Development Principle: HSCP2 – Key frontages and Edges

Figure 6.14 sets out a range of different building frontages, that each have a role to play in creating a sense of place. This includes:

- active frontages with predominantly non-residential ground floor uses will be concentrated along The Ring and fronting the main pedestrian / cycle route to Market Street;
- positive frontages consisting of regular openings will form the remaining edges facing Market Street;
- marker edges, which define special edge treatment of town-wide importance, include frontages directly visible from the southern gateway; and
- potentially inactive frontages – A multi storey car park providing parking spaces for the allocation and the nearby developments must be sensitively integrated into the northern urban block:
 - minimise negative impact on the outlook of new apartments;
 - avoid blank, unattractive façades as much as possible;
 - integrate, where possible, active ground floor uses; and
 - utilise creative façade design and planting and create an architecturally high-quality building that positively contributes to the area.

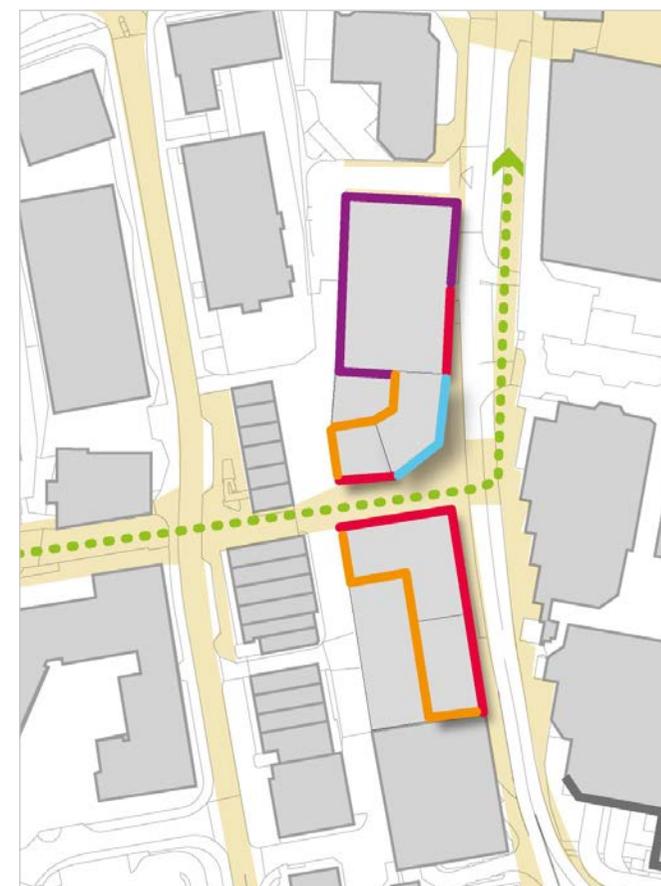


Figure 6.14: Key frontages and Edges

KEY

Principal areas showing ground level activity

- Active frontage
- Positive frontage
- Marker edges of town-wide importance
- Potentially inactive frontage

Heights and Landmarks

6.24 New buildings should support the overall approach to movement and connections through the area. Figure 6.16 sets out principles for building height across the core area as follows.

Development Principle: HSCP3 – Heights and Landmarks

- 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 remainder of the 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.



Figure 6.15: Massing study – view from the east



Figure 6.16: Proposed heights



Land use

6.25 The Council’s planning policy aims to regenerate the area as a vibrant and sustainable mixed-use area. The site’s proximity to the Southern Gateway and the station appeals to a high density predominantly residential mixed-use development with 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.

Development Principle: HSCP4 – Land use

New development should:

- provide a range of residential types and tenures including some 3 bedroom units;
- provide commercial/ community uses on the ground floor, defining and overlooking adjacent streets and spaces, with residential above;
- create active roof spaces to create some private green space; and
- focus ‘active’ commercial frontages onto the east-west route and The Ring to maximise footfall and activate the public realm.

KEY

 Leisure	 Retail
 Office	 Food and beverage
 Office with ground level commercial / retail / leisure / community / cultural	 Education
 Religious	 Residential
 Community	 Residential with ground level commercial / retail / leisure / community / cultural
 Public car parking	 Children and young people’s play
 Private car parking	



Figure 6.17: Proposed land uses

Play and Green infrastructure

6.26 The site proposals offer an opportunity to integrate with the existing green infrastructure network by the introduction of a new east-west link, which will deliver an element of public open space including informal play as well as communal and private open spaces associated with the development blocks.



Figure 6.18: Public space – children's play

Development Principle: HSCP5 – Play and Green Infrastructure

New development should:

- introduce a new east-west link connecting to the green link along The Ring and the wider green infrastructure network;
- plant trees along the east-west route;
- introduce SuDS and tree planting along the enhanced street to the north of the site;
- provide green roofs and communal gardens; and
- integrate play features throughout streets and spaces to achieve an informal environment to play.



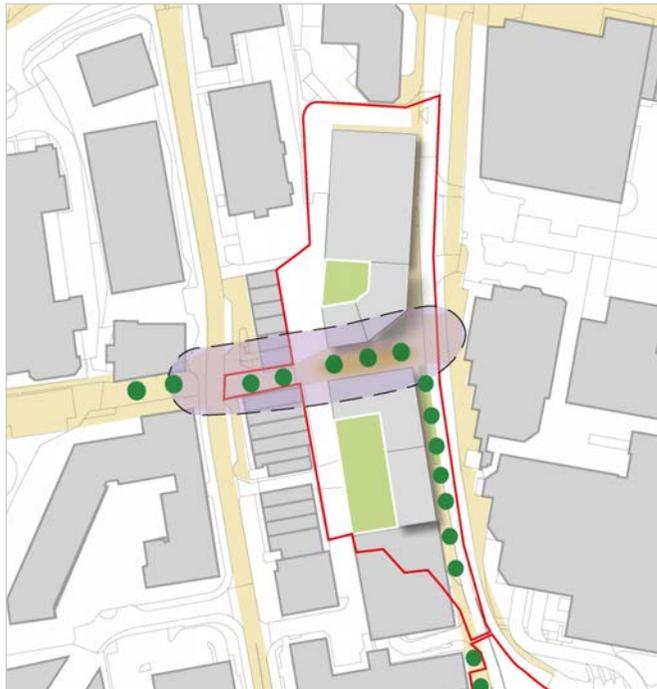
Figure 6.19: Informal play integrated within a green link

Key public spaces

6.27 The High Street Car Park masterplan is made up of a single space that has a particular character and design requirements. This is the east-west route.

East-West Route

6.28 The new pedestrian priority street through the middle of the site will form a vital east-west connection and contribute positively to the developing street network.



East-West route

Figure 6.20: Key public spaces

Development Principle: HSCP6 – Public Spaces

New development should provide:

- direct, visually and physically connected, at grade pedestrian and cycle route between the Peel Centre/Market Street and The Ring, where people will feel comfortable walking and wheeling;
- a new zebra crossing facility on The Ring that directly corresponds with the alignment of the new route. At the Market Street end the new route will line up with the existing signalised crossing to provide a seamless connection between the two thoroughfares;
- accommodation for cycling as part of the pedestrian space, to encourage low speeds and considerate behaviour;
- active and animated commercial and / or residential ground floor frontages lining the route;
- a new courtyard service area that 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; and
- trees lining the route that will help with legibility as well as contributing to the green infrastructure network in the area.



Figure 6.21: East-west route



Figure 6.22: Zebra crossing forming a safe, seamless connection

7. Eastern Gateway

Illustrative masterplan

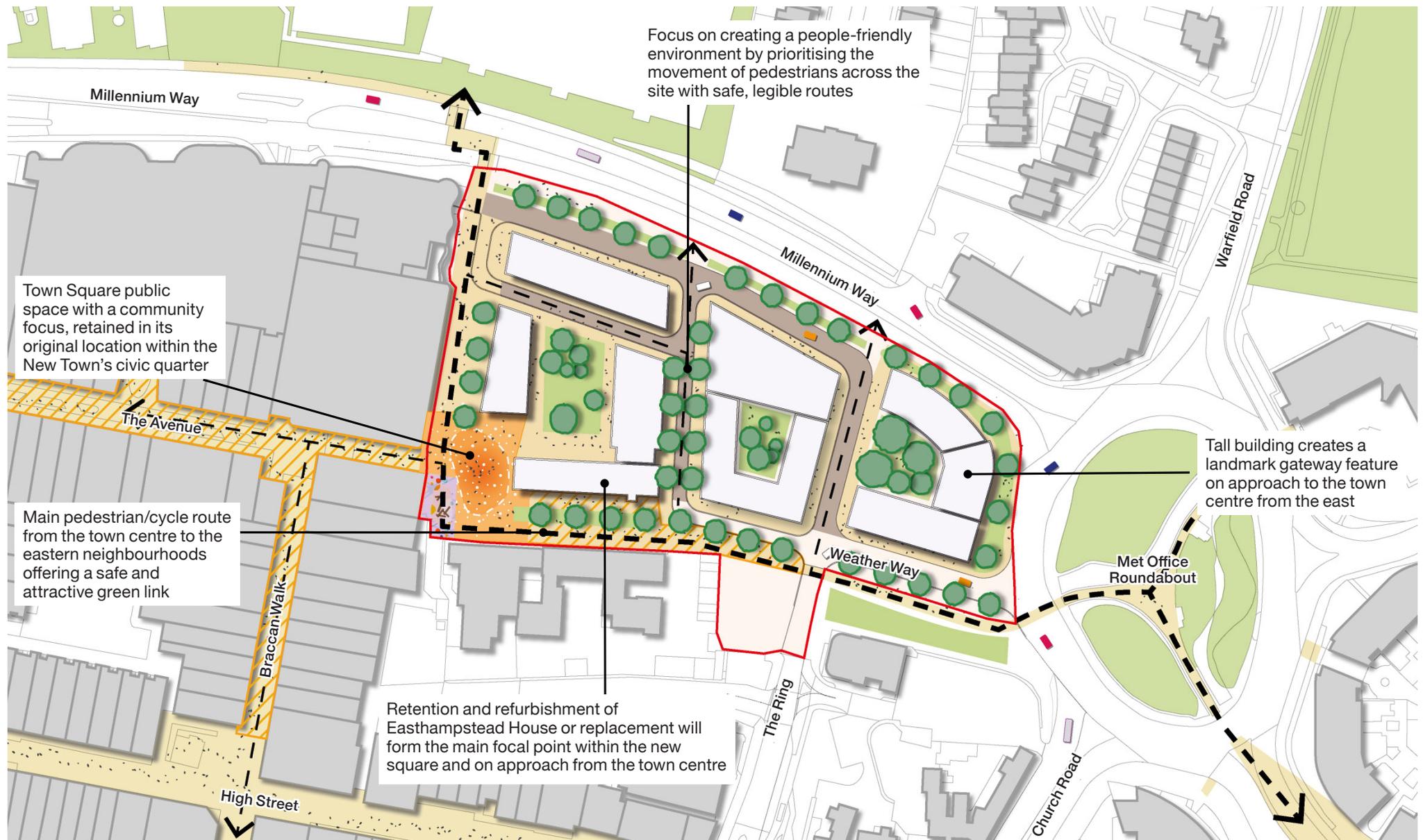


Figure 7.1: Illustrative masterplan

Opportunities and constraints summary

7.1 This section sets out site-specific masterplan principles for the Eastern Gateway masterplan, based on a summary of constraints and opportunities.

Constraints

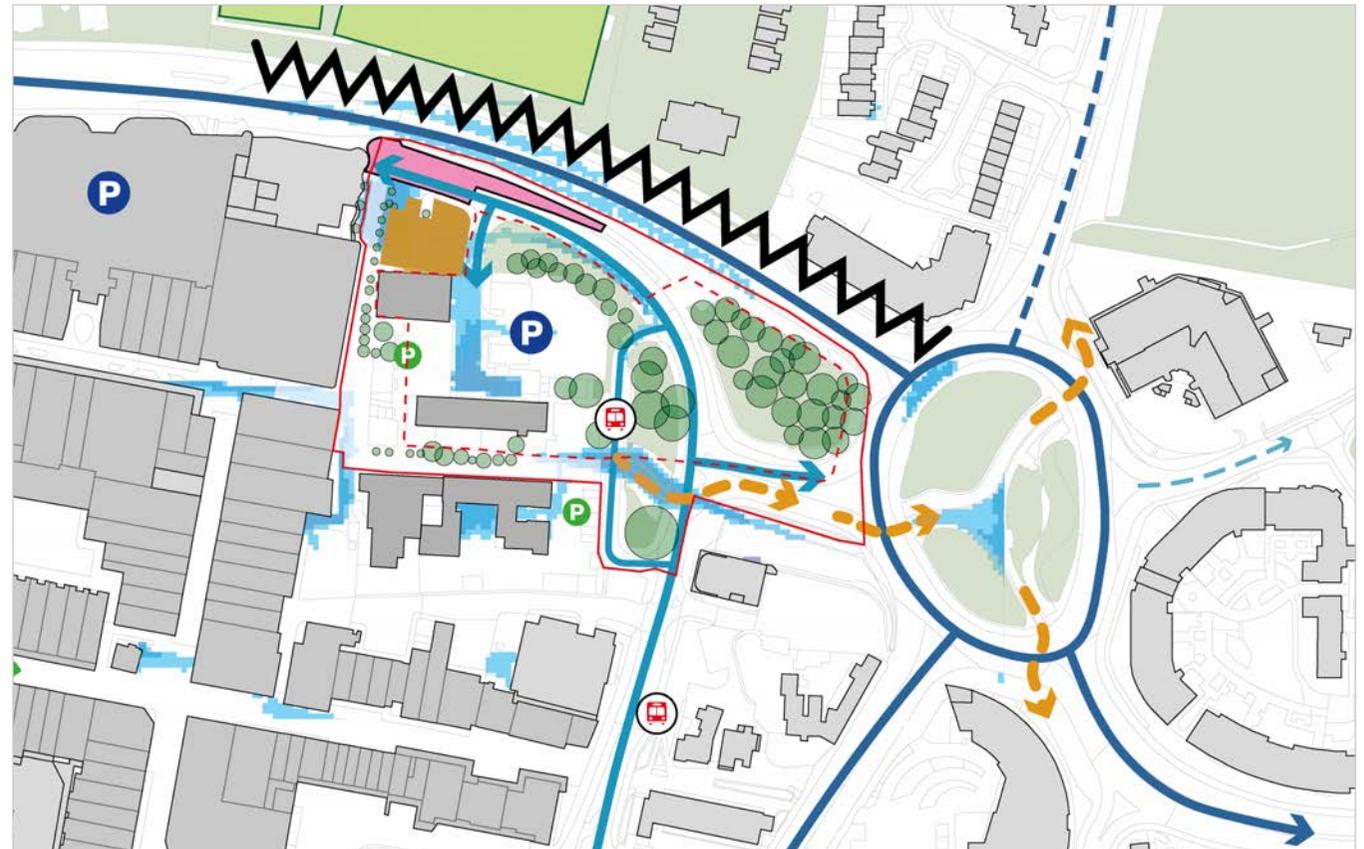


Figure 7.2: Eastern Gateway – Constraints

KEY

Development area	Car parking	Flooding	Drain	Private land
Site boundary	The Ring	Overpass	Noise	Private car park
Underpass	Access to Princess Square car park	Service roads	Heritage	
Green space	Major vehicle routes	Bus stop	Religious	
Trees	Secondary road	Cycle parking		

Topography

7.2 There are notable level changes within the site ranging from +74/75m around the Town Square falling to +73m around the library/ Millennium Way frontage and rising to +77/80m next to the Met Office roundabout. An existing pedestrian/cyclist underpass located to the south of the site enables crossing beneath the roundabout and will be retained.

7.3 There are also level changes due to the decked pedestrian area between the library and Easthampstead House. The impact of these localised changes depends on the strategy taken for Easthampstead House.

Existing trees

7.4 There is a limited number of trees on the site with small clusters in the east and alongside The Ring. Most of these are not expected to be retained. New tree planting as part of the redevelopment is expected to connect this site into the wider landscape network.



Figure 7.3: Existing surface car park fronting Easthampstead House and the library



Figure 7.4: Subway on approach to the town centre from the east with Easthampstead House in the background



Figure 7.5: Existing trees

Flood Risk

7.5 The site lies within Flood Zone 1 with 11.6% of the site at risk of surface water flooding during the 1 in 1000 year flood event.

7.6 Surface water ponding occurs during a 1 in 30 year event, increasing to minor flow routes in the 1 in 1000 year event with surface water ponding in distinct access routes. Going forward this could be managed through SuDS and into green infrastructure.

Noise and Air quality

7.7 The site fronts onto Millennium Way (A329) on its northern frontage and is located next to the Met Office roundabout. Both have a negative impact on the environmental quality of the site, in terms of noise and air quality. Both issues will have to be dealt with through the detailed design approach and a well thought-out and fully integrated landscape strategy. Surveys and mitigation strategies are required at planning application stage.



Figure 7.6: Millennium Way

Utilities

7.8 There are a number of services that will require minor diversion. These are not considered significant enough to undermine the viability of the development and include:

- Cadent (Gas Network): 6in SI LP Mains along the north side of Weather Way and a 63mm PE LP Mains on the south side of Weather Way;
- British Telecom cables;
- SSEN (Scottish & Southern Electricity Networks): service cable running along the northern edge of Weather Way (eastbound) as well as across Weather Way and The Ring; and along route east of Fenwick and across the Town Square;
- Vodafone – underground route runs along The Ring (north-south) opposite Weather Way;
- South East Water: east of surface car park/ across Weather Way and along the north side of Weather Way (eastbound); and
- there is an existing substation within Easthampstead House. The retention and refurbishment of the building will avoid the removal of this.

Access to Fenwick Store

7.9 A 24hr access to Fenwick’s servicing yard must be maintained along The Ring. The western end of The Ring (approx. 40 m length) fronting the surface car park is privately owned and will need to be taken into consideration in any future development.

Private car park

7.10 The car park consisting of 29 car spaces, of which 8 are disabled spaces, needs to be taken into consideration in any future development. An option to relocate the car park spaces to another location or the car park in block E1 (refer to figure 7.14 for location of this) should be considered, this will allow the development to provide a full frontage onto Millennium Way.



Figure 7.7: Fenwick store service route



Figure 7.8: Town Square



Figure 7.9: Route along south side of Easthampstead House

Opportunities

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

- introduce more residential accommodation into the town centre, and increase footfall, vibrance and viability;
- create a positive gateway into the town centre from the east and strong positive frontages onto Millennium Way;
- 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;
- reinforcing the existing pedestrian/cycling connections from the east to the town centre by providing at grade connections overlooked by positive frontages and an attractive public realm; and
- provision of communal internal shared courtyards within the blocks for residents.

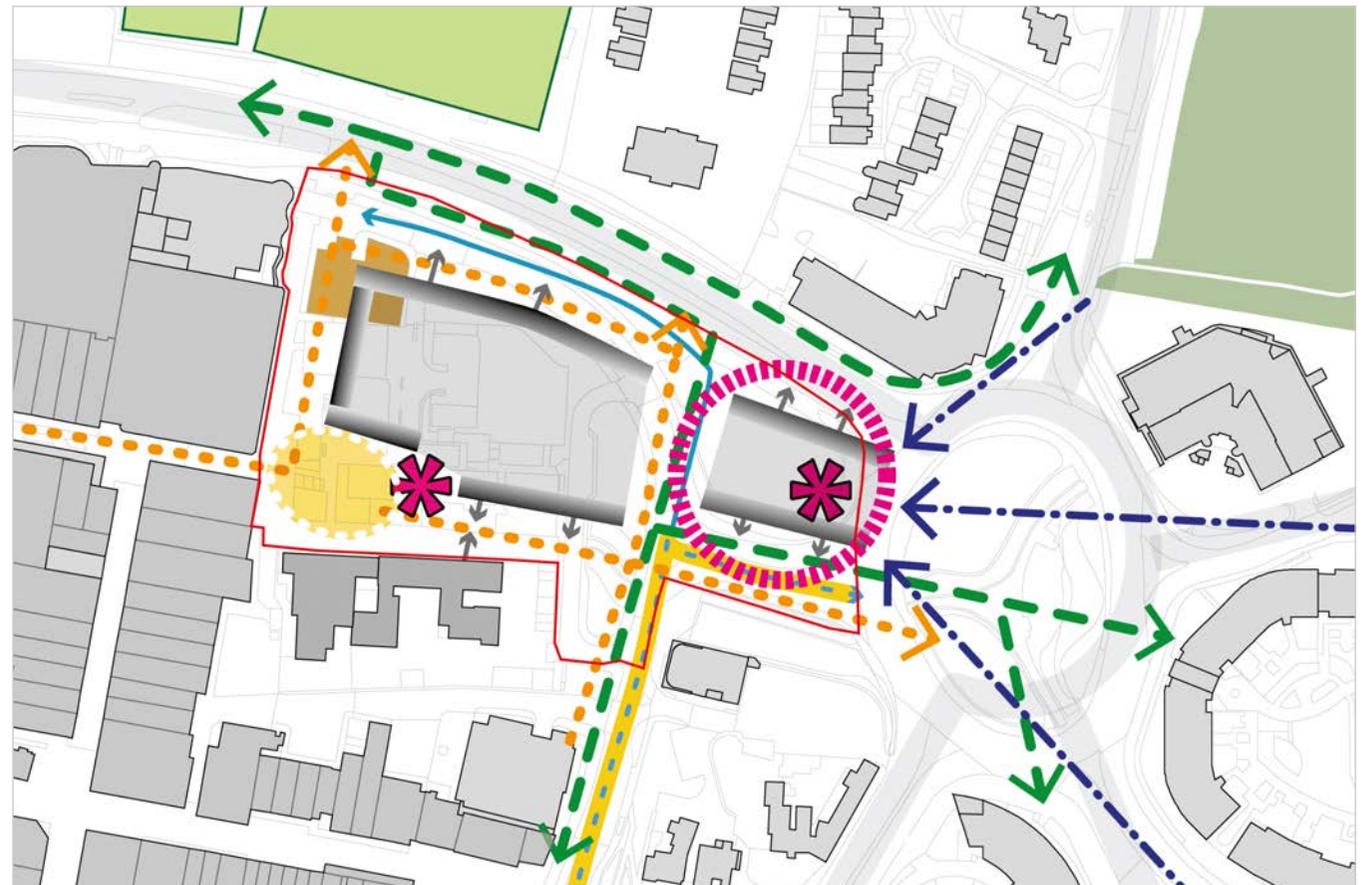


Figure 7.10: Eastern Gateway – Opportunities

KEY

	Site boundary		Access road including service access for Fenwick		Direct connection between the station and town centre		Gateway
	Green space		Pedestrian		Frontages		Public space
	Trees		Cyclist		Landmark		
	The Ring		Views				

Eastern Gateway strategy

7.12 This section provides a specific coordinating framework for all new development within the masterplan area. All planning applications and projects are expected to accord with the principles in relation to the following:

- Movement;
- Layout;
- Land use;
- Green infrastructure; and
- Key public spaces.

7.13 Section 8 contains general design principles that apply across all three masterplan areas and that must be met.



Figure 7.11: Proposed cycle connections

Movement

7.14 Please note that, where appropriate, Manual for Streets (MfS) and Manual for Streets 2 (MfS2) have been used to inform the design of the streets and junctions that comprise the development. Unlike Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB), which is produced primarily for application to the trunk road network, these documents have been produced specifically for use in urban environments. Guidance on visibility splays, junction spacing, corner radii, swept path analysis and lane widths have all been taken from these documents.

7.15 The street network around the site is currently fragmented and uses town centre land inefficiently, with large radii and wide roads dissecting land parcels that can be brought into better, more efficient use.

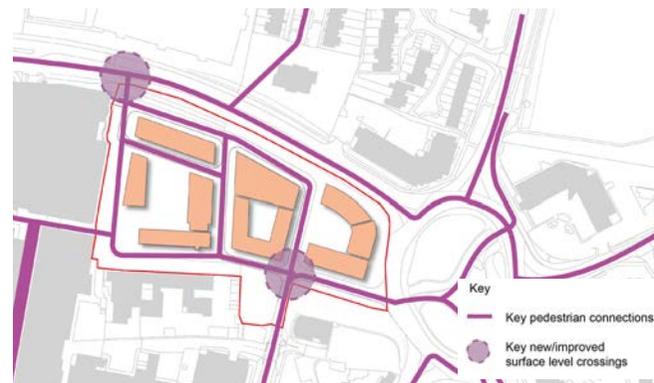


Figure 7.12: Proposed pedestrian connections



Figure 7.13: Proposed bus movement



Figure 7.14: Proposed car parking

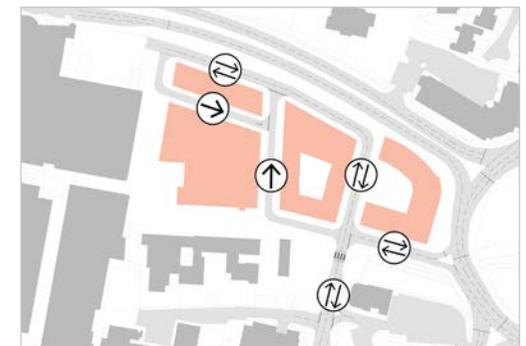


Figure 7.15: Proposed traffic movement

Development Principle: EG1 – Movement

To enable improved cycle and pedestrian movement through the area (refer to figure 7.16) the proposals will need to deliver:

- realignment of The Ring as it runs through the northern site (1) 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 and within the Town Square service streets (2) for a more simplified traffic management system;
- infrastructure required for bus services to be integrated into the design of streets. This should be high in quality, with bus shelters, sufficient lighting and seating provided at well-located bus stops (6);
- two-way operation along Weather Way (3) as a rationalised carriageway occupying the southern / westbound spur of the existing arrangement;
- consolidated car parking within a single car park (block E1 – 275 car parking spaces) (4) accessed off The Ring (refer to figure 7.14);
- service streets through Town Square to be designed as at-grade pedestrian priority spaces, effectively acting as additional public realm most of the day; and
- the east-west route cycle route (5) remaining at surface level through the site and only entering the underpass network at the Met Office Roundabout. This will make cycling more attractive to more people, as well as generally improving the public realm as it will be less fragmented by grade changes. The shops and commercial businesses that line the walking and cycling network will benefit from additional footfall.

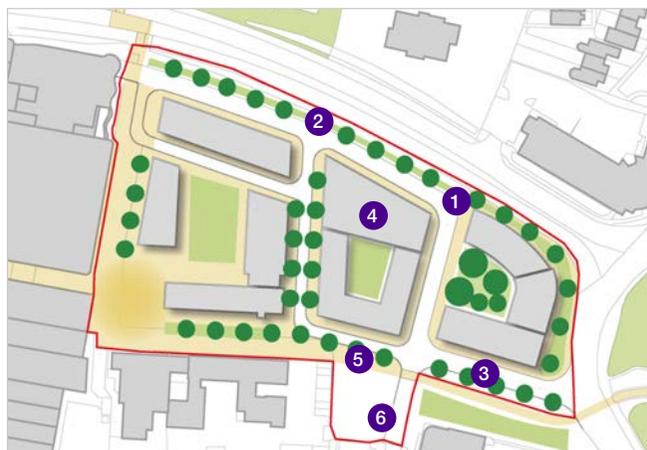


Figure 7.16: Proposed movement – key plan

7.16 Pedestrian movement through the area will be significantly improved and benefit from the rationalisation of carriageway space and creation of new public realm space. Crucially, movement through from The Avenue into the site’s new public spaces and commercial offerings will be greatly improved and as a result allow people to access shops and amenities on foot more easily and enjoyably. Rationalised highway space will deliver more space on footways for people walking, wheeling and relaxing.

7.17 Drop-off parking facilities for residents and visitors to the town centre should be provided on-street where appropriate.

7.18 The new public realm and open space provided within the site will deliver on “Healthy Street principles” as well as advancing biodiversity and habitat creation and utilising SuDS as the primary source of managing surface water.

Key street types

7.19 Figure 7.17 sets out the different street types, that contribute to a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment within the masterplan.

Eastern Gateway Access Streets

7.20 The streets around the existing Town Square will be designed as pedestrian-priority environments with level surfaces – operating as public space more than streets, through which vehicles will be allowed to pass at restricted times. Tree planting, SuDS, seating areas and informal play spaces will be key features within the public realm here, alongside cycle parking and maintenance stations. The surface treatment will not indicate notional carriageway or footway space, instead presenting a consistent space building to building.

7.21 See section 8 for general design principles for each street type.

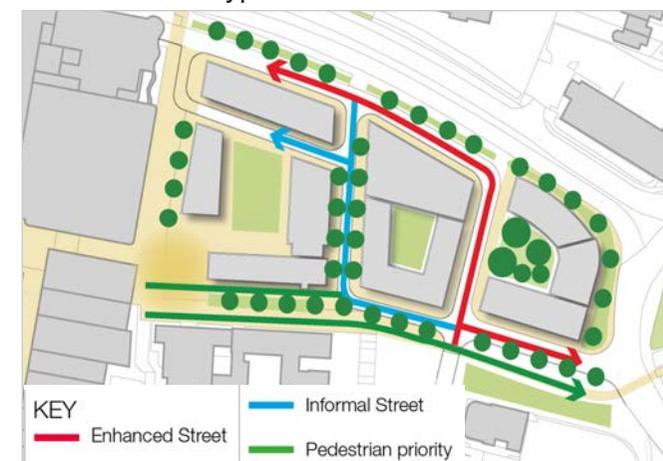


Figure 7.17: Street types

Layout

7.22 The Movement and Public Realm Strategy must be supported by positive building edges defining and overlooking the key routes and spaces within the site. Taller buildings and landmark points reinforce the important destination of the town centre. This section sets out principles for:

- Key frontages and Edges; and
- Heights and Landmarks.

7.23 See section 8 for general design principles for each frontage type.

Development Principle: EG2 – Key frontages and Edges

Figure 7.18 sets out a range of different building frontages, each of which will have a role to play in creating a sense of place. This includes:

- active frontages with predominantly non-residential ground floor uses will be concentrated around the Town Square and along the main pedestrian / cycle route to the east;
- positive frontages consisting of regular entrances to residential uses will form the remaining edges along streets;
- marker edges, which define special edge treatment of town-wide importance, include frontages overlooking the roundabout; and
- potentially inactive frontages – a multi storey car park providing parking spaces for the whole of the allocation must be sensitively integrated into the southern urban block, by:
 - minimising negative impact on the outlook of new apartments;
 - avoiding blank, unattractive façades as much as possible;
 - integrating, where possible, active ground floor uses; and
 - utilising creative façade design and planting and create an architecturally high-quality building that contributes to the area.



Figure 7.18: Key frontages and edges

KEY

Principal areas showing ground level activity

- Active frontage
- Positive frontage
- Marker edges of town-wide importance
- Potentially inactive frontage

Heights and Landmarks

7.24 New buildings should support the overall approach to movement and connections through the area.

Development Principle: EG3 – Heights and Landmarks

Figure 7.20 sets out principles for building height across the core area as follows.

- a single taller building should be located on the eastern edge, overlooking the roundabout up to a maximum of 16 storeys;
- the majority of the remainder of the area may be up to 8 storeys in height. Changes in height and massing should be used to create visual interest and avoid long ‘walls’ of the same height; and
- where there are opportunities for landmark / focal points located on key views, design of buildings must respond positively to these views. Building heights should not exceed 8 storeys.

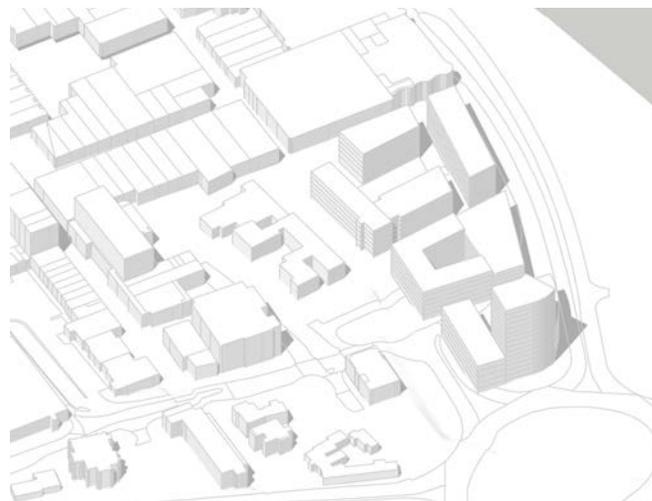


Figure 7.19: Massing study – view from the east

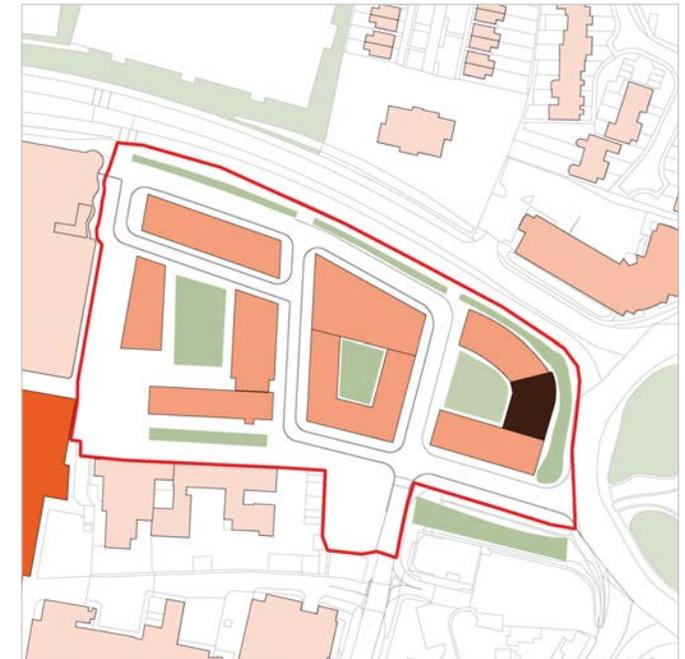


Figure 7.20: Proposed heights



Land use

7.25 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 the 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.

Development Principle: EG4 – Land use

New development should:

- explore in detail the opportunity to retain and refurbish Easthampstead House into a hotel, continued commercial uses or residential uses;
- provide a range of residential types and tenures, including Extra Care;
- provide employment / commercial uses on the ground and lower floors, defining and overlooking adjacent streets and spaces, with residential above;
- focus ‘active’ commercial frontages, community and leisure uses onto the Town Square to maximise footfall, activate the public realm and enable uses to spill out into the square; and
- locate less active commercial / employment uses, such as offices / workshops onto Millennium Way as employment tends to be less sensitive than residential uses to noise from passing vehicles.



Figure 7.21: Easthampstead House can be refurbished and extended at roof level with terraces providing long distance views, example: former Camden Council Office, London

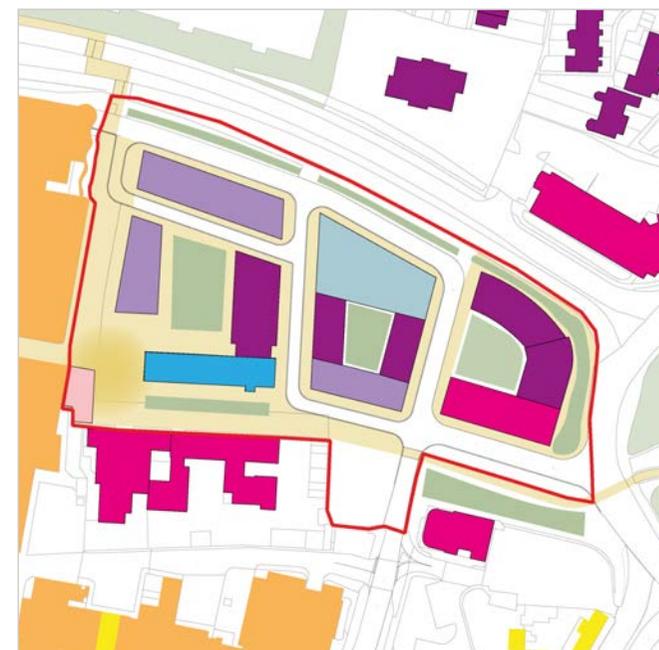


Figure 7.22: Proposed uses



Play and Green infrastructure

7.26 Where new or improved green infrastructure is proposed, the maximum benefit should be achieved by designing it to serve a variety of functions.

7.27 The site proposals offer a major opportunity to integrate with the existing green infrastructure network through improvements along the Eastern Spine, and the delivery of an amount of open space incorporating an element of formal and informal play in addition to communal and private open spaces associated with the development blocks.

Development Principle: EG5 – Play and Green Infrastructure

New development should include:

- trees, other planting and SuDS along the Eastern spine;
- play features throughout streets and spaces, and be well integrated to achieve an informal environment to play;
- children's play focused within the Town Square, animating and contributing to the vibrancy of the space;
- high quality landscaped streets; and
- green roofs and communal gardens.

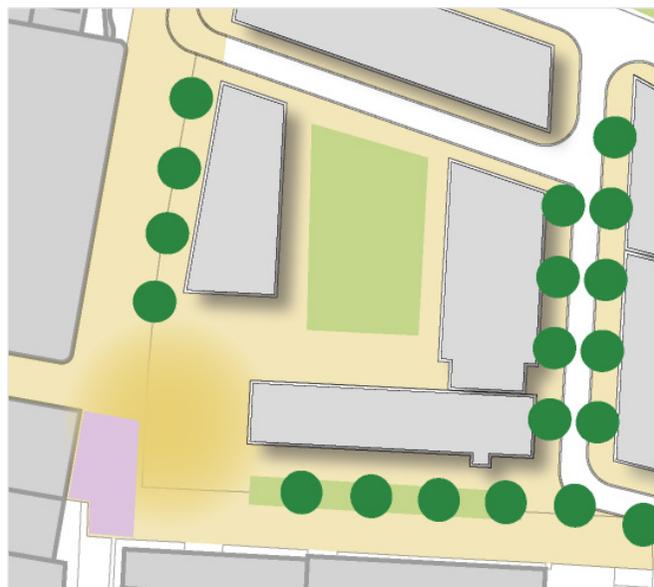


Figure 7.23: Town Square plan – children's play



Figure 7.24: Informal seating in the square



Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, South Park Plaza Transformation
© Willerby Landscapes Ltd



Figure 7.25: Children's play activities

Key public spaces

7.28 The Eastern Gateway masterplan is made up of several spaces, that each have their particular character and design requirements. These are:

- Town Square; and
- Eastern Spine

7.29 In order to deliver the overall masterplan and meet the Council's aspirations, the development principles for each space must be met.



Figure 7.26: Key public spaces

Town Square

7.30 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.

7.31 The artist image in figure 7.29, illustrates how Town Square could look like.

Development Principle: EG6 – Town Square

The following principles will need to be met to achieve the aspiration for this square and surrounding development:

- seating should be fun and convivial, with a mix of formal and informal seating opportunities;
- play opportunities should be incorporated into the space to invite children and families to use the space, and should not be a segregated, fenced off play area;
- trees must be specified to calm the space, offer shade and shelter; and
- SuDS will be incorporated into the space to both soften the space and provide appropriate flood mitigation.

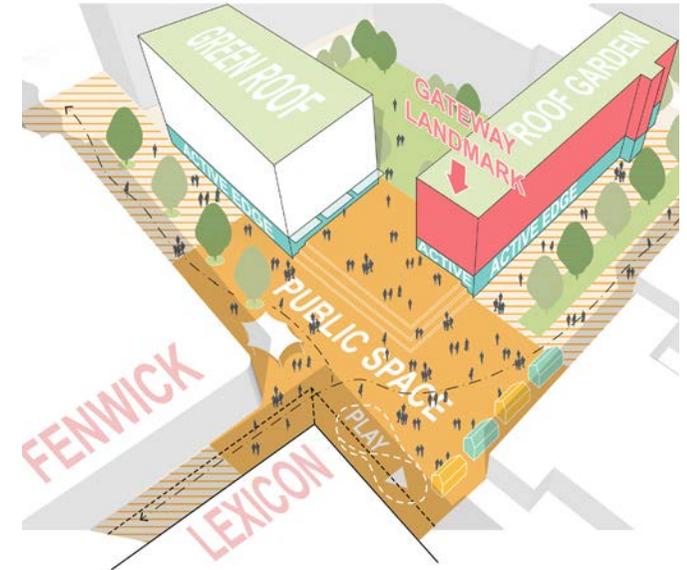


Figure 7.27: Town Square plan and aerial view from the south-west



Figure 7.28: Easthampstead House and Town Square as viewed today on approach from the town centre along The Avenue

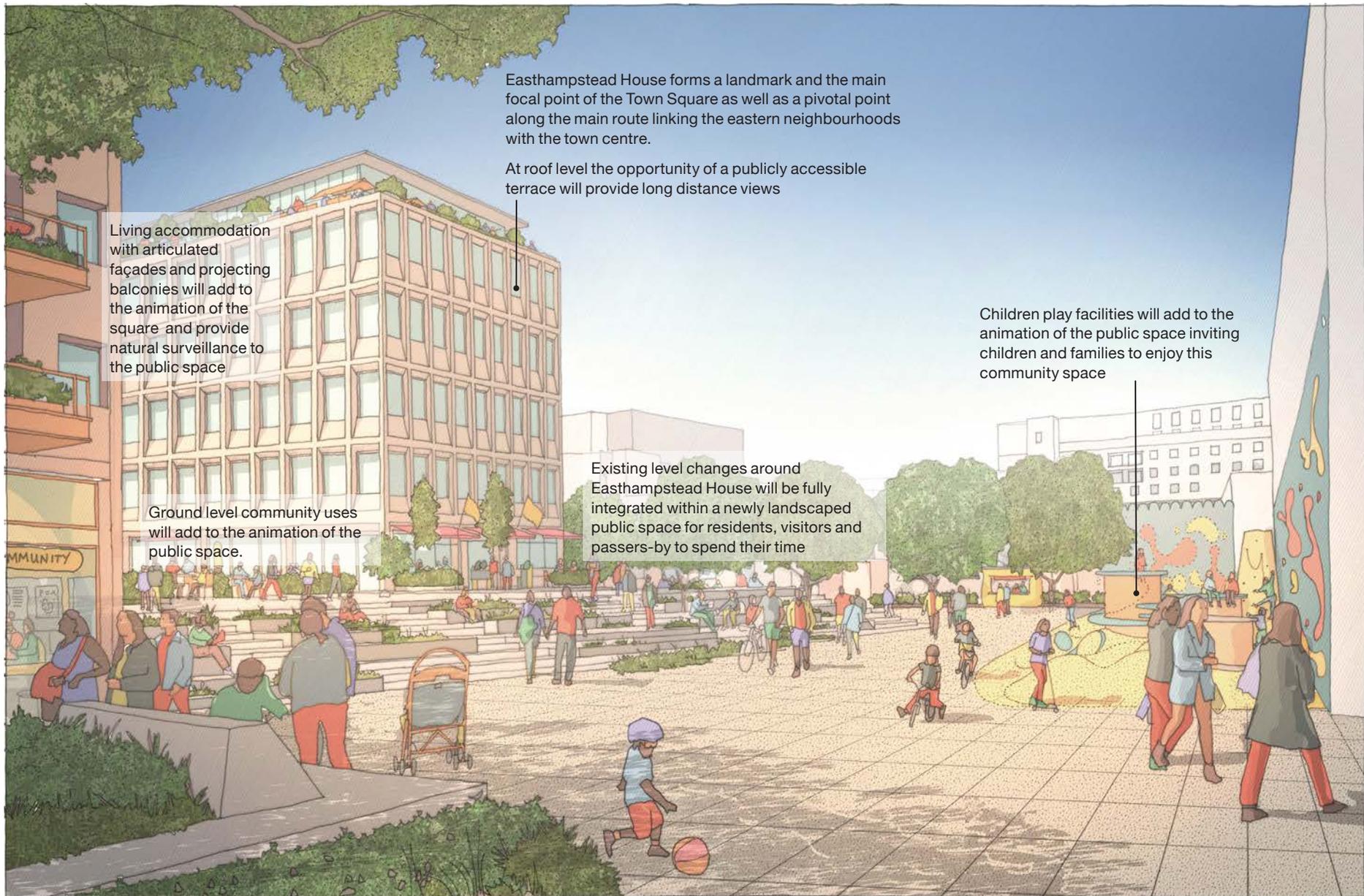


Figure 7.29 Artist's illustration showing how the new Town Square could create a real focus of activity with a refurbished Easthampstead House forming the key landmark around the square and on approach from the town centre.

Eastern Spine

7.32 This route provides the main pedestrian / cycle approach into the town centre from the east.

7.33 The following principles must be met to deliver the aspiration for this square and surrounding development.



Figure 7.30: Eastern spine route

Development Principle: EG7 – Eastern Spine

New development should provide:

- a link that will create a pedestrian priority space, where people feel comfortable walking and wheeling;
- pedestrian space that accommodates cyclists and encourages low speeds and considerate behaviour;
- safe space created at the building edge away from moving cycles, delineated by tactile paving to ensure access for all;
- trees, planting and SuDS that should line the link in a way that breaks up the linearity, providing increased legibility and creating a more relaxed procession – pockets of space joined up to create a link, rather than a formal Avenue;
- at surface level walking and cycling access from the east of The Ring to the underpass network at the Met Office Roundabout;
- servicing routes will be accommodated from Weather Way into the site's pedestrian priority street network around Town Square. These streets will be at grade and operate effectively as public space through which vehicles can pass at restricted times to service buildings; and
- existing access to the Police Station and Magistrate's Court will remain unchanged.



Figure 7.31: Linear park offering space to relax and enjoy



Figure 7.32: Soft landscape, public art, old and new buildings contribute to form a quality environment



Figure 7.33 Pavilion cafe within a square



Figure 7.34: Cyclists

8. General Design Principles

Built form

8.1 The masterplans establish an urban pattern of development creating a clearly defined and permeable structure comprising suitably sized blocks.

Frontages and edges

8.2 To meet the aspiration of creating a vibrant new urban mixed-use neighbourhood it is essential that the design of ground floor frontages ensures attractive and active street edges.



Figure 8.1: Active frontage – ground level uses animate the façade and public realm

Development Principle: GD1 – Frontages and edges

The following frontage typologies have been defined and design principles must be met in line with the framework plans included in sections 5, 6 and 7:

- **Active frontages** – these define the edge of the new pedestrian/cycle routes linking the site to the town centre in the south as well as to the east, and around the public spaces they pass through with strong, almost continuous building edges. The ground floor of the buildings along these frontages will predominantly comprise non-residential uses which will help animate the frontages and, in some cases, spill out into the public realm. These must include active ground floors, windows and doors for at least 50% of the frontage.
- **Positive frontages** – these frontages will accommodate regular entrances to residential and have an important role to play in defining and overlooking all the routes and spaces. This can be achieved by integrating maisonettes at ground level where possible to allow individual front doors onto street level and a regular animation and activity.

- **Marker edges** – these are of town-wide importance and are placed at key locations on approach to the town centre along main key routes. These should have special architectural treatment with distinct detailing and use of special materials to emphasise their visual prominence.
- **Potentially inactive frontages** – in the masterplans there are multi-storey car park buildings which may not be able to achieve active ground floors for large parts of the building frontage. These buildings must be considered carefully and must fit well within the new urban quarters created here. They must:
 - have a strong architectural design that introduces human scale and vertical rhythm through the use of materials and detailing;
 - incorporate graphics and signage into the design of the building in a creative and integrated way (rather than being an add-on); and
 - incorporate small amounts of active ground floor uses where possible – e.g. making the most of staff entrances and office functions.



Figure 8.2: Public uses at ground level spilling out and animating the public realm



Figure 8.3: Multi-storey car park positively contributes to the streetscape – Bittern Way MSCP, Fletton Quays, Peterborough



Figure 8.4: Regular entrances to residential accommodation/maisonette entrances with flats above



Figure 8.5: Multi-storey car park positively contributes to the streetscape – London City Island, Leamouth Peninsula



Articulated façade treatment

8.3 Building façades should be varied both horizontally and vertically in order to achieve proportions that relate to human scale.

Development Principle: GD2 – Façade treatment

In order to achieve this the following design principles should apply:

- monolithic façades must be avoided. Breakdown of the façade helps to reduce their scale and help to integrate them within the development;
- façades should clearly articulate their use and commercial buildings should be articulated differently from residential buildings;
- apartment blocks must have a regular pattern of accommodation expressed externally to provide a vertical rhythm to the street scene and break down the horizontality of the block. This sets apart the new residential buildings from the New Town heritage and non-residential uses in the core of the town centre;
- materials should be high quality and carefully selected to reflect the character of Bracknell; and
- simple clearly articulated building forms, with limited decoration, well-proportioned elevations and high quality detailing.

Acceptable and unacceptable Façade treatments:



Figure 8.6: Buildings with unarticulated form must be avoided



Figure 8.7: Clearly defined base and top of building

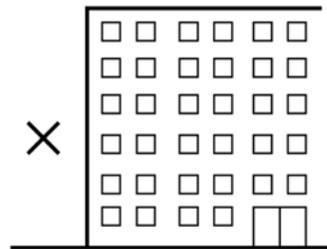


Figure 8.8: Monolithic façades 'hole in wall' must be avoided

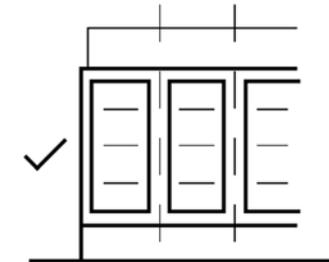


Figure 8.9: Regular vertical bays break down the building mass and provide rhythm

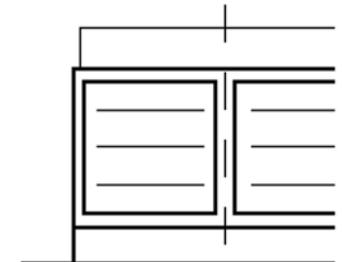


Figure 8.10: Wider commercial grid differentiates from residential scale

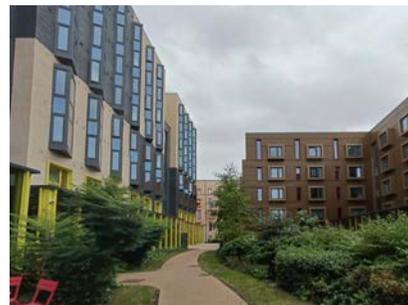


Figure 8.11: Application of colour and projecting bay units provides a playful and interesting treatment to the building façade – Scape Phase 1, Student accommodation, Guildford



Figure 8.12: Interesting play of aperture opening and projections on a brick facade

Landmark buildings

8.4 Landmarks do not need to be taller but should be carefully designed and articulate their location within the wider urban fabric. They should make a positive contribution to the legibility of the wider area and reinforce local identity through their scale, use, detailed design and materiality.

8.5 The introduction and location of a tall building is to provide a clear sense of orientation locally and town-wide. The residential nature of the building will allow the elevations to be strongly modelled incorporating features such as balconies which will add animation and variety to the appearance of the block.

Development Principle: GD3 – Landmark buildings

The following principles should be followed:

- the tall building should be sited so that it enhances views and vistas as well as provides a landmark from street level;
- achieve a slender, elegant and articulated profile that demonstrably minimises the visual bulk and mass of the building – a blocky and inarticulate form must be avoided; and
- they should contribute to an interesting, variable and memorable skyline.

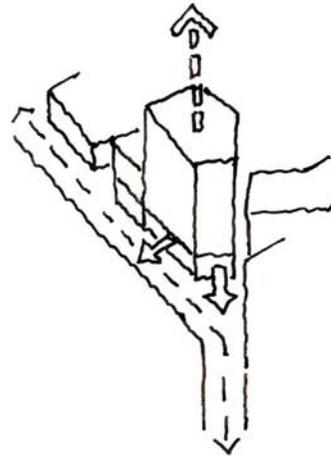


Figure 8.13: Opportunity at the end of the block along Braccan Walk to create a marker at the corner by accentuating the height and addressing the two routes with public uses at ground level



Figure 8.14: Corner articulation gives the opportunity to address two streets creating a marker



Figure 8.15: Corners can be used to accentuate vertical form, or define an entrance

Landmark and taller elements must be integrated into the wider block structure:

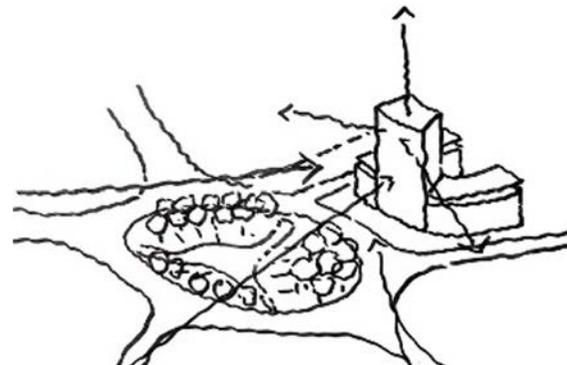


Figure 8.16: Tall building forming a punctuation to the horizontal blocks and a landmark fronting the Met Office roundabout signalling arrival from the west to the town centre

Horizontal block terminated by a taller element creates a strong townscape statement:



Figure 8.17: Surrey Canal, Deptford



Figure 8.18: The Forge, Finsbury Park

Variable roofline

8.6 Rooflines should be broken to avoid long stretches of monotonous roofscape. Variations in building heights and roof shape will enrich the skyline. The following design principles must be met:

Development Principle: GD4 – Rooflines

- accommodate steps in massing. Any height changes should also be reflected in an appropriate elevational treatment for the typology being used;
- use of projections such as vertical circulation towers and setbacks at top levels; and
- include green roofs and roof terraces where possible.

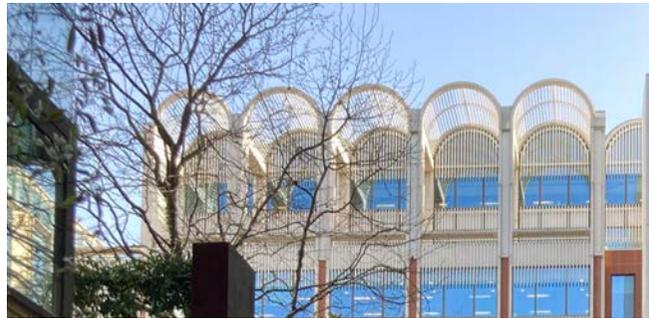


Figure 8.19: Examples of variation in rooflines

Public realm

8.7 The public realm comprises the streets, public squares and pedestrian areas, and public green spaces in the town centre.

8.8 Together, these play a vital role, for the movement and access of people and goods, as well as the comfort and enjoyment of the town centre, encouraging people to spend time there and support the local economy.

Streets and Junctions

8.9 The masterplans reimagine the existing road network and set out new or narrowed streets that contribute to a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment. The street types proposed are taken from the 2018 CIHT publication, “[Creating better streets: Inclusive and accessible places](#)”⁴ and form the framework for the delivery of the streets for these masterplans.

8.10 The following street typologies have been defined and design principles must be met in line with the framework plans included in sections 5, 6 and 7.



Pedestrian Priority Environments

8.11 This type of street is designed as a pedestrianised space, where people walking and wheeling take priority over vehicles and people cycling. Some pedestrian priority environments may provide access to people walking, wheeling and cycling only, with no vehicles permitted. Other pedestrian priority environments may permit very low levels of (often filtered or restricted) vehicles at very low speeds, for example to provide access for loading, or to specific residents to access their properties.

Development Principle: GD5 – Pedestrian priority environments

- street furniture should be placed to loosely define the vehicle movement corridor but there is no ‘carriageway’ or ‘footway’ in the typical sense;
- there should be a pedestrian-only clear zone next to the building edge, defined by tactile paving to allow it to be used by visually impaired people and other pedestrians who do not feel confident being in a space with moving vehicles.



Figure 8.21: Examples of pedestrian priority environment

⁴ https://www.ciht.org.uk/media/4463/ciht_shared_streets_a4_v6_all_combined_1.pdf

Figure 8.20: New Lion Way, Elephant and Castle

Key features of Informal Street Environments

Development Principle: GD6 – Informal street environments

- some of the typical ‘segregation’ measures (for example contrasting colours and materials and signalised crossings) are removed to create a slower more relaxed, pedestrian and cycling friendly environment.
- measures to assist with informal crossing, like central medians, should be used.
- low kerbs (25 – 60 mm) separating the footway and will incorporate trees, raingardens, seats, areas for outdoor dining and the legal minimum amount of road markings, as behaviours should be more intuitive in line with the changed streetscape character.



Figure 8.22: Examples of informal street environment



Figure 8.23: New Lion Way, Elephant and Castle



Figure 8.24: Sayer Street, Elephant and Castle

Key features of Enhanced Street Environments

Development Principle: GD7 – Enhanced street environments

- there is a distinct carriageway separated from the footways with a 100 – 125 mm high kerb
- typical road markings such as double yellow lines and centre lines on an asphalt carriageway.
- the ‘enhancement’ comes from new paving, trees, seats and street furniture, in a decluttered environment that afford more pedestrian priority and space for urban life.



Figure 8.25: An example of an enhanced street environment

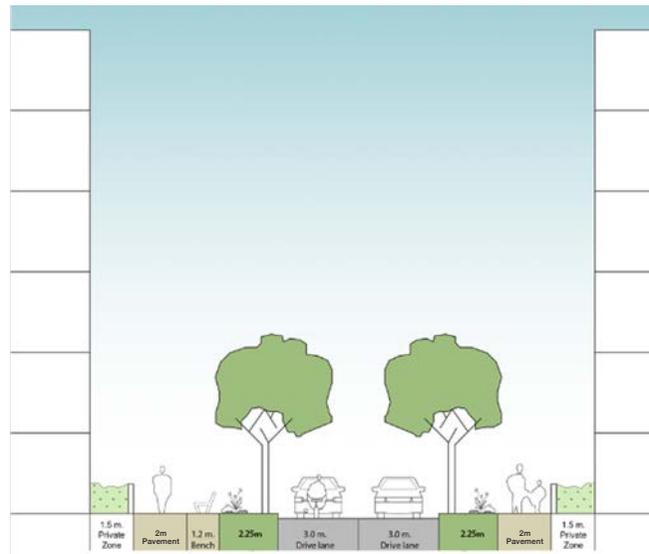


Figure 8.26: Section through The Ring

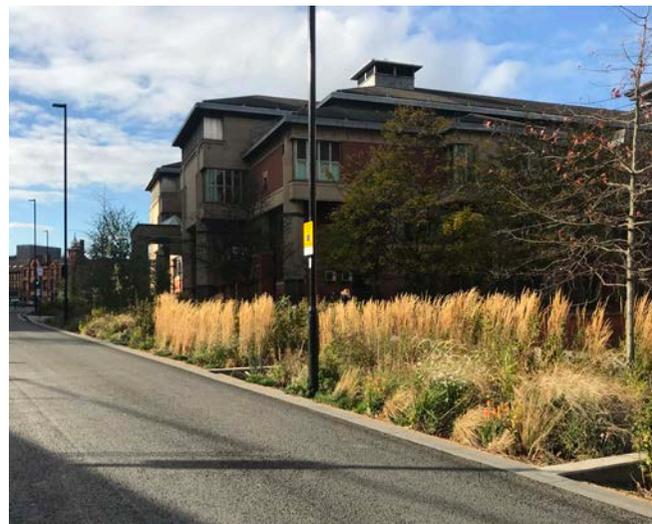


Figure 8.27: SuDS incorporated within the public realm

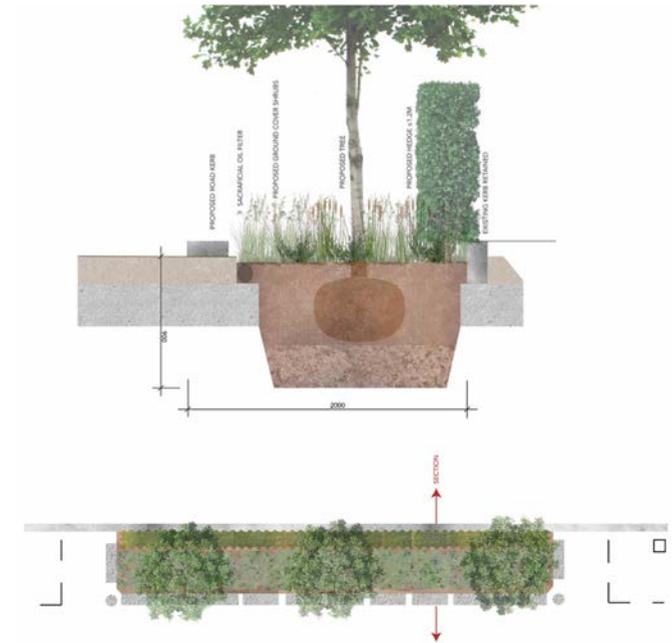


Figure 8.28: An example of a similar carriageway SuDS Solution



Figure 8.29: SuDS incorporated within Heygate Street, Southwark



Figure 8.30: Section through Station Road



Figure 8.31: Examples of an enhanced street environment

Planting

Development Principle: GD8 – Planting

- landscape design must be mindful of the effects of climate change, both in respect of providing shade for people as well as in the selection of drought tolerant planting, maximising opportunities for biodiversity and providing for storm water management;
- biodiversity and climate resilience must be a priority when composing planting palettes, by including a large percentage of UK native species, with documented value to wildlife, along with species more likely to flourish in the anticipated future climate;
- planting should focus on deciduous species, but should include some evergreen species, and must engage the senses by providing year-round seasonal interest in the form of foliage, bark, colour, flowers, fragrance, fruits and berries;
- any plants known to be associated with destructive diseases or harm to people and wildlife must be avoided; and
- plant bedding areas must be designed to ensure an adequate growing medium for sustained healthy plant growth.

Sustainability principles

Active travel

Development Principle: GD9 – Active travel

- the design of streets and public spaces will be delivered in line with the hierarchy of vulnerable road users principles set out within the new Highway Code and within Manual for Streets meaning that streets should meet the needs of pedestrians first, then accommodating cycles and then vehicles;
- the use of active and sustainable modes should be prioritised throughout the sites to ensure that sustainability is at the heart of the mobility network, with access to public transport being key for longer journeys;
- footways throughout the site should have a minimum clear width of 2m, meaning that any furniture zone would be in addition to this. In areas where higher pedestrian flows are expected, pedestrian comfort level analysis should be undertaken to calculate the effective width required in addition to 2m clear;
- footways gradients should be a maximum of 1:20 to enable suitable access to be achieved in line with mobility requirements;
- cycling within the sites should take place within the general carriageway and ensure safe and efficient travel. The design of these streets, including the carriageway width and their general character, must achieve a naturally low-speed environment. Gradients would be a maximum of 1 in 20;
- cycle parking must be provided throughout, with different techniques being used at different locations. In commercial areas, Sheffield Stands should be prioritised to allow people cycling to access shops conveniently, whilst in residential areas secure cycle parking should be incorporated into the public realm; and
- consideration should be given to the provision of shared vehicles for residents, for example through an onsite car sharing club, with preference for electric vehicles.

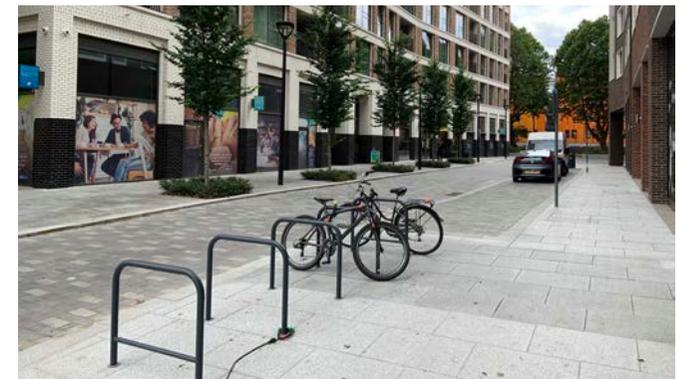


Figure 8.32: Examples of cycling incorporated within public realm

Green and blue infrastructure

8.12 Within the public realm SuDS and tree planting are required throughout, and the mix of planting should prioritise habitat creation and biodiversity support. Surface water should be managed on site through a network of SuDS. Planting should be maximised around existing larger streets to mitigate noise and air pollution whilst being mindful of perceived safety and antisocial behaviour.

8.13 For areas of hardstanding, permeable materials must be prioritised to support the surface water management plan on site.

8.14 Since February 2024 there has been a mandatory requirement for at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Ecological surveys and biodiversity matrix will be required as part of any planning application submission. The outcome may affect the response to design principles set out within this document.

Development Principle: GD10 – Green and blue infrastructure

An emphasis is to be placed on optimising green space within built areas, through:

- incorporating SuDS for conveyance and water treatment, and also providing biodiversity value;
- providing foraging opportunities, edible produce, inclusion of pollinator species and allowing movement of species through urbanised areas, including the use of green walls and roofs where appropriate;
- maximising use of water features which create a sense of place in some key set-piece public realm areas;
- providing clear measures for the reduction of the Urban Heat Island effect through tree planting, greening, providing adequate shading, through natural and artificial means, water features and light coloured surfaces that minimise heat absorption, meeting the mandatory requirement to provide 10% Biodiversity; and
- providing shared, public open spaces of varying types for recreation, communal activities and contribution to community health, wellbeing and social cohesion.

Buildings

Development Principle: GD11 – Buildings

Design all buildings to reduce the demand for energy and the carbon footprint in use by:

- orientating them to take advantage of natural lighting and winter solar gains, prevent overheating and to provide roof orientations suitable for PV panels;
- improving building fabric and insulation beyond minimum Building Regulations requirements;
- installing windows with improved performance;
- improving air tightness;
- specifying low-flow taps and showers;
- installing smart meters and technology to control energy provision with every residential dwelling; and
- providing 100% low energy lighting.

Materials

Development Principle: GD12 – Materials

- materials for construction should follow a reuse and recycle programme, where materials that are lifted are considered for reuse before being replaced, and if not reused should be considered for changing to satisfy another requirement – old kerbs being laid as barrel runs or loading bays for example. New materials should be sourced as locally, and with the lowest carbon footprint, as possible; and
- sustainable construction techniques such as lean construction (which manages the construction process to minimise waste) should be incorporated where possible. The overall goal should be to minimise the embodied carbon of the development.

Public art

8.15 Public art is freely accessible to everyone. It reflects society and can strengthen the sense of place by being site specific. It is a communal activity that can reach a wide variety of people. It can be engaging, inspiring and challenging and can help stimulate conversation between a diverse range of individuals and groups.

8.16 Traditionally, public art was permanent with monuments, memorials, civic statues and sculptures commemorating or celebrating historic people and events, such as the Bracknell War Memorial. The intention of art in Bracknell must be to move beyond more traditional notions, working where possible with local communities/ organisations to commission artworks, temporary and permanent, that respond to site and situation.

8.17 More recently the scope of public art has expanded to include more transient activities, such as performance, dance, theatre, and installations. Street art, including murals and graffiti, whether permanent or temporary, embraces political themes and protest, adding energy and interest to the public realm.

8.18 Permanent art works remain in the public eye and require a great deal of care in commissioning, conceiving, delivering and maintaining. Temporary art is more ephemeral and works may linger in the memory but do not generally provide a permanent physical record. Whether permanent or temporary, the best and most engaging public art should be planned from the outset of any public realm project to ensure it provides meaning for people and value for money.

Development Principle: GD13 – Public art

The following principles apply:

- ensure the delivery of appropriate public art in Bracknell;
- promote the early integration of public art within development proposals;
- clarify the requirements for, and processes involved in, the development and delivery of public art;
- encourage partnership working, such as with local artists or organisations, in delivering public art; and
- establish an agreed management and maintenance procedure for public art.



Figure 8.33: Public art in Bracknell town centre

9. Phasing and Delivery

High Street Car Park

9.1 The whole development site would be expected to be subject to a single planning application to ensure that the site is delivered comprehensively, in its entirety.

9.2 The High Street Car Park site is compact and the development quantum of space being delivered across the site is of a realistic size to consider it to be delivered in a single phase. This is illustrated in figure 9.1 and as listed below:

- Phase 1: Left parcel of the site, encompassing blocks A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, B3, B4 and C1.

9.3 The timescale for the delivery of the High Street Car Park scheme is estimated to be as follows:

- Pre-construction: 6-months
- Construction: 24-months
- Sales: 18-months



Figure 9.1: High Street Car Park phasing plan

Southern Gateway

9.4 The whole development site would be expected to be subject to a single planning application to ensure that the site is delivered comprehensively, in its entirety.

9.5 The Southern Gateway site is quite a large area of development and the quantum of space being delivered across the site may be more reasonable and realistic to consider it to be delivered through multiple phases. This is illustrated in figure 9.2 and as listed below:

- Phase 1: Bottom right parcel encompassing blocks F1, F2, G1, G2 and G3.
- Phase 2: Bottom left parcel encompassing blocks A1, A2, A3, C1, C2, D1 and D2.
- Phase 3: Top right parcel encompassing blocks E1, E2, E3 and E4.

9.6 Detailed analysis of the infrastructure required and associated phasing will need to be undertaken to understand the infrastructure phasing as well as the impact on the wider town centre traffic during phased work stages.

9.7 It is assumed that the Multi Storey Car Park in block F1 will be delivered in the initial phase of the development so that it is available to service subsequent phases of development as well as making the residential offer a more attractive proposition for buyers.



Figure 9.2: Southern Gateway phasing plan

9.8 The timescales of the phasing for the Southern Gateway scheme are estimated to be as follows:

- Pre-construction: 12-months
- Construction: 60-months
- Sales: 12-months

Eastern Gateway

9.9 The whole development site would be expected to be subject to a single planning application to ensure that the site is delivered comprehensively, in its entirety.

9.10 Similar to the Southern Gateway, the development in the Eastern Gateway is estimated to be delivered in phases.

9.11 As illustrated in figure 9.3 there will be two phases as follows:

- Phase 1: Left parcel of the site, encompassing blocks A1, A2, B1, C1, E1 and E2.
- Phase 2: Right parcel of the site, encompassing blocks F1, F2 and F3.

9.12 Similarly to the Southern Gateway Site, the Multi Storey Car Park (block E1) will be delivered in the initial phase of the development so that it is available to service the second phase of the development as well as making the residential offer a more attractive proposition for buyers.

9.13 In addition to the adopted phasing for the Eastern Gateway scheme, the timescales for the respective phases are estimated to be as follows:

- Pre-construction: 12-months
- Construction: 24-months
- Sales: 12-months



Figure 9.3: Eastern gateway phasing plan

