



# Public Document Pack

James Ellis  
Head of Legal and Democratic Services

**MEETING** : DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
**VENUE** : PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING WILL BE HELD VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM.  
**DATE** : THURSDAY 25 JUNE 2020  
**TIME** : 7.00 PM

**PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE**

## **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Councillor B Deering (Chairman)

Councillors D Andrews, T Beckett, R Buckmaster, B Crystall, A Huggins, J Jones, I Kemp, T Page, C Redfern, P Ruffles and T Stowe (Vice-Chairman)

## **Substitutes**

Conservative Group:	Councillors S Bull, R Fernando and J Kaye
Liberal Democrat Group:	Councillor J Dumont
Labour:	Councillor M Brady
Green:	Councillor J Frecknall

*(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member to the Committee Chairman or the Executive Member for Planning and Growth, who, in turn, will notify the Committee service at least 7 hours before commencement of the meeting.)*

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1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
  - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
  - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
  - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
  - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
  - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.
4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

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## AGENDA

### 1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

### 2. Chairman's Announcements

### 3. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' declarations of interest.

### 4. Planning Applications and Unauthorised Development for Consideration by the Committee (Pages 7 - 10)

(A) 3/19/2614/FUL - Mixed use re-development comprising partial demolition of existing buildings and replacement with 3,419 square metres of commercial floorspace (Use Classes A1-A4, D1), an 86-bed hotel (Use Class C1), 98 residential apartments (use class C3), alterations to an existing car park, new bus station facilities and associated works and improvements at Bircherley Green Shopping Centre, Bircherley Green, Hertford, SG14 1BN (Pages 11 - 210)

Recommended for approval subject to a legal agreement and conditions

### 5. Urgent Business

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

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## **East Herts Council Report**

### **Council/Executive/Committee**

Development Management Committee

#### **Date of Meeting:**

25 June 2020

**Report by:** Sara Saunders, Head of Planning and Building Control

**Report title:** Planning Applications and Unauthorised Development for Consideration by the Committee

**Ward(s) affected:** All

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#### **Summary**

- This report is to enable planning and related applications and unauthorised development matters to be considered and determined by the Committee, as appropriate, or as set out for each agenda item.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:**

**A recommendation is detailed separately for each application and determined by the Committee, as appropriate, or as set out for each agenda item.**

#### **1.0 Proposal(s)**

- 1.1 The proposals are set out in detail in the individual reports.

#### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The background in relation to each planning application and enforcement matter included in this agenda is set out in the individual reports.

### **3.0    Reason(s)**

3.1    No.

### **4.0    Options**

4.1    As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

### **5.0    Risks**

5.1    As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

### **6.0    Implications/Consultations**

6.1    As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

#### **Community Safety**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

#### **Data Protection**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

#### **Equalities**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

#### **Environmental Sustainability**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

**Financial**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

**Health and Safety**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

**Human Resources**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

**Human Rights**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

**Legal**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

**Specific Wards**

As detailed separately in relation to each matter if any are appropriate.

**7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material**

- 7.1 The papers which comprise each application/ unauthorised development file. In addition, the East of England Plan, Hertfordshire County Council's Minerals and Waste documents, the East Hertfordshire Local Plan and, where appropriate, the saved policies from the Hertfordshire County Structure Plan, comprise background papers where the provisions of the Development Plan are material planning issues.

7.2 Display of Plans

7.3 Plans for consideration at this meeting will be displayed outside the Council Chamber from 5.00 pm on the day of the meeting. An Officer will be present from 6.30 pm to advise on plans if required. A selection of plans will be displayed electronically at the meeting. Members are reminded that those displayed do not constitute the full range of plans submitted for each matter and they should ensure they inspect those displayed outside the room prior to the meeting.

7.4 All of the plans and associated documents on any of the planning applications included in the agenda can be viewed at:  
<http://online.eastherts.gov.uk/swiftlg/apas/run/wphappcriteria.display>

7.5 Members will need to input the planning lpa reference then click on that application reference. Members can then use the media items tab to view the associated documents, such as the plans and other documents relating to an application.

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## DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 25 JUNE 2020

<b>Application Number</b>	3/19/2614/FUL
<b>Proposal</b>	Mixed use re-development comprising partial demolition of existing buildings and replacement with 3,419 square metres of commercial floorspace (Use Classes A1-A4, D1), an 86-bed hotel (Use Class C1), 98 residential apartments (use class C3), alterations to an existing car park, new bus station facilities and associated works and improvements.
<b>Location</b>	Bircherley Green Shopping Centre, Bircherley Green, Hertford, SG14 1BN
<b>Parish</b>	Hertford Town Council
<b>Ward</b>	Hertford Castle

<b>Date of Registration of Application</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
<b>Target Determination Date</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> May 2020
<b>Reason for Committee Report</b>	Major Planning Application
<b>Case Officer</b>	Rachael Collard

### RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to a legal agreement/conditions/the reason(s) set out at the end of this report.

That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Building Control to finalise the detail of the Legal Agreement and conditions.

#### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The proposal is for a mixed use redevelopment of the 1970s Bircherley Green shopping centre in Hertford Town Centre. The shopping centre closed in 2018 following the determination of planning application 3/17/0392/FUL, approved in January 2018 for a mixed-use redevelopment scheme. Following the closure of the shopping centre, partial demolition of the site commenced with

archaeology investigations undertaken in the area where the hotel was to be constructed. It should be noted that there remain a number of pre-commencement conditions yet to be submitted in relation to the original consented scheme. Notwithstanding this, there is an extant permission on the site and this is a material consideration in the determination of this application.

- 1.2 The proposals raise a range of issues relevant to an important development located in the centre of Hertford. Given its location and a scheme having previously been approved, redevelopment of the site is acceptable in principle. The impact on the overall vitality of the town centre and the way the centre operates is an important consideration for Members.
- 1.3 The current development comprises retail space, parking, the bus station and public circulation areas including a river walkway. As with the approved scheme, the proposal introduces new uses to the site, these include residential development and a hotel use.
- 1.4 Unlike the previous permission where the site was to be delivered in phases, the applicant proposes that the hotel element is given over to a specialist contactor, whilst the remainder of the development is carried out by the applicant.
- 1.5 Members are required to consider an extensive range of issues that would always be material to town centre and Conservation Area developments:
  - Design quality;
  - Scale and height of the buildings;
  - Impact on the Conservation Area and listed buildings;
  - Amenity impacts for existing and new occupiers
  - Transport impacts, accessibility, parking;
  - Flooding risks and drainage;
  - All other relevant and material considerations

1.6 It should be noted that during the course of the application amendments to the scheme were made, the description of development has altered, removing uses (B1- offices and D2 – cinemas, concert halls, gym etc.) from the proposal and amended plans were submitted. As a result of these changes a full formal re-consultation has been undertaken.

## **2.0 Site Description**

2.1 The site is located within Hertford's Town centre in the primary shopping area immediately adjacent to the River Lea, which is in its canalised section forming the northern boundary of the site.

2.2 To the north of the application site beyond the river is the residential area of Folly Island, which is characterised by Victorian terraces. There are a number of listed buildings to the south and west within Bull Plain and Railway Street. Immediately to the east of the site is the refurbished and remodelled Sheltered Housing at Bircherley Court.

2.3 The Bircherley Green Centre is the town's main modern retail area. In its 1970's design there was a priority to meet the practical needs of a large food store as well as dedicated servicing arrangements for the centre. However, this resulted in a poor response to the riverside setting of the site.

2.4 There is an existing public multi-storey car park providing 188 parking spaces, accessed via Bircherley Street. The bus station immediately outside the shopping centre and car park provides 6 bays also accessed off Bircherley Street.

2.5 The site is located within the Hertford Conservation Area and the Area of Archaeological Significance covering the historic core of Hertford.

### **3.0 Background to Proposal**

- 3.1 This planning application was validated in February 2020 and follows a number of planning applications submitted for the site. Planning permission was first granted in January 2018 (ref: 3/17/0392/FUL) and remains extant. This permission was gained by the original developer Wrenbridge on behalf of the site owner Diageo Pension Trust Ltd.
- 3.2 The site owners sold the site in the latter part of 2019 citing that due to market conditions, the scheme had become unviable and they were unable to deliver the approved scheme. Chase New Homes purchased the site and seek to redevelop it for mixed use.
- 3.3 The current application was due to be presented to the Hertfordshire Design Review Panel (DRP) in March 2020, however this was unable to take place due to the Covid-19 situation. Whilst it would have been beneficial for the proposals to have been considered by the panel, comprehensive comments have been provided by the Council's Urban Design and Conservation Officer.
- 3.4 The proposed development consists of three main blocks of development comprising of commercial units at ground floor level, 98 residential units on the upper floors (comprising 32 x 1 bed units and 66 x 2 bed units) and the hotel building.
- 3.5 On approach from the existing pedestrian entrance to the retail mall on Bircherley Green from Railway Street, the pedestrian walkway will continue, in the same northward direction, through to the riverside edge. To the left (west) of the pedestrian route would be a new building, referred to in this report as Block A. Block A would contain commercial units at ground floor level and 54 flats on the upper floors. Opposite this block (east of the pedestrian route) would be Block B, containing commercial units at ground floor level and 44 flats on the upper floors. The proposal would also include the refurbishment of the existing car park with a new façade fronting onto Bircherley Green and the river walk. The hotel building located on the corner of Bircherley Street and Railway Street would accommodate an 86 bed hotel on

the upper floors and a restaurant at ground floor level. Two small existing units on Railway Street, which are currently occupied by Boots and Rose Café would be retained with two additional commercial units one of which is proposed at first floor level.

## Planning History

3.6 The following planning history is relevant:

Application Number	Proposal	Decision	Date
3/19/1308/VAR	Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) of planning permission: 3/17/0392/FUL - Mixed-use redevelopment, including partial demolition of existing buildings, to provide up to 4,694 sqm retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5), an 86-bed hotel (Use Class C1), 70 residential flats (Use Class C3), Refurbishment of existing car park to provide 143 pay and display, 40 residential, 5 car club (total of 188) parking spaces, enhancement of bus station facilities, new public realm and landscaping to riverside, and associated works and improvements - Alterations to the hotel building.	Withdrawn	12 <sup>th</sup> September 2019
3/19/0129/NMA	A non-material amendment to LPA's ref: 3/17/0392/FUL - (Mixed-use redevelopment, including partial demolition of existing buildings, to	Refused	7 <sup>th</sup> March 2019

	<p>provide up to 4,694 sqm retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5), an 86-bed hotel (Use Class C1), 70 residential flats (Use Class C3), Refurbishment of existing car park to provide 143 pay and display, 40 residential, 5 car club (total of 188) parking spaces, enhancement of bus station facilities, new public realm and landscaping to riverside, and associated works and improvements): Minor design alterations to the Phase 1 hotel building including internal layout and revisions to external elevations.</p>		
3/19/0130/NMA	<p>A non-material amendment to LPA's ref: 3/17/0392/FUL - (Mixed-use redevelopment, including partial demolition of existing buildings, to provide up to 4,694 sqm retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5), an 86-bed hotel (Use Class C1), 70 residential flats (Use Class C3), Refurbishment of existing car park to provide 143 pay and display, 40 residential, 5 car club (total of 188) parking spaces, enhancement of bus station facilities, new public realm and landscaping to riverside, and associated</p>	Refused	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2019

	works and improvements): Condition 3: Amendment to the wording to remove reference to "Flemish Bond" to allow for the use of stretcher bond.		
3/18/2317/NMA	A non-material minor amendment to 3/17/0392/FUL - Alterations to the phase 1 hotel building, including internal layout changes and revisions to external elevations.	Refused	16 <sup>th</sup> November 2018
3/18/2210/FUL	Mixed-use redevelopment, including partial demolition of existing buildings, to provide up to 4,602.5 sqm retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5), an 86-bed hotel (Use Class C1), 56 residential flats (Use Class C3), 1,471 sqm office floorspace (Use Class B1a), alterations and refurbishment to an existing car park to provide 143 pay and display, 14 office, 26 residential and 5 car club (total of 188) parking spaces, enhancement of bus station facilities, new public realm and landscaping to riverside, and associated works and improvements - Amendment to Planning Permission Ref 3/17/0392/FUL approved on 5th January 2018 (Revisions to Building B).	Withdrawn	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2019

3/17/0392/FUL	Mixed-use redevelopment, including partial demolition of existing buildings, to provide up to 4,694 sqm retail floorspace (Use Classes A1 to A5), an 86-bed hotel (Use Class C1), 70 residential flats (Use Class C3), Refurbishment of existing car park to provide 143 pay and display, 40 residential, 5 car club (total of 188) parking spaces, enhancement of bus station facilities, new public realm and landscaping to riverside, and associated works and improvements.	Granted with Conditions And S106 Agreement	5th January 2018
3/79/0377/FP	Shopping facilities, multi-storey car park, bus station, public house, restaurant and public toilets	Granted with conditions	26th July 1979

#### 4.0 Main Policy Issues

4.1 These relate to the relevant policies in the East Herts District Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework 2018 (NPPF). There is no Neighbourhood Plan in place, or emerging, in relation to this site.

Key Issue	District Plan	NPPF
Principle of a mixed use re-development within the Town Centre	DPS1, DPS2, DPS3, HERT1, HERT7, RTC1, RTC2, RTC3, DEL1, DEL2, CC1, CC2 Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy 2016 (HUDS)	Chapter 2 Chapter 7

Delivery of Housing	HOU1, HOU2, HOU3, HOU7	Chapter 5
Vitality of Town Centre	RTC1, RTC2, RTC3, HERT7	Chapter 7
Design Quality and Impact on the Conservation Area/Listed Buildings	DES2, DES3, DES4, DES5, HA1, HA2, HA3, HA4, HA7, EQ1, NE3	Chapter 12 Chapter 16
Impacts on neighbour amenity and occupiers	DES3, DES4, EQ2, EQ3, EQ4	Chapter 12
Highway, parking and transport impacts	TRA1, TRA2, TRA3	Chapter 9
Flood risk and drainage, Climate Change	WAT1, WAT3, WAT4, WAT5, CC1, CC2	Chapter 14
Viability and delivery of Infrastructure	DEL1, DEL2	

Other relevant issues are referred to in the 'Consideration of Relevant Issues' section below.

## 5.0 Summary of Consultee Responses

- 5.1 Consultees as set out below have provided feedback received in relation to the proposals as follows.
- 5.2 HCC Highway Authority – No objections subject to conditions.
- 5.3 HCC Planning Obligations – No objections subject to financial contributions towards primary and secondary education and the youth service.
- 5.4 Lead Local Flood Authority – No objection subject to conditions.

- 5.5 EHDC Housing – No comments.
- 5.6 EHDC Waste Services – No objections.
- 5.7 HCC Minerals and Waste – Encourages re-use of unavoidable waste where possible and the use of recycled materials where appropriate to the construction. Encourages opportunistic extraction of minerals for use on site prior to non-mineral development.
- 5.8 Hertfordshire Constabulary – The Police Crime Prevention Design Service support this application.
- 5.9 HCC Historic Environment – No objection subject to conditions.
- 5.10 Environment Agency - Object to the application as there is an inadequate buffer zone to the watercourse. The proposals show that all new development is to be set back by 8 metres from the top of the bank of the River Lee. However, we require that the 8 metre buffer be provided between the development and the top of the bank is naturally managed to provide a green corridor for wildlife. There is a small section of soft landscape edging proposed, but this should be extended all the way along the top of the bank and be at least 8 metres wide. There should be no hardstanding or artificial lighting causing light spill within this buffer.
- 5.11 Thames Water – Comment that the development is within 15m of underground waste water assets and an informative is requested. With regard to surface water drainage. They advise that the developer follows the sequential approach to the disposal of water. No objections are raised in regard to foul water.
- 5.12 HCC Public Health – Comment that the development is in good location for residents to access local services, amenities and public transport. It has potential to provide a number of positive of health impacts. Some concerns are raised about potential

negative health impacts of exposure to noise for the existing and new community and the lack of affordable housing.

- 5.13 HCC Obligations – No objections subject to contributions towards education, library and youth provision.
- 5.14 Canal and River Trust – Object to the application due to concerns of the design of the scheme and the waterside landscaping designed around the needs of servicing vehicles. It would also be difficult to introduce moorings.
- 5.15 Affinity Water – No objections subject to conditions.
- 5.16 Cadent Gas – Identify apparatus in the vicinity of your proposed works.
- 5.17 Historic England – Do not wish to offer any comments.
- 5.18 UK Power Network – Comment that all works are notifiable under the Party Wall etc. Act 1996. The applicant should provide details of the proposed works and liaise with the Company to ensure the appropriate protective measures and mitigation solutions are agreed in accordance with the Act.
- 5.19 East and North Herts CCG – No objections subject to contributions towards GP Provision, Mental Health. Community Healthcare and Acute Costs.
- 5.20 Hertfordshire Ecology – No objections to the application.
- 5.21 EHDC Environmental Health –No objections subject to conditions.
- 5.22 EHDC Landscape Officer – No objections subject to conditions.
- 5.23 EHDC Conservation – No objection subject to conditions

5.24 Hertford Civic Society – comment that the proposal falls short of what is needed to regenerate the heart of Hertford. However, the Society recognise that one developer has already walked away because they could not be confident of an acceptable return, therefore the scope for the Council to negotiate significant changes is very limited.

5.25 Bengeo Steering Group – Welcome the proposal to regenerate this part of Hertford, if redevelopment is carried out in a sustainable and sympathetic way and viable businesses and community facilities are successfully integrated. The Group welcome the provision of cycle parking, car club provision and the proposed provision of GP/medical services. The redevelopment of Bircherley Green should increase footfall into the town centre.

## **6.0 Town Council Representations**

6.1 Hertford Town Council – comment that there are still concerns about the height of the residential blocks, which are above the height of the existing car park and the creation of a tunnelling aspect of the view to the riverfront. There were additional concerns that this would create a wind tunnel effect. In addition the following comments are made:

- There were concerns that there is insufficient parking capacity and that the 40 spaces allocated for 98 residential properties will lead to cars being parked on surrounding roads;
- The Town Council wish to be assured that there will be a condition within each property lease not to own a car without an allocated space and that this would be enforced. This condition would also need to be extended to tenants that rent an apartment;
- There is insufficient future proofing for the likely rapid growth in electric vehicles;
- The provision of an NHS Health Centre is welcomed;
- There is a missed opportunity to develop the bus station into a modern transport hub. The Council would like to see

Hertfordshire County Council take the lead and bring together interested parties including the developer and bus companies to develop a strategic plan for improvements to the bus station;

- The access corridor from the shops to the bus station is improved in these updated proposals. However, but the request for the provision of CCTV along this route for the safety of users is repeated;
- The increased number of solar panels and use of electric heating rather than fossil fuels to ensure sustainability of the development is welcomed;
- There are still some concerns over the access route for service and delivery vehicles. Time constraints should be put in place to avoid using pedestrian areas in peak periods. It is suggested that during opening hours goods could be wheeled in from the service area behind the bus station;
- The lack of social housing on this development is regrettable;
- The planned hotel is welcomed to bring people into the centre of the town;
- Clarification over the extent of the public space along the riverfront is requested.

## 7.0 Summary of Other Representations

7.1 The application has been advertised by neighbour consultation to local residents and businesses and by site notices and a press notice. 82 responses have been received with a mixture of comments objecting and supporting the proposal, these are summarised as follows:

- The scheme in general is supported as there is no doubt this part of Hertford needs regeneration.
- Strongly object to the proposed commercial usage applied for, specifically D2;
- Has consideration been given for the inclusion of a living wall. This beneficial environmentally and for the wellbeing of humans and wildlife alike, I think it would provide an

additional attraction and draw people to the tow to see the wall if done correctly;

- There are only 40 parking spaces dedicated to residents, it is essential that the applicant is not proposing to offer residents a discounted P and D service which would come out of the 100 P and D to the detriment of traders on this site and across the town;
- Concerned regarding the safety where large vehicles are moving through the shopping centre area especially as residents. In the pedestrian area before Railway Street the streetlights are quite central;
- The proposed scheme is poor and would be detrimental to Hertford as a whole;
- The proposal does not respond or recognise current and future trends. Town centres need different drivers with combination of leisure, F and B and community offers to engage with the public and create an exciting urban environment;
- All servicing of units will be done through the frontage into the public realm? No back of house areas have been provided;
- Little thought has been given to access to and from the bus station. Approach from the bus stops is visually narrow (3m wide tunnel) has no activation (flanked by medical centre, resident's bike store and music studio);
- Access from pedestrianised walkway is uninviting. This is one of the main access routes to the town centre with high footfall, it should be alive and active;
- Set back shopfronts with overhands will be permanently shaded, reduces visibility and creates an additional barrier. Little thought has been given to signage zones or wayfinding;
- The 'mock warehouse' design lacks authenticity. Elevation design is diluted without the architectural detailing quality. Designs are bulky blocks with little thought given to architectural quality and proportions. Little detail to show how proposal will sit within the town. Elevations do not show adjacent buildings and their visual relationship;

- The hotel is in prominent corner when people are approaching the town centre by bus or train. It is disappointing to see such poor architectural design. The tower detailing and materiality appear dated with awkward proportions. There is little indication of its relationship to adjacent buildings;
- The provision of just 5 charging points for electric cars seems wholly inadequate given that fossil fuelled cars is to be banned in the next 15 years;
- Parking provision is limited.
- The proposed buildings are at least one storey too high and will dwarf the surrounding older buildings. This sets a precedent for the next development to be one storey higher again as has already been seen elsewhere in the town with subsequent developments;
- There are too many corridor type walkways, the main one will be quite oppressive to walk down between the high buildings, especially at night. There appear to be lots of recesses, covered canopies near the shops which may encourage anti-social behaviour and do not conform to 'Secure by Design' ;
- There are not enough shops. We do not need things like low footfall 'recording studios' in the town centre. We need shops to encourage people to come;
- There are not enough trees. Planters are pointless as the one recently put in the town centre shows. They need a lot of maintenance and watering and become rubbish receptacles;
- The car park entry height has to be at least 200cm, as it is all over Europe. Car manufacturers design people carriers for this reason;
- There does not seem to be adequate parking for residents, hotel guests, shoppers, shop workers, hotel staff etc. Hertford needs all the help it can get to re-energise the failing town centre. No more traffic jams and a disincentive for shoppers to visit the town;
- Buildings A and B when completed will be significantly higher than all buildings nearby. The site as planned will dominate

the town centre skyline, buildings will dominate that section of the River Lea;

- The design appears to be dated and it has been a lost opportunity to a more innovative design;
- The design is lacking in sympathy for its surroundings;
- No provision is made for separate service roads, meaning that all supplies to shops and businesses in the centre will be lorries driven down the pedestrianised central avenue;
- No soft planting is proposed;
- Developers want to build to maximise profit. The proposal adds another 100 flats and not a single house;
- Too many flats;
- The development does nothing to preserve or enhance the area. Five storey flat roofed residential blocks are not sympathetic to the surrounding buildings. The blocks will be overbearing and will be clearly visible from many points around the town including Mill Bridge and Fore Street;
- No affordable dwellings are proposed;
- There is a loss of privacy due to riverfront balconies large enough for seating on elevated levels enabling direct views towards bedrooms of residents on Riverside;
- The proposed height of buildings along the riverfront will cause significant overshadowing and loss of light not only to the properties on the opposite bank but also the river itself especially during winter months;
- Trains get more and more crowded as developments have sprung up, there has been no consideration of this impact on the town. Housing development in the town centre is not needed;
- Concerns over number of female toilet facilities;
- Essential that all materials are of a high standard;
- The revisions have been minimal and not do anything to enhance or improve this scheme;
- Lea Wharf, shows very little thought or research into the local area. 'Ghost Write' signs is an attempt to create history;
- More toilet facilities should be provided;
- Improvements to the façade of the planned hotel;

- Would like to see improvements to the provision of storage for visitors bicycles;
- No meaningful improvement to the open space or riverside set back.

## **8.0 Consideration of Relevant Issues**

### Principle of Development

8.1 New development for key town centre uses, including retail, residential, hotel and other employment uses are encouraged within Hertford, in accordance with policies DPS2, RTC1, HERT1 and HERT7 of the East Herts District Plan 2018. These policies seek to concentrate development within built up areas and to strengthen town centres to ensure they retain a vital role in supporting the community. The NPPF seeks to ensure the vitality of town centres; setting out that planning policy should be positive and promote competitive town centre environments.

8.2 The Council commissioned and developed, in partnership with Hertford Town Council and Herts County Council, the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy (HUDS) which focuses on issues of movement, public realm and key sites within the town centre. This document was approved in 2016 for Development Management purposes and provides a framework for the development of this site. Policy HERT7 is relevant and states '*development proposals in Hertford Town Centre will be expected to take account of, and positively contribute to, proposals contained within the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy, as appropriate*'. The degree, to which the current proposals accord with this approach, is therefore a key planning consideration of the application.

8.3 Members will be aware that Policy DES1 'masterplanning' would usually apply in respect of this application due to its size and nature. However, the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy 2016, sets out a framework which fulfils this role.

Therefore it is not considered reasonable or necessary for a further masterplan framework to be produced.

- 8.4 The site lies within Hertford Town Centre and the Hertford Conservation Area. The principle of a mixed use scheme for town centre uses and residential uses accords with the District Plan policies. The principle of the mixed use re-development of the site is therefore strongly supported in planning terms and is to be attributed significant positive weight in the determination of the application.
- 8.5 It is acknowledged that the retail market has changed significantly since the HUDS work was originally undertaken and therefore following the withdrawal of Wrenbridge from Bircherley Green, the Council commissioned Aspinal Verdi 'Bircherley Green Property Market Report, October 2019' and The Retail Group 'Hertford Town Centre Retail Health Check, October 2019' to undertake a review of Hertford Town Centre and provide an updated assessment. This work is examined in more detail later in this report.

#### Delivery of Housing

- 8.6 The proposal will provide 98 residential dwellings, an increase from the 70 previously granted under the planning permission ref: 3/17/0392/FUL. The site is located in the town centre with access to many services and sustainable modes of transport. The residential provision helps to meet the identified housing need within the district and attracts positive weight in the consideration of this application.
- 8.7 Policy HOU3 sets out the Council's Affordable Housing policy and seeks the provision of up to 40% of residential units as affordable. Where a lower provision is proposed a financial viability assessment is required to demonstrate and justify this position. A viability report accompanies the application to justify the applicant's position in relation to affordable housing. The

applicant has confirmed that no affordable housing is proposed. The Council have engaged an independent viability consultant to scrutinise that submission.

8.8 The conclusion of the Council's assessment is that the scheme is not sufficiently viable to deliver an affordable housing contribution. The viability of the current proposal compared to the previously approved scheme, which was going to provide 10% affordable housing equating to 6 units, has been affected by increasing development costs and the downturn in the retail market in the intervening period, which has had a negative impact. Whilst it is disappointing that the proposal would not provide any affordable housing, due to the circumstances and based on the viability work undertaken it is considered to be in compliance with Policy HOU3. A more detailed discussion regarding viability is set out in the 'Viability' section of this report.

#### Impact on vitality and viability of the town centre

8.9 As with the previously approved scheme the proposed development will provide commercial floor space with a range of town centre uses; these uses include, A1 (Retail), A2 (Financial and professional services), A3 (sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises –restaurants, snack bars and cafes) A4 (public house, wine-bar or other drinking establishment), D1 (Health centres; Clinics; Schools; Day nurseries; Crèches; Day centres; Art galleries; Libraries; Museums; Law courts; Village halls; Church halls; Places of worship) and a recording studio totalling a floor space of 3,419m<sup>2</sup> which is a reduction of 1,275m<sup>2</sup> from the floor space originally granted in 2018.

8.10 As per the previous permission, an 86 bed hotel and ground floor restaurant is proposed on the corner of Railway Street and Bircherley Street, of which the land has already been cleared.

8.11 Advice which informed the original Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy (HUDS) concluded that the development must contribute to the overall objectives by:

- Delivering more recognisable multiple operators;
- The delivery of a cluster of larger modern units, between 1000 and 4000 sqft which would be able to attract retailers to the town who may otherwise be here but have been unable to find the right kinds of letting space;
- More recognisable and effective anchors were also identified, along with more external retail and food and beverage activity.

8.12 In combination this would provide a complementary provision to the other types of retailing and leisure uses already within the town centre, likely bringing more people into the town centre and enhancing its vitality. However, since the HUDS work was formally adopted in 2016, and the intervening period, the retail sector has changed considerably.

8.13 Therefore following the withdrawal of the previous developer from the site, the Council commissioned two additional studies from consultants who had previously been part of the team that carried out the HUDS work. These comprised the Aspinal Verdi 'Bircherley Green Property Market Report, October 2019' and The Retail Group 'Hertford Town Centre Retail Health Check, October 2019' which were commissioned in order to provide an updated position on the Hertford retail sector. The findings of these reports were reported to Executive on 21 January 2020. Subsequent to that, further advice was sought from The Retail Group specifically in respect of the current application, in particular seeking to consider appropriateness of the proposals and how it could potentially help Hertford Town Centre achieve its aims and objectives as a retail centre and improve its destination appeal going forward. In respect of general emerging consumer and retail trends across both Retail Group reports, these cite that consumers demand is ever increasing towards the 'convenience'

market where physical shopping occurs in town centres. Customers are increasingly choosing to visit a location, for wider activities rather than just the traditional shopping only experience of solely retailer brands and the size of stores they trade from. Opportunities to combine leisure, eating and drinking add to the appeal of destinations and therefore increase the viability and vitality potential of those town centres. The right type of catering, food and beverage, and associated leisure offers is therefore seen as being key to healthy town centres. A key outcome of the retail advice therefore is the need to be flexible and adaptable, with town centre developments in 2020 becoming more mixed use in terms of components that are driven by non-retail elements, which drive the vitality such as residential, leisure or offices.

- 8.14 On the basis of the recent retail advice and acknowledging that the retail landscape has and is changing, flexibility is important in ensuring a town centre that is vibrant and adaptable moving forward.
- 8.15 The proposal seeks to provide a number of units at ground floor that range in size. The advice suggests that the sizes of the units have the potential to be attractive to end users, with the suggestion that convenience goods stores or a pharmacy (or both) could provide mini-anchors and footfall generators. In addition it is advised that the river fronting units should be for a selection of food and beverage operators taking advantage of the setting to improve the overall aspiration and experience of the town centre. Whilst the proposal does not provide any certainty in terms of the operators choosing to be located at the site, it is considered that overall the size and type of units would be attractive and it may be the case that should operators be interested, units could be made larger or smaller if necessary, although this is dependent on those changes, which may require further applications. Due to the uses proposed and shown on the ground floor layout plan, the potential for these units to be occupied by a number of uses has the prospect to broaden its appeal and are considered to be

suitable town centre uses in compliance with Policy RTC1 and RTC3 (primary shopping frontages).

- 8.16 The only exception to the above and as with the previous scheme are the units along the riverside (north sides of blocks A and B) as these should be for a selection of food and beverage operators to exploit the riverside location and to enhance its attractiveness as a destination in its own right, as well as improving the overall town centre experience, which is an aim contained within the original HUDS report and confirmed by recent work undertaken on behalf of the Council by The Retail Group. As such the floorplans show these units limited to an A3/A4 uses, a condition would also be imposed to this effect. In addition, the ground floor plan has identified bus station waiting room facilities and the applicant has confirmed via email that the toilet facilities will be refurbished. A condition is considered to be reasonable requiring details of the waiting room facilities and its opening times. In addition a condition is recommended requiring details of the toilets and their maintenance and management to be agreed.
- 8.17 A large unit of approximately 940m<sup>2</sup> is highlighted to be used for general medical services; the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy discusses the potential for a purpose built health care facility to be provided at the site. At the time of writing this report; there are ongoing negotiations between the applicant and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and therefore, in order to allow flexibility should these proposals not come to fruition, the unit could be used for other uses that fall within the use classes identified on the layout plan. Notwithstanding this a clause within the Section 106 is considered reasonable to require the developer to continue to engage have with the CCG.
- 8.18 It is considered that, in combination, the proposed mix of uses consisting of residential, commercial and a hotel use would not jeopardise the vitality of the town centre with the changing nature of town centres being driven by non-retail uses and would allow flexibility to enable the scheme to adapt to changing commercial

circumstances going forward. Overall, the proposal is considered to add to the vitality and viability to which substantial positive weight can be assigned in the determination of the application.

### Design quality and visual appearance

8.19 Policies DES3 and DES4 seek design quality that respects the constraints of a site and integrates landscaping into the design. In addition Policy HERT7 expects development proposals to take account of and positively contribute to proposals contained within the Hertford Town Centre Urban Strategy (HUDS).

8.20 The HUDS work sets out a framework of urban design principles for the redevelopment of Bircherley Green but was not prescriptive of architectural form. This in part reflects the policy approach of the NPPF, which emphasises that good design '*is a key aspect of sustainable development creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.*'

8.21 The treatment of spaces around and between buildings is as important as the architecture itself. The existing Bircherley Green site provides a pleasant internal street and a central courtyard space, but its relationship with the river is very poor, turning its back on the river and leaving this as a blank façade and a service road. The bus station environment and the east façade of the multi storey car park is also of poor design and visually unattractive. The existing roof skyline in longer views around the town is highlighted by the utilitarian feature of the lift overrun, the highest part of the complex.

8.22 The proposed layout is similar to that presented under the previously approved scheme, with the retention of the existing car park and three blocks proposed. The proposal creates a frontage with the riverside and frontages along the central pedestrian walkway to strengthen the visual link between Railway Street and the river Lea. In addition, the bus station and the pedestrian link

from the bus station into the central area within the site are to be retained. The layout also maintains the link between Railway Street and the River Lea, which improves the physical and visual link between the bus station, the centre of the site and Bull Plain; and provides for attractive pedestrian routes through the development. These aspects of the scheme are considered to conform to the design principals within the Urban Design Strategy.

- 8.23 Members will note that when Bircherley Green was in operation, various pedestrian accesses through the site could be used. However, at night when the centre was closed those access points, with the exception of the access along the riverfront were not publically accessible due to the use of gates and roller shutters for security purposes. The applicant has not confirmed the position in respect of this matter but it is likely the area would remain open at night given the proposed uses on the site and the need for residents to get from the car park to the apartments
- 8.24 A number of objections have been received in relation to the application, citing concerns over the general design approach sought along with the overall scale of the development. However, in accordance with the urban design principles set out within the HUDS document, the site could accommodate buildings that are up to five storeys in scale in relation to the development on the eastern side of the central walkway through the site and along the northern side of Block B. Additionally development should be 4 storeys along Railway Street, adjacent to the bus station and a maximum of 3-4 storeys on the other side of the central walkway and the northern frontage of Block A closest to Bull Plain. HUDS also states that any development adjacent to Lombard House should be limited to 2 storeys
- 8.25 The proposal differs to the consented scheme in terms of its design approach, the two blocks fronting the river appear as wharf style buildings to relate to the riverside with recessed balconies, stone detailing and canopies to provide covered

entrances in inclement weather. Blocks A and B are similar in design, however the upper floor windows in Block B have been reduced in size. Plans show that Blocks A and B are 5 storey's in scale, whilst the hotel building on the corner of Railway Street would be 4 storeys. Whilst Block B is considered to be consistent with the urban design principles set within the HUDS document, Block A would be larger in scale and is a breach in this regard.

- 8.26 Following amendments to the scheme, Building A has been moved back from the river edge providing additional useable public space. A bridge feature has been added and the flank elevation of Block A has additional detailing which includes the sack hoist and door detailing to add interest.
- 8.27 In comparison to the consented scheme the overall heights of these buildings have increased and this is particularly noticeable in relation to Building A. Whilst Building B would be no closer to the riverside edge than the previous scheme it would have a wider frontage facing the riverside. Whilst, Building A would be sited closer to the river frontage than the previous scheme, with a 3m deep single storey element projecting adjacent to Lombard House.
- 8.28 Overall, it is clear that the increased scale of development has resulted in buildings that are larger in size, particularly in terms of the relationship of Block A. However, on balance, the development is considered to broadly adhere to the HUDS work.
- 8.29 In relation to the hotel building, this is considered to be similar to the design of the hotel previously approved; a matching material palate to the remainder of the site would be seen and a condition will be imposed requiring details to be submitted. The building is four storeys in height and would be flat roofed, it is noted that the fourth floor on Railway Street is recessed and therefore the building from street level would not be read as a four storey building. The tower feature on the corner would be retained, although unlike the consented scheme which saw a large glazed

section, different fenestration and brick detailing would be seen. Following concerns over the visibility of the solar panels on this prominent corner building, these are to be lain flat so not to disrupt views on approach within the conservation area, elevation plans have been updated accordingly.

- 8.30 In accordance with policy HOU7, all new residential development should meet the Building Regulations Requirement M4(2) (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings), all residential units would meet this requirement. In addition a proportion of dwellings would be expected to meet Building Regulations Requirement M4(3) (Wheelchair users). As part of the amendments a single unit would be M4(3) compliant and is considered to be acceptable. In this instance it is reasonable for a clause to be included within a Section 106 agreement requiring the wheelchair accessible unit to be marketed for a period of time with the specific intention of attracting a purchaser who needs it for its requirement before being put on the open market.
- 8.31 Concerns have been raised regarding the security of the site and the provision of CCTV. In this respect, Policy DES5 requires developments to be designed to reduce the opportunity for crime encouraging the surveillance of streets, footpaths and communal areas. It is considered that the design/layout together with the mix of uses achieves this. The Crime Prevention Officer has been consulted on the application and does not wish to object. Furthermore, CCTV is a detailed matter that would not ordinarily be shown at this stage. However, a condition is considered to be reasonable requiring details to be submitted, and the applicant has agreed to this.
- 8.32 Signage, does not form part of the application or the planning permission should it be granted, as separate advert consent will be required. The signage proposed is to be 'ghost written' which would be painted directly onto the building and is considered that the signage proposed will aide in the creation of a memorable character for the development.

8.33 The use and quality of materials is important to provide definition and visual interest to the building and is considered to be an important part of the scheme. The range of materials being proposed are brickwork with a variety of brick providing definition and detail to the building. Stone detailing and girder effect details are also proposed. The bus station façade would be louvred cladding. A condition is recommended requiring samples of materials to be submitted.

8.34 Landscaping is an important part of any development as it can help to soften the built form and provide a pleasant public realm. Policy DES3 requires proposals to demonstrate how they will retain, protect and enhance existing landscape features, and also states that, where losses are unavoidable, compensatory planting or habitat creation will be sought. Firstly it is noted that the existing Horse Chestnut tree located adjacent to the site and Lombard House is to be retained and the proposals show the frontage with the River Lea to provide useable open space.

8.35 The riverside frontage is to be redefined with high quality hard landscape materials and existing kerbs removed to eradicate level changes as this is to be a shared space between pedestrians and servicing vehicles. Six replacement trees are proposed along the river frontage with some planting areas to soften this aspect of the development. The Landscape Officer raises no objections, but notes that subsoil conditions are difficult due to waterlogging. Careful consideration is required regarding the types of plants to be planted in this location in order to be successful, it is considered reasonable for a condition to be imposed requiring full landscaping details to be provided.

8.36 The proposal is considered to represent a design that, takes advantage of the characteristics of the site and area. The layout of buildings, scale and orientation of active facades and the increased permeability of the scheme enhances the riverside setting. Improvements to the bus station and the façade to the

existing public car park result in a more contemporary approach to design.

8.37 Overall, the layout, design and appearance of the development is considered to be in general conformity with the design principles and criteria of the approved HUDS strategy for the site. The development results in a modern retail centre that responds positively to the riverside, new public spaces are created and in general streets around the site will be retained alongside the bus station.

#### Heritage impact

8.38 The site is located within the Hertford Conservation Area and an Area of Archaeological Significance. Due to its location within the historic core of Hertford there are a number of listed buildings within close proximity to the site on Railway Street and Bull Plain. Folly Island is also a distinctive area in the Conservation Area on the opposite side of the river.

8.39 Policy HA4 requires new development to preserve or enhance the special interest, character and appearance of the area and Policy HA7 requires that the setting of a Listed Buildings be preserved. The NPPF requires identification and assessment of the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal including any contribution made by their setting.

8.40 When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

8.41 The impact upon the setting of listed buildings has been assessed, and the applicant has submitted a Heritage Impact Assessment. There are two Grade II group listings for No's 23-25 and 27 and 29,

which are at the crossroads with Market Street and the main entrance to the Bircherley Green site. A further two, Grade II group listings for numbers 28 and 30, and for 32,-36, which lie to the west opposite the proposed hotel development on Railway Street, and the entrance to Bircherley Street. Also on Railway Street is the Grade I listed Friends Meeting House, and the neighbouring Priory Rooms, which is Grade II listed, both of which lie to the east opposite the proposed hotel development on Railway Street, and the entrance to Bircherley Street.

- 8.42 On Bull Plan, and immediately adjacent to the site lie two listed Buildings, those being the Grade II\* Listed Beadle House and the Grade II listed Tooke House and Hertford Museum. The Grade II\* Lombard House lies at the top of Bull Plain, alongside its Grade II listed gateway. Lombard House is situated hard up against the canal and appears in various views along the canal.
- 8.43 The Conservation and Urban Design Officer was consulted on the original proposals and highlighted various concerns. Of those concerns relating to heritage matters, comments were made regarding the proximity of Building A to the river edge and the lack of public space which also exacerbated the impact of the development on the setting of the Grade II\* Listed Lombard House and the impact of the built form on the Hertford Museum garden.
- 8.44 As a result, amendments to the scheme have resulted in the pulling back of Building A from the river edge, which has provided more useable public riverside, which in turn reduces the impact of the scheme on Lombard House. A roof terrace has been created at the fourth floor of Block A to step the built form away from the museum garden creating a further degree of separation.
- 8.45 The Conservation and Urban Design Officer has been consulted on the amendments and raises no objections to the application subject to conditions, which include samples of materials to be submitted, as this is an important aspect to ensure that the

materials respect the Conservation Area. Further details relating to hard surfacing materials, balustrade detailing and the louvered screen to the car park are also required. Details of the decorative brickwork are also sought to ensure that a high quality finish is provided. These conditions are considered to be reasonable and necessary as the application lacks these more detailed matters.

- 8.46 Notwithstanding the above, whilst it is acknowledged that the scheme is five storeys in scale across the site with the exception of the hotel building, which is a considerable increase in scale from the existing situation. It is considered that the development would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II\* Listed Lombard House. The harm that is identified is due to the scale of Block A when seen in views of Lombard House, however this impact is limited to oblique views. In terms of the other listed buildings surrounding the site, these remain within their town centre setting but it is acknowledged that the scheme would result in less than substantial harm to the Hertford Conservation Area as a whole of which those building contribute to its character and appearance. This is due to the built form in relation to the surrounding built environment but this harm is considered to be highly localised and it is considered that the impact on the wider town centre would be limited.
- 8.47 Whilst less than substantial harm has been identified, the benefits to the Hertford Conservation Area should be weighed against the harm. The benefits include the visual and architectural improvements over the existing shopping centre and the improved riverside frontage with units fronting this prime location. In addition the provision of a vibrant, permeable and improved riverside public space with complementary town centre uses is positive. Therefore on balance these benefits are considered to be significant and outweigh the less than substantial harm that is identified.
- 8.48 As the site is located within an area of Archaeological Significance, Policy HA3 is relevant in the determination of the application. In

relation to archaeological interest, the application is accompanied by an Archaeological Assessment and Hertfordshire County Council's archaeologist has been notified of the application. Their comments note that the development site has '*considerable archaeological potential, specifically for remains of Saxon or medieval date but queries remained over whether such remains would have survived modern construction impacts on site.*'

- 8.49 A recent archaeological evaluation of where the hotel would be located, has been carried out in response to an archaeological condition placed on the original consent 3/17/0392/FUL, which has identified numerous archaeological features. This investigation revealed additional features of medieval date. Therefore it is considered that archaeological investigations should take place across the remainder of the site to be developed. This will comprise primarily the area of the proposed buildings A and B but also other areas where ground disturbance will occur.
- 8.50 The historic advisor has recommended a condition. However, as archaeological fieldwork has already been undertaken on the area proposed for the hotel, it is not necessary for this to be repeated, but as post excavation reporting has not been completed it is necessary for conditions to be imposed to cover all parts of the site.

#### Climate Change and Water Efficiency

- 8.51 It is expected that all new development demonstrates how the design, materials, construction and operation of the development will minimise overheating in summer and reduce the need for heating in the winter, while integrating green infrastructure as well as demonstrating how carbon dioxide emissions will be minimised across the development site.
- 8.52 Having regard to climate change adaptation and mitigation (Policies CC1 and CC2) and the building design requirements of

Policy DES4, all developments should demonstrate how carbon dioxide emissions will be minimised and how the design, materials, construction and operation of development will minimise heating and cooling requirements. The application is supported by a Sustainability Statement and Energy Strategy.

8.53 The statement sets out that the development will follow a fabric first approach which seeks to maximise performance of the materials that make up the building itself to achieve consistently high energy efficiency in order to achieve low CO<sub>2</sub> emission rates. The proposal will improve building fabric specification to exceed that of the notional building; low permeability targets, thermal bridging details and a selection of energy efficient services. The fabric first approach is in accordance with the Council's policy approach within policy CC2 and energy hierarchy. In addition, the development would have photovoltaic panels on the roof of all buildings with a total of 125kWp to be installed contributing to a 37.14% carbon reduction. The development proposes the installation of electric heating in the residential units based on the forthcoming SAP10 carbon factors. The electrically heated schemes will be more carbon efficient than gas heated schemes. Air source heat pumps are proposed for the commercial space.

8.54 It is noted that alternative renewable energy sources were considered such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP), solar water heating, Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHP), wind turbines and Biomass; however these were not feasible for the scale of development proposed.

8.55 Overall, the development will achieve a 10.83% improvement over Part L of the Building Regulations and therefore is in accordance with Policies CC1 and CC2.

8.56 In terms of water efficiency, policy WAT4 requires that residential developments achieve a target consumption rate of 110 litres per person per day. The applicant has confirmed that the development will specify environmentally efficient appliances,

brassware and dual flush toilet cisterns. As such it is predicted that a typical 2 bedroom apartment would have water usage of 108.4 litres per person per day, this is in compliance with the policy. It is considered reasonable to impose a condition requiring the development achieves at least the target consumption rate set out in policy.

### Neighbour impact

8.57 Policy DES4 requires that significant detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupiers is avoided, by ensuring their environments are not harmed by noise and disturbance, or by inadequate daylight, privacy and overlooking. Noise and light pollution are also relevant matters and the subject of Policies EQ2 and EQ3 respectively. Good relationship between new and existing development is one of the themes underlying the well-designed places guidance in the NPPF.

8.58 The 98 residential units on the upper floors of blocks A and B will be accessed via four stairwells, where the majority of the flats would be single aspect, although some units particularly those to the north would be dual aspect.

8.59 It is important to assess the impact the development will have in relation to neighbouring properties surrounding the site including those properties on Folly Island and within the site itself. A number of objections have been received raising concerns about the overall scale of the development resulting in loss of privacy, loss of light and overshadowing on nearby properties.

8.60 With regard to the residential units within the site, it is noted that the separation between blocks A and B changes throughout the development, at its narrowest point there is a separation distance of approximately 6.7m and therefore there are concerns regarding direct overlooking. It is noted that the side facing windows to units 16, 17, 41, 42, 53, 66, 67, 89 and 90 will be

obscure glazed as shown on plan and this is considered to be necessary.

8.61 In relation to those buildings located on Bull Plain, it is noted that these are predominantly commercial properties although a small collection of residential dwellings within Oddfellows Court can be seen. Block A would be closest to those properties. As no windows or gardens can be seen facing towards Bircherley Green, as properties within Oddfellows Court are centred around a courtyard, it is not considered the development would result in a detrimental impact to these properties. With regard to the commercial properties, concerns have been raised by occupiers and the impact the development would have on their outlook and light. It is noted that the single storey element would be located approximately 1.5m from the boundary and the upper floors would be set back between 9m-11m from the boundary with the exception of the closest part of Block A to the rear elevations of Oddfellows Court of approximately 2.5m. It is acknowledged that there would be a change in outlook and loss of light would occur to those windows, however it is not considered to justify a reason for refusal in this instance.

8.62 It is necessary to consider the impact the development will have on those properties opposite on Folly Island. Block A would face The Old Barge, whilst Block B would be closest to those Victorian properties facing the site. The distance maintained between the development and the frontage of these properties is a minimum of approximately 25m from the closest part. Much of the frontage adjacent to the Folly Island properties is similar in height due to the retention of the car park although the new façade would extend slightly above the height of this. Furthermore, the Daylight and Sunlight report indicates that any shadowing caused is generally within the accepted standards of the Building Research Establishment (BRE).

8.63 A number of concerns have been raised regarding loss of privacy as result of the development. Balconies are proposed, 16 units

across both blocks (northern elevation) would have access to a small balcony overlooking the river and Folly Island, a further 8 units would have balconies within Block A facing towards the rear elevations of properties on Bull Plain and residents of this Block would also have access to a roof garden. 8 further units within Block B would have balconies facing towards the service yard. It is also noted that this scheme presents more windows facing towards the river than the previous permission. With regard to privacy impacts, whilst views of the front elevations of the residential properties on Folly Island will be possible, it is considered that the proposed development is sufficiently separate from any existing residential uses and therefore would not be sufficient to justify a reason for refusal. This consideration is made against a back drop of the town centre location where it is accepted that property separation distances and residential amenity areas will be reduced when compared with more suburban and rural locations.

- 8.64 No concerns are raised regarding the impact of the hotel in relation to nearby buildings and the residential accommodation of Bircherley Court, this is due to the separation distances maintained. This element of the scheme is broadly the same as that granted under the previous planning permission.
- 8.65 The submitted noise assessment demonstrates that, subject to appropriate conditions, the proposed development could provide an acceptable noise environment for new residential units and hotel occupiers. In addition, it is considered that the development would not cause undue harm to other neighbouring properties from noise disturbance. The Council's Environmental Health Officer has commented on the application and does not raise any concerns subject to the conditions.
- 8.66 Overall, it is considered that a suitable residential environment can be created for new residential occupiers and maintained for the existing occupiers located close to the site.

### Highway, parking and transport impacts

8.67 Policy TRA1 relates to sustainable transport measures, it sets out that development proposals should primarily be located in places which enable sustainable journeys to be made, ensure that a range of sustainable options are available, and ensure that site layouts prioritise the provision of modes of transport other than the car. Policy TRA2 requires all development proposals to have safe and suitable access, be acceptable in highway safety terms, not result in severe residual cumulative impact and not have a significant detrimental impact on the character of the area. The NPPF sets out that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds where there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety or the residual cumulative impacts on the network would be severe.

8.68 The application is supported by an updated Transport Assessment (TA). The applicant proposes the development will utilise the existing car park access and egress points and proposes to downgrade the status of Bircherley Street and Bircherley Green to the north and south of the site to a shared surfaced area with access for servicing and deliveries.

8.69 In their submission the applicants have considered the traffic generation potential of the proposals. The Highway Authority has commented on the application and does not wish to raise any objections to the scheme subject to conditions. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit (RSA) will be required for the proposed development for all new junctions and amendments and this can be dealt with through a condition. The TA provides a review of 5 years of collisions (2014-2019) within the vicinity of the site and there are no clusters, evident or evidence to suggest the highway arrangements contributed to collisions, therefore the development is not expected to impact the safety of the highway.

8.70 Whilst it is noted that there is a marginal increase of 10 two-way vehicle movements over the AM peak period and a decrease of 6

two-way vehicle movements in the PM peak period, the Highway Authority is content that the development proposals do not represent a material change over and above the consented scheme. Therefore, it is not expected to result in a change in the performance of the network.

- 8.71 Details have been provided in relation to servicing and refuse arrangements. Plans show servicing vehicles entering the site from Railway Street, through the central area and the river front, exiting onto Railway Street although this could also happen in the reverse. The plans also show the existing servicing yard to the rear of the hotel will be retained and is considered to be used for the servicing of units fronting Railway Street and unit 9. Concerns have been raised regarding this; however this arrangement does not differ from the previously approved scheme. It is therefore considered necessary and reasonable to impose a condition limiting delivery times for the commercial units using this servicing route to avoid conflict with pedestrians.
- 8.72 Refuse vehicles will use the same route as the serving vehicles, bin stores are located across the site with doors opening out directly into the main thoroughfare or the service yard with designated bin stores for residential and commercial uses. The Waste Officer has confirmed that the plans submitted are acceptable and it has been agreed that some bins can be collected from the alleyway to Bull Plain.
- 8.73 As with the previous scheme there are no changes proposed to the existing taxi rank arrangements on Railway Street. It is anticipated that this will remain operational throughout construction.
- 8.74 With regard to car parking provision, Policy TRA3 is relevant. It is noted that a number of objections have been received raising concerns over the lack of parking available for the residential units and publically accessible spaces, citing that parking is an issue in Hertford and concerns that residents will choose to park

should they not have an allocated space, limiting spaces. An updated Parking Provision Statement has been submitted as part of the application. This identifies that the existing car park is to be retained and access will continue to be from Bircherley Street. The car park will retain a total of 188 car parking spaces. The Highway Authority raised concerns regarding the additional 3 disabled spaces shown adjacent to the exit of the car park and the riverfront, as these potentially conflict with the tracking plans of larger vehicles that would need to service the site. Updated details have been submitted and it is considered that one of those spaces should be removed in order to ensure there is no conflict. A condition will be imposed requiring an updated plan to be submitted showing the removal of a bay. The proposal seeks to allocate 40 of the total spaces for the residential units, plus 5 spaces for a car club, 143 'Pay and Display' spaces are provided for general use and will be operational 24 hours a day. The TA suggests that 15 spaces could be allocated to the NHS if appropriate. It is not clear if this is intended to be for patients or NHS workers. If this is brought forward it would reduce the number of publically accessible spaces to 128. At the time of writing the report it is not clear if there will be an agreed position between the NHS and the applicant. However, regardless of this position, a condition is considered to be reasonable to show the parking spaces that would be designated for the residential properties and car club. At the stage of submission of these details further consideration can be made to parking for the NHS.

8.75 As with the consented scheme, there is no allocated parking provision for the hotel and its associated restaurant; however guests and customers can make use of the multi storey car park, which will be priced accordingly throughout the day and night to ensure the car park continues as short stay but also can accommodate any overnight parking. The principle of this is acceptable and is in line with arrangements at other town centre hotels where hotel visitors arriving by car are expected to park in public car parks.

8.76 A summary of the Council's updated parking standards are detailed in the following table:

Use Type	Location: Zone 2			
	Standard	Maximum Allowable	With 50 to 75% reduction	Available Proposed parking provision
<b>C3 Residential</b>				
31 x 1 bed	1.5	48	12 - 24	
67 x 2 bed	2.00	132	33-66	
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>180</b>	<b>45- 90</b>	<b>40 + 5 car club spaces</b>
<b>C2 Hotel</b> 86 beds	1 space per bedroom, plus 1 space per manager, plus 2 spaces per 3 staff plus:  1 space per 5m <sup>2</sup> dining area, 1 space per 3m <sup>2</sup> bar area, 1 space per 5m <sup>2</sup> public area in conference facility, 1 space per 6m <sup>2</sup> of public area in	86  Plus potential of additional 40	21.5-43  10-20	0 allocated but up to 143 shared with commercial uses

	exhibition hall, plus a minimum of 1 coach parking space per 100 bedrooms.		
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8.77 The table presented above sets out the updated parking standards, which were agreed by the Council in 2015. The parking spaces proposed would fall below both the Council's adopted and agreed car parking standard maximum requirement. However, (Vehicle Parking and Provision Supplementary Planning Document 2007) allows for a reduction of up to 75% of the full requirement, due to the site's location within the town centre (accessibility zone 2) and this has been reflected in the table. Given the town centre location and immediate availability of other transport modes, notably the bus station and nearby Hertford East and Hertford North train stations, the level of reduction is considered acceptable.

8.78 Five car club spaces are proposed for use by all local residents of Hertford. These will provide an incentive to residents to meet their travel needs in a way which does not require them to purchase their own vehicle. Details of the mechanism to secure the car club, membership and management are to be secured via the recommended legal agreement.

8.79 With regards to electric vehicle charging points, it is expected that provision is made. In this instance the applicant has confirmed that 10 charging points would be possible, however it is unclear how these would be dispersed. A condition is therefore recommended requiring details of this to be submitted and approved.

8.80 The multi-storey car park itself will be refurbished and changes made to its external elevation with the introduction of louvres to provide a more attractive appearance to a utilitarian use. A condition is recommended requiring details and samples to be submitted and approved. The bus services themselves will continue to operate throughout the construction period. Improvements to the bus station attract additional positive weight.

8.81 As part of the proposal a total of approximately 112 secure cycle parking spaces are proposed in five locations across the development at ground floor level. These are shown on The Ground Floor Masterplan Layout (Drawing Number 19 0052-02 U). Cycle parking for residents would be located in these stores. In relation to cycle spaces available for members of the public, further information has been requested and an indicative plan has been submitted. The applicant considers that 78 spaces could be provided within racks positioned around the site. With overlooked cycle spaces adjacent to the wall with Lombard House and along the riverfront. Racks are shown within the service yard and the route from the service yard into the shopping area. There are concerns that some of the locations chosen for cycle parking could obstruct servicing arrangements. However, this is addressed by a condition requiring that further details of cycle parking spaces be provided and approved.

8.82 Policy TRA3 relates to vehicle parking provision. As stated above the existing Bircherley Green car park would be retained. The parking provision would be in accordance with the zonal approach. The 75% reduction in the total parking requirement, in accordance with the Council's updated Car Parking Guidance, is considered reasonable in this case due to the location of the site within the town centre of Hertford where sustainable transport modes such as buses and trains are accessible. It is considered that the parking provision is acceptable and that it accords with Policy TRA3.

### Drainage/Flood risk

8.83 Policy WAT1 relates to flooding and is considered to be relevant in the determination of this application, it is noted that the application site is predominantly located within Flood Risk Zone 1, although an area to the south-east of the site is within Flood Zone 2 (the hotel element).

8.84 A Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy has been submitted in support of the application. The updated drainage strategy is based upon permeable paving with tanked gravel sub-base storage and discharge via an existing outfall into the River Lea. Surface water calculations have been updated and ensure that the drainage strategy caters for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 plus 40% for climate change with 1.7 l/s discharge for the 1 in 1 year event and additional 4 l/s discharge for the 1 in 100 year event. The Lead Local Flood Authority have considered the drainage strategy plan and the Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy and raise no objections. The Authority recommend a number of conditions requiring further detailed surface water drainage information and a management and maintenance plan for the SuDS features and drainage on site.

8.85 The Environment Agency (EA) have commented on the application stating that '*all new built development is set back 8 metres from the top of the bank of the River Lee and that this 8 metre buffer is managed to provide a green corridor for wildlife.*' It is acknowledged that policy WAT3 requires development proposals to preserve or enhance the water environment and for an undeveloped buffer strip of at least 8 metres wide, should be maintained alongside all main rivers and an appropriate buffer strip should be maintained at ordinary watercourses, unless there is clear justification for not doing so.

8.86 The comments from the EA are based on the approach of the Agency to secure naturalisation as far as possible, of riverside environments through new developments, to secure flood risk mitigation and biodiversity objectives. Whilst those objectives are recognised, securing them in this location would not enable the active food and drink uses that are proposed, which also forms part of the urban design strategy for the site. This is due in part to the retention of the car park and the servicing requirements of the development. Furthermore it should be noted that the previous application did not provide an undeveloped buffer as requested by the EA for the same reasons. Furthermore, the existing shopping centre utilises the area along the riverfront to access the service yard. Therefore there is a clear justification in this instance for not achieving this policy requirement, although it should be noted that the buildings would be set back from the river edge in excess of 8 metres.

#### Contamination, Noise, Lighting and Odour

8.87 Policy EQ1 requires the remediation of land so that unacceptable risks from contamination and land instability are addressed through remediation. A Phase 1 Desktop study was submitted and the Environmental Health officer has recommended a condition is imposed as the report recommends intrusive sampling in respect of soil groundwater and gas monitoring.

8.88 Policy EQ2 requires consideration of noise and developments shall be designed and operated in a way that minimises the direct and cumulative impact of noise on the surrounding environment, in particular noise sensitive areas. The application is accompanied by a noise report. The Environmental Health Officer has been consulted on the application and considers that a range of conditions should be imposed to ensure that the amenity of residential occupiers is maintained. These conditions include limiting operating hours of the A3/A4 uses, sound attenuation works and details of fixed plant/or machinery.

8.89 With regards to odour, the development has the potential to accommodate a number of A3/A4 uses. It is considered, therefore, that mitigation measures are required to ensure that nuisance from odour is not an issue at the site and the Environmental Health Officer recommends a condition requiring that details of air extraction and odour control submitted and approved. This is considered to be necessary and reasonable to ensure neighbouring occupiers to ensure that any external flues are located in suitable locations.

8.90 Policy EQ3 requires external lighting to not have an unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring uses or the wider landscape, be the minimum required for security and operational purposes, minimise glare and spillage and minimise harm to amenity of residents and road users and prevent impact on local ecology. The previous planning permission was subject to a condition requiring details of lighting to be submitted and approved. It is considered appropriate to deal with lighting by condition in the same way.

### Ecology

8.91 Comments received from Hertfordshire Ecology state that the site supports no appreciable ecological value and therefore development will not result in measurable net loss of biodiversity and consider that the use of the biodiversity metric would not be appropriate in these circumstances.

8.92 As demolition is proposed, birds and bats that rely on the property to roost or shelter could be harmed. However, the evidence of the most recent Ecological Technical Note by Aspect Ecology (February 2020), shows that the likelihood of breeding birds and bats being adversely affected is low.

8.93 Notwithstanding this the development provides an opportunity to secure modest biodiversity gain. Features such as provision of boxes for urban bird and bat species could be incorporated within the structure of the buildings. New trees and landscaping can also be beneficial to biodiversity.

### Viability and delivery of Infrastructure

8.94 With regard to the provision of financial support for the delivery of services and infrastructure, as the application is for the provision of 98 residential units, the need for financial contributions is required under policy DEL2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

8.95 Hertfordshire County Council has confirmed that they will require contributions:

- Youth Service - £954 (to be indexed linked to PUBSEC175)
- Library Service - £10,978 (to be indexed linked to PUBSEC175)
- Primary Education - £56,832 (to be indexed linked to PUBSEC175)
- Secondary Education - £481,955 (based on costs of 1Q2019, BICS all in TPI indexation to be applied)

8.96 On considering the comments from the County Council, the contributions requested are considered to be necessary and reasonable based on pressures that the development will place on existing infrastructure. The obligations are therefore considered to meet the tests set out in Section 122 of The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations (CIL) 2010.

8.97 Hertfordshire County Council Highways have confirmed that they require a travel Plan and are seeking a contribution of a residential contribution of £45,000 and an additional £1,000 for additional non-residential two way trips on the highway network in the busiest peak hour. Based on the TA the development is

expected to result in 44 two way vehicular trips in the AM peak hour equating to £44,000.

8.98 The total sum should then be increased by circa 47,22% to take into account SPONS indexation (this figure can change on signing the agreement) since 2006 to give an estimated final Sustainable Transport contribution figure of **£131,025.8** (£42,025.8 plus £89,000 = £131,025.8). These sustainable infrastructure contributions are in order to promote travel by sustainable modes to the following identified schemes:

- Railway Street – Improve walking and cycling connectivity to Hertford East railway Station through walking and cycling provision on Railway Street
- Hertford – Improve the wayfinding for key locations in Hertford, particularly for walking, cycling and public transport routes.
- Town centre – Improve cycle parking provision at key locations in the centre to promote cycling uptake.

8.99 A Travel Plan for the commercial and residential elements was submitted as part of the consented scheme. In this instance the applicant has only submitted a Travel Plan relating to the residential aspect of the scheme. HCC's travel plan team consider that this is inadequate. HCC recognises the need to and therefore agrees for the submission of the residential travel plan and the individual travel plans for the hotel and use classes A1-A4, D1 to be secured under a Section 106 together with a contribution of £6,000 for monitoring. In addition a Construction Management Plan is required to reduce impacts arising during construction. Whilst it is considered reasonable for a condition to be imposed requiring a Travel Plan to be submitted, the applicant objects to the imposition and objects to the monitoring fee. These comments have been passed onto the Highway Authority to review and should there be a change in position, Members will be updated at the committee meeting.

8.100 With regard to the provision of a health facility, this is shown on the submitted plans. Policy HERT7 sets out that 'Development proposals in Hertford Town Centre will be expected to take account of, and positively contribute to, proposals contained within the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy (HUDS)'. The HUDS work clearly sets out a design strategy for key sites of which the Bircherley Green Shopping area is listed. Provision would be seen as a significant benefit of the proposal, relocating GP practices that are currently located in buildings which are not of a modern specification into new, purpose built space. The applicant has been in discussions with the relevant health service providers in the hope of progressing matters. However, these discussions are still ongoing. It is considered that a clause could be included within the Section 106 agreement to continue discussions, which is consistent with the approach taken on the consented scheme, although it should be noted that this clause could only be limited in how it can deal with these matters. Members are advised that if the health facility cannot be secured, this in itself would not justify refusal of the application.

8.101 The NHS have submitted comments on the application and have requested the following contributions:

- GMS GP Provision - £69,364.71

It is requested that the GMS monies are for general practice infrastructure within Hertford, ideally within the development. Discussions are ongoing regarding the provision of a GP surgery at the site.

8.102 The NHS CCG requested contributions relating to the provision of community and acute services:

- Community Healthcare - £17,838.00
- Mental Health - £19,771.00
- Acute Services - £217,017.00

8.103 There is a requirement for both Community and Mental Health Services to be located within this development. If the facility is made available then a reasonable rent free agreement would be expected. If the requirement is for health to develop the facility a capital payment would be required to subsidize the cost of the healthcare development. If this cannot be accommodated within the development, then an off-site contribution should be secured. In terms of the acute services figure, no project has been identified and therefore it would not meet the Section 106 or the CIL regulations and therefore could not be requested in this instance.

8.104 With regards to the contributions sought by East Herts District Council this has been assessed against the Open Space, Sport and Recreation SPD 2020. In this instance the Council would seek the following:

- Sports Hall - £40,797
- Swimming Pool - £41,719
- Fitness Gyms - £18,131
- Studio Space - £7,490
- Outdoor Tennis - £11,550
- Village and Community Centres - £49,383
- Children's Play and Provision for young people - £84,294
- Parks and Gardens and Amenity Green Space - £49,687
- Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space - £20,884
- Allotments - £10,647

8.105 A viability assessment accompanied the application and was based on 0% affordable housing and Section 106 costs of £277,866. The assessment produces a residual land value and when compared to the benchmark land value the scheme a deficit of over £4,480,000. The Council's viability consultant undertook further viability 'sensitivity' testing, with scheme adjustments resulting in an increased residual land value; however it too remained below the amended benchmark land value with the scheme remaining in deficit.

8.106 The viability consultant noted that when compared to the extant planning permission, development costs have significantly increased and the downturn of the retail market in the intervening period has had a negative impact. As such the conclusion was that the scheme is unable to deliver an affordable housing contribution.

8.107 Following amendments to the scheme, the applicant submitted an updated note to be read as an addendum to the viability assessment. This addendum summarises the changes and explains how this has further affected the viability of the scheme. These changes include:

- The reduction of 2 units from the scheme;
- The change of a 2 bed unit to a 1 bed M4(3) compliant unit.
- Elevational enhancements, brick detaining enhancements and the addition of a roof garden.

8.108 The applicant notes that as a result of these changes they have further reduced the profitability of the scheme and therefore the scheme is unable to afford any Section 106 contributions.

8.109 Following the advice of the Council's viability consultant on the original scheme, where it was determined the application was unviable, it is clear that these changes have further impacted the viability of the scheme. Therefore, whilst the above financial contributions have been sought, the scheme is unable to provide any on the ground of viability. On the basis of advice from the Council's viability consultant it is considered that the viability submissions are robust and therefore no contributions have been requested. Members are advised that in circumstance where the viability of a proposal is in question the failure to deliver infrastructure contributions would not of itself amount to justifiable reason for refusal of the application.

## **9.0 Conclusion**

- 9.1 A mixed use redevelopment of the Bircherley Green shopping centre in Hertford complies, in principle, with local and national planning policy and has been promoted by the work contained within the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy (HUDS) 2016. This includes a framework to guide the redevelopment of Bircherley Green.
- 9.2 It is considered that the scheme, largely complies with the principles of the HUDS. In the longer term, it is considered that the proposed development will bring significant benefits to the site and the town centre. This scheme offers the potential for the creation of modern, flexible retail accommodation that the town lacks; a new hotel attracting significant visitor numbers to the town; new residential accommodation to meet a housing need and enliven the area and enhancements to the amenity of the riverside area. A new public space is created and in general streets and spaces around the site will be fully retained and enhanced.
- 9.3 The impact of the proposals on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and nearby Listed Buildings are considered to result in less than substantial harm, however the benefits of the proposal which include the redevelopment of this vacant area of the town centre are considered to outweigh the harm identified.
- 9.4 The application makes a positive contribution towards residential provision, (98 units). The positive weight that can be assigned to this is moderated as the viability is not sufficient to support provision of affordable housing in line with the policy requirement of up to 40%, nor would it be possible to gain any financial contributions as part of a Section 106.

- 9.5 There is a reduction of 45 car parking spaces for public town centre parking. At the same time the car park is expected to accommodate retail floorspace as currently exists, with the introduction of other uses, namely the hotel element. It is concluded that there will be some strain on the parking facilities in the Bircherley Green car park and harm is attributed to this. However, this is considered to be offset by the sustainable location of the site and proximity to public transport facilities, provision of a car club, bus station facilities and the inclusion of cycle parking facilities.
- 9.6 In respect and on balance all other matters set out in this report and the impact of the proposals are considered to be acceptable
- 9.7 The overall planning balance is one of considering the identified benefits of the proposals, the introduction of residential use, improvement to the public realm, the enhancement of the Conservation area and other benefits against the harm. Whilst the viability situation gives rise to a non-policy compliant affordable housing offer and no Section 106 contributions. Overall, the balance is considered to be such that the benefits clearly outweigh the identified harm.
- 9.8 Members are advised that planning permission can be granted in this case, subject to the necessary safeguards provided by the matters to be covered by a legal agreement and conditions as set out below.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That planning permission be **GRANTED**, subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement and conditions set out at the end of this report. Authority be delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Control to amend, add or delete conditions and finalise the matters covered in the legal agreement.

## **Legal Agreement**

To include the following obligations:

- Arrangements for the provision and management of a car club for 5 parking spaces within the Bircherley Green car park;
- Permissive rights of way along the riverfront and Bircherley Green;
- Maintenance and Management details for the commercial and residential parts of the site;
- M4(3) Wheelchair User dwelling – To be marketed for its intended purpose for a period of time. Should this not be possible put on open market;
- NHS Clause;
- Payment in full of the Council's reasonable legal and other professional costs incurred preparing and completing the Legal Agreement.

## **Conditions**

1. The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of three years commencing on the date of this notice.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. Approved Plans

2. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans listed at the end of this Decision Notice.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans, drawings and specifications.

3. Prior to the commencement of above ground works for the hotel as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, and notwithstanding the submitted plans, full details, including samples, of the external materials of construction for the building hereby permitted shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved materials.

Reason: In the interests of appearance and securing a high quality development within the Hertford Conservation Area and in accordance with the provisions of the approved Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy 2016 and policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

4. Prior to the commencement of above ground works for Blocks A and B and the carpark as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, and notwithstanding the submitted plans, the following shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority:

- Samples of materials and a plan showing where those materials shall be used.
- The preparation of a sample board of all proposed facing materials (minimum 2 metres square) to be constructed on site for the Local Planning Authority to inspect. Thereafter it shall be retained on site until the completion of the development to which it relates.
- Details of the balcony balustrades which shall be obscure glazed.
- Details of the louvered screen to the car park.

The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved materials and details.

Reason: In the interests of appearance and securing a high quality development within the Hertford Conservation Area and in

accordance with the provisions of the approved Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy 2016 and policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

5. Prior to the commencement of above ground works and notwithstanding the approved plans, a detailed drawing shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, showing the decorative brickwork to be used on all proposed buildings. The development shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of appearance and securing a high quality development within the Hertford Conservation Area and in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

6. The development hereby permitted shall not begin until a scheme to deal with contamination of land/ground gas/controlled waters has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include all of the following measures:
  1. A Phase II intrusive investigation report detailing all investigative works and sampling on site, together with the results of the analysis, undertaken in accordance with BS 10175:2011 Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites – Code of Practice. The Report shall be based on the recommendations in “Bircherley Green Shopping Centre Phase One desktop Study” Report reference 2154-DS02 Rev B, Dated January 2017 by BJB Consulting. The report shall include a detailed quantitative human health and environmental risk assessment.
  2. A remediation scheme detailing how the remediation will be undertaken, what methods will be used and what is to be achieved. A clear end point of the remediation shall be stated,

and how this will be validated. Any ongoing monitoring shall also be determined.

3. If during the works contamination is encountered which has not previously been identified, then works shall cease and the additional contamination shall be fully monitored and assessed in an appropriate remediation scheme which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority.
4. A validation report detailing the proposed remediation works and quality assurance certificates to show that the works have been carried out in full accordance with the approved methodology shall be submitted prior to the development being brought into use. Details of any post-remedial sampling and analysis to demonstrate that the site has achieved the required clean-up criteria shall be included, together with the necessary documentation detailing what waste materials have been removed from the site.

Reason: To minimise and prevent pollution of the land and water environment in accordance with National Planning Policy Guidance set out in section 178 of the National Planning Policy Framework, and in order to protect human health and the environment in accordance with policy EQ1 of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

7. The development permitted by this planning permission shall be carried out in accordance with the principles of the approved Flood Risk and Drainage Strategy Report, produced by Walker Associates, Project Reference 7301, dated 6 May 2020.
  1. Limiting the surface water runoff generated by the critical storm events so that it will not exceed a surface water runoff rate of 1.7 l/s for the 1 in 1 year event and additional 4.0 l/s up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus 40% climate change event.

2. Providing storage in permeable paving with tanked gravel sub-base to ensure no increase in surface water runoff volumes for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year plus climate change event.
3. The surface water runoff from the site will discharge into the existing single direct outfall into the River Lea.

The drainage scheme shall be fully implemented prior to occupation and subsequently in accordance with the timing/phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To prevent and reduce the risk of flooding by ensuring the satisfactory disposal and storage of surface water from the site for future occupants in accordance with policy WAT1 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

8. No development shall take place until a detailed surface water drainage scheme for the site based on the principles as set out in Condition 7, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved details before the development is occupied. The scheme shall include:
  1. Confirmation of the condition survey and the invert level of the outfall pipe and its availability during the 1 in 30-year rainfall event.
  2. Final, detailed post-development calculations/modelling in relation to surface water for all rainfall events up to and including the 1 in 100 year return period including a +40% allowance for climate change.
  3. A detailed drainage plan including the location and provided volumes of all SuDS features, pipe runs, invert levels and discharge points and shall include details to prevent oil/water

interceptor which acts to prevent petrol/oil being discharged into the surface and groundwater network. This should include full details hotel and service yard areas. If areas are to be designated for informal flooding these should also be shown on a detailed site plan. A flat valve may need to be included at the outfall, subject to an outfall assessment.

4. Detailed assessment of existing public surface water sewer lines crossing the development site and its impact on the proposed new drainage scheme.
5. Full assessment of proposed SuDS treatment and management stages for all surface water runoff from the entire development site.
6. Exceedance flow paths for surface water for events greater than the 1 in 100 year including climate change allowance.
7. Detailed engineered drawings of the proposed SuDS features including cross section drawings, their size, volume, depth and any inlet and outlet features including any connecting pipe runs. This should include details regarding the connection to the existing outfall pipe.

Reason: To prevent the increased risk of flooding, both on and off site in accordance with policy WAT1 and WAT5 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

9. Upon completion of the drainage works, a maintenance and management plan for the SuDS features and drainage network shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include:
  1. Provision of complete set of as built drawings including the final drainage layout for site drainage network.
  2. Maintenance and operational activities for the lifetime of the development.
  3. Arrangements for adoption and any other measures to secure the operation of the scheme throughout its lifetime.

Reason: To ensure suitable maintenance of the features In accordance with policy WAT5 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

10. With the exception of the hotel and ancillary restaurant/bar, the A3 and A4 uses hereby granted planning permission shall cease trading and all visiting members of the public shall have departed the units by 23:30hrs on all days.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents in accordance with policy EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

11. Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, detailed plans showing the existing and proposed ground levels of the site relative to adjoining land, together with the slab levels and ridge heights of the proposed buildings, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and the development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: The details are required to be approved prior to the commencement of development to ensure that the development is properly related to the levels of adjoining development in the interests of neighbour amenity and good design in accordance with Policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

12. In connection with all site demolition, site preparation and construction works, no plant or machinery shall be operated on the premises before 07.30hrs Monday to Saturday, nor after 18.30hrs on weekdays and 13.00hrs on Saturdays, not at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of existing and future residents of nearby properties, in accordance with policy EQ2 of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

13. Before any of the A3/ A4 uses have been brought into use, a scheme of sound attenuation works shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once these details are agreed they shall be installed and retained in the approved form thereafter. The scheme of works shall be capable of restricting noise breakout from the A4 use to the flat above to levels complying with the following:

- Bedrooms. Noise Rating Curve NR20 (2300 to 0700 hrs)
- Living Rooms. Noise Rating Curve NR25 (0700 to 2300 hrs)

The Noise Rating Curve shall be measured as a 15 minute linear Leq at the octave band centre frequencies 31.5 Hz to 8 kHz.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents in accordance with policy EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

14. Prior to any hereby permitted use commencing, a scheme containing full details of arrangements for internal air extraction, odour control, and discharge to atmosphere from cooking operations, including any external ducting and flues, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The works detailed in the approved scheme shall be installed in their entirety before the use hereby permitted is commenced. The equipment shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and operated at all times when cooking is being carried out unless otherwise agreed beforehand in writing with the local planning authority.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for residents in accordance with policy EQ2 and EQ4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

15. Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted, a Delivery and Servicing Management Plan, as required in relation to the hotel, commercial units and residential

units, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Delivery and Servicing Plan shall include restrictions on commercial delivery times to between 07.00hrs and 10.00hrs on all days to the riverside and pedestrianised retail area, vehicle tracking and contain the delivery and servicing requirements (including refuse collection) for the proposed uses, a scheme for coordinating deliveries and servicing for the proposed development, areas within the development site that will be used for the loading and manoeuvring of delivery and service vehicles and access to/from the site for delivery and servicing vehicles such plans. Once agreed the development shall be constructed to enable the agreed arrangements to be implemented and shall subsequently be operated as agreed.

Reason: In the interests of amenity of the public shopping area and to reduce conflict with users and to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents, in accordance with policy EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

16. No fixed plant and/or machinery shall come into operation until details of the fixed plant and machinery serving the development hereby permitted and any mitigation measures to achieve this condition are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The rating level of the sound emitted from the site shall not exceed 42 dBA between 07.00hrs and 23.00hrs and 34 dBA at all other times (inclusive of any penalty for tonal, impulsive or other distinctive acoustic characteristics when measured or calculated according to the provisions of BS4142:2014). The sound levels shall be determined by measurement or calculations at the nearest noise sensitive premises in Oddfellows Court, Bull Plain and Folly Island.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for residents in accordance with policy EQ2 of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

17. If percussion piling is considered to be the most appropriate method of foundation construction, then prior to commencement of development a justification statement detailing why percussion piling is the most appropriate method of foundation construction, and proposed degree of control measures having considered the proximity of the site to noise sensitive premises shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All piling works shall be carried out in accordance with the agreed details.

Reason: In the interests of the amenities of residents of neighbouring properties and in accordance with policies EQ2 and EQ4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018

18. Prior to the commencement of the development, a detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, the plan shall include the following:
  - a) Construction vehicle numbers, type, routing;
  - b) Traffic management requirements;
  - c) The construction programme and phasing;
  - d) Construction and storage compounds (including areas designated for car parking);
  - e) Siting and details of wheel washing facilities;
  - f) Cleaning of site entrances, site tracks and the adjacent public highway;
  - g) Post construction restoration/reinstatement of the working areas and temporary access to the public highway;
  - h) Details of Hoarding;
  - i) Hours of operation, delivery and storage of materials;
  - j) Details of any highway works necessary to enable construction to take place;
  - k) Parking and loading arrangements;
  - l) Management of traffic to reduce congestion;
  - m) Details of consultation and complaint management with local businesses and neighbours;

- n) Waste management proposals;
- o) Mechanisms to deal with environmental impacts such as noise and vibration, air quality and dust, light and odour;
- p) Details of any proposed piling operations, including justification for the proposed piling strategy, a vibration impact assessment and proposed control and mitigation measures.

All works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved CEMP thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety and the control of environmental impacts in order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents in accordance with policies TRA2, EQ2 and EQ4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018

19. Notwithstanding the approved plans, no above ground development shall commence until a Delivery and Servicing Plan has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Delivery and Servicing Plan must contain the following:

- a) Details of a revised refuse tracking taking into account all existing and proposed street furniture and landscaping;
- b) Plans showing removal of one of the disabled spaces in Bircherley Street;
- c) Details of the parcel pick-up/drop-off hub in the hotel's service yard;
- d) Details of controlling access by delivery vans;
- e) Details of managing and enforcing a potential one-way circulation route;
- f) A scheme for coordinating deliveries and servicing for the proposed development;
- g) Areas within the development site that will be used for loading and manoeuvring of delivery and servicing vehicles (including food deliveries);

- h) Access to / from the site for delivery and servicing vehicles inclusive of any signage.

Reason: In the interests of maintaining highway efficiency and safety in accordance with policy TRA2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 20. Prior to the occupation/use of any part of the development hereby permitted, details of the siting, type and specification of EVCPs, the energy sources and the strategy/management plan for supply and maintenance of the 10 active EVCPs shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details should also include how the active spaces would be distributed to cater for residential and public use. All EVCPs shall be installed in accordance with the approved details prior to occupation of each of the units and permanently maintained and retained.

Reason: To ensure construction of a satisfactory development and to promote sustainable development in accordance with Policies 5, 19 and 20 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan and policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

- 21. Prior to the commencement of any above ground works of the development hereby permitted, a Stage 1 Road Safety Audit is required for all access arrangements and any proposed mitigation measures required as a result of the Audit, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed access arrangements are safe and suitable for their intended use in accordance with policy TRA2 of the East Herts District Council 2018.

- 22. Prior to the first occupation of any part of the development hereby permitted a scheme for the parking of cycles including details of the design, level and siting of the proposed parking shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning

Authority. The approved scheme shall be fully implemented before the development is first occupied or brought into use and thereafter retained for this purpose.

Reason: To ensure the provision of adequate cycle parking that meets the needs of occupiers of the proposed development and in the interests of encouraging the use of sustainable modes of transport in accordance with Policies 1, 5 and 8 of Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan (adopted 2018) and in accordance with policy TRA3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

23. Prior to the occupation of Block B, the 188 spaces within the retained multi-storey car park shall be provided, to include a minimum of 143 spaces which are to be made available for general public use and 40 spaces for private residential car parking including at least 5 bays available for car club use. The parking is to be managed in accordance with a Car Park Management Plan, to include car park charges, signs and enforcement for areas not within private ownership of future residents, which is to be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to retain adequate public parking for the benefit of the town centre in accordance with policy TRA3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

24. The windows of all the ground floor commercial units shall remain visually permeable and shall not be obscured by advertisements or security shutters.

Reason: To ensure the riverside and street elevations remain animated and the public spaces are overlooked, in the interests of appearance and securing a high quality development within the Hertford Conservation Area and in accordance with the provisions of the approved Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy 2016 and policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

25. All existing trees and hedges shall be retained, unless shown on the approved drawing 10480 TPP 01 Rev A (contained within the Arboricultural Impact Assessment May 2020, 10480\_AIA 001 Rev A) as being removed. All trees and hedges on and immediately adjoining the site shall be protected from damage as a result of works on the site, to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority in accordance with BS5837: 2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, or any subsequent relevant British Standard, for the duration of the works on site and until at least five years following contractual practical completion of the approved development. In the event that trees or hedging become damaged or otherwise defective during such period, the Local Planning Authority shall be notified as soon as reasonably practicable and remedial action agreed and implemented. In the event that any tree or hedging dies or is removed without the prior consent of the Local Planning Authority, it shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable and, in any case, by not later than the end of the first available planting season, with trees of such size, species and in such number and positions as may be agreed with the Authority.

Reason: To ensure the continuity of amenity afforded by existing trees, in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

26. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order), 2015 (As amended) the change of use of a building and any land within its curtilage from a use falling within Class A1(retail), A2 (financial and professional services) of the Schedule to the Use Classes Order, to a use falling within Class C3 (dwellinghouses) of that Schedule, as described in Schedule 2, Part 3, Class M of the Order shall not be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the Local Planning Authority retains control over any future development as specified in the condition in the interests of amenity and in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

27. Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development Order), 2015 (as amended) the erection or construction of gates, fences, walls or other means of enclosure as described in Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A of the Order on any part of the site or its boundaries shall not be undertaken without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the Local Planning Authority retains control over any future development as specified in the condition in the interests of amenity and in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

28. Details of any external lighting proposed shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of development, and no external lighting shall be provided without such written consent. The development shall then be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the area, and in accordance with policy EQ3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

29. The hotel restaurant/bar shall cease trading and be closed between 01:00hrs and 06:00hrs on all days.

Reason: In the interest of neighbour amenity and in accordance with Policies EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

30. A scheme of sound insulation for the proposed hotel as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The recommendations in the sound insulation report shall be

implemented in full prior to first occupation of the hotel and the scheme of measures shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for residents in accordance with policy EQ2 of the adopted East Herts District Plan 2018.

31. No development of the hotel as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, shall take place within the proposed development site until the applicant, or their agents, or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This condition will only be considered to be discharged when the planning authority has received and approved an archaeological report of all the required archaeological works, and if appropriate, a commitment to publication has been made.

Reason: To secure the protection of and proper provision for any archaeological remains in accordance with Policies HA1 and HA3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

32. Prior to the commencement of development for the hotel as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a Site Waste Management Plan, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Plan shall provide details of the measures to be taken in the design, construction decommissioning and demolition of the development to; re-use existing materials within the new development; recycle waste materials for use on site and off; minimise the amount of waste generated; minimise the pollution potential of unavoidable waste; treat and dispose of the remaining waste in an environmentally acceptable manner; and to utilise secondary aggregates and construction and other materials with a recycled content. Once agreed, the measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Plan. The demolition work shall proceed in

accordance with the provisions of the approved Site Waste Management Plan.

Reason: To accord with Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan policies 7 and 8.

33. Prior to the commencement of above ground works for the hotel as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a scheme providing for the insulation of the proposed dwellings against the transmission of noise and vibration, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and confirmed by a report of sound testing prior to the first occupation of dwellings.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for residents of the hotel in accordance with policies DES4 and EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

34. Prior to the occupation the hotel as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a CCTV Plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, such plans to show the model, location, height and surveillance area of all CCTV cameras to be installed. The applicant shall also submit details setting out how the installed CCTV cameras are to be maintained and operated. Once agreed, the cameras will be installed and operated in full accordance with the approved CCTV Plan prior to the first occupation of any part of the building.

Reason: To ensure that security surveillance is effective and co-ordinated between services and to ensure that the safety and security of residents and visitors to the site is safeguarded in accordance with policy DES5 of the East Herts District Plan.

35. Any A3/A4 use shall be restricted to the ground floor frontages of units as defined on plan 19 0052-02 U.

Reason: In the interests of the vitality and viability of the town centre, having regard to the provisions of the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy and also with regard to the amenity of residents in the immediate vicinity of the site, in accordance with policies RTC1, HERT7 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

36. Notwithstanding the approved plans, should a health facility occupy unit 9, further details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority showing details of any windows that are required to be obscured.

Reason: To ensure the riverside and street elevations remain animated and the public spaces are overlooked, in the interests of appearance and securing a high quality development within the Hertford Conservation Area and in accordance with the provisions of the approved Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy 2016 and policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

37. Prior to any hereby permitted use commencing in relation to Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a scheme containing full details of arrangements for internal air extraction, odour control, and discharge to atmosphere from cooking operations, including any external ducting and flues, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The works detailed in the approved scheme shall be installed in their entirety before the use hereby permitted is commenced. The equipment shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and operated at all times when cooking is being carried out unless otherwise agreed beforehand in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for residents in accordance with policy EQ2 and EQ4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

38. Prior to above ground works of Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a scheme of sound insulation for the proposed residential units shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The recommendations in the sound insulation report shall be implemented in full, prior to first occupation of the residential units. The scheme of measures shall be maintained thereafter.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for nearby residents in accordance with policy EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

39. Prior to the commencement of the development of Blocks A and B as shown on plan 19 0052-01 N hereby permitted, full details of both hard and soft landscape proposals, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include:

- a) Riverside railings (if needed) and other means of enclosure;
- b) Car parking layouts to show public and private residential areas spaces;
- c) Hard surfacing materials including the approved palette of high quality materials;
- d) Public seating, having regards to the provisions of the submitted Public Realm Strategy, to include feature benches (minimum 4) around riverside trees along the river frontage;
- e) Any other street furniture (for example litter bins);
- f) Proposed and existing functional services above and below ground (e.g. drainage, power, communications cables, pipelines, etc. indicating lines, manholes, supports, etc.);
- g) Planting plans;
- h) Schedules of plants and trees, including details of tree pits, species, planting sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate;
- i) Mooring points;
- j) Details of and locations of the bat and bird boxes to be within the site.

Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the provision of amenity afforded by appropriate landscape design and securing a high quality development and appearance of the development within the Hertford Conservation Area and in accordance with the provisions of the approved Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy 2016 and policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

40. All hard and soft landscape works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. Any trees or plants that, within a period of five years after planting, are removed, die or become, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, seriously damaged or defective, shall be replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable with others of species, size and number as originally approved, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

Reason: To ensure the provision, establishment and maintenance of a reasonable standard of landscaping in accordance with the approved designs, in accordance with policies DES3 and DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

41. Prior to the commencement of development of Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, details of the design of building foundations and the layout, with positions, dimensions and levels, of (a) service trenches (b) ditches (c) drains (d) other excavations on site insofar as they may affect trees and hedgerows on or adjoining the site, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the development should be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: Details are required to be approved prior to the commencement of the development to ensure the protection of trees and hedgerows to be retained, and in particular to avoid damage to root systems in accordance with Policy DES3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

42. Prior to the first occupation of the residential units hereby approved, details of any communal television reception facilities proposed in connection with the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority and thereafter the development should be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To prevent the proliferation of telecommunication facilities in the interests of amenity and good design in accordance with Policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

43. Details of provisions and a programme to market the use of the new civic space between Block A and the river frontage by public and other non-commercial organisations, including the frequency of events, not less than 12 dates in a calendar year unless otherwise agreed in writing, shall be provided to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority prior to the commencement of works to Block B. The space shall thereafter be marketed and made available in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the optimal use of public space in the interests of the vitality and viability of the town centre, having regard to the provisions of the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy and also with regard to the amenity of residents in the immediate vicinity of the site, in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

44. Prior to the first occupation of any of the residential units hereby permitted, details shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority setting out the allocation of the

parking spaces to the residential units, car club spaces and the details shall also make clear if any allocation of parking spaces will be made to the health care facility. Once approved, the parking space allocation shall be implemented and retained as such.

Reason: To ensure clarity with regard to the allocation of spaces in accordance with policy TRA3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

45. Prior to the occupation of any part of Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a CCTV Plan shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority, such plans to show the model, location, height and surveillance area of all CCTV cameras to be installed. The applicant shall also submit details setting out how the installed CCTV cameras are to be maintained and operated. Once agreed, the cameras will be installed and operated in full accordance with the approved CCTV Plan prior to the first occupation of any building in that Phase.

Reason: To ensure that security surveillance is effective and co-ordinated between services and to ensure that the safety and security of residents and visitors to the site is safeguarded in accordance with policy DES5 of the East Herts District Plan.

46. No development or groundworks shall take place within the proposed development site for Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, until the applicant, or their agents, or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This condition will only be considered to be discharged when the planning authority has received and approved an archaeological report of all the required archaeological works, and if appropriate, a commitment to publication has been made. The development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved scheme.

Reason: To secure the protection of and proper provision for any archaeological remains in accordance with policy HA3 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

47. Prior to the commencement of works to Block A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, details of the refurbished public toilet facilities, their opening hours and the cleaning and maintenance regimes shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The facilities shall thereafter be operated, maintained and be made available in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of delivering good quality public conveniences as part of the development in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

48. Prior to the commencement of works to Block B, details of the bus station facilities to be provided as shown on plan 19 0052-02 U, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These details shall include, their opening hours, cleaning and maintenance regimes, information demonstrating the ability for a Real Time Passenger Information system (RTPI) to be installed. The facilities shall be made available for public use and brought into operation on first occupation of Block B. The facilities shall thereafter be maintained and be made available in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: In the interests of delivering good quality public conveniences as part of the development in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

49. Prior to the commencement of development for Blocks A and B, as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a Site Waste Management Plan, as required in relation to each phase of the development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The Plan shall provide details of the

measures to be taken in the design, construction decommissioning and demolition of the development to; re-use existing materials within the new development; recycle waste materials for use on site and off; minimise the amount of waste generated; minimise the pollution potential of unavoidable waste; treat and dispose of the remaining waste in an environmentally acceptable manner; and to utilise secondary aggregates and construction and other materials with a recycled content. Once agreed, the measures shall be implemented in accordance with the approved Plan. The demolition work shall proceed in accordance with the provisions of the approved Site Waste Management Plan.

Reason: To accord with Hertfordshire Waste Local Plan policies 7 and 8.

50. Prior to the commencement of above ground works for Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, a scheme providing for the insulation of the proposed dwellings against the transmission of noise and vibration, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and confirmed by a report of sound testing prior to the first occupation of dwellings.

Reason: In order to ensure an adequate level of amenity for residents of the new dwellings in accordance with policies DES4 and EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

51. No fixed plant and/or machinery shall come into operation for Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, until details of the fixed plant and machinery serving that phase of the development hereby permitted, and any mitigation measures to achieve this condition, are submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The rating level of the sound emitted from the site shall not exceed 43 dBA between 0700 and 2300 hours and 39 dBA at all other times. The sound levels shall

be determined by measurement or calculation at the nearest existing noise sensitive premises in Oddfellows Court, Bull Plain and Folly Island. The measurements and assessment shall be made according to BS 4142:2014.

Reason: To protect the residential amenity of existing and any future occupiers in accordance with policy EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

52. Odour equipment shall be installed to effectively suppress and disperse fumes and/or odours produced by cooking and food preparation at commercial food premises, and the equipment shall be effectively operated for so long as the commercial food use continues. Full details of the method of odour abatement and all odour abatement equipment to be used, including predicted noise levels of the equipment in operation in each Phase of the Development, shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to the installation of the equipment in that Phase of the Development. The approved equipment shall be installed and in full working order to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority prior to the use hereby permitted commencing under each Phase.

Reason: In order to prevent the adverse impact of odours arising from cooking activities on the amenity of nearby residents and in accordance with Policy EQ2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

53. Prior to the occupation of the development, measures to implement the approved Sustainability Statement and Energy Strategy (Whitecode Design Associates, 10772-S-ENER-0001, Revision 2, May 2020) shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Once agreed, the measures shall be implemented as such, retained and the development operated accordingly.

Reason: In order to ensure the development meets local and national objectives in respect of climate change in accordance with policies CC1 and CC2 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

54. Prior to above ground works of Blocks A and B as shown on drawing number 19 0052-01 N, details showing how the solar panel frames will be screened shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of appearance and securing a high quality development within the Hertford Conservation Area and in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018 and the NPPF.

55. Prior to the first occupation of the residential units, measures shall be incorporated within the development to ensure that a water efficiency standard of 110 litres (or less) per person per day is achieved.

Reason: The Environment Agency has identified this area to be particularly water stressed and a reduction in water usage and increased water efficiency are necessary in accordance with Policy WAT4 of the District Plan 2018.

56. Prior to the commencement of development, details of the measures to facilitate the provision of high speed broadband internet connections to the development shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details shall include a timetable and method of delivery for high speed broadband for each residential and commercial unit. Once approved, high speed broadband infrastructure shall be implemented thereafter in accordance with the approved details and made available for use prior to first occupation of the residential and commercial to which it relates.

Reason: In order to ensure the provision of appropriate infrastructure to support the future sustainability of the

development in accordance with policy DES4 of the East Herts District Plan 2018.

57. Prior to the first occupation or any use hereby permitted, a Travel Plan for the residential and commercial developments, consisting of a written agreement setting out a scheme to encourage, regulate, and green travel measures for owners, occupiers, and visitors to the Development in accordance with the provisions of the County Councils Travel Plan Guidance for Business and Residential Development, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Prior to the first occupation, the agreed Travel Plan for that phase, shall be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To promote the use of non-car modes of transport in accordance with Policy TRA1 of East Herts District Plan 2018.

Informatives:

1. During the demolition and construction phase the guidance in BS5228-1:2009 (Code of Practice for noise Control on construction and open sites) should be adhered to.
2. Prior to the commencement of demolition of the existing building, a survey should be undertaken in order to identify the presence of asbestos containing materials. Any asbestos containing materials should be handled and disposed of appropriately. Where necessary this should include the use of licensed contractors and waste disposal sites licensed to receive asbestos.
3. A premises Licence will be required for A3 / A4 uses. The Applicant is advised to contact [Community.Protection@eastherts.gov.uk](mailto:Community.Protection@eastherts.gov.uk) regarding applying for Licences.
4. Bats and their roosts are protected at all times under domestic and European law. To reduce the risk of an offence, work should proceed with caution. In the event of bats or evidence of them

being found, work must stop immediately and advice taken on how to proceed lawfully from an appropriately qualified and experienced ecologist or Natural England.

5. In order to protect breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young, demolition should only be carried out during the period October to February inclusive. If this is not possible, then a pre-development (ie no greater than 48 hours before demolition begins) search of the building should be made by a suitably experienced ecologist. If active nests are found, then works must be delayed until the juvenile birds have left the nest and are fully independent or professional ecological advice taken on how best to proceed.
6. The construction works and operation of the proposed development site should be done in accordance with the relevant British Standards and Best Management Practices, thereby significantly reducing the groundwater pollution risk.
7. The proposed development is located within 15 metres of Thames Waters underground assets and as such, the development could cause the assets to fail if appropriate measures are not taken. Please read our guide 'working near our assets' to ensure your workings are in line with the necessary processes you need to follow if you're considering working above or near our pipes or other structures.<https://developers.thameswater.co.uk/Developing-a-large-site/Planning-your-development/Working-near-or-diverting-our-pipes>. Should you require further information please contact Thames Water. Email: developer.services@thameswater.co.uk Phone: 0800 009 3921 (Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm) Write to: Thames Water Developer Services, Clearwater Court, Vastern Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 8DB
8. Storage of materials: The applicant is advised that the storage of materials associated with the construction of this development

should be provided within the site on land which is not public highway, and the use of such areas must not interfere with the public highway. If this is not possible, authorisation should be sought from the Highway Authority before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

9. Obstruction of public highway land: It is an offence under section 137 of the Highways Act 1980 for any person, without lawful authority or excuse, in any way to wilfully obstruct the free passage along a highway or public right of way. If this development is likely to result in the public highway or public right of way network becoming routinely blocked (fully or partly) the applicant must contact the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements before construction works commence. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
10. Road Deposits: It is an offence under section 148 of the Highways Act 1980 to deposit mud or other debris on the public highway, and section 149 of the same Act gives the Highway Authority powers to remove such material at the expense of the party responsible. Therefore, best practical means shall be taken at all times to ensure that all vehicles leaving the site during construction of the development are in a condition such as not to emit dust or deposit mud, slurry or other debris on the highway. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.
11. Construction standards for works within the highway: All works to be undertaken on the adjoining highway shall be constructed to the satisfaction and specification of the Highway Authority, by an approved contractor, and in accordance with Hertfordshire County Council's publication "Road" in Hertfordshire - Highway

Design Guide (2011)". Before works commence the applicant will need to apply to the Highway Authority to obtain their permission and requirements. Further information is available via the website <http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/transtreets/highways/> or by telephoning 0300 1234047.

12. The development will involve the numbering of properties and naming of new streets. The applicant MUST consult the Director of Internal Services. Application for this purpose should be made to the Local Land and Property Gazetteer Custodian, East Herts Council, Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ. Tel: 01279 655261.
13. This planning permission is also subject to a Planning Obligation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
14. This permission does not convey any consent which may be required under any legislation other than the Town and Country Planning Acts. Any permission required under the Building Regulations or under any other Act, must be obtained from the relevant authority or body eg. Fire Officer, Health and Safety Executive, Environment Agency (Water Interest) etc. Neither does this permission negate or override any private covenants which may affect the land.
15. Notwithstanding the approved plans, all adverts require advert consent.

#### Summary of reasons for decision

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015, East Herts Council has considered, in a positive and proactive manner, whether the planning objections to this proposal could be satisfactorily resolved within the statutory period for determining the application. However, for the reasons set out in this decision notice, the proposal is not considered to

achieve an acceptable and sustainable development in accordance with the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

**KEY DATA****Residential Development**

<b>Residential density</b>	<b>Units/ha</b>	
	Bed spaces	Number of Units
Number of existing units demolished		
Number of new flat units	1	32
	2	66
	3	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>98</b>

**Affordable Housing**

<b>Number of units</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
None	0%

**Residential Vehicle Parking Provision**

Current Parking Policy Maximum Standards (EHDC 2007 Local Plan)

Parking Zone	2	
Residential flatbed unit size (bed spaces)	Spaces per unit	Spaces required
1	1.25	40
2	1.50	99
Total required		139
<b>Proposed Provision</b>		40

**Updated Parking Standards**

Parking Zone	2	
Residential unit size (bed spaces)	Spaces per unit	Spaces required
1	1.50	48

2	2.00	132
Total required		180
Accessibility reduction	25-100%	45-180
Resulting Requirement		45-180
<b>Proposed Provision</b>		40

## **Non-Residential Development**

<b>Use Type</b>	<b>Floorspace (sqm)</b>
Class C1 Hotel	3,466
Class A1-A4, and D1	3,419

## **Legal Agreement – financial obligations**

This table sets out the financial obligations that could potentially be sought from the proposed development in accordance with the

Obligation	Amount sought by EHDC	Amount recommended in this case	Reason for difference (if any)
Affordable Housing	40%	None	Viability
Sports Hall	£40,797	None	Viability
Swimming Pool	£41,719	None	Viability
Fitness Gyms	£18,131	None	Viability
Studio Space	£7,490	None	Viability
Outdoor Tennis	£11,550	None	Viability

Village and Community Centres	£49,383	None	Viability
Children's Play and Provision for young people	£84,294	None	Viability
Parks and Gardens and Amenity Green Space	£49,687	None	Viability
Natural and Semi-Natural Green Space	£20,884	None	Viability
Allotments	£10.647	None	Viability

Obligation	Amount sought by HCC	Amount recommended in this case	Reason for difference (if any)
Primary Education	£56,832	None	Viability
Secondary Education	£481,955	None	Viability
Youth Service	£954	None	Viability
Library	£10,978	None	Viability

Obligation	Additional Obligations sought
Car Club	5 Spaces to be provided
Unit 18	M4(3) unit to be marketed
Public Access	Permissive rights of way along riverfront and Bircherley Green
Maintenance and	Maintenance and Management Plan for both the commercial and residential elements of

Management	the scheme
NHS	NHS Clause

**Essential reference paper A – Hertford Town Centre and Urban Design Strategy (HUDS)**

[https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/31015/Hertford-Town-Centre-and-Urban-Design-Strategy/PDF/SSS.012\\_Hertford\\_Town\\_Centre\\_and\\_Urban\\_Design\\_Strategy.pdf](https://www.eastherts.gov.uk/media/31015/Hertford-Town-Centre-and-Urban-Design-Strategy/PDF/SSS.012_Hertford_Town_Centre_and_Urban_Design_Strategy.pdf)

# Hertford

Town Centre Urban Design Strategy

February 2016



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Hertford is already a great town, this study is designed to make it the best it can be and secure its status as the county town of Hertfordshire.



Heritage



Living



Shopping



River Lea



Dining



Culture



Cafés

Figure 1.1: Strengths of Hertford

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 About the project

1.1.1 The purpose of this strategy is to guide future development in Hertford's town centre. It provides a long-term coherent vision for the area, provides design approaches for key areas within the town centre, and aims to guide developers and provide a framework for determining planning applications. The Strategy seeks to engender a sense of community, to provide opportunities to reinforce or improve the sense of place associated with Hertford Town Centre and its environs (in line with the sustainability principles outlined in section 2 of the NPPF (ensuring the vitality of town centres)).

1.1.2 Among other things, it also includes technical (although not exhaustive or exclusive) advice on landscape and urban design principles and recommendations for street furniture selection etc. befitting the County Town.

1.1.3 This document is split into four key parts:

- The Vision;
- Movement Strategy;
- Design Strategy; and
- Public Realm.

1.1.4 The Vision section commences with the vision and objectives for the strategy. These were generated from a process of public engagement conducted in March 2015 and are supported by a set of Place-making principles for Hertford Town Centre.

1.1.5 The Movement Strategy sets out opportunities to improve people's ability to access the town centre as well as move within it.

1.1.6 The Design Strategy includes more technical information detailing how the urban design strategy will be achieved. This will commence with a strategy for three key sites within the town, these are:

- Maidenhead Street;
- The Marquee; and
- Bircherley Green.

1.1.7 This is followed by a public realm strategy, setting out public realm design principles and a materials and landscape palette.

1.1.8 The commissioning of the Study has been led by East Herts Council, working together with Hertfordshire County Council and Hertford Town Council.

## 1.2 Why is the strategy necessary?

1.2.1 East Herts Council is in the process of developing its new District Plan. When adopted this will deliver sustainable development and shape the future of East Herts until 2031. The Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy will support the preparation of this document.

1.2.2 Hertford is an historic, characterful and successful place. However, in recent years the economic downturn and changing roles of small towns have threatened its identity as the County Town of Hertfordshire. Some retail units have been left empty, parts of the public realm are tired and dated and new development has sometimes failed to deliver the best for Hertford. There is a need to re-invigorate the town centre. The Council needs to ensure its new policies reflect the current needs of the town centre, its occupiers, visitors and the local community.

1.2.3 A number of issues are driving this project. These are:

- The need to devise a successful redevelopment scheme for Hertford's main shopping area at Bircherley Green.
- The need for a Hertford-specific approach to retail policy and the need to address general concerns about the vitality of certain shopping areas e.g. Maidenhead Street, Market Place, etc.
- Deterioration of public realm quality and maintenance.
- The need to detail ideas for anticipated change of public spaces – Maidenhead Street, Bull Plain, Old Cross, The Wash/Mill Bridge, The Riverside, Fore Street, The Marquee, Warren Place, and Hertford East Station.
- The need for longer term design vision of the town centre that commands public support and ownership, and which can inform policy documents and Development Management decisions.
- The need for an economically viable strategy to deliver the best planning outcome in the public interest.
- The need to ensure a working town centre accessible for businesses and desirable to visitors and users as they move around.
- The need to ensure accessibility by sustainable modes of transport to meet future demands.

## 1.3 Methodology

1.3.1 The project has been undertaken in 5 stages. These are illustrated in the time-line diagram opposite and are summarized below.

### Stage 1: Inception, briefing and review.

1.3.2 Stage 1 set the scene for the project. It ensured that all of the client and consultant team had met each other and were properly briefed. It also ensured all background information was reviewed prior to commencing project work.

### Stages 2 and 3: Baseline appraisals and Visioning.

1.3.3 A baseline report prepared at the end of stage 2 summarises initial urban design, retail, market, public realm and movement appraisals. The purpose of the baseline appraisal is to gain an in-depth understanding of the opportunities in the town centre and a robust evidence base to support the future strategy.

1.3.4 Engagement events with the public, stakeholders and elected members identified existing issues and established a vision and objectives for the strategy.

### Stage 4: Draft strategies.

1.3.5 The Town Centre strategy prepared for consultation purposes was based on the baseline appraisals as well as the issues and objectives identified through the initial engagement.

### Stage 5: Final urban design strategy.

1.3.6 Following a final public engagement the strategy has been completed.

1.3.7 All of the proposals included in this document have been informed by a process of public engagement. Proposals have been carefully considered to not prejudice against anyone in terms of race disability or human rights.

## 1.4 Structure of the report

1.4.1 The remainder of this document is split into four sections:

- **Section 2 - The Vision** sets out the overarching vision and objectives for Hertford Town Centre. These have been identified through public and stakeholder engagement events.
- **Section 3 - Movement Strategy** looks at the movement to, from and within the town centre and how this could be changed in support of the overall vision and objectives.
- **Section 4 - Design Strategy** contains guidance on the key sites at Bircherley Green, Maidenhead Street and The Marquee.
- **Section 5 - Public Realm** sets out the principles for a coordinated public realm strategy and identifies an approach towards paving, materials and street furniture.

### Stage 1: Inception, briefing and review

#### Purpose:

- Set up the project.
- Get to know each other and the place.
- Agree program and objectives.

#### Outcome:

- Project plan and clear definition of responsibilities.
- Agree program and objectives.

### Stage 2: Baseline appraisals

#### Purpose:

- Provide a robust baseline.
- Gain an in depth understanding of issues and opportunities in the Town Centre.

#### Outcome: Baseline report summarising work.

### Stage 3: Visioning

#### Purpose:

- Define a common vision and objectives for the Town Centre.
- Engage with stakeholders and population.
- Generating enthusiasm and conversation about the Town Centre.

#### Outcome: A vision and set of objectives.

### Stage 4: Draft strategies

#### Purpose:

- Test and explore potential strategies for the Town Centre.

#### Outcome: Identification of a preferred strategy for the town centre.

### Stage 5: Consultation on the Draft Strategy / Options and Production of Final Document

#### Purpose:

- Promote draft strategy and agree options with stakeholders and public. Responses from consultation will inform the final strategy.

#### Outcome: Production of Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy document (this document), which both supports planning policy and promotes the Town Centre.

Figure 1.2: Flow chart project stages

# 2

## The Vision

# The Vision

## 2.1 What Hertford wants

2.1.1 The work presented in this Strategy has been informed by two stages of public engagement carried out in March and September 2015. These are summarised below.

### March 2015 Engagement

2.1.2 This initial period of engagement was aimed to scope out the issues that the strategy should address. It consisted of the following:

- A stakeholder workshop.
- Elected member workshop.
- A drop in public engagement event/exhibition - which was staffed for 2 days at The Mill Bridge Rooms then left as a stand-alone exhibition at Hertford Theatre for another week.

2.1.3 At each session people were asked to identify issues and ideas for the following topics:

- Economy.
- Access and Movement.
- Environment.
- History and Character.
- Key sites.

2.1.4 An additional questionnaire asked people how they used the town centre. This was available at the consultation events, at Hertford Theatre, and online.

2.1.5 At least 166 people came to the drop in event and 476 copies of the feedback questionnaire were returned. The messages coming from both public and stakeholder engagement activity were very consistent in terms of the

ambitions local people have for the town centre. We have summarised the central issues on a topic-by-topic basis below.

#### History and Character

- All of the feedback received clearly saw the heritage and historical character as a positive asset for the town. The areas identified as most distinctive included:
  - The River Lea.
  - Hertford Castle and Grounds.
  - Parliament Square.
  - Maidenhead Street.
  - Bircherley Green/Bus Station.
  - Salisbury Square - especially the trees.
  - St Andrew Street.
- There was a general consensus that not enough was being made of the historic assets of the town. Unlike other towns, most of Hertford's historic buildings are usually closed to the public. The Castle, arguably its most important historical asset, is physically separated from the town centre. It is hidden behind the buildings of St Andrew Street/The Wash and behind the remaining castle walls.
- There was a consensus that more needed to be done to exploit these assets such as creating plaques and information points to tell the public about the town.
- There was also a consensus that Hertford had lost its identity as the 'County Town' of Hertfordshire. This status referred to Hertford as the civic and administrative heart of the county and focal point for retail and social activity. The town's declining retail offer with the loss of



Figure 2.1: Images from public drop in March event at the Mill Bridge Rooms



Figure 2.2: Images from September consultation event at the Mill Bridge Rooms

high street multiples and increasing numbers of empty units was seen as a particular threat to the town's identity. This was particularly evident when comparing Hertford to neighbouring settlements, such as Welwyn Garden City, which have maintained a very vibrant retail economy.

- There was a clear interest in improving as well as extending the offer of arts/cultural attractions and forming an overall tourism strategy (events, workshops etc.).
- A desire was expressed to expand the Farmers Market, change the frequency to weekly and offer higher diversity.

#### Environment

- The River Lea was identified as being one of the biggest priority areas for improvement in the town. Walking routes along the river were frequently identified as a priority.
- Maidenhead Street was also a priority for improvement. The quality of public realm, vacant buildings and the choice and variety of shops were seen as concerns. There is a perception that Evron Place is a focal point for anti-social behaviour.
- Bircherley Green consistently came up as a priority area for improvement. This is one of the key sites included in this study.
- Generally, people wanted to see the public realm tidied up and de-cluttered. It should reflect the status of Hertford as a 'County Town'. 'A' boards cluttering the Street were consistently seen as a problem. The quality of signage around the town was also poor and often inaccurate.

#### Movement

- There was a clear desire to retain a dedicated bus station in a central location in the town centre.
- Car parking was identified as hard to locate and use. There was strong desire to implement for 'pay on exit' car parks to enable visitors and citizens to spend more time in the town centre.
- There was a general consensus to make Hertford more pedestrian friendly. Narrow footways and poor public realm were a particular barrier throughout the town centre.
- Reducing traffic in the town centre would encourage people to walk and open up the road for buses and alternative modes. Specific barriers for pedestrians were identified at the junctions at Old Cross/St. Andrew Street, Fore Street/Railway Street and at Parliament Square and Fore Street. Gascoyne Way was also seen as a huge barrier to pedestrian movement and the subways that go under it as unpleasant places to use.
- The majority of people visiting the exhibition came on foot.
- The Castle Grounds were seen as an enjoyable place to walk around, however, wayfinding to and from the Grounds was seen as poor.
- Hertford was not viewed as a cycle friendly town. Even though the wider cycle network to the surrounding area is well established, it was seen as poor. Traffic congestion and narrow routes were a barrier to cycling in the town centre. There was a perception that cycle routes needed to be better joined up and facilities along them such as racks and maps better provided.
- The poor maintenance of surfaces was an issue identified as needing to be addressed.

#### Economy

*This topic was included at the drop in events only.*

- There was a strong desire to widen the range of shops available in Hertford with a mixture of both national chains and independent shops.
- The number of empty shops in the town centre was consistently identified as an area of concern. Many people suggested that rents were too expensive.
- The discussion also produced the idea of offering in-between uses like Galleries, Pop-up shops or Farm shops to fill in until a permanent shop could be established.
- There was very strong support for enhancing the experience of the farmers market, including a higher frequency and a higher diversity of the stalls.
- Many people stated that they wished Waitrose to remain in the town centre. It was seen as an important anchor for Bircherley Green.
- Tourism was identified as something that could be improved upon. The town's history clearly lends itself to visitors and opportunities to expand visitor numbers should be investigated.

2.1.6 While there are issues to be addressed and opportunities to improve the town centre environment it was also clear that there was no appetite for radical re-planning of the town centre.

2.1.7 The consultation comments have been used to generate the following set of Vision and Objectives.

## The Vision

- Hertford's town centre will have a strong identity and a central focus. High quality public realm, a vibrant market and a mix of national and independent retailers will provide services to the local and wider population. A range of cafés and restaurants will continue to attract local people and visitors to spend their leisure time.
- Hertford will celebrate its historic Market Town character while embracing its status as the County Town.
- The River Lea will become an integral part of the town centre and residents and visitors will be able to enjoy this high quality environment.
- Hertford town centre will make the most of its historic and natural environment (River Lea) to promote itself to visitors. High quality developments and architecture will complement the existing environment.
- Hertford's town centre will continue to embrace a variety of uses including retail, residential, employment, culture and leisure uses and balance the needs of each to create an attractive and vibrant environment.

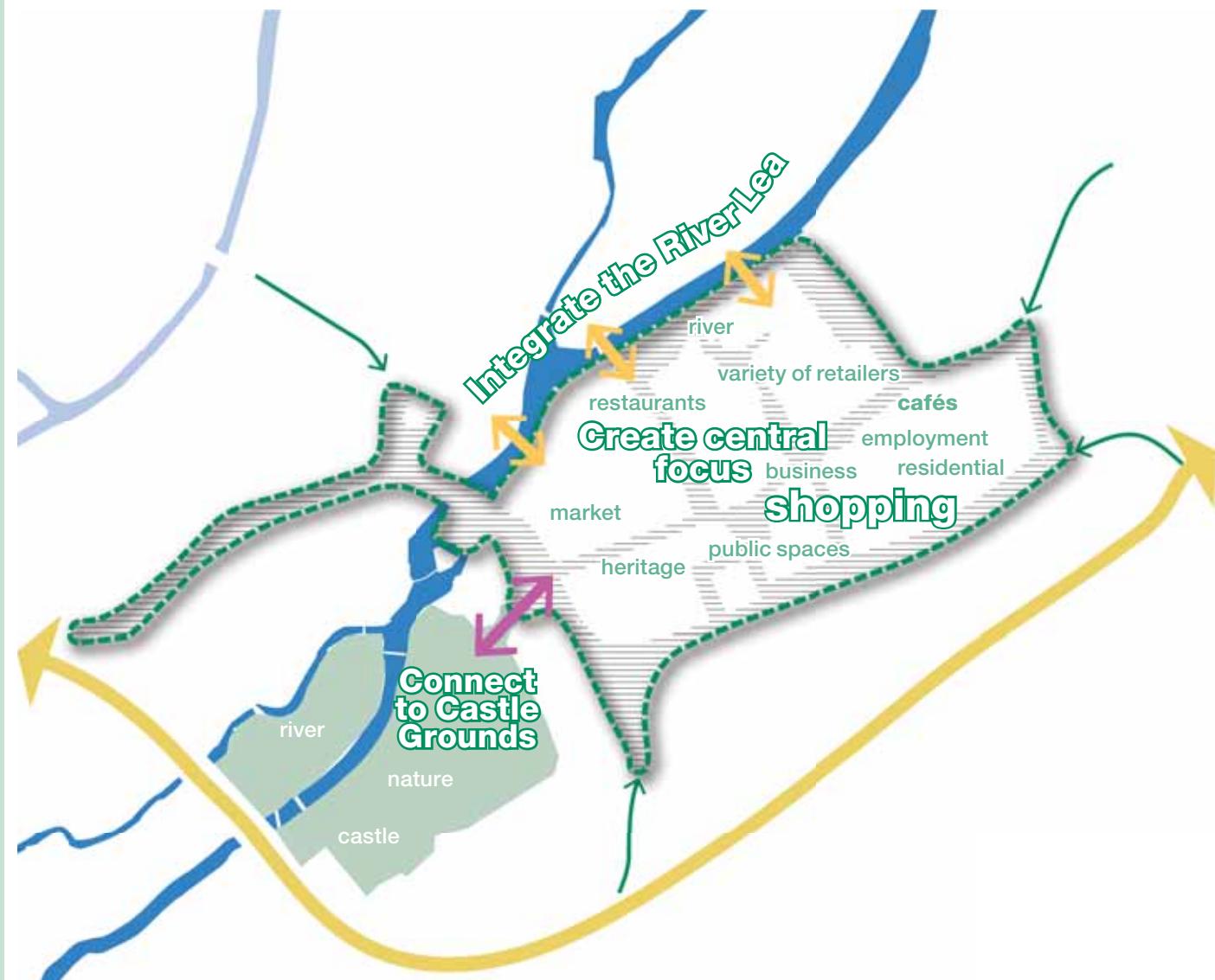


Figure 2.3: Vision of diversity in central areas

## Core objectives

### Character and history

- Promote the identity of Hertford town centre by making the most of its historic assets and street pattern.
- Promote Hertford town centre as a tourist destination by improving, publicising and extending the offer of cultural attractions.
- Ensure that new development is sensitive to the existing historic environment and new buildings of high quality architecture - while encouraging a range of architectural approaches.



Figure 2.4: Historic buildings in Hertford as a central feature

### Movement and transport

- Prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and reduce the conflicts with vehicles.
- Improve the pedestrian and cycle routes into the town centre, by investigating additional surface level connections across Gascoyne Way and improving the existing underpasses.
- Retain a bus station in the town centre to provide easy and convenient access whilst meeting the needs of local service operators.
- Ensure adequate car parking is provided and well advertised to support the viability of the town centre.
- Create a high quality accessible network of routes and spaces that encourage people to move around the town centre and invite people to stay.

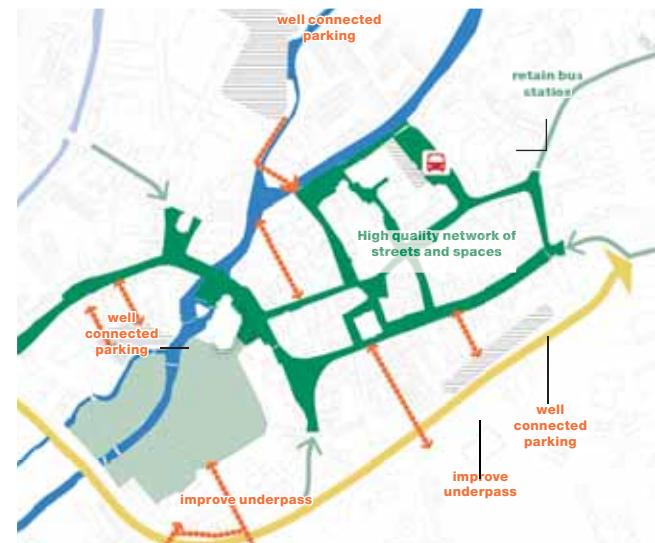


Figure 2.5: Movement and transport in Hertford

### Environment

- Transform the riverbank into an attractive destination and create and improve links to connect it into the wider town centre.
- Improve the quality of pedestrian and cycle routes into and within the town centre, including high quality paving, planting and street furniture, where appropriate.
- Make it easier for people to find their way around town and make full use of all facilities.

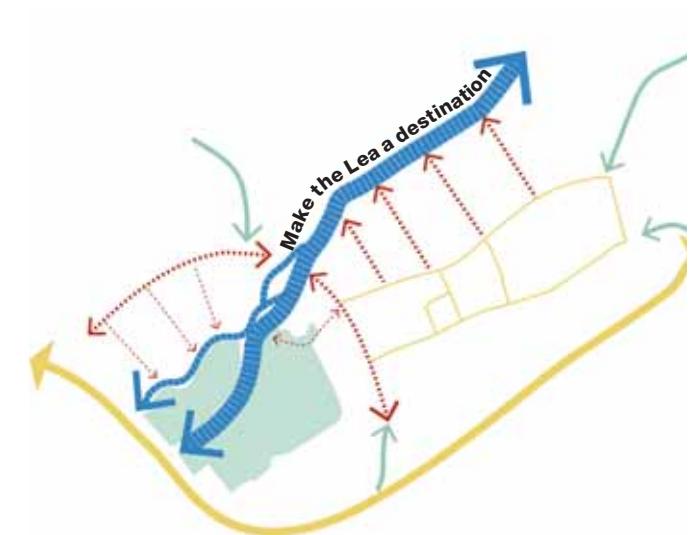


Figure 2.6: River Lea is an important feature

## Economy

- Encourage a greater variety of shops, including national and independent retailers.
- Improve the market, so that it becomes a central attraction for Hertford.
- Avoid empty shop units by actively promoting temporary uses and a flexible approach to use classes.
- Introduce more residential into the town centre.
- Retain and promote Hertford town centre as the administrative centre for Hertfordshire and encourage the large number of employees to use the town centre.
- Promote Hertford as a destination for small and medium sized businesses.

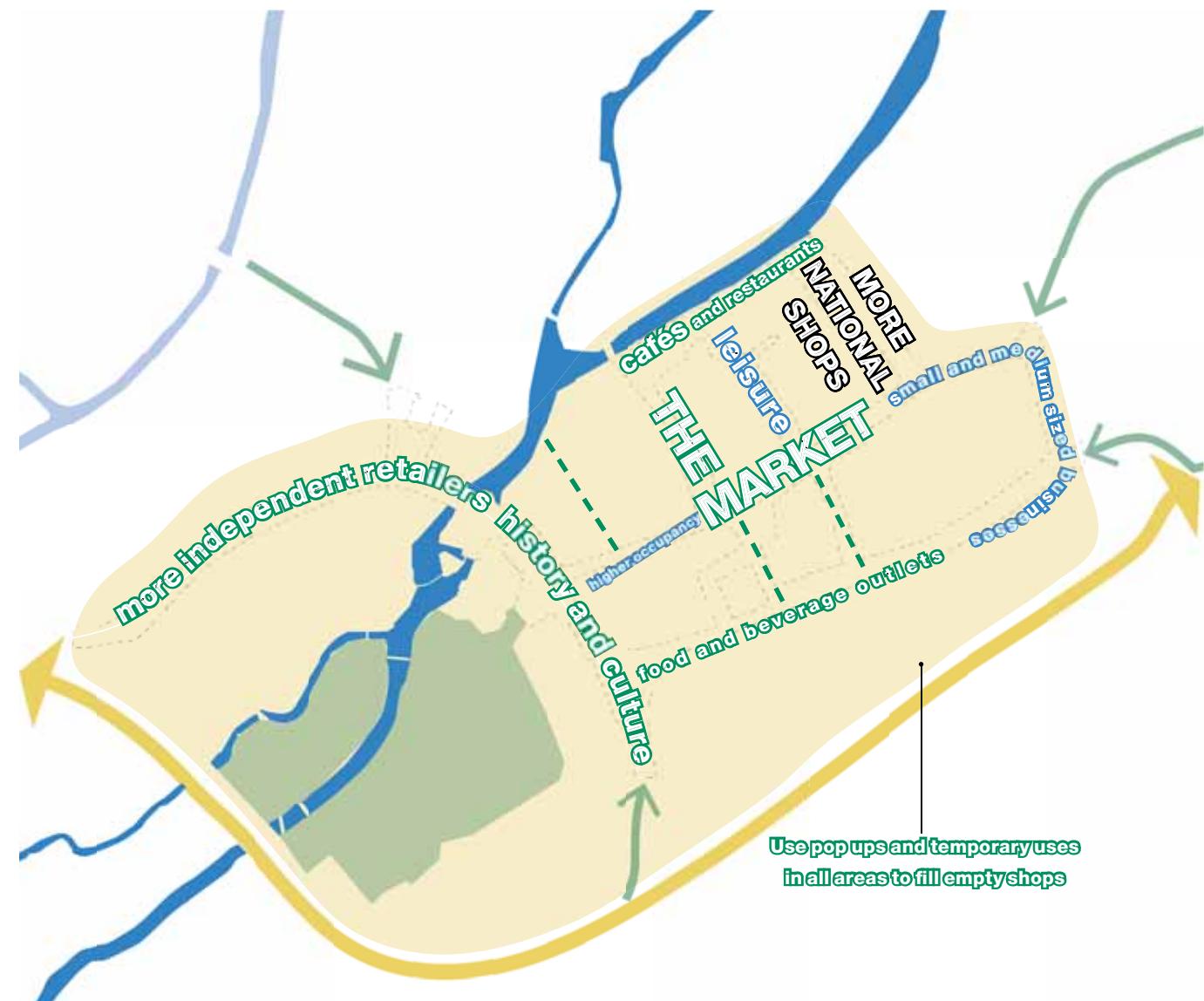


Figure 2.7: Shopping landscape in Hertford as set out in objective

## September 2015 Engagement

2.1.8 Following the initial round of public engagement the team developed a draft Urban Design Strategy that was based on the Vision and Objectives above. A further round of public consultation followed. This aimed to:

- Share the draft strategy with elected members.
- Exhibit the draft strategy to the public.
- Ask local people to prioritise various options for the town.
- Achieve buy-in to the principles set out in the draft strategy.

2.1.9 A workshop with elected members from the County, District and Town Councils was held on the 18th of August at East Herts Council's offices.

2.1.10 This was followed by a public exhibition held on Friday the 4th and Saturday the 5th of September 2015 at the Mill Bridge Rooms, Hertford.

2.1.11 The exhibition consisted of a series of boards designed to summarise the chapters of the draft strategy. These were:

- A summary of previous engagement and how it has influenced the strategy.
- The vision and objectives.
- The place-making strategy (Section 2.3 of this document).
- Movement and transport. (Section 3 of this document).
- Key sites Design (Section 4 of this document).
- Public realm strategy. (Section 5 of this document).

2.1.12 Opportunities for the public to state their opinion on various issues were presented via a questionnaire integrated

with the board content. The public were invited to state whether they agreed, disagreed or were neutral with our proposals by sticking dots next to their preferred answer. They were also asked to prioritise various options. Paper copies and a link to an online questionnaire were made available for those who wished to provide more detailed feedback or have more time to consider their response.

2.1.13 Representatives from the County and District Councils and Tibbalds were available to answer any questions.

2.1.14 The exhibition was moved to Hertford Theatre for a further week. This was not staffed but offered members of the public a further opportunity to see the proposals and feedback.

2.1.15 All of the materials presented at the exhibition were uploaded to the East Herts website for the duration of the consultation. People were able to comment on the draft Strategy either by downloading a PDF copy of the questionnaire (with various drop-off locations provided) or by following a link to an online questionnaire. Responses were also collected by email.

### Response

- Approximately 200 people attended the events on the 4th and 5th of September. We received up to 150 responses per question on the exhibition boards.
- 61 people completed the online version of the questionnaire in addition to 11 hard copies and 2 sets of written comments.
- We received 5 emails with comments via the Hertford TCUDS web address.
- The Town Council and Civic Society provided individual responses.

### Placemaking Strategy results

2.1.16 The response was generally very supportive of the Placemaking strategy (set out in Section 2.3 of this document) with 75% of people stating that they thought that the strategy would create a successful focus for the town centre.

### Movement and Transport - Results

2.1.17 Opinions were a little more divided when considering the movement and transport options for the town. More controversial interventions, such as limiting vehicular access to Folly Island at certain times, received a little less support. However, most of the options put forward were supported by over 60% of the people responding to the survey. The only topic that people strongly disagreed with was the idea of moving bus services from the bus station at Bircherley Green.

### Key sites design

2.1.18 The majority of those participating in the survey were supportive of the place-making principles for each of the key sites. Whilst a preferred option emerged for each of the sites, the numerical results were quite close in respect of some of the proposals. Where this was the case, the examination of written comments revealed more information on what the public liked and did not like in each option. This evidence has been used to refine the final options presented in this document.

### Public Realm Strategy

2.1.19 There was a high level of support for the public realm strategy for each the quarters.

2.1.20 A full copy of the Consultation Reports are included as Appendix 2 and 3 of this document. The results of the survey have been carefully analysed and used to inform the final strategy.

## 2.2 Future role - A successful Market Town

2.2.1 In order to achieve the core objectives it is necessary to establish the sorts of activities and uses that the town can realistically support. In the emerging District Plan Hertford is classed as a Secondary Town centre. Hertford has struggled to attract the level of retail and leisure uses that comparative nearby market towns, such as Hitchin and St Albans, contain. Hertford town centre must create its own distinct identity and role. Market and Retail studies have been carried out to help identify this role and steps towards its delivery.

2.2.2 The market study carried out by AspinallVerdi stated that there is significant opportunity to revitalise the town to complement planned growth and development and the retail study carried out by the Retail Group identified several opportunities to enhance the retail experience.

2.2.3 It was clear from public engagement that there is little desire to radically change the town. Therefore, the strategy for change needs to be focused around making the most of what is there already and solidifying Hertford's role as a successful market town.

### The main objective is to create a retail focus in Hertford town centre

2.2.4 The retail study identified that the town lacks a memorable and strong 'heart' in trading terms. Shopping is dispersed across the town centre in retail sub zones. These areas are not well connected and people are not encouraged to dwell in the town centre for extended periods of time. The strategy to improve retail in the town must look at consolidating the retail offer and creating a memorable attractive area with a larger range of shops - as identified as a core objective. To achieve this the following elements should be considered:

#### Re-emphasise the town centre environment

2.2.5 The east-west connection between The Wash and the bus station should function as a central retail spine. This spine is made up of Maidenhead Street, Salisbury Square and Railway Street; each of these has its particular challenges and together they don't read like a continuous route. The public realm proposals seek to address this and much of this urban design strategy is about strengthening this east-west link to create the missing town centre focal point. Improving pedestrian routes and creating a network of high quality spaces are key objectives of this study. Improving the function and appearance of the public realm will create a more attractive environment for retailers and shoppers alike.

### Creating a modern retail environment

#### Bircherley Green Shopping Centre

2.2.6 The Bircherley Green Shopping Centre occupies a key central position within the town; it includes the bus station, the main east-west retail axis and the River Lea. It provides the primary opportunity to create a destination for modern retail set by an attractive river environment. A comprehensive redevelopment would provide the opportunity to address town centre wide, as well as site specific, shortcomings. These are:

##### ■ **A lack of modern retail units (town centre wide):**

Because of the historic environment, average unit sizes are small and below modern retail standards. While these may be suitable for independent shops they are unlikely to attract new national retailers into the town.

##### ■ **A poor river environment:** The river is one of Hertford's greatest assets and the current centre does not address it positively as it turns its back and service area to it.

##### ■ **Lack of visibility of retail units within Bircherley Green:** The current design of the building leads to many of the retail units, and especially their fascias, being hidden behind the building's many overhangs.

2.2.7 The existing foodstore provision around the town centre is excellent with Waitrose in the Bircherley Green Centre and both Sainsbury's and Tesco trading from large modern stores adjoining the town centre boundary. M&S have a successfully trading store on the town centre boundary at the end of Fore Street. This would suggest limited demand for a large supermarket in the core of the town centre. This does of course not preclude demand on top up basket grocery requirements. The market analysis

suggests that a convenience retailer would be viable within Hertford town centre; however, we note that at the consultation event there was a clear preference for a higher value foodstore.

2.2.8 Improving Bircherley Green picks up on many of the core objectives of this study, especially with the opportunities it presents to attract new retailers and open up the riverfront.

### Hertford town centre as a social place

2.2.9 From the baseline studies as well as the consultation event it is very clear that Hertford Town Centre is a social place and that people are attracted to its cafés and restaurants set within a historic environment.

2.2.10 The café and restaurant offer in the town is visibly busy across the trading day. Where external tables and chairs are provided they are often fully used. This includes the units inside Bircherley Green and also Railway Street, Fore Street and especially Parliament Square.

2.2.11 Much of the existing food and beverage offer is basic or cheap fast food, targeting the mass market. In addition, there is a considerable demand for higher quality food and beverage units in the town.

### Making the most of the market

2.2.12 Markets can play a great role in attracting footfall to a town centre or indeed a particular part of the town centre. Public engagement clearly supported the market function within the town centre and its improvement is one of the key objectives of the study. The weekday market and street stalls trading provision in the town centre are basic and it is unlikely that the existing markets are satisfying that role in Hertford. Whilst the existing stalls (typically 2-4 stalls) are reasonably well delivered, they are not attractive enough, visible enough, dynamic, memorable or big enough in quantum to be classified as a market.

2.2.13 The chartered Saturday market is stronger, as is the monthly visiting Farmers Market. Furthermore, signage to the market provision is non-existent and the markets are not helping to distribute footfall across the town.

2.2.14 Market towns often have large, open and permeable market squares. Hertford does not. Many strong market towns have clear centres of activity where footfall is often highest. As Hertford, in location terms, lacks a real 'heart' this is difficult to achieve.

2.2.15 Public realm works and the redevelopment of Bircherley Green could provide high quality public space that offers additional capacity for specialist and seasonal markets that would support a strong market culture.

### Independent retailers

2.2.16 As well as a large number of independent traders operating in the central retail core, Hertford has a strong independent retail offer focused in and around St. Andrew Street and Old Cross. It is focused strongly around homes/interiors and fashion. Many of the shops are upscale and well presented. This contributes greatly to the variety of the retail offer in the town. However, this cluster is physically disconnected from the core town centre offer. Connecting this area with the primary retail centre would create a consolidated shopping experience and support Hertford as a location for both chain and independent retailers – as set out in the core objectives.

### The river

2.2.17 The river frontage is a significantly underutilised asset. Hertford is very unusual in that it has a very attractive and well-maintained river running through the middle of it. Despite this, there is little retail or food and beverage activity that takes advantage of it (with the exception of Starbucks and The Woolpack and Barge pubs).

2.2.18 One of the key objectives of this study is to transform the riverside into an attractive destination and create and improve links to connect it into the wider town centre. The retail appeal and experience across many towns in the UK is that Hertford's offer would benefit from such an asset and opportunity. The environment surrounding the River Lea to the rear of the Bircherley Green Shopping Centre could be brought forward for tourism and leisure uses, including punting along the river and farmers markets.

## Widening the offer

2.2.19 We have already mentioned the opportunity surrounding the markets and there are other opportunities that could support Hertford Town Centre as a place to shop, socialise and spend leisure time. The following opportunities have been identified in the Market Review undertaken in support of this strategy.

2.2.20 **Hotels:** Requirements registered by hotel operators and collated by AspinallVerdi show that there is known demand for a hotel in the area. Given the limited supply of hotels within Hertford there is likely to be potential demand for a new hotel in the town centre. Provision of a hotel will further support tourism within the town and help to establish the evening economy. Businesses are also likely to benefit from such a facility.

2.2.21 **Residential:** Given Hertford's proximity to London and good transport links, there is likely to be demand for apartments and town houses in central Hertford. The ageing population also suggests there would be demand for a retirement/care home. This has been confirmed by requirements registered by a number of operators and collated by AspinallVerdi. These operators often favour town centre locations as it enables residents to access local facilities easily.

2.2.22 **Workspace:** Due to the limited provision of smaller offices and managed workspace facilities in the town centre, the market review suggests there is likely to be demand for a business centre in the town centre to support start-ups and SME's. In the event that the current permission for conversion to a gym is not implemented, The Marquee is likely to be a good location for this; however, a local or independent operator is likely to run such a facility.

2.2.23 **Leisure:** Although there is provision of cinema facilities at Hertford Theatre, there is only one screen and it does not show films every day. The cinema often shows blockbusters, usually at a later date to general release, and screens specialist arts-films. Therefore, the current cinema offer in the town targets a fairly niche audience. Market analysis and feedback from the public engagement demonstrated a demand for another cinema in Hertford which would provide a different offer to the existing facility. A cinema was consistently identified by our engagement exercises as a desirable feature for the town centre and would be the most popular of the uses listed above.

2.2.24 To emphasise the cultural and social importance of the town, opportunities should be explored to work with the University of Hertfordshire and Courtyard Arts to bring art events into the town centre. Hertford Theatre has, in recent years, been refurbished and restructured to include an art gallery run by Courtyard Arts. This has been successful in boosting the cultural life of the town and should be further enhanced. While the main location of Courtyard Arts lies outside the study area (in Port Vale), its benefits are well recognised locally. It is noted that there are aspirations to build on the existing cultural heritage in Contemporary Arts and work with the University of Hertfordshire towards creating an Arts Hub, with a gallery capable of becoming nationally recognised as a PLUS TATE location – the UK National Network of Art Galleries. This initiative would help attract national and international tourists to Hertford and bring wider benefits to the town.

## 2.3 Place-Making Strategy

2.3.1 To achieve the core ambitions of the town centre strategy identified by public engagement and base line studies, it is necessary to synthesise the retail, market and movement analysis as well as urban design/character appraisals into a coherent set of place making principles. The Place-making strategy for Hertford Town Centre builds on:

- Making the most of the town's heritage and character.
- Creating a central focus for Hertford.
- Making the River Lea a focal point for the town.
- Strengthening the identity of the town by creating distinct quarters.
- Improving public realm and connections.



Figure 2.8: Historic building on St Andrew Street

### Making the most of the existing heritage and character

2.3.2 Public engagement clearly identified the town's heritage as its strongest characteristic and as one of its biggest assets. Hertford is in the fortunate position of having the majority of its historical character intact. It is largely built on its historic street network, with the exception of Gascoyne Way. The latter has substantially damaged the existing route network and cut off important landmarks, such as All Saints Church and the residential areas to the south. However, north of Gascoyne Way the original street network remains largely unchanged. This pattern dates back as far as 1610 as illustrated on Speed's Map (Figure 2.9) which clearly shows the loop of the Wash, Mill Bridge, the Castle, Old Cross, Fore Street and Maidenhead Street. All of these are clearly recognisable in the Hertford of today. This creates a rich and varied townscape, reflecting the historic development and changes.

2.3.3 With the exception of Bircherley Green, the historic plot pattern is largely undisturbed. Plots are generally long and narrow, with the exception of many buildings on Fore Street that are generally wide fronted. This historic grain leads to a varied and vertical rhythm of frontages.

2.3.4 The fine urban grain is also reflected in the narrow alleyways. A few of these are successfully used, such as the ones leading to the multi-storey car park and Honey Lane. However, these lanes have their issues and are not a pleasant environment. Evron Place, a more recent lane is particularly poor, as it does not attract footfall or have any active uses within it. Antisocial behaviour is focused in this area, according to consultation comments.

2.3.5 In order to meet the core objective of ensuring new development is sensitive to the historic environment, new development should:

- Reflect the existing plot pattern; where wider retail units are required, the façade on the upper and ground floors should reflect the existing historic grain and narrow plot width.
- Respect established building lines.
- Reflect the historic scale in terms of building heights and create a varied eaves line, with the exception of Bull Plain and Fore Street where eaves lines are generally more consistent.
- Use materials that are of high quality and appropriate in colour, e.g. white and cream coloured render and yellow / brownish bricks.
- Shopfronts should be designed in a sensitive manner and of high quality signage, either painted or individual letters.



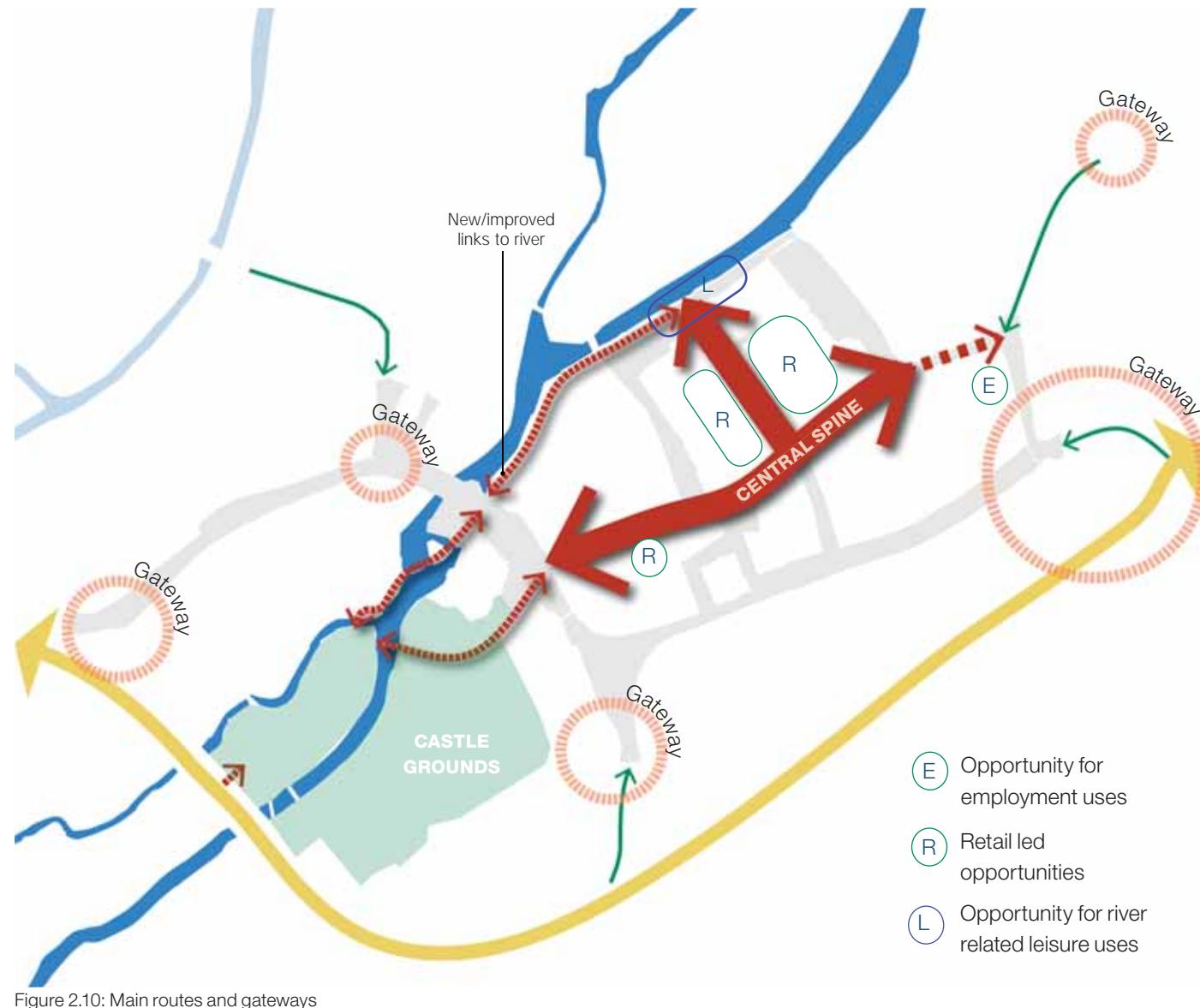
Figure 2.9: Speed's Map of 1610

### Creating a focus for Hertford town centre

2.3.6 Hertford needs a memorable, well-connected focal point for retail, leisure and tourism. This central spine should run from the Castle Grounds, through Maidenhead Street, Salisbury Square and Railway Street. This spine connects all of the key sites (Bircherley Green, Maidenhead Street and The Marquee) and provides a main orientating route for the town centre.

2.3.7 The focus for this area must be:

- Creating a distinctive, well connected spine for the town that links to its gateways, key streets/spaces, key sites and the River Lea- as identified under the environmental core objectives.
- Creating opportunities for larger modern retail units and additional leisure uses on key sites, Bircherley Green and Maidenhead Street to help meet the economic core objectives as identified by public engagement.
- Create a coherent public realm and opportunities for outdoor seating, town centre events and an improved market environment. This will help meet the movement, transport and environment core objectives as identified by public engagement.
- Set out clear signage identifying routes to destinations, open spaces, stations and buildings of historic importance. This will capitalise on the existing town and it will also make it easier for people to find their way around, as set out under the environment core objectives.



### Make the River Lea a focal point for the town

2.3.8 Public engagement identified the River Lea as perhaps the most underused and one of the most picturesque assets in Hertford. The following opportunities have been identified to tie the river back into the town by:

- Opening up the 'island' area of the Castle Grounds between the two branches of the River by adding new pathways.
- Improved links alongside the River Lea through better connections, potential new bridges and public realm improvements.
- Re-focus development at Bircherley Green towards the river and provide usable public open space.
- Investigate a new crossing between Dolphin Yard and Old Library Lane and/or The Wash.
- Promote mooring and facilities for narrow boats to bring visitors to the town and create an active and pleasant river environment.
- Encourage cafés / restaurants to use the river environment.

#### Key

<span style="background-color: #e0e0e0; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px;"></span> Hertford road network	<span style="color: green; font-size: 1.5em;">→</span> Connections into the town centre
<span style="background-color: #a0c0a0; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px;"></span> Castle Grounds	<span style="color: orange; font-size: 1.5em;">→</span> New River Walk
<span style="color: red; font-size: 1.5em;">↗</span> Extension of central spine	<span style="color: red; font-size: 1.5em;">→</span> Improved pedestrian links
<span style="color: yellow; font-size: 1.5em;">→</span> A 414	<span style="color: orange; font-size: 1.5em;">→</span> Town Loop Walk
<span style="color: red; font-size: 1.5em;">■</span> Pedestrian central spine	<span style="color: green; font-size: 1.5em;">●</span> New seasonal refreshment facility

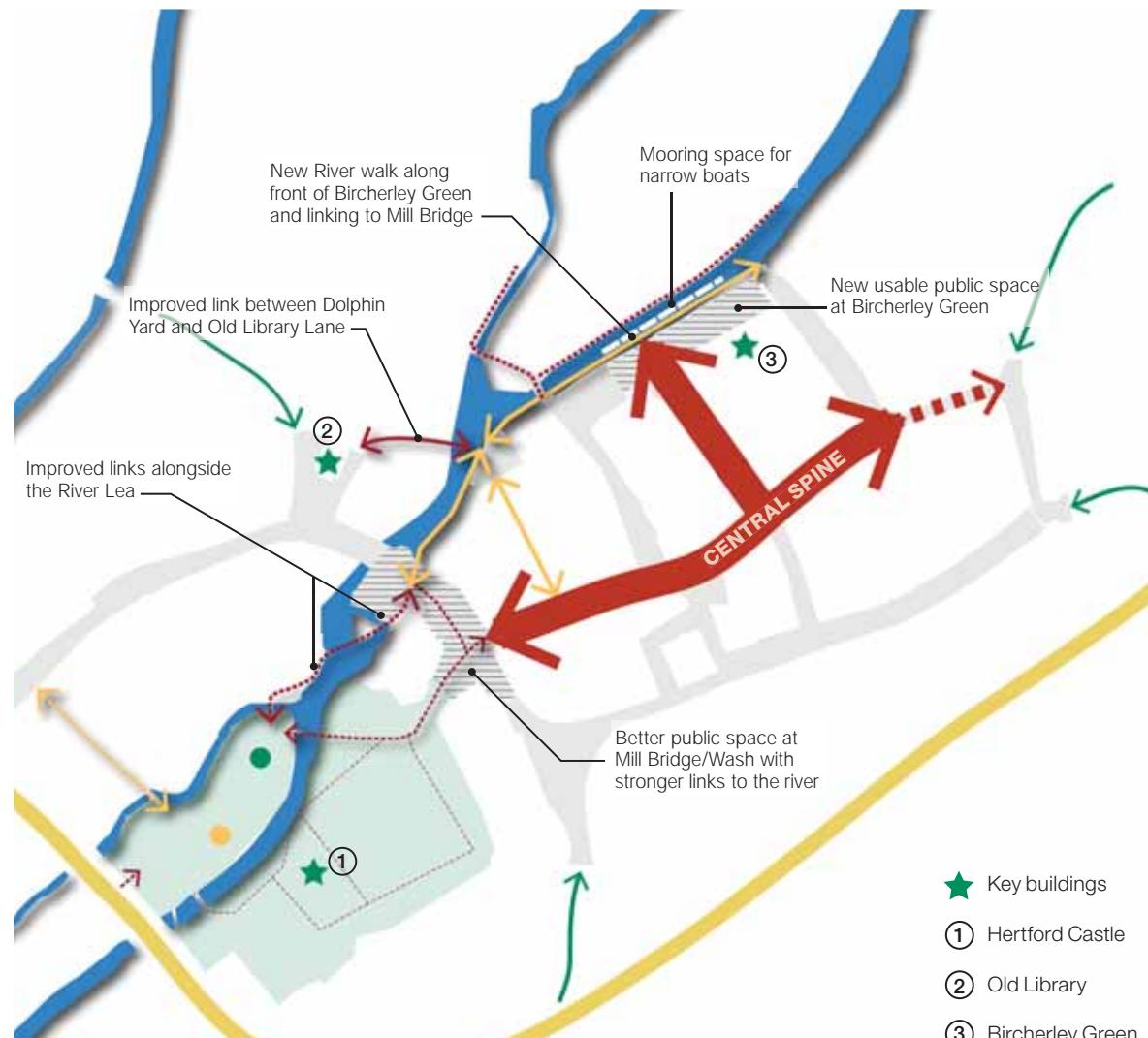


Figure 2.11: Improving and creating new pedestrian links in Castle Grounds and along the river

## Strengthening the identity of the town by creating distinctive quarters

2.3.9 From a retail and wayfinding perspective it is important to identify distinct quarters within the town. This will not only help people to find their way around the town but create marketing opportunities for the town and local businesses promoting the town's heritage and shops. This will help realise objectives set out under character and history, environment and economy. This strategy identifies six distinctive quarters.

- **St Andrew Quarter:** The area of Old Cross and St Andrew Street is distinct through its cluster of independent retail, high end shops that are set within a high quality historic environment. The branding of this area as 'St Andrew Quarter' would put this area onto the map and ensure that it is linked with the town centre, therefore attracting visitors.
- **Salisbury Quarter:** This is formed around the traditional retail core of the town and the central spine, including Maidenhead Street and Railway Street.
- **Castle Quarter:** An area defined by the castle building and grounds, including The Wash and Theatre.
- **The Shire Quarter (Fore Street):** This area is formed around the grandest street in Hertford and the former civic heart. It is characterised by a dominance of food and beverage outlets and the night-time economy.
- **New Riverside Quarter:** The redeveloped Bircherley Green shopping centre, with a modern retail environment, cafés and restaurants set alongside a reanimated river frontage.
- **Bluecoats Quarter:** Eastern periphery of the town centre and former industrial area, contains Hertford East station and historic Former Christ's Hospital School.



Figure 2.12: Quarters in Hertford

### Improving public realm and spaces

2.3.10 Public realm improvements in each quarter will enhance the character of each quarter. Each quarter is supported by the public realm strategy that enhances the focal points identified to guide people around the town. Each of the identified spaces has been selected from feedback of the public engagement exercises and our landscape and townscape analysis. Improvements should enhance the setting of following key spaces:

- St Andrew Quarter: Old Cross.
- The Salisbury Quarter: Maidenhead Street, Bull Plain and Railway Street.
- The Shire Quarter: Parliament Square, Junction of Fore Street and Former Christ's Hospital School.
- New Riverside Quarter: The Riverfront and Bircherley Green.
- Bluecoats Quarter: The entrance space to Hertford East Station.
- The Castle Grounds: The environment of The Wash, entrance to the grounds and links to the River Lea.



Figure 2.13: Important public realm in Hertford

#### Key



Key buildings

## Creating a pedestrian friendly environment

### Improving pedestrian and cycle connections

2.3.11 Good connections between areas within the town centre and the wider town are important to encourage people to use the town centre as well as reduce the amount of vehicular traffic. Improved connections between the quarters encourage visitors to explore the full town centre offers and extend their stay in the town. Better connectivity will largely be achieved by public realm projects, improvements to existing pedestrian crossing points, localised redistribution of road space for pedestrian or cycle users and a potential new pedestrian link from Dolphin Yard to St Andrew Street that would connect the central retail areas and the St Andrew Quarter.

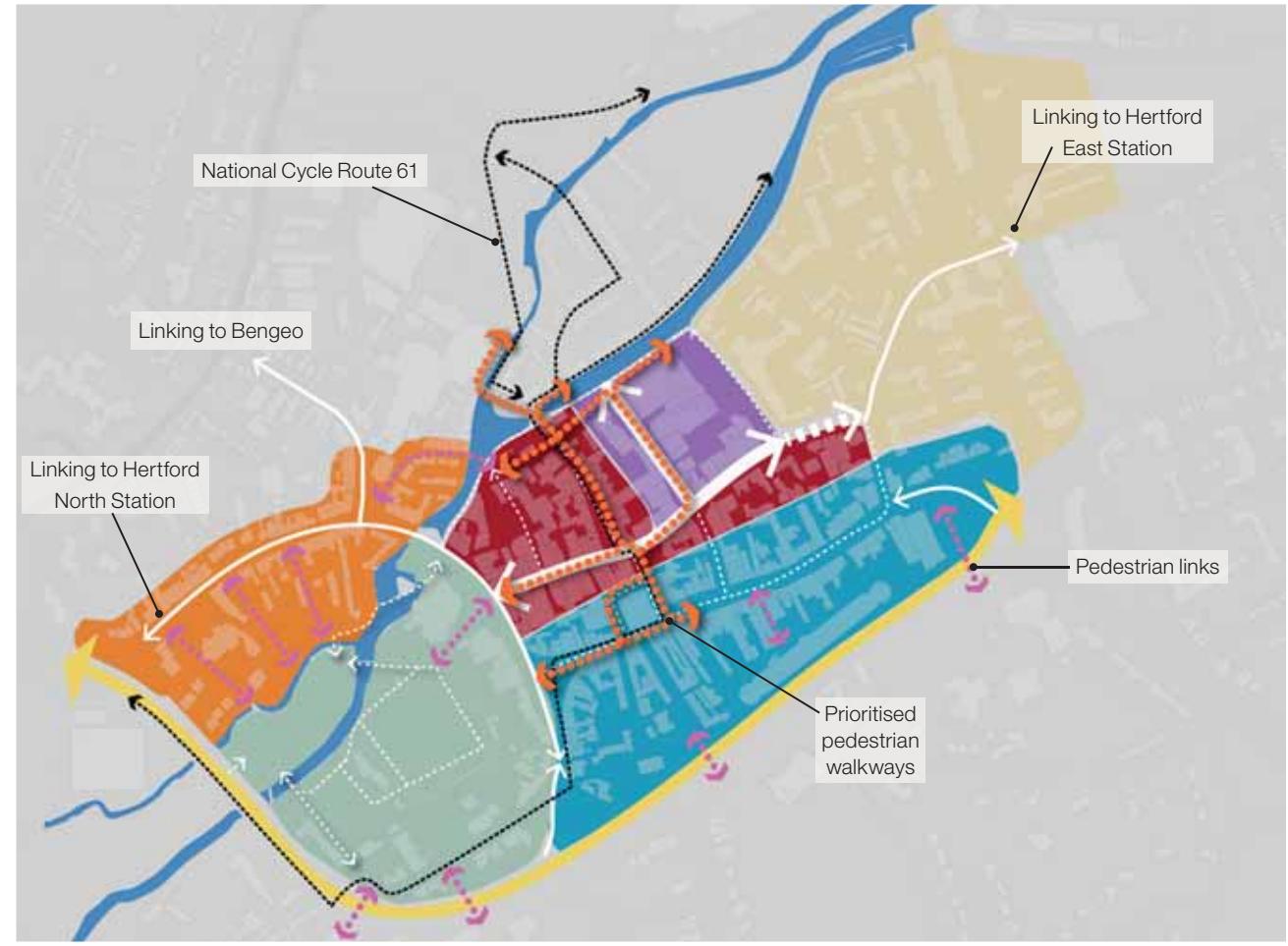


Figure 2.14: Important connections



Figure 2.15: Location of movement strategies

### Reducing traffic within the town centre

2.3.12 To meet the key objective of creating a more pedestrian friendly town centre environment the volume of vehicles entering the town centre needs to be reduced and loading and servicing better managed. This reduction in traffic would help to meet the objective of prioritising cyclists and pedestrians in the town centre area and enable public realm improvements and town centre events to take place. Hertford is a historic environment and therefore the options for traffic management are restricted.

2.3.13 The Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan includes a long-term aspiration to close Hertford town centre

streets to motorised traffic except buses, cycles, taxis and loading. However, the balance between vehicular traffic and a pedestrian focused town centre environment must allow for the needs of retailers and wider accessibility.

2.3.14 The retail study supporting this strategy has found that Hertford's retail offer has to achieve the balance between ease of access, shopper convenience, and quality of retail environment. At the moment the number of visitors to the town centre either looking to park as close to the core town centre as possible, and indeed access Folly Island, is negatively affecting the shopper experience in the core of the town centre offer around Market Place / Railway Street and Bull Plain. It would be preferable for shoppers in these

areas if they were designated pedestrian and cycling priority zones, at least during core shopping times.

2.3.15 It is however important that short term parking is retained in the town centre, but this should be on the edge of centre, not necessarily in the core of the retail offer. Below are a number of interventions that could contribute towards a more pedestrian friendly environment. Further technical detail is provided in the Movement Strategy.

### Closing the Western End of Fore Street

2.3.16 Public consultation and our transport analysis identified a particular conflict at the western end of Fore Street (between the war memorial and the Shire Hall) Fore Street acts as an 'eastbound relief road' for the A414 (Gascoyne Way). Traffic entering from the west creates a conflict between pedestrians, cars, buses and cyclists. Furthermore, the western end of Fore Street is two-way for buses but not wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass without either mounting the kerb or using the designated give way area, which is often ignored by motorists. This in turn creates damage to the footway which is costly to maintain and repair.

2.3.17 The Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan (UTP) identifies the closure of the western end of Fore Street for general traffic as a long-term aspiration (Scheme HWY3). This view was largely supported by the feedback to the public consultation on this document. This Town Centre Strategy aspires to close the western end of Fore Street to general traffic on a permanent and create a bus, cycle and pedestrian priority link. Further detailed information is included in Section 3.

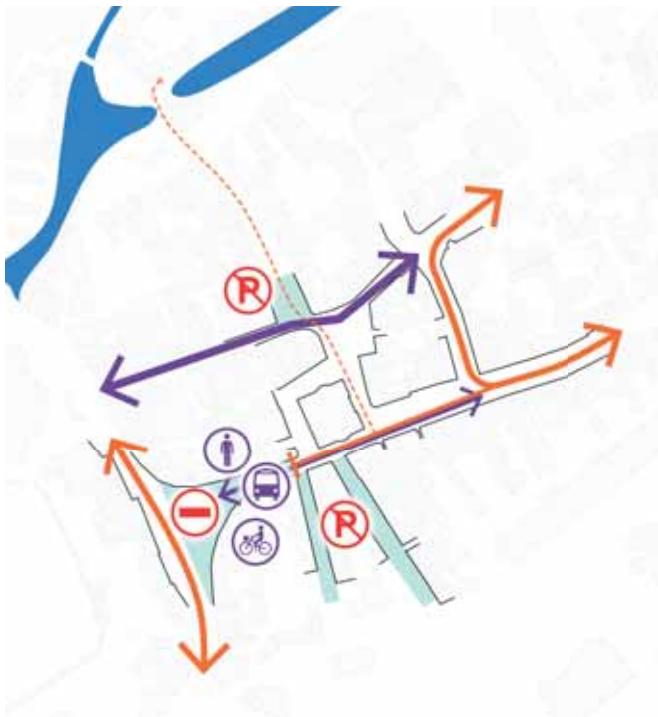


Figure 2.16: Detailed movement strategy

**Key**

- Areas of change
- Central pedestrian spine
- Pedestrianised link to The Wash, allowing buses and cycles
- End of vehicular network
- Reduced traffic to Folly Island
- Removal of short stay on street public parking except for disabled parking
- Closing the western end of Fore Street

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2.3.18 What would be the impact of closing the western end of Fore Street to private motorised traffic?

**Positives:**

- Reduce the number of vehicles (between 230- 320 cars at peak hour) driving through Market Street and Railway Street. This would in turn improve pedestrian amenity within the town centre.
- Reduce car, bus, pedestrian and cyclist conflict.
- Create a safer environment for cyclists as the National Cycle Route 61 runs along this stretch of road.

**Negatives:**

- Likely to increase traffic delays on the network, particularly in the evening peak. The reason for this is that the model shows over 700 vehicles travelling eastbound on Fore Street in the PM peak hour, with buses only accounting for a small number of these movements. With the closure of Fore Street, these vehicles must find alternative routes to their destinations, with most of the traffic continuing along The Wash to the roundabout with Gascoyne Way. The queue lengths for the roundabout, between Gascoyne Way and the Wash increase significantly due to the additional traffic, causing queues to extend back to the Old Cross traffic signals, as well as causing blocking back along Gascoyne Way.
- Increases the bus journey times for some bus routes (note there are variations in the routes depending on the time of day and week; the number of buses relates to the peak number of routes). Buses turning into / out of Fore Street are getting caught up in the additional queues on the Wash which block back all the way to Old Cross. Whilst closing Fore Street initially reduces journey times for buses due to the reduction of traffic on Fore Street

and the surrounding roads, by the end of the peak hour, the additional queuing on The Wash and Gascoyne Way will negatively impact on bus journeys.

- Restricting the western access to Fore Street would also limit access to the town centre and Folly Island for those travelling from the north-west. This could result in additional vehicle miles and an increase to journey times for residents, visitors and servicing vehicles.

2.3.19 This closure could be put in place on a trial basis initially and consideration could also be given to limiting it to off-peak and/or evenings and weekends only. This measure must be considered alongside the wider traffic impacts of District Plan growth in Hertford, largely beyond the town centre, and its effect on the A414 and the wider road network.

2.3.20 Also, these changes may encourage people to change their travel behaviour. The restricted access of vehicle traffic and the increase in delays could result in a modal shift towards more people walking, cycling or using public transport.

2.3.21 If, following further studies, it were concluded that under current conditions the network could not support the closure of Fore Street at the western end, it may be the case that improvements to the wider strategic transport network could provide further capacity in the longer term. This may provide more resilience in the network, which would enable the closure of Fore Street without causing a significant impact to highway capacity as a long-term Strategy aspiration.

**Reduce traffic through Bull Plain**

2.3.22 As identified in the strategy the central spine leading from Bircherley Green, via Railway Street to the Castle Grounds is a critical element to improving the vitality and quality of the town centre. Salisbury Square, along with Bull Plain, is the central space in the town and it should play a much more significant role. Reducing traffic in this area will offer the opportunity to create a high quality public space that is designed with pedestrians in mind, a space that can accommodate town events and regular larger markets. The benefits of reducing traffic in this area would make a significant difference to this part of the town, and support the vision and objectives identified through consultation, such as:

- Reduce the pedestrian / vehicle conflict at the junction of Maidenhead Street and Salisbury Square on a temporary basis.
- Emphasise the east-west pedestrian flow through the town centre.
- Create a better and more usable space in the centre of the town for events and larger markets.
- Improve the retail environment around Salisbury Square and links to Maidenhead Street.

2.3.23 Reducing traffic in this area would be achieved in two ways:

**Limit access (through the town centre) to Folly Island**

2.3.24 One of the main barriers to removing traffic from the central area - Salisbury Square - is the historic route from Fore Street to Folly Island. At present this is the only vehicular access to Folly Island and it is currently impossible to remove vehicles completely from this route.

2.3.25 There potentially is a long term aspiration to create an alternative access to Folly Island from the north. A link via Thornton Street needs further investigation and is currently difficult to achieve due to land ownership and technical constraints, in relation to level changes. However, in the short term, there is the potential to close the Bull Plain access for private vehicles on particular days to facilitate town centre events and markets. Emergency access will need to be retained at all times.

**Removing parking from Bull Plain**

2.3.26 There are currently around 15 short-term parking spaces in Bull Plain. Except for the disabled parking bays, these should be removed to reduce the amount of cars in the town centre cruising for spaces (often in vain), enhance the pedestrian environment, and provide space for a potential market. The analysis suggests that there is spare capacity at other town centre car parks (notably Hartham Lane or the Sainsbury's car parks to the north). Gascoyne Way car park also has spare capacity throughout the day, which needs to be managed to allow for more short term shoppers car parking and for people to be directed to use this car park.

2.3.27 While this intervention will lead to the loss of some short-term parking spaces, it will significantly improve the pedestrian environment.

**Limit general traffic to west of Market Street**

2.3.28 Both of the interventions, closing off Fore Street and reducing traffic in Bull Plain can be taken forward independently. However, in combination they would have the greatest impact on the town centre. A longer term aspiration is to make the area west of Market Street a residential parking zone and restricting access to services and residents only, with the exception of disabled parking in certain locations. Vehicular flows within the centre will be even further reduced.

2.3.29 To achieve this, the public parking spaces on Bell Lane and Church Street (both of which take access off Fore Street) need to be withdrawn and re-allocated to residents who will be afforded access only rights as a controlled parking zone. This will result in the loss of approximately 14 unrestricted spaces on Church Street and a further 8 short term spaces on Bell Lane. These spaces are within a short walk of Gascoyne Way which could absorb some of the capacity.

2.3.30 The current general parking spaces outside numbers 17 to 27 Fore Street would become a dedicated disabled parking/loading bay.

2.3.31 With the removal of these parking spaces and limited vehicular access to the town centre, it will become a more attractive space for people to walk and cycle as traffic in the area is reduced. This could result in a shift away from people driving, and an increase in more sustainable modes, which would reduce the need for car parking spaces.

2.3.32 Apart from this the **benefits** would be:

- A significant reduction in traffic within the town centre, around the Shire Hall, western end of Fore Street, Bull Plain, Market Square and Salisbury Square.
- Potential improvements to parking for town centre residents as a result of a resident only parking area - the viability and deliverability of this will need to be further investigated.

**Negatives:**

- Reduction in short term parking dispersed through the western part of the town centre.
- Delays on the highway network for general traffic and selected buses as a result of closing the western end of Fore Street to general traffic.

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### Loading and servicing

2.3.33 Loading Pads could be implemented on Fore Street, The Wash, Market Street and Railway Street. These pads could increase the effective width of the footway when loading is not in operation, whilst still retaining the loading bays required to service the units. These interventions along with better management of the loading restrictions and times in the town centre would help address some of the issues identified in the baseline report and devote more of the public realm to pedestrian activities. This would supplement the other interventions mentioned. Measures to restrict services to out of hours are common in most town centres. However, this will need to be tested with existing retailers as it can be ~~ag~~ train, particularly in respect of the scope for independent retailers to influence the timing of deliveries because of their ~~ag~~ size.

## Area guidance

2.4.1 One of the most positive aspects of Hertford's Town Centre is the distinctive character of streets and spaces. The most historic buildings and landmarks stand out in the townscape, giving character to the surrounding. To strengthen the town centre identity, enhance wayfinding, and help people to orientate themselves, we have identified a detailed strategy for each of the areas:

- **St Andrew Quarter:** Old Cross and St Andrew Street.
- **The Castle Quarter:** The environment of The Wash, entrance to the grounds and links to the River Lea.
- **The Shire Quarter:** Parliament Square, Junction of Fore Street and Former Christ's Hospital School.
- **The Salisbury Quarter:** Maidenhead Street, Bull Plain and Railway Street.
- **New Riverside Quarter:** The River Front and Bircherley Green.
- **Bluecoats Quarter:** The entrance space to Hertford East Station.



Figure 2.17: Town Centre Improvement strategy - detailed plans for each area are included in each section

## St Andrew Quarter - St Andrew Street and Old Cross

2.4.2 This area creates the western entrance to the town centre and is the home of some high quality independent retailers and businesses.

2.4.3 St Andrew Street is a particularly distinctive street with many attractive historic buildings and independent businesses. St Andrew Street gently curves around the castle grounds. It contains many historic listed buildings that follow a traditional historic pattern. Narrow plots sit directly on the pavement and most have no front garden or boundary treatments. Buildings to the north of the street are set along a continuous frontage. This breaks only at the entrances to Brewhouse Lane where it steps back widening the road.

2.4.4 The southern edge of the street follows a similar pattern but the frontage is broken up by St Andrew's Churchyard. The spire of St Andrew's is an important landmark for the town.

2.4.5 Most of the buildings on St Andrew Street were originally built as residential properties and are two to three storeys in height. There are several ages and styles of building from traditional timber framed, to classical to modern dwellings. Typically, the less classical buildings are rendered with steep roofs and dormer windows to accommodate additional space in the attic. More classical buildings are made of brick and have shallower pitches.

2.4.6 St Andrew Street is a successful cluster of small businesses and shops. It has a distinct high quality character with a mix of uses. Many buildings have business or retail uses at ground floor with residential accommodation above. Shop fronts have generally been sensitively designed to complement the historic character of the buildings featuring timber fascias, awnings and traditional signage.

2.4.7 St Andrew Street suffers from the impact of heavy traffic and its footpaths are narrow, which creates conflicts and a hostile environment for pedestrians. One of the key spaces in this area is the junction of St Andrew Street and Old Cross. At this point visitors coming from St Andrew Street start getting a fuller sense of the town centre, with a view to the old library to the north and the former Green Dragon Hotel at the junction with Maidenhead Street. The Former Library Building stands out as a feature in the townscape.

### Place-making objectives

- Reduce traffic dominance on St Andrew Street and at Old Cross junction and improve pedestrian crossing.
- Promote 'St Andrew Quarter' to encourage more footfall through signage and branding.
- Improve connection between St Andrew Street and the wider town centre.
- Work with the St Andrew Street Traders' Association to improve and promote the area.
- Making the most of the Town's heritage by use of high quality traditional materials.

### Improvement strategy

- Enhance Old Cross as the gateway into St Andrew Quarter by repaving the paved space (East side) in natural stone materials to match St Andrew Street and provide enhanced seating and a wayfinding map totem.
- To further define the gateway space, extend the paved extent of the square to create a paved shared carriageway along Old Cross to Old Library Lane. This will also enhance the legibility of the proposed riverside walk loop from Bull Plain / Dolphin Yard to St Andrew Street if this is constructed. The technical feasibility of this link needs to be further investigated.
- St. Andrew Street's street furniture and lighting should be repainted to ensure the area looks well maintained. Consider location of signage and street furniture to ensure they don't create pinch points and clutter on narrow footways.
- Improve entrances to the surface car park to enhance the historic streetscape and improve legibility of the car park and pedestrian link to the Castle Grounds through narrowing openings with brick walls, railings incorporating wayfinding signage, tree planting and paving across cross overs.
- Create a small paved space for seating and cycle parking for shoppers outside numbers 32 – 32A. Remove the two parking bays on the north side and extend the footway with a raised cycle parking / loading bay at footway level where pavement is set back. Provide seating and cycle parking stands.
- Add additional sign to existing public footpath finger post by St. Andrew's Church indicating access to Castle Grounds as part of a 'town loop' and Castlemead.



Figure 2.18: Improvement strategy for St Andrew Street

## Key

- Gateway points to alert vehicles to reduce speed
- Repave footway - type as materials strategy
- Raised paved crossing to ease pedestrian crossing
- Extend width of footway
- Town loop walk
- New path through or defined route to Castle Grounds
- Paths enhanced
- Street tree planting zone

## Castle Quarter - The Wash

2.4.8 Starting at Old Cross, via The Wash, Mill Bridge and leading to Parliament Square this street curves around the Castle Grounds. It is one of the oldest routes in the town and has a unique character and sense of drama.

2.4.9 The street narrows between Old Cross and Mill Bridge and opens up at the Wash, from where it sweeps down towards the Castle before rising to Parliament Square.

2.4.10 In the south this street connects to the Gascoyne Way roundabout and therefore it is an important gateway into the town. South of Parliament Square the built form and tight sense of enclosure clearly signalises the arrival into the town centre. However, the public realm is highway dominated and designed to allow cars off the roundabout as quickly as possible. This reduces the quality of the townscape and sense of arrival.

2.4.11 On the northern end at Mill Bridge there are open views down the Lea and a large area of public open space between the Lea and the Six Templars Pub. This contains Hertford Theatre and the historic gates to the Castle. Both are important landmarks. Despite the absence of buildings along the southern edge of the carriageway, the wayfinding to the Castle and Grounds is poor. Visual links are restricted by the remains of the old castle walls and by heavy planting. This is not helped by the location of the decorative gates to the Castle Grounds. These should remain unchanged, but as the gates are often closed they block views into the Castle Grounds. Furthermore, the loading area and car park for the theatre blocks views and the pedestrian route through the open space.

2.4.12 Narrow pavements and high volumes of traffic further impact on The Wash and Mill Bridge. There are two key bus stops within this area which will need to be retained as they serve this area of the town well.

2.4.13 The Quarter consists of two interlinked elements:

- the Castle Grounds and River Lea; and
- Mill Bridge, The Wash, Parliament Square and Castle Street.

### Place-making objectives

- Encourage greater use of the Grounds throughout the year and improve facilities to attract visitors and shoppers to spend more time in Hertford Town Centre.
- Improve the river environment with a continuous pedestrian friendly footway along the river edge and through Castle Grounds, investigating ways to better connect existing sections of the riverside path and the potential for introducing seasonal riverside refreshments.
- Improve access from the West /Castlemead and reduce impact of the A414 on the Grounds.
- Improve connections, legibility and quality of routes between the centre of the town and Castle Grounds and improve wayfinding with a focus on signposting retail areas and cultural and historic assets.
- Improve the quality of shops and restaurants along The Wash.
- Improve the southern gateway at Gascoyne Way and Parliament Square and expand the town centre environment to the roundabout by creating a more pedestrian friendly and less car orientated public realm.
- Make the most of the Town's heritage and enhance the setting of Listed buildings with use of high quality traditional materials.

### Improvement strategy

#### Castle Grounds and River Lea

- Upgrade existing seating and provide additional seating along existing footpaths.
- The Ashley Webb shelter is in poor condition creating a run-down appearance to this part of the Grounds. Its location and design blocks views to the river from the Hertford Theatre / Maidenhead Street entrance and attracts anti-social behaviour. This structure forms part of the listing due to being within the Curtilage of a listed building. While the preferred option would be to remove the shelter to open up the Grounds or provide a new structure that could better meet the needs for a safe and attractive social space, there is some support to retain the structure in a refurbished form. Either of these building options should provide greater visual permeability, seating, and reduce the dark environment and potential for anti-social behaviour. This area has great potential to support interpretation to the Motte and provide a safe and attractive social space to enjoy the riverside views.
- The existing play area could be enhanced to provide a more attractive facility for the local population and visitors to the Castle Grounds though the size should remain similar to the existing situation to ensure there isn't a negative impact on the historic grounds. Its relocation within the Grounds could also be considered to reduce any negative air quality impact from the A414 for users. It should be noted that Hartham Common provides a greater range of equipment for all ages and is the main recreation ground in the town.

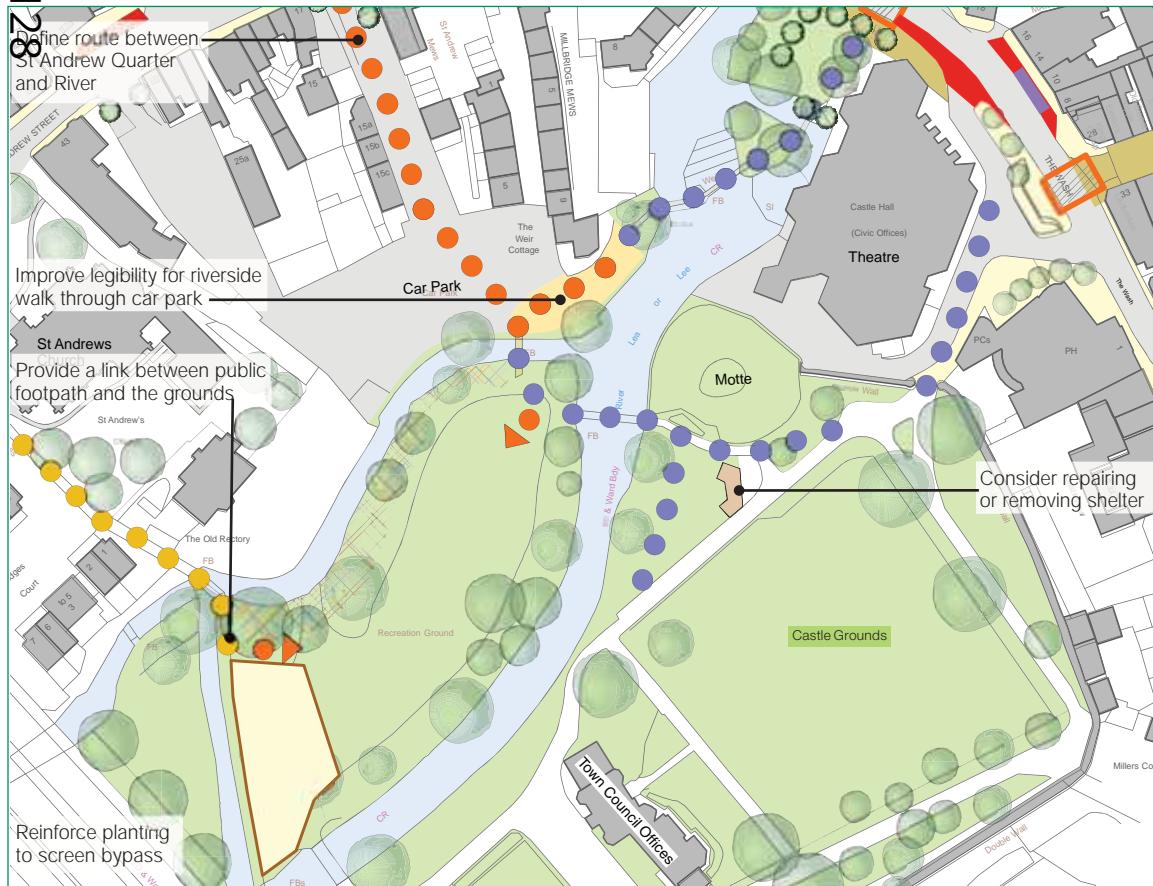


Figure 2.19: Improvement strategy for Castle Grounds

### Key

- ● Town loop walk
- ● New path through or defined route to Grounds
- ● Park paths enhanced
- Enhanced existing play area



- Improve the areas of public open space along the Wash, creating better links between the retail area and the Castle Grounds as well as visual connections to the River Lea. This should include consideration of removal of a number of parking spaces in the St. Andrew Street car park to form a continuous vehicle free pedestrian riverside route from the Castle Grounds to Mill Bridge and the Theatre.

### Castle Quarter - Mill Bridge, The Wash, Parliament Square, Castle Street

- Reconfigure the riverside space next to Mill Bridge / Hertford Theatre through:
  - Extending the paved area to create a larger space of informal activities / performances and to allow for a street café serviced by mobile coffee vendor or consider a more permanent landmark structure.
  - Relocating the Samuel Stone statue away from the back of footway set within a paved space with additional seating and amenity lighting and wayfinding related to the riverside walk. However, this would need to be sensitively planned to ensure that it would not be open to anti-social behaviour, especially at night.
  - Retaining a soft edge to the river with path and seating and additional planting. Undertake risk assessment to assess whether the railings are required or could be reduced in length to allow greater connectivity between the water and the space.



#### Key

- ● ● Enhance Town Centre Gateway
- ○ ○ Gateway points to alert vehicles to reduce speed
- ● ● New path through or defined route to Gardens
- ○ ○ Raised paved crossing to ease pedestrian crossing

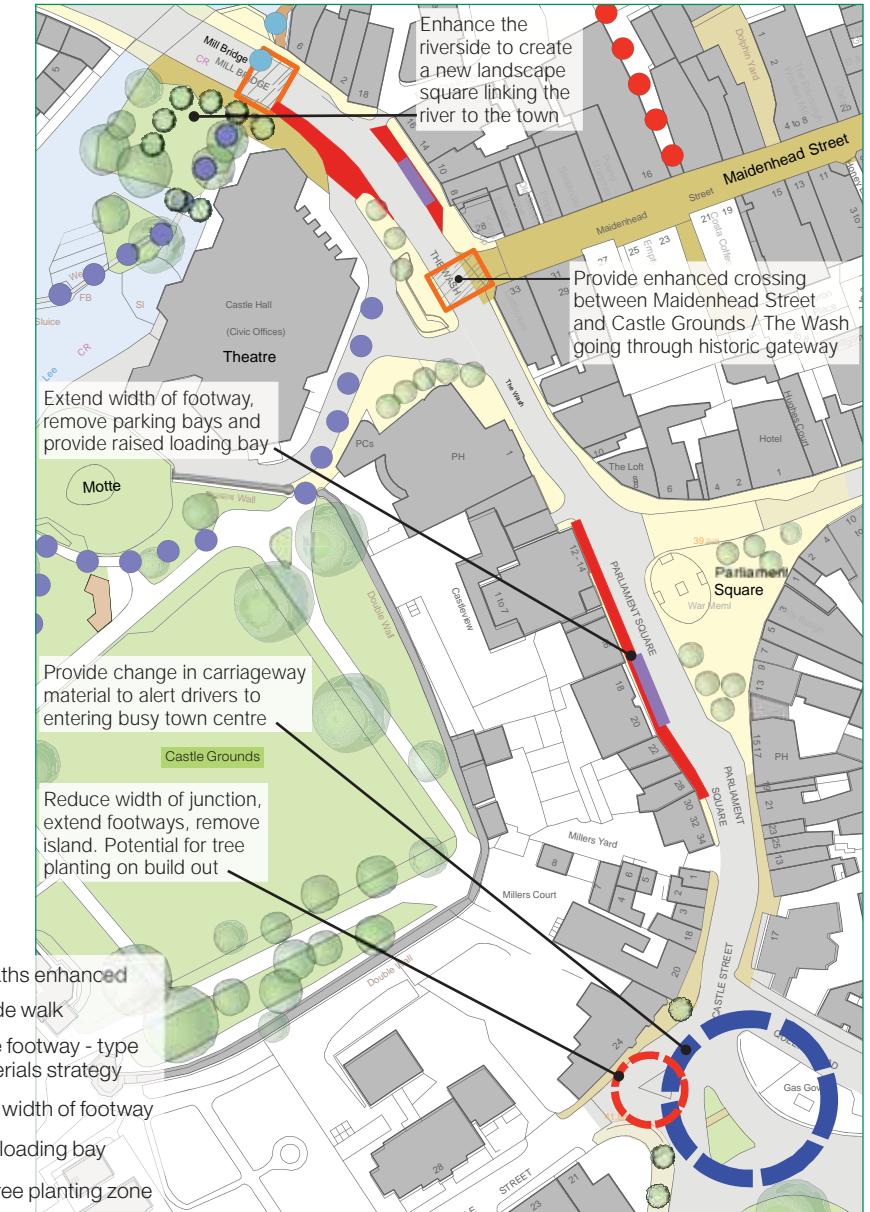


Figure 2.20: Improvement strategy for The Wash

- Improving access along the riverside – particularly encouraging increased public access to the existing gated ‘westbank’ path within the hours allowed by the planning permission for that development.
- Investigating potential for Hertford Theatre to open out onto the adjacent space.
- Removing the planting bed on the bridge to create a viewing point and so increase width of footway.
- Reducing width of carriageway and increase footways where feasible. Provide paved raised loading bay pads to increase footway width when not in use.
- Enhancing crossing point from Maidenhead Street by creating a wide controlled raised table across The Wash from Maidenhead Street to the historic Castle allowing pedestrian access directly through the impressive entrance gates. The technical feasibility of this crossing needs to be further investigated.
- Removing excess bollards at Parliament Square.
- Creating a paved space with seating in front of the Hertford Theatre and reducing vehicle movements around the theatre forecourt by closing off the northern exit for all but the largest theatre vehicles if required.
- Improve existing shop fronts to reflect the historic environment of the Castle Quarter.
- Strengthen the gateway into the town from Gascoyne Way by:
  - Reducing the width of the turning into Castle Street with kerb build-out to both sides and remove the traffic island in Castle Street between Longmores and William H Brown which is out of keeping with the historic narrow street. Consideration will need to be given to the needs of cyclists using National Cycle Route 61.

- Provide a change in carriageway surface at the gateway such as a coloured macadam wearing course or other material sympathetic to the Conservation Area to define a threshold into the town centre to alert drivers to the change in speed limit and likely pedestrian and cycle activity between the bypass and the town centre.
- Screening the Gascoyne Way car park with attractive materials, such as a living wall or other sympathetic material, would reduce the impact of this obtrusive building.

### Shire Quarter

2.4.14 Before the construction of Gascoyne Way, Fore Street was the main vehicular route through the town centre. It is wider and grander than the other streets in Hertford. The buildings on Fore Street are taller and wider, many are double-fronted and symmetrical, creating a sense of formality. In the past this street would have been the business hub of the town with many banks, the Post Office and the Magistrates Court clustered together.

2.4.15 The street is terminated at either end with distinctive buildings or spaces. On the western edge it is terminated by Parliament Square. This square is an important urban space at the western end of Fore Street. It links directly into Fore Street. This triangular space includes the war memorial, a significant landmark, and marks an entry point to the town. This is one of the few larger spaces in Hertford town centre that is sunny, with an opportunity to sit out.

2.4.16 On the eastern end, the historic buildings at the Former Christ’s Hospital School create a distinctive entrance point to the street. However, the existing Marks & Spencer building, the garage and clutter of traffic signs at the entrance to Fore Street reduce the quality of this town centre gateway.

2.4.17 In traffic terms, Fore Street unfortunately acts as an eastbound rat run to avoid Gascoyne Way, which creates conflict between pedestrians and vehicles and increases the traffic flows through the town centre.

2.4.18 Car parking, bus stops and servicing as well as taxi ranks create a busy environment on Fore Street. This reduces the ability of pedestrians to cross the street and explore shops on both sides of the road.

### Place-making objectives

- Reduce traffic within the area and improve pedestrian environment.
- Reduce traffic / pedestrian and cycle conflicts at the western end of Fore Street.
- Making the most of the Town’s heritage and strengthen the ‘County town’ character reflecting the historic and cultural significant buildings including Shire Hall.
- Strengthen the gateway on the east of Fore Street by improving the setting of the historic buildings and creating a more pedestrian friendly and a less car orientated public realm.
- Promote existing buildings of lower quality, such as the Marks & Spencer’s and garage building as a long-term opportunity site.
- Improve wayfinding with a focus on signposting, retail areas cultural and historic assets, such as the Shire Hall.
- Reduce the impact of vehicles on the retail and evening environment.

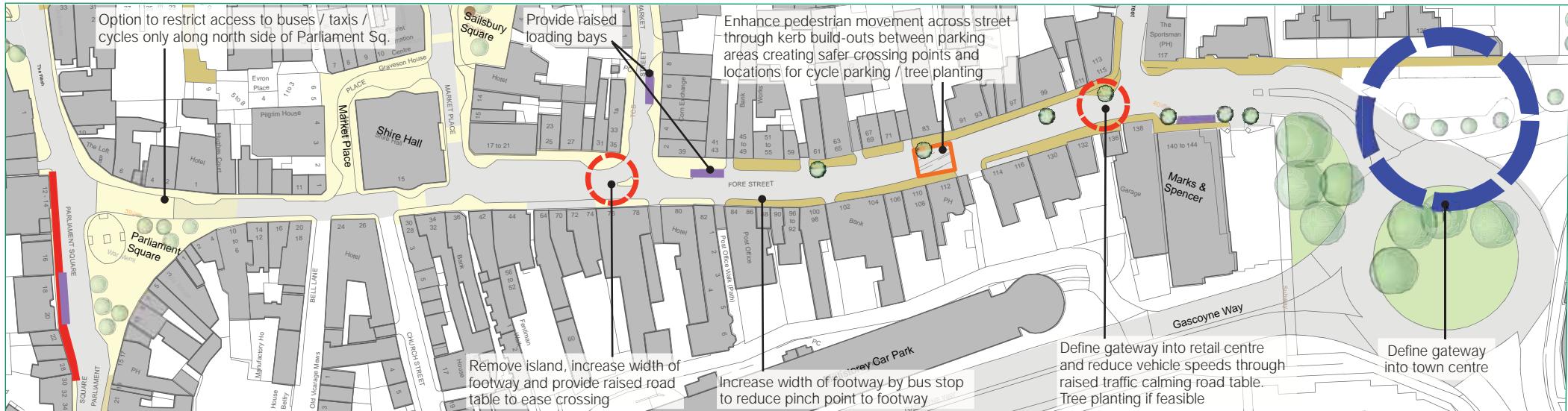


Figure 2.21: Improvement strategy for Shire Quarter - Fore Street

#### Key

- Enhance Town Centre Gateway
- Gateway points to alert vehicles to reduce speed
- Repave footway - type as materials strategy
- Raised paved crossing to ease pedestrian crossing
- Raised loading bay
- Street tree planting zone



## Shire Quarter - Fore Street

2.4.19 Fore Street is a key east west route within the town centre and a street of a distinct and positive character.

2.4.20 Apart from the potential closure of Fore Street at the western end to general traffic, there is a number of options around how to treat Fore Street in the future. These relate to the priority that is being given to pedestrian, cycle, buses and private traffic. Section 3 of this report sets out the implication of increasing bus services along this route.

### Pedestrian and cycle priority

2.4.21 As a key east west link there is the opportunity to give more emphasis to cyclists and pedestrians on Fore Street. This would improve the pedestrian and cycle environment at the expense of losing short-term parking spaces and the opportunity to improve bus services and promote the cycling contraflow along this street.

### Leave as is with minor public realm improvements

2.4.22 There is an opportunity to improve the environment on Fore Street without structural changes to traffic flows and only minor changes to the existing parking arrangements. This would improve the ability of pedestrians to cross the street and give more space to pedestrians outside loading activities.

2.4.23 Prioritising pedestrians, cyclists or public transport would benefit from an extension of the footway along the entire length of the street. Either on the northern side to allow a wider footway for shoppers, potential for seating, tree planting (if feasible) and cycle parking stands without impacting on pedestrian movement or on the southern side to provide space for bus shelters and seating. As a result some on street parking will need to be relocated, reducing

the length of the taxi rank in the daytime and an overall reduction in parking.

2.4.24 A less intrusive option would be to retain the existing kerb lines and provide a pavement extension with raised speed table to ease pedestrian crossing between the retail frontages, reduce speed of vehicles along the street and provide opportunity for tree planting and possibly seating. In this option, some on street parking will also need to be relocated, reducing the length of the taxi rank in the daytime.

### Improvement strategy

- Strengthen gateway from Gascoyne Way by defining a landscape space in front of Bluecoats reflecting the formal architecture of the Former Christ's Hospital School Yard. This space has the potential for a Public Art project and additional trees to improve the air quality.
- Reduce carriageway widths between Gascoyne Way roundabout and South Street where feasible.
- Where not already provided, repave remaining sections of footways from Post Office Walk to Gascoyne Way (South Street end) with Yorkstone slabs to unify street.
- Provide raised paved loading pads in appropriate locations, retain the loading facility, but to increase the effective width of footway when they are not in use.
- Strengthen the gateway into Fore Street at South Street junction and improve pedestrian crossing by extending footways, reducing carriageway width and providing a raised paved road table. Pavement build-out to have tree planting and location for cycle parking set away from pedestrian desire lines.
- Deter drivers moving further west than Market Street by making it no entry except for buses, cycles and access

only and improve pedestrian crossing by extending width of footway, reducing width of carriageway, removing central island and providing a raised table on Fore Street by Market Street Junction.

- Enhance vehicular carriageway between Parliament Square and Market Place. Options for approved construction are dependent on issues concerning potential length of street closure. Extending the existing area of Tegula concrete setts as used in part of the north side of Parliament Square would provide a coherent finish, extend the character of the square and be quicker to construct than using natural granite stone setts, which are currently in situ. While macadam would be the quickest and most robust repair option, as it provides the least visual enhancement, this is not a favoured approach.
- Street furniture and lighting should be repainted to ensure the area looks well maintained. Consider location of signage and street furniture to ensure they don't create pinch points and clutter on narrow footways. Where new lighting is introduced, this should be of LED type and predominantly be mounted on buildings.

## Salisbury Quarter

2.4.25 Originally this area would have housed most of the civic and retail functions of the town. It should be the focal point of the town centre. However, the quality of retail, management issues and ageing public realm are letting it down.

2.4.26 Salisbury Square is the only town centre space that currently provides opportunity for town centre events and markets. It is in the geographic heart of the town centre, but does not live up to the potential role of a town centre

wide focal point. This is partly due to the existing uses and vehicular traffic.

2.4.27 Bull Plain is a wide space that connects the town to Folly Island. The consistent building line and scale of development frames this street. It is terminated at both ends by attractive buildings (Lombard House to the north and curved former department store building, 1-3 Maidenhead Street, to south). Bull Plain is the home of the Museum and provides a key link to the River Lea.

2.4.28 Bull Plain provides the only vehicular access to Folly Island. As a result of this it is currently impossible to close access through Salisbury Square, even on a temporary basis for town centre events. To reduce traffic flows through this area, a northern access into Folly Island as well as temporary closure of this access for special events are proposed. As a result of landownership and level differences, a northern vehicle access is unlikely to be achievable in the short term, but it remains a long term aspiration that needs to be further tested.

2.4.29 Maidenhead Street passes through one of the weakest retail offers and environments in the town centre. The street itself presents an unattractive and unappealing retail experience. Service retailers, especially financial services, dominate it. The value comparison goods offer is visibly quite dominant.

2.4.30 The street has a number of management issues and frequent breaches of the pedestrianisation order are reducing the shopper experience. This is mainly due to loading, which is allowed currently. Given its importance as a  east west route, plus access route to the library / cultural offer, as well as to the St. Andrew Street / Old Cross offer,  Maidenhead Street is currently providing a very poor lasting impression of Hertford Town Centre.



2.4.31 There are a number of small historic lanes that contribute to the character of this area. Evron Place, a more recent lane, does not contribute to the quality of the area.

### Place-making objectives

- Reduce the number of cars in the area and reduce pedestrian / vehicle conflict.
- Create a unified public realm to strengthen the east west link of Maidenhead Street, Salisbury Square and Railway Street.
- Create a focus for Hertford and enlarge the focal point around Salisbury Square with high quality public realm and retail units.
- Improve wayfinding with a focus on signposting, retail areas cultural and historic assets, such as the museum and the River Lea.
- Improve the management of Maidenhead Street, reinforce the pedestrianisation order and restrict servicing.
- Make the most of the Town's heritage and character. Enhancing the setting of Bull Plain and redefining as a public space.

### Improvement strategy

2.4.32 Repave Maidenhead Street in quality natural stone materials to match Railway Street / Salisbury square to create a unified feel to the retail core. Bircherley Green should also be repaved in similar materials as part of any redevelopment proposals.

2.4.33 Consider designating Maidenhead Street as one-way west bound, except cycles, to allow a no entry from The Wash, to help reduce unauthorised use of the street. This will also help in the potential improvements to the pedestrian crossing across The Wash from Maidenhead Street (See The Wash).

2.4.34 Remove all parking spaces, except those designated for disabled use, from Bull Plain and extend the paved square northwards. Disabled Bays would also be introduced to Fore Street within the existing parking area outside No.s 17 to 29 Fore Street, potentially in combination with a loading bay. The reduction in parking spaces will be part of a defined permit holders parking area north of Fore Street to reduce the number of vehicles crossing the Central Spine of the town and strengthen the Heart of the town by extending the character of Salisbury Square through into Bull Plain. The paved square will extend the street market activity and allow for more seating and tree planting (if feasible).

2.4.35 Extend Salisbury Square across the carriageway to the Monsoon store by raising the carriageway to create a single level surface and paving. This will further traffic calm vehicles and deter use of area. Paving materials would be similar to Railway Street defining the carriageway with smaller units but removing the kerb edge.

2.4.36 Provide street tree planting to Bull Plain, small to medium size columnar type form to emphasis the square whilst not impacting on the urban form. Any tree planting will require a local agreement with Hertfordshire County Council in terms of planting and maintenance. Consideration will also need to be given to the location of statutory undertakers buried pipes and cables that may restrict placement of trees. The positioning of existing cellars in this location (particularly on the westside) would also need to be factored into any potential plans for the area.

2.4.37 Recognise the unique architectural form of Bull Plain and its links between the riverside and Salisbury Square as an asset to the retail and cultural qualities of the town centre by extending retail and social activity into the space.

2.4.38 Extend the weekend street market along the length of Bull Plain with the weekend street market to create a retail loop round to the river and Bircherley Green.

- Control the use of 'A' boards by shopkeepers and consider some form of unified designed shopping map as part of the Wayfinding strategy.
- Where vehicle access is limited to servicing and access only, as along Maidenhead Street and the west end of Railway Street, specific access times should be enforced through physical barriers such as drop bollards or electronic gates. Maintenance and management considerations would need to be assessed when considering options.
- Explore options to close off Evron Place to non-residents in the evenings to reduce potential for antisocial behaviour.
- Improve wayfinding with a map totem located in Bull Plain / Maidenhead Street.
- Improve the management of Maidenhead Street and reinforce a new order to restrict access.
- Street furniture and lighting should be repainted to ensure the area looks well maintained. Consider location of signage and street furniture to ensure they don't create pinch points and clutter on narrow footways. Where new lighting is introduced, this should be of LED type and predominantly be mounted on buildings.

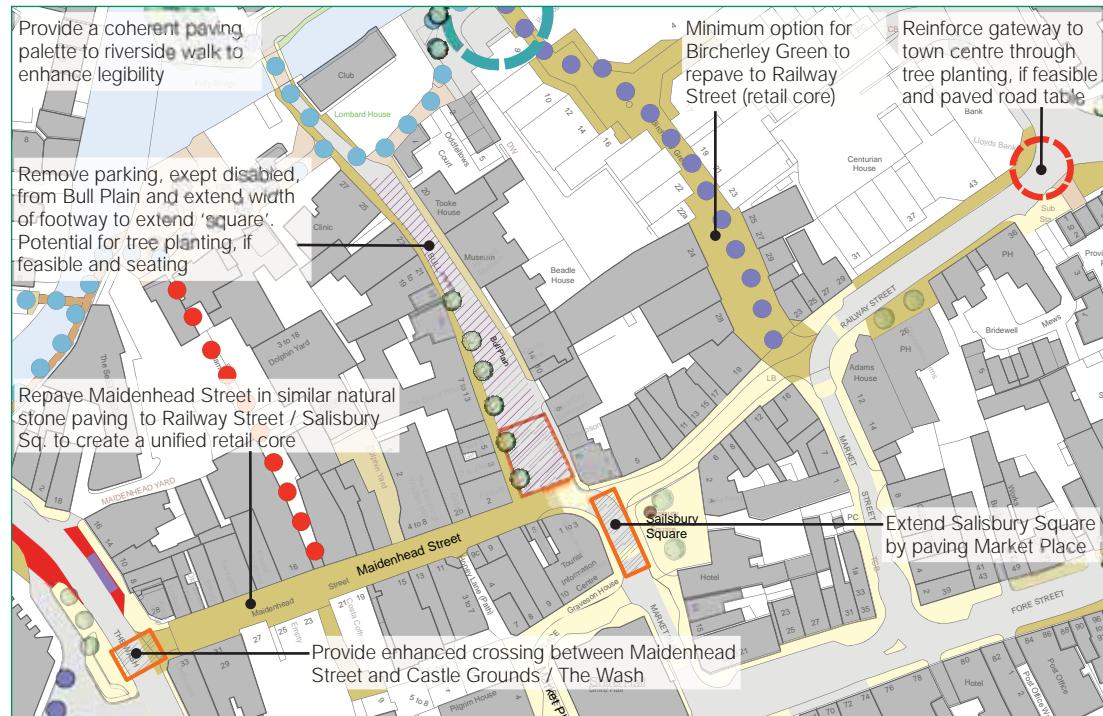


Figure 2.22: Improvement strategy for The Salisbury Quarter

#### Key

- Define paved square - enlarge existing
- Extend width of footway
- Raised loading bay
- Riverside walk
- Street Market extension
- Street tree planting zone
- Repave footway - type as materials strategy



## New Riverside Quarter

2.4.39 The existing Bircherley Green shopping centre provides the main town centre opportunity and a comprehensive redevelopment could contribute significantly to the town centre's health and vibrancy. In particular, in terms of achieving the town's objective to make the River Lea a central part of the town centre and creating a more pleasant river environment.

2.4.40 The existing commercial shopping complex consists of a series of buildings of varying heights, including a multi-storey car park, a food store and a number of smaller units. As discussed, this area does not function well in terms of modern retail requirements and does not provide the environment the town aspires to.

2.4.41 The centre is inward looking with poor connections to the wider town and the river. The main building backs onto the river, creating a blank frontage and an unpleasant pedestrian environment. The arrangement of the internal shopping street does not allow views through to the main space or the river and it feels narrow and cluttered. Also, it does not allow shoppers to view the whole retail offer, due to the stepping building line and overhangs.

2.4.42 As part of this study the opportunity for additional footbridges across the River Lea were explored. Previous studies have shown that an accessible footbridge at Bircherley Green is technically not feasible due to level differences on either riverbank and the height requirement to allow boats to pass undisturbed.

### The bus station

2.4.43 This is currently located on land that is controlled by the Bircherley Green landowner, although some areas are dedicated as public highway. The public consultations in March as well as in September have clearly established the preference of the town to keep the bus station in its current location. Also, in terms of pedestrian movement the bus station is well located adjacent to the shopping centre and on the important east west route of Railway Street via Salisbury Square and Maidenhead Street.

### Place-making objectives

- Create a vibrant and attractive area adjacent to the river, providing opportunity for public space that can be enjoyed for a variety of activities, such as specialist markets, boating, eating and drinking.
- Create a modern retail environment with larger retail units suitable to attract national retailers and create a key destination in this part of the town centre.
- Explore the opportunity to attract a leisure use, such as a cinema. This would provide an additional destination in this part of the town and encourage footfall. Any new leisure use should complement and not directly compete with the existing cultural offer, such as Hertford Theatre.
- Introduce more residential development.
- Retain office space provision as part of the mix.
- Investigate additional footbridge from Dolphin Yard to the northern bank of the Lea or Mill Bridge to extend the river walk way.

### Improvement strategy

- As part of the Bircherley Green proposals develop an attractive waterside space with cafés and seating directly linking the core retail area and Railway Street to the waterside.
- Repave the pedestrian link between Bircherley Green and Bull Plain to match materials in Dolphin Yard to create a legible link.

### Riverside Walk and connections

2.4.44 Develop a coherent waterside walk to attract a greater use of the river both as a route linking the different distinctive quarters set out in the Place Making strategy and as a recreational route linking the town's key open spaces of Hartham Common and Castle Grounds. In order to achieve this, the current missing link between Dolphin Yard and Old Cross or Mill Bridge needs to be provided.

2.4.45 The potential to create a bridge link from Dolphin Yard to Old Cross via Old Library Lane has been assessed previously by the County Council as not viable. This was due to existing navigation requirements and motoring rights along this stretch of the river. Any changes to these would attract objections from boat users if this part of the river were no longer available for boat users. The County Council considered the costs of providing a suitable bridge construction with enough headroom that allowed this part of the river to be navigable for riverboats, and provide pedestrian access that is fully DDA compliant and usable by cycles would be excessive for the benefits gained.

2.4.46 To enable a lower cost bridge construction to be economically viable the strategy proposes three options to be considered for further evaluation.

2.4.47 **Option 1:** The short section of navigable water between Mill Bridge and Old Library Lane, approximately 35m that would not be needed for turning boats, would need to be classified as non-navigable allowing a lower level bridge which would have minimal visual impact on the historic character of the area. This would allow a fully DDA compliant structure to be built and for use by cyclists.

2.4.48 **Option 2:** Retain access for boats and provide a bridge with stepped access to provide sufficient headroom. This by its nature could be Equalities Act compliant in terms of a stepped access route, but not have facilities to allow for wheel chair users or cyclists across the bridge.

2.4.49 **Option 3:** Extend the existing riverside walk between Dolphin Yard and Mill Bridge, along Adams Yard and The Seed Warehouse thereby linking both Castle Grounds and Hartham Common, and St. Andrew Quarter and Bircherley Green together via a riverside walk. A link would be provided along the building line to the east side of the river, from Dolphin Yard to Mill Bridge. This proposal would create a timber deck walkway with a stepped access up to Mill Bridge requiring works to the Mill Bridge

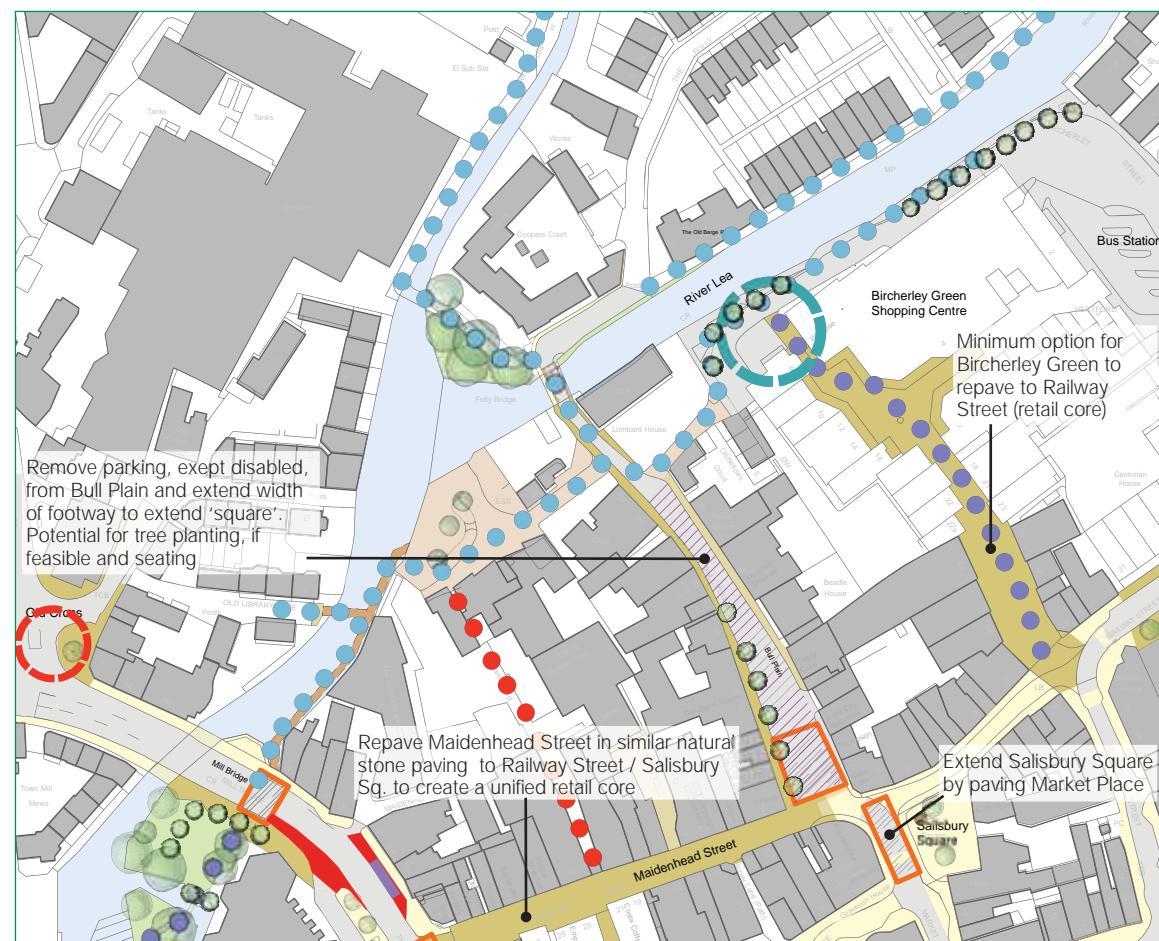


Figure 2.23: Improvement strategy for the New Riverside Quarter

#### Key

-  Define paved square - enlarge existing
-  Gateway points to alert vehicles to reduce speed
-  Park paths enhanced

-  Raised paved crossing to ease pedestrian crossing
-  Repave footway - type as materials strategy
-  Extend width of footway

-  Riverside walk
-  Street Market extension
-  Raised loading bay
-  Street tree planting zone

balustrade. The board-walk structure could be self-standing or floating within the river. This would provide an Equalities Act compliant stepped access but not provide an Equalities Act accessible route for wheelchair users or act as a cycle route. It would retain access for boat users but the design would need to incorporate mooring rights to The Seed Warehouse as part of the design.

2.4.50 Option 3 was the preferred option at the consultation event and is supported by all Councils. However, it will need to be investigated further in terms of land availability, technical feasibility and costs.

## Bluecoats Quarter

2.4.51 The Former Christ's Hospital School site is a very distinctive, self-contained area of the town centre. Surrounded by a tall wall on all sides, it is not very well linked to the surrounding streets. However, the movement study has identified an east-west pedestrian connection through the northern part, from Tesco to Railway Street. The design and layout within the site is very positive. The buildings are arranged around a wide tree lined boulevard, Bluecoats Avenue. Eight grand symmetrical dormitory blocks flank the avenue on the left and right hand sides. These are constructed from red brick. The former school hall building itself terminates the avenue.

2.4.52 The adopted Mead Lane Urban Design Framework (2014) puts forward proposals that will help to transform this area, especially the area around the station. However, it is important that this current strategy considers ways to improve the area, especially the route from Railway Street to the town centre.

### Place-making objectives

- Improve permeability through the Former Christ's Hospital School site.
- Create a more coherent townscape and improve public realm and connections.

### Improvement strategy

- Creating a paved square in front of the station by:
  - Reducing Mill Road carriageway width to 6.5ms, depending on the detailed design, and extending footways either side.
  - Providing a paved raised speed table to reduce speeds and ease pedestrian crossing.
  - Provide tree planting to Mill Road to further define 'square'.
  - Raise the taxi rank drop off area to be flush with footway and pave in matching materials.
- Enhance street frontage to Railway street car park through tree planting.
- Repave footways leading into town centre as set out in materials strategy.
- Improve Wayfinding through enhanced paving and improved crossing as noted above to direct visitors to the town centre and provide town map outside station and additional finger post at roundabout noting direction to town centre, Bluecoats Avenue and County Hall/Wallfields.
- Provide tree planting where feasible along the section of Railway Street between South Street and Bircherley Green to create a greater sense of enclosure on the approach to the historic core.

- Provide a sensitive advertising board to entrance Warren Place for the businesses as part of a boundary wall to enhance the street edge and screen bins.
- Street furniture and lighting should be repainted to ensure the area looks well maintained. Consider location of signage and street furniture to ensure they don't create pinch points and clutter on narrow footways. Where new lighting is introduced, this should be of LED type and predominantly be mounted on buildings.
- Continue the plaques initiative on buildings of historic interest.



Figure 2.24: Improvement Strategy for the Bluecoats Quarter

### Key



Define paved square  
- enlarge existing



Repave footway - type  
as materials strategy



Raised paved crossing to  
ease pedestrian crossing



Gateway points to alert  
vehicles to reduce speed



Raised loading bay



Street tree planting zone

## Views

2.4.53 Hertford is not a formal town and there are no large formal vistas or direct and clear views to destinations, landmarks or the river. On one hand this makes it particularly difficult to find one's way around the town centre and appreciate all it has to offer. On the other it creates a distinct character and interest.

2.4.54 The character of Hertford and its fine urban grain creates a number of important glimpsed or high-level views within and surrounding the town centre. These are:

- Bull Plain towards 42 Fore Street and All Saints Church Tower.
- View of the River Lea from Bull Plain Bridge.
- View of the Shire Hall on Fore Street.
- View of the Castle from Gascoyne Way.
- No 51 St Andrew Street and St Andrew's Church.
- The Old Library.
- All Saints' Church.
- Historic McMullen's Brewery and the Old Barge Pub on the river.

2.4.55 Apart from these views to important landmarks, there are a number of attractive views to particular buildings and building features, such as the view towards the curved former "Graveson's" department store building at the junction of Maidenhead Street. New developments should contribute to the rich townscape with new high quality buildings that either enhance existing views and landmarks or create new ones.

## Barriers - Gascoyne Way

2.4.56 There is very little potential within this study to remove or improve the impact that Gascoyne Way has on this town. Movement analysis revealed that all of the junctions are at capacity and there is unlikely to be any potential to reduce or re-direct the traffic flow. However, the appearance of the multi-storey car park could be greatly improved by re-cladding it in an attractive material or by screening of this obtrusive building, possibly through the application of a living wall. Two of the underpasses have recently been re-designed with artwork to become attractive well-lit places. Many other cities have used artists to help re-design such places. This could be extended to other locations to create new interesting spaces to enhance the town.



Figure 2.25: View of River Lea from Bull Plain Bridge



Figure 2.26: View of the Shire Hall on Fore Street



Figure 2.27: View of Bull Plain towards All Saints Church

# 3

## Movement Strategy

# 3 Movement Strategy

## 3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The 'Movement Strategy' forms a part of this Urban Design Strategy. It evaluates the current transport system around the town centre and proposes options to assist in achieving the key objectives of the Urban Design Strategy. This section sets out the relationship to the strategic transport plan for Hertford and discusses the proposed interventions in more detail from a movement perspective. It provides a technical basis for the place-making principles and proposed improvement strategy.

3.1.2 The Movement Strategy supports Hertford's current Urban Transport Plan (UTP) by:

- Optimising the value of Hertford's heritage, open spaces and landscape assets, including the river areas;
- Providing a town centre that is safe, attractive and enjoyable as a place people will naturally favour to shop, work and spend their leisure time;
- Enhancing the user experience by the creation of a distinctive network of public paths, spaces and opportunities to hold public events;
- Designing a town that focuses on place and character of Hertford's historic environment while balancing the need for movement – managing the conflicts of vehicles and pedestrians, giving priority to accessibility and emphasising sustainable travel modes;
- Revitalising the commercial activity of the town centre and secure, in particular, the long term health of the primary shopping areas;
- Developing a coherent, high quality and cost effective approach to the treatment and maintenance of the public highway, footways and other public spaces in the town centre; and

- Developing a sensitively designed strategy for car parking provision within and around the town centre.

## 3.2 Movement issues

3.2.1 In addition to the issues identified in the consultation, the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan highlights the following wider issues:

3.2.2 **Traffic Congestion:** The A414 is sensitive to congestion on the M25 and is therefore the main diversionary route when incidents involving road closure and delays occur. Congestion hotspots mainly occur on the A414 through Hertford and its connection with the A10. The Bluecoats and Mill Road junctions are identified as areas causing the most significant delays to traffic. Other hotspots include Castle Street/Parliament Square junction, Hale Road/Pegs Lane, Railway Street and Fore Street.

3.2.3 **Passenger Transport Access Issues:** There are passenger transport access issues including parking capacity issues at both Hertford East and North Station and the passenger experience at the central Bus Station. Bus services between the north and south of town are relatively infrequent compared to east-west services, as well as there being limited bus priority measures due to the constrained road space within town.

3.2.4 **Cycle Accessibility Issues:** Cyclists have limited access due to the pattern of existing traffic routes, often with high vehicular traffic, including the A414 and other narrow and traffic dominated streets within the town. The Dicker Mill Bridge at the end of Mill Road, Welwyn Road and Port Hill are identified as key routes that have issues for cyclists.

3.2.5 **Pedestrian Accessibility Issues:** The A414 is a major barrier to pedestrian movement with those subway crossings which have yet to be enhanced being particularly unattractive, while North Road has reported speeding issues and bus stop location issues. Minor conflicts and serious accidents between pedestrians and traffic have occurred at Old Cross and South Street (in the 3 years prior to the publication of the document) and minor accidents involving pedestrians have occurred on the western end of Fore Street, on Bull Plain and at The Wash.

3.2.6 Public consultation identified some issues with the clarity of priority between pedestrians and vehicles such as at certain speed tables at Maidenhead Street/Bull Plain and Railway Street/Market Street.

## 3.3 Highways

3.3.1 This section of the Report explores the potential to alter the highway arrangement within the study area. Two key options were analysed:

1. Closure of western end of Fore Street; and
2. Alternative vehicle route into Folly Island.

### Paramics model

3.3.2 As part of the work JMP has been granted the right to use the Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) Paramics Model. This model was initially developed in 2009 to assess the implications of transport schemes as part of the Hertford and Ware Urban Transport Plan work.

3.3.3 The model was updated in 2014 to assess the potential for making improvements to the junctions along the A414 corridor. As part of this work, the existing Bengoe part of the model was extended to the Hertingfordbury roundabout in the west and the A10 Rush Green roundabout in the east. New traffic data was collected at junctions along the A414 corridor and a local recalibration exercise was undertaken. The current version of the model has a base year for the two weekday peak periods AM (07:00 – 10:00) and, PM (16:00 – 19:00).

3.3.4 The level of validation along the A414 corridor is good with 95% of individual flows meeting the DMRB GEH criteria in the AM peak and 100% meeting the criteria in the PM peak however, this remains to be verified by the County Council which has not yet had sight of the revised model.

3.3.5 The Model has recently been extended by the Bircherley Green site promoters and refined in the town centre area to support planning application work on the Bus Station site. The level of calibration and validation continues to meet DMRB GEH criteria.

### Closure of Fore Street to general traffic

#### Issues

3.3.6 Fore Street acts as an 'eastbound relief road' for the A414 (Gascoyne Way), which creates a conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

3.3.7 Approximately 318 vehicles use Fore Street in the PM peak (17:00-18:00), compared with 717 in the AM peak (08:00-09:00). Of those approximately 233 are observed to rat run in the AM peak and 313 in the PM peak. This shows that proportionally more vehicles make the movement in the AM, although there is a higher absolute number in the PM peak.

3.3.8 Figure 3.1 depicts the number of vehicles making this movement and shows that the majority approach from the north, whilst those approaching from the west are likely to remain on Gascoyne Way rather than make the diversion.

3.3.9 The western end of Fore Street is two-way for buses but not wide enough to allow two vehicles to pass without either mounting the kerb or using the designated give way area (as shown in Figure 3.2), which are often ignored by motorists. This damages the footway and is costly to repair and maintain.

3.3.10 Restricting the use of the western section of Fore Street to buses, cyclists and pedestrians would also limit access to the town centre and Folly Island for those travelling from the west. This could result in additional vehicle miles and an increase to journey times for residents, visitors and servicing vehicles.

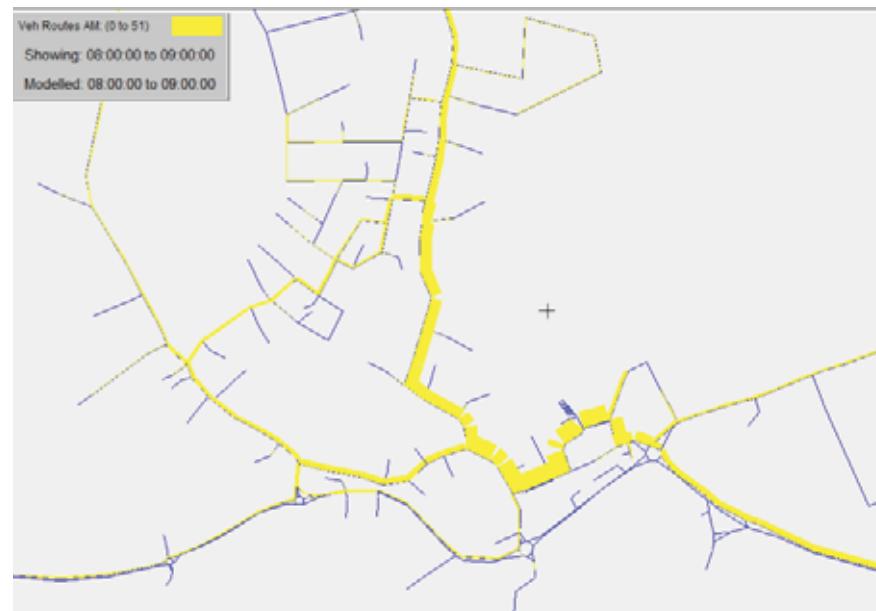


Figure 3.1: Paramics Model



Figure 3.2: Fore Street Pinch Point

3.3.11 The UTP identifies HWY3 as a long-term aspiration to close Hertford to vehicle traffic which aligns with the closure of Fore Street. The closure of Fore Street also aligns with PTM19 which describes the need for bus priority on Fore Street.

### Assessment

3.3.12 The Paramics model examined the effects of closing the western end of Fore Street to all vehicles except buses in both directions (Option 1). Currently Fore Street is open to cars travelling eastwards from the Wash.

3.3.13 No updates were made to the base model network or demand matrix, as we were given to understand in the MOU and the supporting documentation supplied with the model that Hertford model was already validated within the DMRB GEH criteria.

3.3.14 The level of vehicle delay is provided in Table 3.1 (mean / max queue lengths) and Table 3.2 (Journey time delays on the key routes).

3.3.15 The model shows that the proposal results in delays on the network, particularly in the evening peak. The reason for this is that the model shows over 700 vehicles travelling Eastbound on Fore Street in the PM peak hour, with buses only accounting for a small number of these movements. With the closure of Fore Street, these vehicles must find alternative routes to their destinations, with most of the traffic continuing along The Wash to the roundabout with Gascoyne Way.

3.3.16 The queue lengths for the roundabout at the junction of Gascoyne Way and the Wash increase significantly due to the additional traffic causing queues to extend back to the Old Cross traffic signals, as well as causing blocking along Gascoyne Way.

Mean Max Queue Length (m)		AM		PM	
Junction	Arm	Base	Option 1	Base	Option 1
A414 Central Roundabout	The Wash	115	260	30	312
A414 Central Roundabout	Gascoyne Way (East)	101	83	64	62
A414 Central Roundabout	Hale Road	78	117	125	129
A414 Central Roundabout	Gascoyne Way (West)	340	528	182	657
A414 Eastern Roundabout	Fore Street	60	25	42	27
A414 Eastern Roundabout	A119	73	73	74	74
A414 Eastern Roundabout	A414	283	262	162	163
A414 Eastern Roundabout	Gascoyne Way (West)	186	271	137	372
Fore Street/South Street	South Street	52	27	44	32
Fore Street/South Street	Fore Street (East)	33	60	33	94
Fore Street/South Street	Fore Street (West)	16	5	20	4
Fore Street/Bull Plain	Fore Street (East)	-	-	-	-
Fore Street/Bull Plain	Fore Street (West)	27	1	32	8
Railway Street/Bircherley Street	Railway Street	19	3	25	6
South Street Roundabout	South Street (North)	14	4	7	3
South Street Roundabout	South Street (South)	6	13	8	26
South Street Roundabout	Railway Street	23	7	25	24
Gascoyne Way Car Park Exit	Car park Exit	2	8	28	30

Table 3.1: Hertford Queue Length (M)

Journey Times (Seconds)	AM		PM	
	Route	Base	Option 1	Base
Bengeo to Gascoyne Way	438	898	271	1189
Gascoyne Way to Bengeo	362	326	342	361
Gascoyne Way WB	52	44	37	36
Gascoyne Way EB	189	295	125	496
Overall Journey Time for all Routes within the model (s)	11268	15735	6990	16987

Table 3.2: Journey Times (Seconds)

3.3.17 Whilst initially this proposal reduces journey times for buses due to the reduction of traffic on Fore Street and the surrounding roads, by the end of the peak hour, the additional queuing on The Wash and Gascogne Way actually increases the bus journey times, as the buses become caught up in the additional queues.

### Consideration for Strategy Implementation

3.3.18 From a purely highways perspective, the additional queuing on the network associated with the closure to Fore Street is considered to have a detrimental impact upon the highway network. It is also noted that those accessing the town centre / Folly Island from the west would be forced to travel further.

3.3.19 As stated above, public transport users would also experience an increase in journey times associated with the closure as buses become caught up in the resulting congestion. However, it is acknowledged that the closure would create a better environment for pedestrians on this stretch of the road. It would also remove conflicts between vehicles and cyclists who are using the National Cycle Network.

3.3.20 The cost of implementing this change is relatively low, with minor alterations to signage and Traffic Regulation Orders needed to achieve the desired result.

3.3.21 It is also noted that the traffic model does not take into account potential for people to change their travel behaviour. The restricted access of vehicle traffic and the increase in delays could result in a modal shift towards more sustainable modes such as walking/cycling/public transport. Further, improvements to the wider strategic road network could provide further capacity in the future and reduce the vehicle impact of the closure. This may provide more

resilience in the network, which would enable the closure of the western end of Fore Street to general traffic without causing a significant impact to highway capacity.

### Alternative route into Folly Island

#### Background

3.3.22 As explained in Section 2 of this report, Bull Plain / Salisbury Square has been identified by the project team as a key area that could be improved by reducing traffic to improve the pedestrian / cycle amenity as well as allowing events such as a street market.

3.3.23 Bull Plain also provides the sole access to Folly Island. Closing Bull Plain to traffic would therefore not be possible unless an alternative route into Folly Island was found. The bridge is very tight and service vehicles regularly damage the bridge and Lombard House. There is also a conflict between pedestrians walking along the river and Salisbury Square.

3.3.24 An alternative northern access to Folly Island is a long-term objective that needs to be investigated further. However, to provide a link via Thornton Street significant works are required to adapt the bridge and overcome land ownership and technical constraints. There is a significant level difference between the bridge and the island, with the bridge appearing to be up to 0.9ms higher. This represents a challenge in tying the two sections of road together. Assuming vertical curvature of 400m radius, a 37m ramp would be required to achieve a fully adoptable road link. The loading capacity of the bridge would also impact on the Council's decision to adopt the bridge. At present the bridge is not public highway but would need to be if the route were opened up.

3.3.25 There are also known servicing issues that would need to be overcome. Nevertheless, a northern access to Folly Island remains a potential objective for the long-term and will need to be tested as the opportunity arises.

3.3.26 Temporary closure of the existing route into Folly Island has been considered below on specific event days only.

3.3.27 As stated previously, there is also the potential to remove 15 car parking spaces from the southern end of Bull Plain, and extend the paved square northwards combined with raising the carriageway adjacent. Three disabled bays could either remain included within the area set on the raised level to further increase the spatial quality of the square or be relocated onto Fore Street.

3.3.28 Following interrogation of the Paramics model the number of vehicles using Bull Plain was determined and is shown in Table 3.3.

3.3.29 It is noted that not all of these vehicles enter The Folly and that they will also be associated with servicing and parking on Bull Plain.

Total Vehicles	IN	OUT
AM (07:00-10:00)	137	130
PM (16:00-19:00)	170	164

Table 3.3 Flows on Bull Plain

\*From the data taken from the model, it is not possible to differentiate between those driving to the Folly and those looking to park in Bull Plain.

### Closure of Bull Plain Bridge during operation of a Market on Bull Plain

3.3.30 This option explores the potential to temporarily close Bull Plain for periods for events or markets in the southern section of Bull Plain.

3.3.31 During times when the market/event is open, vehicle access would be prevented; this restriction would apply to servicing vehicles and residents, but emergency access would need to be retained. In these events, at the discretion of the District Council as parking authority, dispensation could be given for free parking in the Hartham car parks for residents of Folly Island during these occasions.

### Consideration for Strategy Implementation

3.3.32 At the consultation the majority of people agreed with implementing restrictions if a specialist market or other events are happening on Bull Plain.

3.3.33 The parking at the southern end of Bull Plain should be removed to reduce vehicle movements in the area and encourage more sustainable methods of transport. The removal of the parking is explored in more detail on the following pages.

3.3.34 From a highways perspective, this is a relatively low cost option with changes to the Traffic Regulation Order to inhibit vehicle access and the removal of the parking bays. However, access should be retained for emergency vehicles at all times.

### Limit general traffic to west of Market Street

3.3.35 Both of the interventions, involving closing off the western end of Fore Street for general traffic and reducing traffic in Bull Plain, could be taken forward independently. However, in combination they would have the greatest impact on the town centre. By making the area west of Market Street a residential parking zone and restricting access to services and residents only, vehicular flows within the centre would be even more reduced.

3.3.36 To achieve this it is proposed to withdraw public parking spaces on Bell Lane and Church Street (both of which take access off Fore Street) and re-allocate these to residents as a controlled parking zone who will be afforded access only rights. This will result in the loss of approximately 14 unrestricted spaces on Church Street and a further 8 short term spaces on Bell Lane. These spaces are within a short walk of Gascoyne Way which could absorb some of the capacity.

3.3.37 With the removal of these parking spaces and limited vehicular access to the town centre, it will become a more attractive space for people to walk and cycle as traffic in the area is reduced. This will encourage a shift away from people driving, and an increase in more sustainable modes, which would reduce the need for car parking spaces.

3.3.38 Apart from this the benefits would be:

- A significant reduction in traffic within the town centre, around the Shire Hall, western end of Fore Street, Bull Plain, Market Square and Salisbury Square.
- Potential improvements to parking for town centre residents as a result of a resident only parking area - the viability and deliverability of this will need to be further investigated.

3.3.39 Whilst the negatives include:

- Reduction in short term parking dispersed through the western part of the town centre.
- Delays on the highway network for general traffic and selected buses as a result of closing the western end of Fore Street to general traffic.

## 144 Public transport and bus station

### Introduction

3.4.1 This section explores the potential of replacing the bus stops currently provided at the Bus Station with alternative locations on Fore Street, which may also need to be supplemented by stops on Railway Street.

### Background

3.4.2 The Bus Station is situated adjacent to Bircherley Green Shopping Centre and serves as a bus stop and terminus for buses.

3.4.3 The Bus Station is currently the only area within the town centre with the capability of being a bus stand, a bus stop and an interchange waiting area, whilst also being located directly beside the key retail centre of Hertford.

3.4.4 In total there are six stops and the Bus Station also benefits from a waiting area, part-time enclosed waiting facilities in the café, and toilets. During a site visit, the Bus Station was observed to be operating with no bus stand capacity issues. However, there are some issues with the design and layout of the Bus Station which are outlined below:

- The passenger information consisted of small timetables stuck to various parts of the shopping centre facade and pillars, with no real time passenger information;
- An electronic kiosk was available but is located quite far from the stop and is of a relatively dated design;

- Waiting capacity is limited, with hard steel benches, some exposed to the weather and some sheltered but poorly lit. There is some indoor waiting capacity (during the opening hours of the Bircherley Green Shopping Centre) in a cafe that faces the Bus Station;
- Passengers have to cross the carriageway to get to a bus stop; and
- Passengers have to step up onto buses due to inadequate level access.

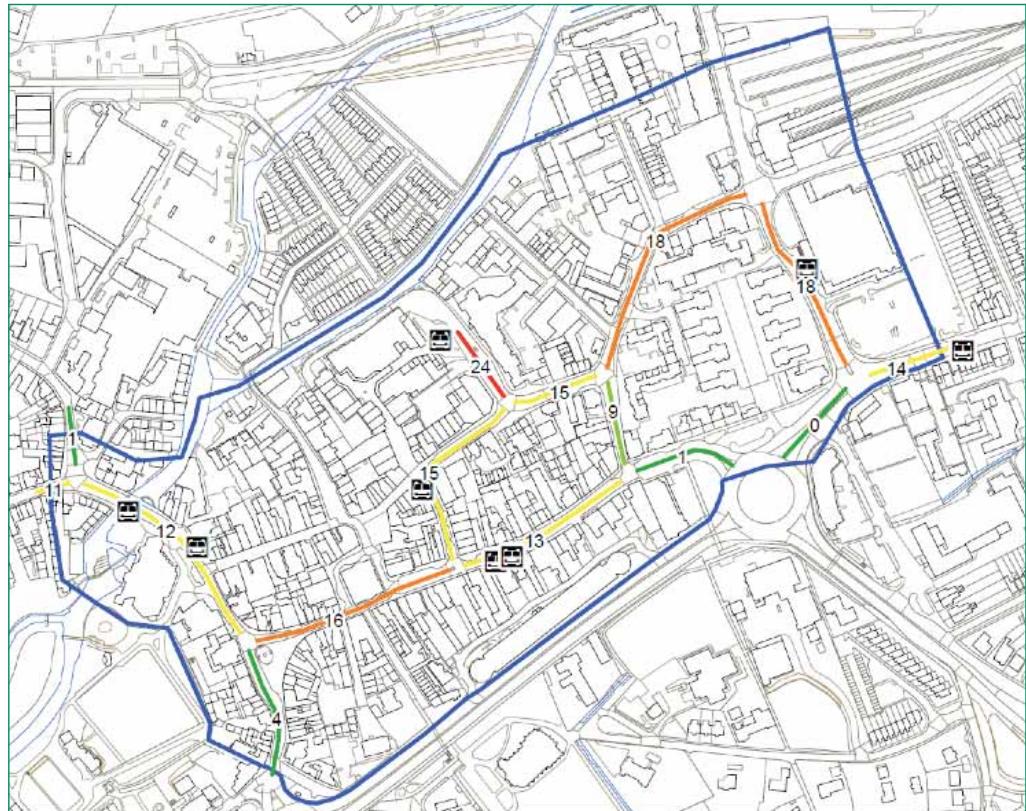


Figure 3.3: Bus Routes

\*Note there are variations in the routes depending on the time of day and week; the diagram displays the peak number of routes.

3.4.5 The lease of the Bus Station is not within the Councils' control and as a result, there is a possibility that a new location may be required to accommodate buses.

3.4.6 This Strategy explores the potential to relocate the bus stops to Fore Street and Railway Street and determines what the impact would be on the town centre. Other alternatives were considered, but due to the narrow streets or the distance from the town centre (e.g. the Wash), these locations were deemed unattractive. The number of routes that run through the town centre are shown in Figure 3.3.

3.4.7 The UTP (PTM1) identifies the need for improvements at the Bus Station and scheme PTM19 identifies improved bus priority on Fore Street.

### Bus station usage

3.4.8 The Bus Station is currently well utilised with approximately 29 services using the station in the AM peak (08:00-09:00). A number of these services are required to dwell in the station whilst they await their departure time and there is a 10 minute period between 08:45 and 08:55 when 5 to 6 of the stops are in continuous use. The preceding hour (07:00-08:00), has a similar number of services, with approximately 21 services using the Bus Station across the hour. Further interrogation of the timetable suggests that approximately 4/5 stops are required in typical off-peak hour.

### Future Growth

3.4.9 The Preferred Options Consultation Draft East Herts District Plan identified four main areas of development as preferred options for future housing as shown in Figure 3.4.

3.4.10 The corridor to the west of the town centre development has a proposed 550 dwellings in the preferred options consultation East Herts Draft District Plan. Whilst this is unlikely to generate a stand alone new bus route, District Plan growth generally is likely to increase demand and may require additional services.

3.4.11 The increase in demand would require a 7.5-8 minute frequency which implies 2 additional departures from ~~10~~ Bus Station every hour. As the 310 runs every 10 minutes with a 9 minute turnaround this could also trigger the need for an additional stand.



Figure 3.4: Housing Allocations

\* Proposed in East Herts Draft District Plan, Preferred Options Consultation, 2014

- Site allocations (including local green infrastructure)
- 100 Proposed number of new homes
- P New primary school required
- Railway station
- Potential road improvements
- Existing built up areas
- Green Belt

3.4.12 It is also noted that there are a number of other planned developments in the town (such as the Birchery Green Shopping Centre redevelopment) which could in turn lead to additional demand for bus services and additional stands.

### Potential relocation of bus services to Fore Street / Railway Street

3.4.13 As stated above, the timetables suggest that there are points in the day where all 6 stops are necessary; and in a typical off-peak hour up to 5 stops are required. Operational vehicle movements for staff vehicles will also need to be accounted for proposals involving relocating the Bus Station.

3.4.14 The Paramics model provides space for up to four buses on Fore Street and this has been reviewed in the context of highway operation. Although, it is noted that in practice a further two bus stops would be required to replicate the existing arrangement.

3.4.15 The exercise has determined that the provision of bus stops on Fore Street and/or Railway Street would result in the loss of taxi rank space. For example, providing for four bus stops on Fore Street would require a bus cage of approximately 88m in length, which would have a significant implication for the taxi rank. This is based on allowing for a 12m stopping area for each bus, a 13m entry length at the start of the cage and 9m exit length between buses.

3.4.16 The indicative layout of the bus stop requires that buses pull up to the front of the bus cage or behind the rear most bus. It has been designed such that a bus can pull away from any position within the cage in accordance with the Transport for London's Accessible Bus Stop Design Guidance document.

3.4.17 Any design would also require the footway to be widened to a width of up to 3m, in order to allow space for bus shelters and increased pedestrian usage in line with the Department for Transport's (DfT) 'Inclusive Mobility' (2005) document. This would result in the need to remove parking and loading spaces from the northern side of the road.

3.4.18 The indicative plan shows footway widths at intervals and it can be seen that, in places, the footway narrows to less than 2m. At the front of the cage, the width of the footway is 1.85m which will not provide sufficient capacity for waiting passengers and could seriously impede pedestrian movements causing potential conflict with frontages in this location. There would be no scope to provide welfare facilities which are located at the current Bus Station. Given the limited space on Fore Street, there will be no potential to re-provide the waiting facilities and toilets at the Bircherley Green Shopping Centre.

3.4.19 It should also be noted that Fore Street is a busy street for both vehicles and pedestrians with a number of units serviced from the on-street loading bays / short term parking bays.

3.4.20 Re-locating the buses onto Fore Street and/or Railway Street would also have a detrimental effect on the air quality and pedestrian amenity on Fore Street and these effects would potentially be harmful to the trading of the many restaurants and cafés in this location. Buses stationed on Fore Street with their engines running will further reduce the amenity of the Street, and the attractiveness of the adjacent land uses (eg. restaurants).

3.4.21 The relocation of some of the bus stops onto Fore Street would increase bus movements in Fore Street. There are currently approximately 13 bus movements on Fore Street between 07:00-08:00 and a further 16 between 08:00-09:00. With the relocation of the bus stops onto Fore Street, there would be a further 10 services between 07:00-08:00 (23 in total) and a further 15 services between 08:00-09:00 (31 in total).

3.4.22 The buses would also need to layover on Fore Street as this would become the end of the route for a number of the buses, increasing the dwell time and extending the presence of the buses beyond just picking up and dropping off passengers. This would change the character of the Street and make it more bus dominated, reducing the pedestrian amenity of the Street.

#### Paramics model assessment

3.4.23 An option was tested whereby all buses using the Bus Station at Bircherley Green were transferred to the bus stops in Fore Street, with no services calling at the Bus Station. It was assumed the buses would have the same dwell time on Fore Street as was coded into the model for the Bus Station.

3.4.24 The model shows that the existing bus stops in Fore Street are sufficient to accommodate the additional buses as well as the longer dwell times without causing excessive congestion along Fore Street, although there is a slight increase in queuing at the South Street/Fore Street Traffic Signals.

3.4.25 However, a closer examination of the model suggests that the capacity of the existing bus stops may have been over estimated in the model, as the model assumes that there is space to accommodate 4 buses (requiring 40m cage) in the existing stops along Fore Street, which is not the case in reality. Therefore caution should be applied when interpreting the results of the model.

3.4.26 It is noted that the 6 bays at the current Bus Station are fully utilised in the AM peak and in reality it would not be possible to accommodate these services over 4 stops in Fore Street. Further standing space would be required along either Fore Street or Railway Street which would further impact upon the amenity and air quality of the town centre.

3.4.27 The re-routing of bus services to accommodate the use of Fore Street increases both bus journey times and distance travelled and leads to an overall increase of bus journey times within the model. This could prove unattractive to commercial operators and could potentially impact negatively on the current level of commercial service provision.

#### Partial Relocation of bus Station

3.4.28 Consideration has also been given to the partial re-location of the Bus Station with some stops remaining at Bircherley Green Shopping Centre and an intensified use of Fore Street. This would result in additional space at the Bircherley Green Shopping Centre which could benefit the development. However, the overall number of stops is not the major space constraint within the Bircherley Green Shopping Centre; rather it is the turning head needed to allow the buses to access and egress in forward gear which takes up the majority of space. This turning head would still be required if there were only a couple of bus stops and therefore the hybrid situation would not re-claim a significant amount of space.

3.4.29 The bus station serves as an interchange, with people more willing to get the bus if they can connect to an onward journey without the need to walk. By splitting the number of services between Bircherley Green and Fore Street, the interchange facility within the town is reduced as people need to walk between the two sites.

3.4.30 Having the Bus Station consolidated at a single location also requires a single set of waiting facilities to be provided. Splitting the two sites would require further waiting facilities to be introduced on Fore Street where space is already highly constrained.

3.4.31 Bircherley Green Shopping Centre benefits from the high footfall and public transport accessibility. Reducing the bus service will make this a less sustainable location and could encourage an increase in vehicle trips.

3.4.32 As demonstrated previously, inclusion of additional stops on Fore Street requires an extensive amount of re-configuration and requires highway to be turned over to bus cages. The footway would also need to be extended to create space for passengers to wait. None of this can be achieved without the re-allocation of space from other road users.

3.4.33 Intensifying the use of Fore Street for buses also reduces the effectiveness of other measures put forward as part of the Strategy.

## Summary

3.4.34 The assessment demonstrates that by re-providing a further two bus stops on Fore Street (to create a total of four bus stops), the operation of the Street would be altered significantly, making the Street very bus dominated and reducing the air quality, while potentially not being able to wholly re-provide the services on the existing timetable in peak periods.

3.4.35 It would also negate the opportunities to provide improved walking and cycling facilities on Fore Street.

3.4.36 The narrow footways on the southern side of the street would not be able to facilitate a pedestrian waiting area without footways being widened and loading and servicing for local shops would be compromised.

3.4.37 The taxi rank would need to be reduced to 24m in length and the parking on the northern side of the footway would need to be removed to improve the pedestrian facilities on Fore Street.

## Further Issues

3.4.38 Further issues with regard to the relocation of the Bus Station include:

- **Layover time for buses (early arrivals / late departures):** If buses arrive early or depart late, then there is the potential for blocking back onto the junction of Gascoyne Way / Fore Street which could affect the operation of the A road.
- **Set down / pick up separation:** Passengers travelling on cross town services would need to be able to transfer between buses travelling east and west which could result in the need for further bus stops.
- **Additional vehicle mileage:** associated with the increased journey times to routes would equate to cost increase and possible Peak Vehicle Requirement (PVR) increases.
- **The footfall of the Bircherley Green shopping centre:** may drop as replacement stops will be a fair way away from the new development and could reduce viability. Bircherley Green Shopping Centre also benefits from good public transport accessibility with the Bus Station attached. Should the Bus Station be removed, then an increased level of car parking may be required to support the re-development.
- **Bus drivers will require meal breaks and toilet facilities:** which in turn require layover areas. Having buses parked up for extended periods on Fore Street will significantly reduce the pedestrian environment. This will be exacerbated if buses remain with their engines running.

■ **Lack of Space:** for covered waiting facilities, timetables and route information boards. A significant alteration to the Street would be required to supply these facilities.

■ **No Indoor waiting facilities** will be provided for bus users.

■ **No toilet facilities** for either drivers or passengers.

3.4.39 These issues will need to be discussed through consultation with the bus companies and could result in the loss of services to the town centre if the issues are not resolved with the bus providers.

3.4.40 Taking all of this into account, this Strategy strongly supports the retention of a single, unified bus station facility at Bircherley Green, providing no less than the current level of provision, including both the number of bus stops and other on-site facilities.

3.4.41 There are a number of issues with the existing Hertford East rail station, notably:

- Lack of toilet facilities;
- Poor ambiance;
- Problems with pigeons, which leads to hygiene issues; and
- Security issues.

3.4.42 It is also noted that there is the potential for Crossrail 2 to terminate at the station, which would increase the ridership, although, differing from previous iterations, the latest public consultation (concluding on 8th January 2016) shows Broxbourne as the northern most end of the scheme, with an arrow indicating a possible route extension with no specific station identified at this stage.

3.4.43 To the south of the station, the Bluecoats estate forms a clear desire line from the Tesco bus stop to the town centre which people were observed to be following and if this was designed as an official pedestrian and cycle through route it would offer a safe and more direct alternative to Railway Street. However, it is noted that there is 'No Public Right of Way' through the Bluecoats estate and therefore negotiations would need to be sought with the landowners.

3.4.44 Hertford East station has a large roundabout junction with no controlled pedestrian crossings. The UTP recognises this issue and suggests there is scope for re-profiling this junction to create clear and safe signalised pedestrian crossings to and from the station, other crossing types could be explored for the best balance for users such as pedestrian priority (Zebra) crossings.

3.4.45 In addition to this the current footway and kiss and ride facilities at the station could be rearranged to complement an improved junction by reducing the impedance of parked up taxis and improve visibility and direct access from the station, by possibly reducing the capacity or ability for taxis to stop around the station entrances. Taxis can be encouraged to use the Railway Street rank instead.

3.4.46 There is a considerable amount of low quality scrub-land surrounding the station which may be partially cleared to add amenity space to the station such as increased car and cycle parking or bus infrastructure; this is also suggested as a medium term scheme in the UTP as part of Mead Lane developments.

3.4.47 Information dissemination at the station can be improved by including a walking-oriented map and the provision of bus information.

3.4.48 The land to the north of the station is being re-developed and part of the scheme will facilitate the provision of a new bus stop/interchange area.

### Hertford North

3.4.49 Hertford North's main access route into the town centre can be improved for pedestrians and cyclists, to create a better link to the town centre.

## Parking

### Introduction

3.4.50 This section analyses the parking usage for the key car parks within the study area. It summarises the operation of the existing car parks and examines where there are opportunities to re-allocate on-street space to other road users.

### Off-street parking analysis

3.4.51 It is based on a full record of transactions made in East Herts Council run Car Parks for the period April 2014 - March 2015.

3.4.52 Figure 3.5 shows the names, capacity and locations of the Car Parks that the transaction data was taken from.

### Analysis

3.4.53 The objective for the analysis was to understand the usage of the car parks in Hertford throughout the day. The usage was then compared to the overall number of spaces to determine the spare capacity. Four days from this dataset were chosen for analysis:

- **23rd December 2014:** This was the busiest weekday in terms of total daily entries with 2847 people recorded buying a ticket at a car park.
- **3rd November 2014:** This was a representative average weekday (1,798) with a similar number of ticket sales to the annual daily average of 1794 entries.
- **14th March 2015:** This was the busiest Saturday in terms of total daily entries with 2,966 people recorded buying a ticket at the car park.
- **28th June 2014:** This was a representative average weekday (2,292) with a similar number of ticket sales to the annual daily average of 2,275 entries.

3.4.54 Sundays were not selected as they have significantly lower activity on average than the other 6 days of the week.

## Analysis Methodology

3.4.55 In order to understand the parking activity on the 4 chosen days, an accumulation calculation was undertaken to create a day long profile of arrivals and departures based on ticket sales.

3.4.56 However, there were no reported departure times in the parking transaction data. In order to estimate the departure time of vehicles, the recorded ticketed duration for each vehicle was added on to their respective arrival times. This represents the maximum time a vehicle could have stayed and therefore will often overestimate the time spent parked.

3.4.57 Vehicles staying under half an hour and reported as having a parking duration of zero, so a half hour of parking duration was assumed. For reference, the reported tariff times for the car parks are as shown in Table 3.4.

3.4.58 The following graphs display the parking capacity of each car park following the arrivals and estimated departures throughout each of the selected days.

3.4.59 It should be noted that the accumulation was capped to the capacity of the respective car park. It should also be noted that many of the car parks do not require the purchase of a parking ticket outside the designated parking tariff hours and therefore capacity during the night-time and early morning may not show a true reflection in the analysis.

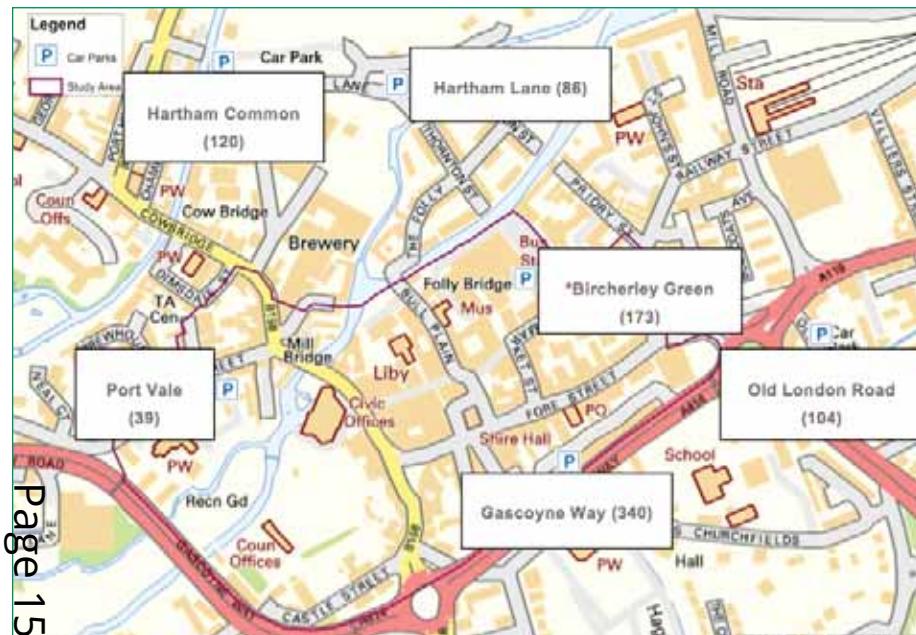


Figure 3.5: Parking location map  
\*Note: Bircherley Green Shopping Centre car park was run by East Herts Council until 2015, and is therefore included in the figure, but is now under the control of Bircherley Green operators.

Address	Spaces	Tariff and opening hours
Gascoyne Way	340	Mon-Sat 7:30-16:00 Free outside these hours 30 Mins Free 90 Mins £0.80 3 Hours £2.00 4 Hours £2.90 5 Hours £3.60 Day £4.40 Motorcycle Free Disabled Free Mon-Sat 16:00-18:30 30 Mins Free Max £1.00 Motorcycle Free Disabled Free
Bircherley Green	173	Mon-Sat 7:00-18:30 Sun 7:00-17:00
Hartham Common	120	Mon-Sat 7:30-16:00 Free outside these hours 30 Mins Free 90 Mins £0.80 3 Hours £2.00 5 Hours £3.60 Day £4.40, Disabled Free Mon-Sat 16:00-18:30, 30 Mins Free, Max £1.00, Disabled Free
Old London Road	104	Mon-Sat 7:30-16:00 Free outside these hours 30 Mins Free 5 Hours £ 3.60 Day £ 4.40 Motorcycle Free Disabled Free Mon-Sat 16:00-18:30 30 Mins Free Max £ 1.00 Motorcycle Free Disabled Free Mon-Sun 24 hours Large Vehicle £15.00
St. Andrew Street	103	Maximum stay 5 hours Mon-Sat 7:30-16:00 Free outside these hours 30 Mins Free 90 Mins £0.80 3 Hours £2.00 5 Hours £3.60 Disabled Free Mon-Sat 16:00-18:30 30 Mins Free Max £1.00 Disabled
Hartham Lane	86	Mon-Sat 7:30-16:00 Free outside these hours 30 Mins Free 90 Mins £0.80 3 Hours £2.00 5 Hours £3.60 Day £4.40 Disabled Free Mon-Sat 16:00-18:30 30 Mins Free Max £1.00 Disabled Free
Port Vale	39	Mon-Sat 7:30-16:00 Free outside these hours 30 Mins Free 90 Mins £0.80 3 Hours £2.00 4 Hours £2.90 5 Hours £3.60 Day £4.40 Disabled Free Mon-Sat 16:00-18:30 30 Mins Free Max £1.00 Disabled Free

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Table 3.4 Parking Charges

## Busiest Weekday: 23 December 2014

3.4.60 Figure 3.6 shows the spare capacity for the busiest day of the year. The maximum accumulation of vehicles for all of the car parks combined was 757 cars at 13:23.

## Analysis

3.4.61 The data indicates that through all 4 scenarios, there is a degree of spare capacity throughout the day within the seven car parks assessed. The minimum spare capacity of the day for each car park is summarised below in Table 5.2.

3.4.62 The analysis indicates that there is generally more spare capacity during the weekday, than the weekend suggesting that the parking spaces are more likely to be used by shoppers than commuters working in the town centre. There is a preference for people to park in the more central locations of St Andrew Street and Bircherley Green shopping centre, which are at capacity on an average weekend.

3.4.63 It is noted that Gascoyne Way has spare capacity throughout the day. People could be directed to use this car park to evenly spread the usage across the town centre.

Car park	Average		Maximum	
	Weekday	Saturday	Weekday	Saturday
Bircherley Green	86	0	0	0
Gascoyne Way	189	61	72	24
Hartham Common	78	77	31	16
Hartham Lane	67	63	66	40
London Road	56	72	67	63
Port Vale	9	20	21	14
St Andrew Street	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>157</b>

Table 3.5: Minimum Spare Capacity (available spaces)

### Hertford Car Park Spare Capacity on the Busiest Weekday- 23 December 2014

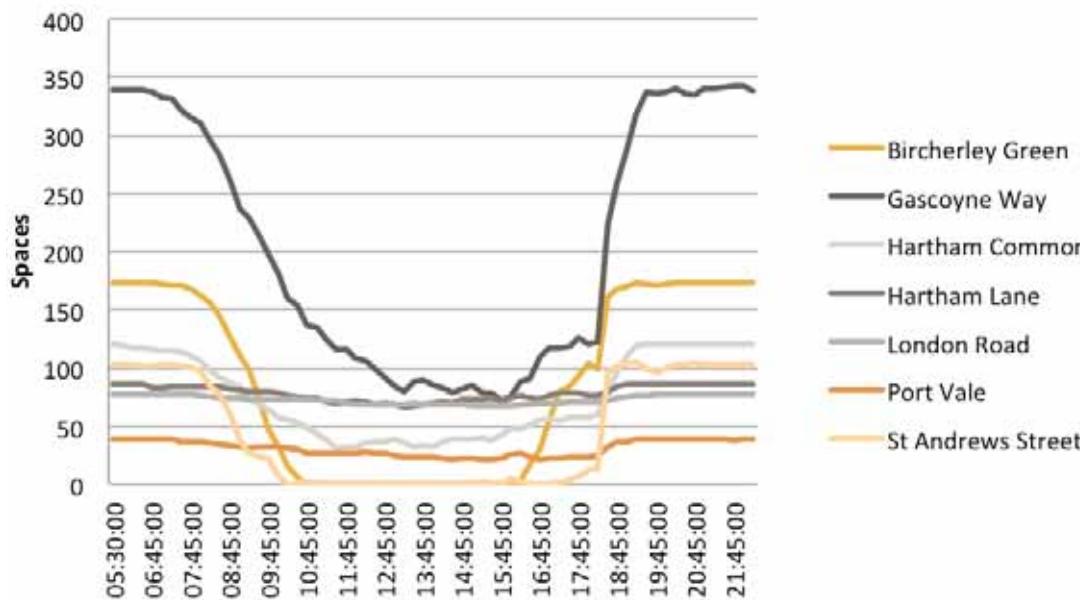


Figure 3.6: Hertford Car Park Spare Capacity on the busiest weekday

3.4.64 The Council recently set up short stay free parking (half an hour) in Gascoyne Way and all its other car parks in the town centre. This has been positively received.

3.4.65 The Bircherley Green car park has a number of car parking spaces associated with the Waitrose that will relocate if the store does not feature in the redevelopment of the shopping centre. Therefore, despite the high utilisation, it is not considered that the same number of parking spaces will necessarily need to be re-provided in the future.

3.4.66 The number of spaces provided in the future scheme should be in line with policy; however, this would be subject to further discussions with both Hertfordshire County Council, as transport authority, and with East Herts Council, as planning authority.

3.4.67 Through the public consultations a preference for a 'pay on exit' approach in the town's car parks was expressed. This preference should continue to be borne in mind; however, central Government currently prohibits local authorities implementing 'pay on exit' systems based solely on ANPR. The alternative to an ANPR based approach – a

system including barriers – was investigated in 2015 but was ruled out on cost, traffic management and safety grounds. Restrictions on the use of ANPR do not apply to private sector car park operators who operate their car parks on a different legal basis and who therefore enjoy freedoms not available to the Council.

### On-street parking opportunities

#### General

3.4.68 Through discussions with EHC, it was noted that the recent emphasis at EHC has been to increase the availability of on-street 'stop and shop' limited waiting bays and last year the Council increased the supply by removing some redundant single yellow lines (SYL) and double yellow lines (DYL).

3.4.69 The East Herts parking policy does however suggest that, in implementing parking solutions, these should reflect local needs and therefore removal of some on-street parking spaces is a possibility if the need can be justified. Any loss of free short stay parking will need to be balanced against accessibility of shops and services.

#### Fore Street

3.4.70 It is acknowledged that the parking on Fore Street is currently seen as necessary for the function of the street; however, its removal could allow the expansion of footways and create a more pleasant and safer environment for pedestrians.

3.4.71 There is a limited need to park on Fore Street, unless someone is disabled or for loading purposes, if people are willing to walk to the retail units from the allocated car parks. Policies to reduce convenience parking may reduce the impact on space that parked vehicles create as well as discourage car use in the town centre creating a safer and more pleasant pedestrian environment.

3.4.72 The analysis above shows that there are a number of free parking spaces within Gascoyne Way which could absorb this loss of parking should people be willing to walk an additional five minutes to use the facilities on Fore Street. There is a small surface car park area just off the Fore Street / A119 / A414 junction in front of Bluecoats which could be removed to reduce the conflicts between vehicle movements at the junction. Again the car park on Gascoyne Way has the potential to absorb these trips.

3.4.73 The removal of this short stay free car parking could also result in a modal shift with people preferring to use sustainable modes of transport rather than having to drive to the town centre. The removal of these parking spaces could also facilitate a shared footway approach on the north side of Fore Street and allow for the widening of the southern footway to better accommodate bus passengers waiting at the stops.

#### Bull Plain

3.4.74 Bull Plain has 15 car parking spaces on the southern section, all of which, except for the disabled parking spaces, could be removed to allow an enhanced pedestrian environment and provide space for a potential market. While there was some objection to the loss of car parking, the analysis suggests that there is spare capacity at other town centre car parks (notably Hartham Lane or the Sainsbury's car parks to the north). The analysis of the off-street parking shows that there are viable alternatives from a transport perspective; however it is acknowledged that the removal of parking can be a contentious issue and may be unpopular amongst retailers and the disabled users.

#### Church Street and Bell Lane

3.4.75 To facilitate the removal of traffic on the western section of Fore Street, parking spaces on Bell Lane and Church Street (both of which take access off Fore Street) should be withdrawn and re allocated to residents who will be afforded access only rights.

3.4.76 This will result in the loss of approximately 14 unrestricted spaces on Church Street and a further 8 short term spaces on Bell Lane. These spaces are within a short walk of Gascoyne Way Car Park, which could absorb some of the capacity.

3.4.77 It is also anticipated that with the removal of these parking spaces, the town centre will become a more attractive space for people to walk and cycle as traffic in the area is reduced. This could result in a shift away from people driving, and the increase in more sustainable modes which would reduce the need for car parking spaces.

Car park	Distance to Bircherley Green
Gascoyne Way	200m
Hartham Common	500m
Hartham Lane	400m
London Road	520m
Port Vale	680m
Andrews Street	400m

Table 3.6: Distance to Bircherley Green Shopping Centre

**Taxi bays****Issues**

3.4.78 There is an issue with taxis parking over the pedestrianised entrance to Bircherley Green / Railway Street which causes a conflict with pedestrians. This is an enforcement issue and could be resolved by stricter control of the stopping area. The configuration of the Hertford East taxi rank and parking layout results in vehicles impeding the station entrance.

3.4.79 There is a relatively long taxi rank situated on Fore Street, which is lightly trafficked in the day, although it is noted that it facilitates the night-time economy on Fore Street. Taxi ranks are important to the town centre vitality and the loss of taxi facilities needs to be carefully considered.

**Public realm design**

3.4.80 The pavements are generally narrow and there is scope for increasing width in places, especially where there are wide median strip crossings and markings along roads (such as along The Wash or on the parts of Railway Street that did not feature as part of the earlier enhancement works).

3.4.81 The use of guardrails and bollards to prevent kerb parking or encroachment can undermine the visual impression of the town centre; and where possible these should be removed and replaced with street furniture such as benches, cycle parking or planting boxes. Similarly, there are lighting columns and other signage which may work better if they are attached directly to buildings (subject to heritage and conservation issues), or at least combined onto one post to reduce footway clutter.

3.4.82 Key entrances into the town centre can be designed to create a traffic calming effect by design; making it clear to drivers they are entering a more pedestrian oriented zone. It is noted that a number of roads within the town centre are subject to 20mph restrictions, but this will also need to be reflected in future design.

**Key Pedestrian Desire Lines**

3.4.83 Although two have recently been upgraded, some of the subways are in disrepair and the eastern subway (connecting to Fore Street adjacent to the Marks & Spencer) has lighting issues which reduces the perception of safety. As a key entry point into the town centre from the south, these should both be enhanced for use by pedestrians accessing the town centre.

3.4.84 The riverside by Bircherley Green has limited pedestrian access and poor footway quality, which could be improved with the redevelopment of Bircherley Green shopping centre.

3.4.85 The eastern end of Fore Street has an excessive entrance treatment that restricts pedestrian movement; this should be redesigned to make pedestrian movement easier while creating a well-designed indication to drivers that they are entering the town centre area.

3.4.86 The Strategy also looks to strengthen the gateway into Fore Street at South Street junction and improve pedestrian crossing by extending footways, reducing carriageway width and providing a raised paved road table. The pavement build-out should have tree planting and location for cycle parking set away from pedestrian desire lines.

3.4.87 It is noted that HCC, as well as this strategy, has an aspiration to create a strong pedestrian link between Maidenhead Street and the Castle area. This could be achieved by enhancing the crossing point from Maidenhead Street. To ensure safety of pedestrians Maidenhead Street could be defined as One-Way west bound to allow for a No Entry from The Wash.

### Surface Crossing on Gascoyne Way

3.4.88 The potential for including an 'at grade crossing' on Gascoyne Way has been explored in terms of determining locations which would cater for any key desire lines and the feasibility of implementing the crossing.

3.4.89 The section of Gascoyne Way between the junctions with Castle Street and Fore Street is dual carriageway and has limited footways. This is predominantly because there are no active frontages which would require pedestrian access to be maintained. There are no junctions with minor roads except for access to the multi-storey car park; however, it is noted that the desire line between Queen's Road and Church Street (which leads into the town centre) has been severed by Gascoyne Way.

3.4.90 In terms of location, this is considered to be the main desire line which would afford access into Hertford town centre from the south. There is an existing subway located at the south end of Church Street on the aforementioned desire line. Conversion of the subway to an 'at grade pedestrian crossing' could be considered but significant engineering works (i.e. infilling of the subway) or compulsory purchase of neighbouring properties would be required.

3.4.91 The safety implications and the potential for blocking back onto the preceding junction would also need to be considered carefully. The provision of an 'at grade crossing' in this location could be dangerous due to its proximity to the roundabout. Vehicles held up at the crossing could block back onto the preceding junction which could in turn cause the junction to lock up. Slow moving traffic, queuing back onto the roundabout could create an additional potential for rear shunt collisions due to the speed and nature of the road.

3.4.92 Given the above and that there is an existing subway, it is recommended that the existing crossing facility is refurbished and enhanced to provide a more attractive crossing. There should also be an aspiration to refurbish the other two underpasses at Castle Street and Fore Street to make them more attractive for pedestrians and cyclists. This is in line with UTP scheme PED34 which suggests the refurbishment of 'underpasses at Hale Rd to include better sight lines where possible'.

3.4.93 A further crossing point linking Post Office Walk (through Gascoyne Way car park) has also been considered. However, this would require land take from the church or Right of Way agreement through the church grounds. It would also require pedestrians to cut through the car park, which could have safety implications.

## Wayfinding principles

### Issues

3.4.94 The current wayfinding infrastructure consists of traditional wayfinding posts located at appropriate points across the town centre. However, these are not considered to be best practice and a strategy more in line with 'Legible London' would work better in the town centre.

3.4.95 Signage and wayfinding help to create a welcoming, friendly town centre for people to visit and will encourage greater exploration of all the cultural retail and leisure activities that Hertford has to offer. Key gateways, squares and pedestrian crossings provide the most suitable places for locating Wayfinding signage throughout the town centre.

3.4.96 As well as formal signage elements, people use a number of physical elements to help them navigate within urban areas such as landmark elements, natural features, key views, urban quarters and prominent routes forming a 'mental' map of the area in their mind. The more legible these are the easier it is to navigate. Within the Strategy the proposals are for a mixture of specifically designed wayfinding signage elements combined with improved legibility of elements that form the town centre such as strengthening the identity of the distinct quarters within the town centre and making the river Lea a focal point.

3.4.97 The Wayfinding signs should provide a town map in a 3D form identifying the key townscape elements and activities within the town. The signage should also identify where it is sited - which street or distinct quarter and space for specific event advertising.

3.4.98 The wayfinding map below identifies the location for Wayfinding Signage maps and street signage to identify distinct quarters.

3.4.99 **Physically Accessible Signage:** the guidance recommends that signs are generally between 900-1,800mm above the ground. Locations for wayfinding features are included on the maps for each area. The following principles apply:

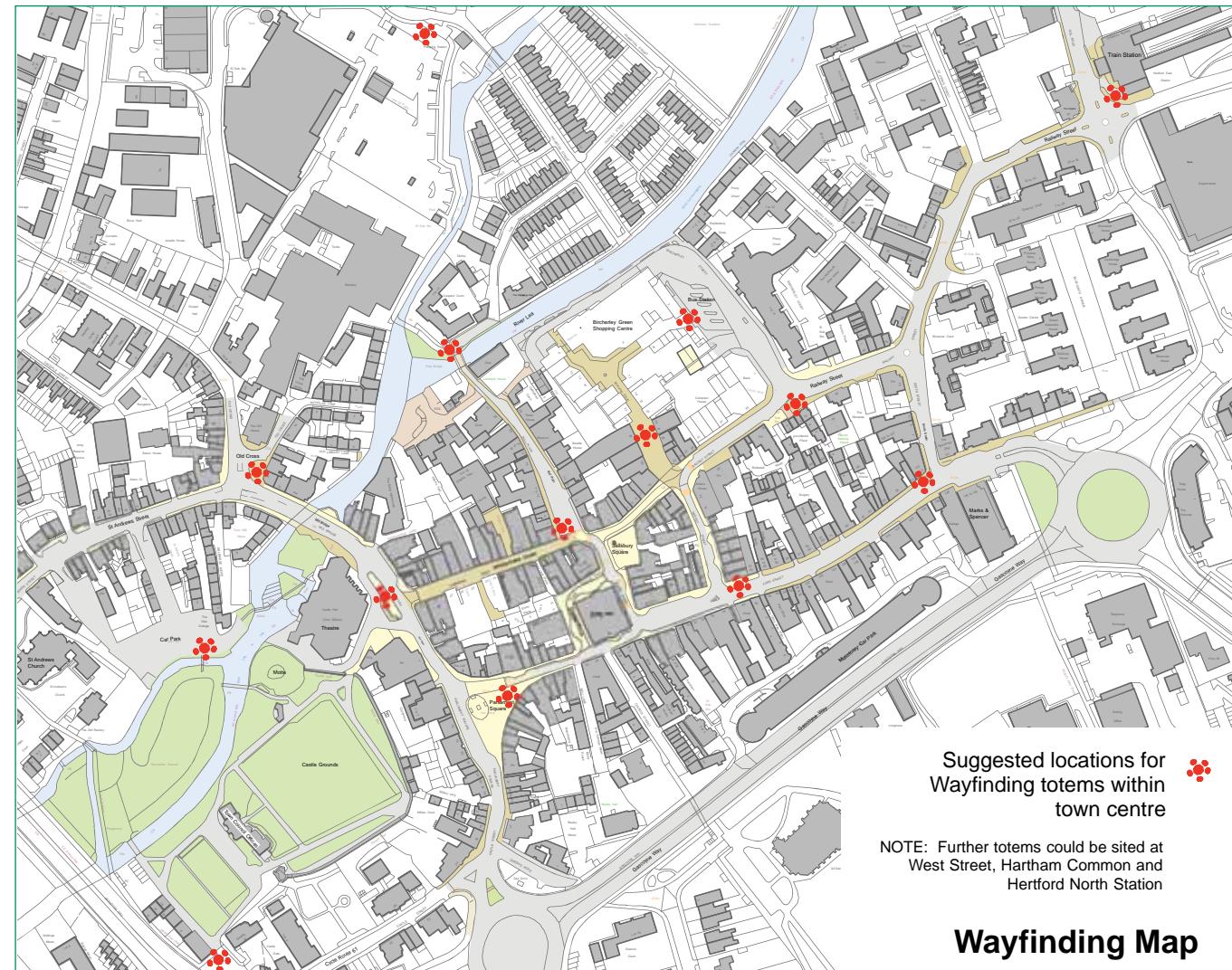


Figure 3.7: Wayfinding map

- Typography** – A clear and recognisable typeface should be applied consistently across the signage. Capitalisation of important places could also be adopted.
- Accessible Routes** – These should be clearly shown on the signage, narrow pavements or steps should be clearly marked to warn wheelchair users of inappropriate routes.
- Graphics** – 3D buildings can be illustrated to provide a representation of key landmark, which can assist people who find map reading difficult.
- Scale** – Measurements in time are more useful than distances as people can relate to time better.
- Off-map Destinations** – Nearby prominent locations can be signed showing their travel time in relation to the edge of the map.
- Integrated Transport** – Any key transport infrastructure.

Source: based on 'Legible London Yellow Book', Transport for London and Applied Information Group, 2007

## Other Measures

3.4.100 Overall, the following measures have been identified to improve the wayfinding:

- Control the use of 'A' boards by shop keepers and consider some form of unified designed shopping map as part of the Wayfinding strategy;
- Improve wayfinding with a map totem located in key locations as shown on map; and
- Provide distinct quarters for the town centre.

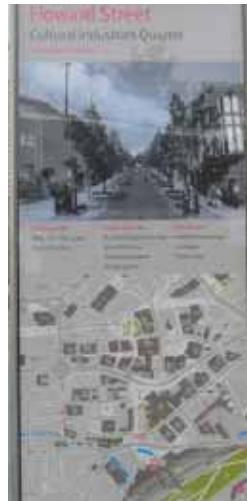


Figure 3.8: Wayfinding Map and information



Figure 3.9: Wayfinding elements used in combination - wayfinding map, banners and unified paving to identify key routes

3.4.103 These markings would also act as a route confirmatory measure and to advise cyclists as to the safest road position to take, which in many cases would be the central primary position due to the narrow nature of the town centre roads. Cyclists who assume this position are generally more accepted by other road users when supported by road markings.

3.4.104 The existing route NCN 61 runs along the section of Fore Street between Market Place and Parliament Square, which is a narrow section of road with multiple priority working arrangements. This route potentially puts cyclists into conflict with oncoming vehicles such as cars and buses. On Fore Street, eastbound vehicles may be expecting buses travelling in a westbound direction, although may be less aware of cyclists. The changes to the western end of Fore Street discussed in section 2 would improve the situation for cyclists in this location.

3.4.105 North Road has two-way advisory cycle lanes linking to Hertford North Station, both of which are poorly maintained and of sub-standard width due to carriageway width constraints. Improved provision on this key route between the station and the town centre should be explored. Continuation of the route into the town centre and beyond the junction with Cross Lane should also be considered through the use of advisory cycle lanes and Advanced Stop Lines (ASLs) at junctions.

3.4.106 Cyclists have the potential to conflict with pedestrians in the town centre. However, there is little alternative as Gascogne Way is unsuitable for cycling. Therefore, those wishing to pass through the town centre should not be discouraged from doing so. The overall urban design strategy is intended to reduce traffic speeds and congestion, which will help provide a safer east-west route for cyclists before they join up with the NCN61.

## Cycling

### Introduction

3.4.101 This section explores the potential to alter the highway arrangement within the study area in order to provide an improved environment for cyclists.

### Issues and Measures

3.4.102 To improve the awareness of other road users to the presence of cyclists it is recommended that cycle symbol road markings be implemented, provided they do not negatively impact on the historic environment.

3.4.107 Cyclists whose final destination lies within the town centre should be encouraged to dismount at edge of the town centre where possible. This can be achieved by providing high quality cycle parking on the periphery.

#### The Wash / St Andrew Street / North Road

3.4.108 The possibility of connecting the existing NCN route 61 to the cycle lanes on North Road has been considered, as a means of connecting the town centre to Hertford North Railway Station. The identified route runs along The Wash, St Andrew Street and North Road, up to the junction with Cross Lane.

3.4.109 The width of these roads is quite narrow, in particular the Wash, which measures 6.2m in width at its narrowest point. Furthermore, footway widths at the pinch points are very narrow, meaning the carriageway cannot be widened without creating a safety hazard for pedestrians. Hence, it is not feasible to provide mandatory cycle lanes which need to be a minimum of 1.5m wide.

3.4.110 Using simple cycle symbol road markings along The Wash would not give any additional rights to cyclists, but it would make drivers aware of the fact that this route is particularly popular with cyclists. Such an approach would establish the principle of a connection between the town and Hertford North Station. Dedicated or advisory cycle lanes have not been deemed appropriate in this location due to the limited road width in certain locations and pinch points.

3.4.111 The map in Figure 3.10 shows the locations of the suggested advanced stop lines for cyclists at two signalised junctions; as well as the proposed route for improvements.

3.4.112 An alternative car free cycle route could be promoted alongside the River Beane.

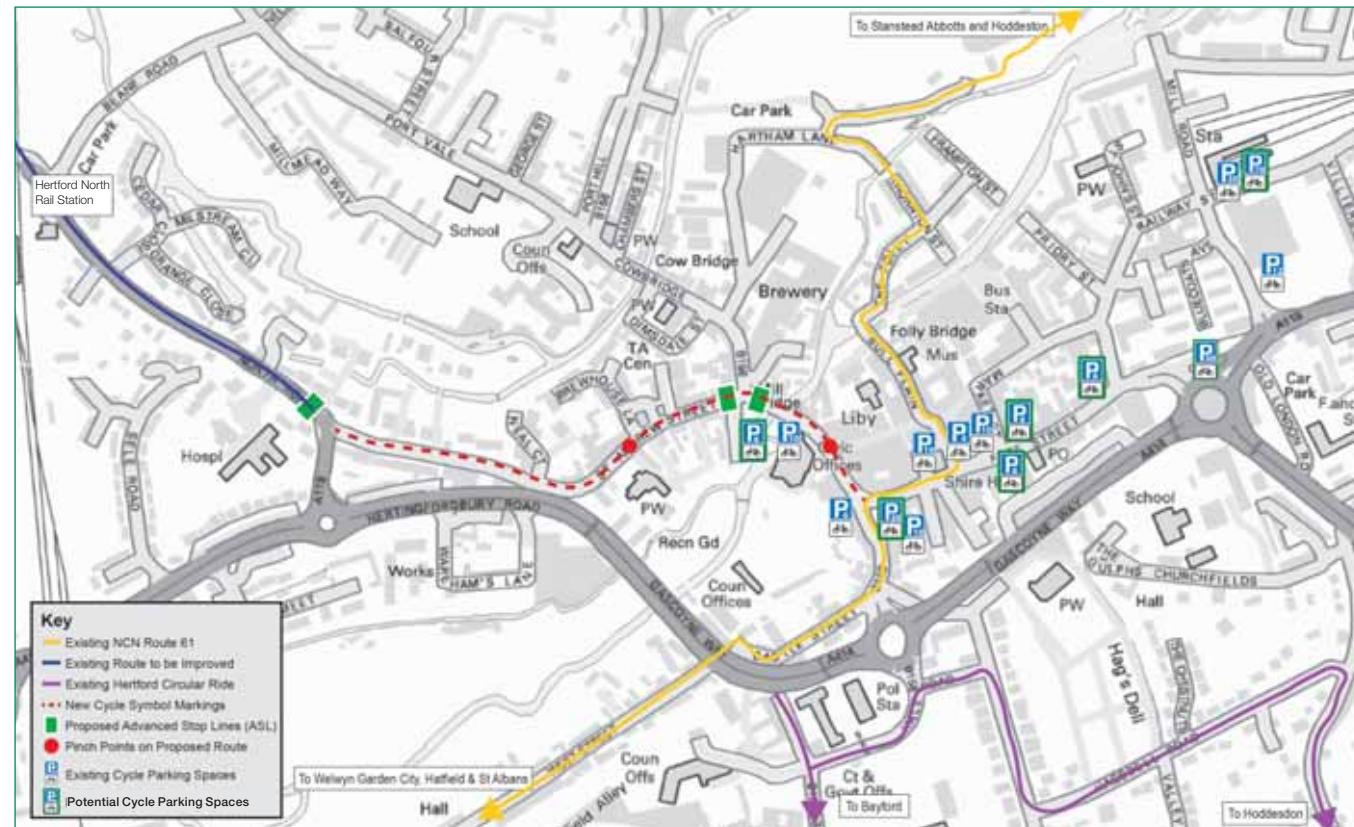


Figure 3.10: Cycle Parking Proposals

#### Hertford East Station

3.4.113 Development in the Mead Lane Area is expected to provide a priority cycle link between the station and National Cycle Network Route 61. Public Realm improvements around the station should facilitate access to the proposed route by creating a more cycle friendly environment.

#### Cycle parking

3.4.114 A review of the cycle parking provision in the town centre has highlighted the need for additional spaces in key locations. The proposals are for up to an additional 138 spaces in the study area, an increase of 150% on the existing provision of 92 spaces, as shown in Figure 3.10.

3.4.115 It is noted that the proposed location of the spaces are generally in line with UTP:

- CYC24 – Cycle Storage Hertford East.
- Cycle storage at Hertford Theatre.
- CYC27 – Cycle Storage at Parliament Square. In this location any cycle parking needs to be carefully considered in relation to the setting of the War Memorial.
- CYC30 – Cycle Storage at Bluecoats.
- CYC31 – Cycle Storage at Fore Street.

3.4.116 Cycle parking will also be supplied at Bircherley Green Shopping Centre in line with policy.

## Servicing

### Introduction

3.4.117 This section of the report explores the issues relating to servicing and provides proposals demonstrating how the impact of servicing vehicles could be reduced.

### Issues and enforcement

3.4.118 During the site visit it was observed that Maidenhead Street had a number of palettes permanently located outside shops. This effectively narrows the footway and detracts from the streetscape. Palettes should not be left on public highway and the Council should look to ensure that this is enforced.

3.4.119 The narrow roads /footways and one way systems create a constrained environment around the town centre. Any illegally parked cars which obstruct the flow of traffic can have a detrimental impact on traffic flow. Again the Council should look to ensure that there is no illegal stopping whilst people deliver goods to / from the units.

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### Proposed restricted operating times

3.4.120 Servicing restrictions could be applied to the town centre. This would require consultation with local business and it is acknowledged that previous consultation has been unsuccessful due to the nature of the retail units in the town centre.

3.4.121 Vehicles should be restricted to before and after times of high pedestrian activity in the town centre. For example it is suggested that servicing is restricted to outside the hours of 10:00-18:00 on weekdays and on 10:00-16:00 on weekends.

3.4.122 It is noted that this would be difficult to implement and would need to be conducted on a street by street basis: pedestrianised streets such as Maidenhead Street could be restricted to specific time periods.

3.4.123 Loading bays could also be restricted to specific time periods.

3.4.124 Vehicles loading from short term parking bays such as on Fore Street would be harder to control. In order to minimise the impact of servicing on these streets, restriction on vehicle sizes could be applied to ensure that larger vehicles do not use the bays for servicing.

3.4.125 Where there are pinch points, no loading should be permitted at any time to ensure that vehicle movements remain unrestricted.

3.4.126 This is in line with FRT4 of the UTP which promotes loading restrictions on Fore Street / Parliament Square. It is also in line with HWY3 which promotes loading restrictions on the Market Street, the Wash and Fore Street.

### Proposed loading pads

3.4.127 Loading Pads could potentially be implemented on Fore Street, Market Street and Railway Street. These pads could increase the effective width of the footway when loading is not in operation, whilst still retaining the loading bays required to service the units.

3.4.128 The illustrative public realm designs (Appendix 1) provide further details on the potential Loading Pad Locations.

# 4

## Design Strategy

# 4 Design Strategy

## 4.1 Key sites strategy

4.1.1 This section sets out the design principles for the key opportunity sites in Hertford. The options have been developed with the vision and objectives in mind and support the strategy set out in this document. The options have been tested in terms of their viability at a high level.

The three key sites are:

- Bircherley Green Shopping Precinct.
- Maidenhead Street.
- The Marquee.

### 4.1 KEY SITE STRATEGY - BIRCHERLEY GREEN

#### Bircherley Green

4.1.2 Bircherley Green is perhaps the most critical of the three sites examined in this study. It has the most potential to deliver some of the core objectives set out earlier in this document namely:

- Transform the riverside into an attractive destination.
- Attract a greater variety of shops and create a cluster of modern retail units.
- Promote the town as a tourist/visitor destination by extending the leisure offer in the form of river activities and potentially a cinema.

4.1.3 The Team developed 3 options for the site that were shown to the public at the September round of consultation. Two of these options looked at comprehensively redeveloping the centre. The third option looked at simply refurbishing it.

4.1.4 All of the options retained a dedicated bus station in its current location and this has been included in the urban design framework plan. However, there is a possibility that it may be proposed to be relocated. The bus station is a major constraint on this site and the relocation of its services would provide the opportunity to improve on each of the options in commercial terms.

4.1.5 However, to achieve any of the three proposed options at least some redevelopment of the existing shopping centre is necessary. The current development is under-performing in both its spatial and economic contributions to the town. Baseline studies revealed the following problems with the centre:

- The unit sizes are too small to attract modern retailers.
- The development turns its back on the river using the river as a service route for large trucks.
- It visually blocks connections between Railway Street and the River.
- It fails to link up with other key destinations in the town.
- The public realm is dated and there are no quality open spaces for events, markets or street traders.
- The bus station is unattractive.

4.1.6 The Bircherley Green car park has a number of car parking spaces associated with the Waitrose store that may relocate with the redevelopment of the shopping centre. Therefore, despite the high utilisation, it is not considered that the same number of parking spaces would necessarily need to be re-provided in the future if this store were no longer present.

4.1.7 The future of Bircherley Green is uncertain. Waitrose, the centre's anchor store has been keen to leave the site for an alternative out of town location. The site's owners have been preparing proposals to redevelop the centre with a new superstore at its heart. Their pre-application material was taken to public consultation in 2014 and was met with some objection at the time. Controversially, the proposals removed Hertford bus station from the site. This was not well received and the scheme attracted further negative feedback from the public with regard to the scale of the proposals, its failure to provide usable public space at the river and the proposed architectural style. A Design Review was also critical of the plans.

4.1.8 Proposals have been made but withdrawn for a new out of town foodstore at the site of the Van Hage Garden Centre. It has been widely speculated that Waitrose wish to move to this new site and have made it known that, regardless of the outcome, that they do not intend to remain in Bircherley Green.

4.1.9 In light of this uncertainty, an urban design framework is seen to be the best way to establish the key requirement any scheme has to meet, while leaving enough flexibility to allow a developer to respond to market constraints. The framework addresses the issues identified and aims to deliver the core objectives of the study. The viability and deliverability of the urban design framework has been tested through the following three options presented at consultation.

4.1.10 Bircherley Green is the key development opportunity in the town centre and it must contribute to the overall objectives. The development uses are expected to help deliver the following:

- More recognisable multiple operators.
- More, bigger, retail units available (circa 1,500-4,000sqft) including both comparison goods as well as food & beverage.
- More recognisable and effective anchors.
- More external retail and food & beverage activity i.e. more external tables and chairs.
- Office use.
- A strong town centre focus.
- Linkages between daytime and evening economy.
- Space for more and better market stalls, events and activities.
- Maintain opportunity for some high quality foodstore provision.
- The bus station should remain on site, retaining the existing number of stops, and proposals must re-provide a covered waiting area and toilet facilities.
- Purpose built town centre healthcare facility (i.e. doctors' surgery).

### Development Options for Bircherley Green

4.1.11 The team developed 3 options for the site.

These were:

- **Option 1:** Foodstore.
- **Option 2:** Mixed use (including leisure).
- **Option 3:** Refurbishment.

4.1.12 The options were presented to the public at the September consultation and are shown opposite.

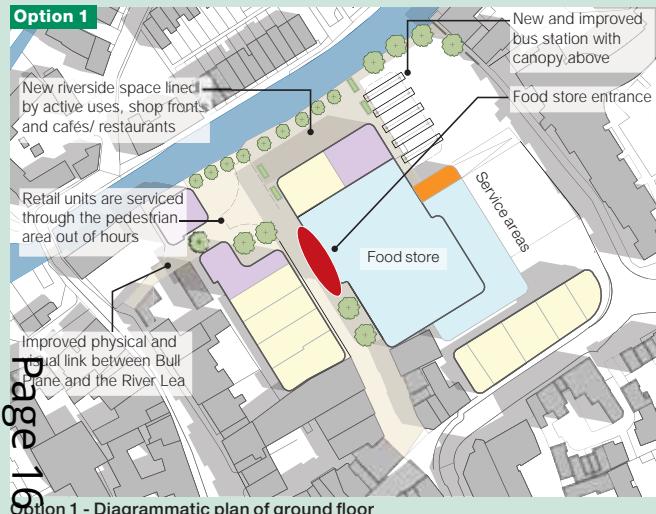
4.1.13 The September consultation revealed that 74% of the public responses favoured the more radical proposals to redevelop the site (Options 1 and 2) over refurbishment of the centre. However, the results regarding the individual options were quite close. 41% preferred Option 1, 33% preferred Option 2, and 26% preferred Option 3.

## Development options as presented at public exhibition in September 2015

### Option 1: Foodstore

This option looks at a variation of the proposals put forward by the landowners in 2014. It explores how a development, including a large foodstore could address some of the wider town centre issues and objectives.

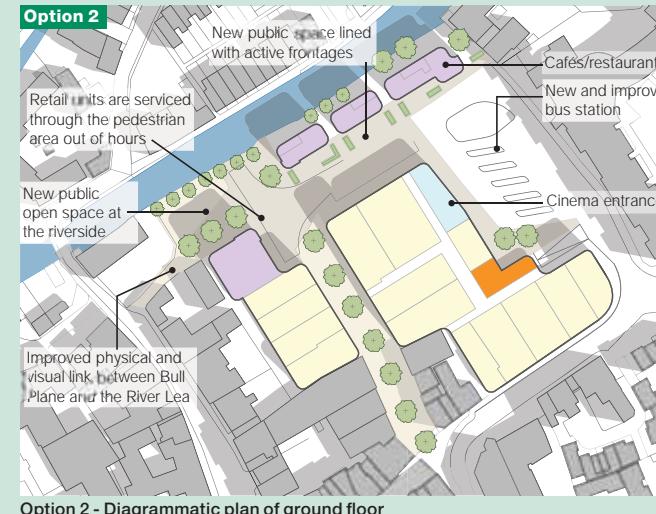
- Retains the bus station on site,.
- Creates 15 new retail units between 1000 and 4000sqft to create a cluster of modern retail units.
- Create usable public spaces at the riverfront that could be used for specialist markets and events.
- Create dual aspect residential accommodation on upper floors to bring more residential uses into the town centre.
- Provides car-parking underground to give more space over to pedestrians.
- Create a strong visual connection from Railway Street to the river.
- Orientate the entrance of the foodstore towards the town centre to encourage linked trips and a better flow of people between shops.



### Option 2: Mixed use (including leisure)

This option provides a destination by creating a cluster of modern retail units and leisure opportunities, including a leisure use, such as a small multiplex cinema as an alternative anchor tenant for the site.

- Creating a finer urban grain, through a range of modern retail units that are complementary to Hertford town centre in terms of uses, retail offer and character.
- Create dual aspect residential accommodation on upper floors to bring more residential uses into the town centre.
- Bringing an additional leisure use (for example a cinema) into this part of the town centre would encourage people to stay longer in the town centre, using the shops, cafés, restaurants and leisure offer.
- Creating an open space large enough to accommodate town centre events and specialist markets.

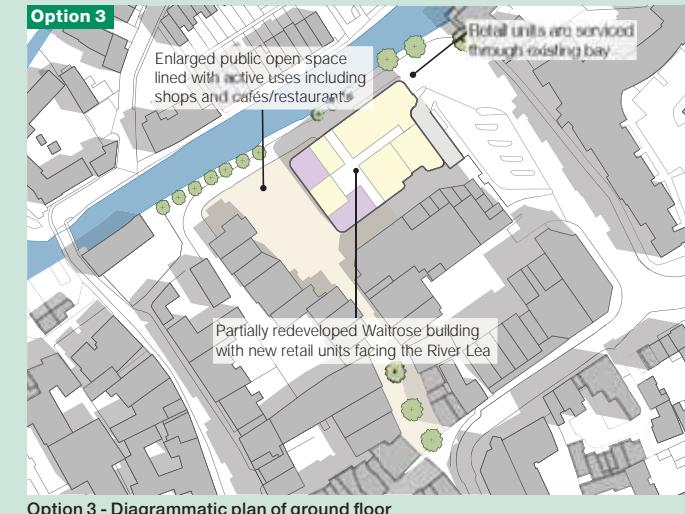


### Option 3: Refurbishment

This option is the 'do minimum' approach to Bircherley Green. It looks at what could be done with the existing centre (should Waitrose leave the site).

- Partial demolition of the centre, leaving the car park and most of the existing smaller units intact.
- Some new units on the site of the existing Waitrose store could face onto the river.
- Create larger public space at the river.
- Improve public realm throughout the centre.
- Bus station is retained in its current shape and form.

Key
Retail
Café
Leisure use, e.g. cinema
Public open space
Bus service



4.1.14 Bircherley Green is the most important development opportunity site in the town centre. It has the most potential to improve the retail/leisure offer and open up the riverfront. It is essential that any proposals brought forward on the site maximise the potential of the site and also satisfy public opinion. We have therefore created a set of urban design principles and a Framework Plan that address both of these elements (Figure 4.1).

4.1.15 As public opinion on the best option for the site was split, the Framework Plan has been further developed to offer a hybrid of the best components of each of the three options to respond to the elements the public supported in each one, as well as other emerging issues, namely:

- Set back of all buildings along the river's edge and creation of a useable public space, as shown in Option 1.
- Creating active frontages along the river (all options).
- Improving visual connections from Railway Street to the river (all options).
- Respecting the scale and historic context of neighbouring buildings (e.g. Lombard House) (all options).
- Restricting vehicles to Bircherley Street (all options).
- Support for the potential development of a foodstore (Option 1) or the leisure/mixed use option (Option2).
- Need for new retail units to maintain flexibility to allow combining into larger or anchor unit (added to framework).
- Retention of the bus station – Bircherley Green represents the best and only town centre location capable of providing a central bus station (all options).
- Retention of pedestrian link through the centre of the development (added to framework).

- Retention of office facilities (added to framework).
- Potential for purpose built town centre healthcare facility (i.e. doctors' surgery) (added to framework).
- Potential to deliver the refurbishment option (Option 3) which would be least disruptive to the town.
- Restriction of building heights - allowing a maximum of 5 storeys only in the less sensitive central location (Added to framework).

4.1.16 The council will use the framework to guide the future development on this important site. It has been designed to be flexible enough to support a number of development options whilst linking strategically into the wider strategy for the town.

### Urban Design Principles

#### Frontages and heights

-  Proposals must create a frontage to the riverside.
-  Frontages along Railway Street should follow the existing building line and be 3 to 4 storeys in height.
-  Frontages along Bircherley Green should be positioned perpendicular to the river to strengthen the visual link between Railway Street and the water.
-  The frontage along Bircherley Street should be 4 storeys in height, be attractively designed and provide some level of casual surveillance over the bus station.
-  Any development adjacent to Lombard House should be limited to 2 storeys to respect the setting of the listed building and be set back 8m from the water.
-  Development closer to Bull Plain should be restricted to between 3 and 4 storeys to respect the historic context in this area.
-  Development in the centre of the site can be between 4 and 5 storeys in height.
-  Development in the centre of the site can be up to 4 storeys in height.

#### Links and Transport

-  Proposals must maintain the physical link between Railway Street and the River Lea - this should remain a pedestrian environment restricted to essential service vehicles only.
-  Proposals must retain and improve the physical and visual link between the bus station, Bircherley Green and Bull Plain (including maintaining the link to the museum).
-  A single united bus station should remain on Bircherley Street providing no less than the current level of provision and have covered and indoor waiting areas and toilet facilities.
-  Proposals must provide adequate parking to cater for wider town centre as well as new development – ideally this should be located below ground (where possible) and accessed from the vehicular route on Bircherley Street.
-  Improved attractive pedestrian route from the bus station to Railway Street.
-  Attractive pedestrian route through development.

**Spaces and Landscaping**

- Routes along Bircherley Street (including the bus station) and Bircherley Green should be attractively landscaped to draw people towards the river.
- Proposals must create usable public open space with attractively designed hard and soft landscaping.
- The focal point for new development should be where key pedestrian links converge at the River/Bircherley Green.
- Architecture should be used to create focal points at key positions to draw people into the town and towards the river.

**Uses**

- New development must provide a broad mix of town centre uses, including a cluster of new retail units between 1000 and 4000sqft each (with flexibility to combine into larger or anchor unit), food and beverage uses, retention of the bus station and office provision and potential provision of a healthcare facility.

**Please note:** This Framework drawing provides an outline concept illustrating the key principles and approach for the development of the site.

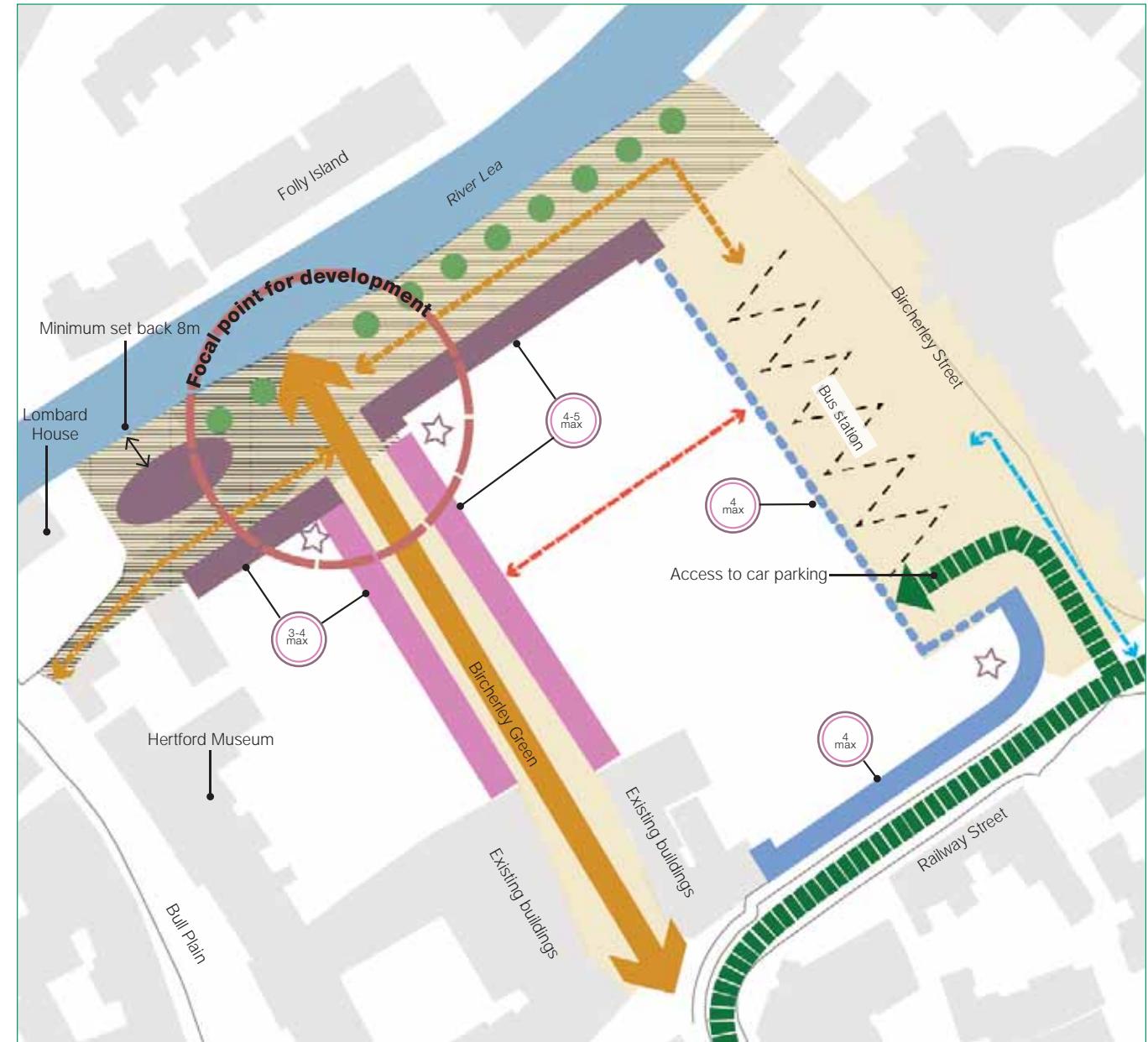


Figure 4.1: Bircherley Green Urban Design Framework

## Maidenhead Street

4.1.17 The team examined three options for the former McDonald's building and the Boots Optician Building on Maidenhead Street. The McDonald's had lain empty for several years and was creating an eyesore in the street. Since the public consultation, the building has now been occupied (by a stationers and the relocated Post Office) and has benefited from the installation of a new shopfront. However, this work has not involved any significant uplift or remodelling of the building. Therefore, although in the short-term major proposals for the building do not appear likely, this would not rule out the prospect of more ambitious development options being considered in the future.

### Urban design principles

4.1.18 Most of the issues identified from our retail study, townscape and landscape analysis as well as public engagement relate to improving the public realm, shopfronts, and management along Maidenhead Street generally. There were few comments about the former McDonald's building (now occupied by the Post Office) in particular. However, from a townscape perspective there are some key principles that development on this site should address. These are:

- Improve street scene to make a more attractive environment considering materials, lighting and street furniture.
- Frontage to Maidenhead Street should be aligned with the predominant building line.
- Proposals should review service access to shops.

- Proposals should create some active as well as attractive frontage along Evron Place to deter anti-social behaviour in the lane; investigate the potential to close the lane for public access and incorporate the space into a new development, for example in the form of a rear courtyard.
- Existing buildings in the surrounding context should inform the height of new development.
- New or refurbished shop units should have a general floor area of at least 3000sqft to provide a different offer and increase the opportunity to attract national retailers.

### Development options for Maidenhead Street

4.1.19 The team developed 3 options to show how the urban design principles above could be translated into development proposals for the site.

These were:

- **Option 1:** Refurbishment and extend.
- **Option 2:** Redevelop and extend.
- **Option 3:** Comprehensive redevelopment of middle section of the street.

4.1.20 Option 1 would leave the site as it stands at present with some cosmetic changes. The other options involve more extensive changes – these are illustrated opposite.

4.1.21 The above scenarios were presented at the September 2015 round of consultation. Option 3 – the most radical – was the most popular with the public. This option deals most effectively with the issues of anti-social behaviour at Evron Place and service access along the street.

## Maidenhead Street: Development options as presented at public exhibition in September 2015

### Option 1 - Refurbishment and extend

This option looked at simply refurbishing the existing building (excluding Boots Optician). The advantages of this approach would be to:

- A less disruptive and potentially quicker delivery.
- Provide more active frontage at ground floor level.
- Extend frontage to align with the prevailing building line.
- Lower cost.

#### Viability

This option involves a small extension to the existing unit and therefore requires additional land to be acquired. The scheme proposed does produce a positive residual land value which should be sufficient to acquire the land required and enable the refurbishment to be undertaken. Given that the land in question is currently part of Maidenhead Street, it is unlikely to be brought forward as an alternative use and the extension of the existing retail unit is likely to be the only feasible use.

As the scheme option is developed in further, detail discussions will need to be undertaken with the landowners to determine the value of the land for the proposed scheme. These discussions will need to focus on the added value of the extension to the retail unit and how this value is attributed to the land, given the costs and risks associated with the refurbishment and extension.

### Option 2 - Redevelop and extend

This option examined the potential of redeveloping both the Boots optician and the McDonald's building. The advantages of this approach would be to:

- Realign the whole frontage of these buildings at Maidenhead Street to match up with the rest of the street.
- Create an active retail frontage along Evron Place.
- Provide new residential units at upper levels increasing casual surveillance over Evron Place.
- Provide an area to the rear of the building for bin storage.
- 2xA3 retail units at ground floor and around six flats at first and second floor.

#### Viability

As with option 1 the proposed scheme generates a positive residual land value. However, under this option additional properties will need to be acquired and therefore as the scheme option is developed in further detail it will be necessary to undertake a detailed analysis of the existing asset values in order to confirm whether the residual land value generated by the proposed scheme is sufficient to acquire the existing assets on site and enable the scheme to come forward.

In terms of comparing the residual land value with the threshold land values (TLV) for town centre retail on a brown field site, (East Herts strategic assessment of development viability – stage 1 b – paper 2, commercial viability (January 2013)), and can confirm that the residual value generated is in excess of the TLV, thus suggesting that the option is viable. However, as mentioned above the extension will require the acquisition of an existing unit which has an investment value which will be above the land value. Further analysis of the asset values will be required as the scheme option is brought forward.

### Option 3 - Comprehensive redevelopment of middle section of the street

This option examined the potential of comprehensively redeveloping the middle section of Maidenhead Street and Evron Place. The advantages of this approach would be to:

- Create a dedicated service yard to address issues of servicing and bin storage, access from Market Place.
- Close Evron Place to address issues of anti-social behaviour.
- Provide up to 4 more modern units and larger retail units.
- Bring more residential uses - around 13 new flats - to Maidenhead Street and increase the vibrancy of the area and passive surveillance during the night.

#### Viability

As with Option 2, this option requires the acquisition of additional properties, and as before although the proposals generate a positive residual land value and they are above the TLV for the town centre and therefore considered to be viable at this stage, further analysis of asset values of the additional properties will be required. This comprehensive option, given the scale of development proposed, is one which will need to be considered potentially over a medium to longer term i.e. as the existing properties begin to age and therefore redevelopment becomes a more attractive proposition as the value of a new scheme will be significantly higher than the existing asset value of the properties as they are.

While it is a desire to bring forward the building frontage of the existing building to create a more coherent and visible frontage, land ownerships and highway boundaries need to be investigated and respected.



Option 1 - Diagrammatic plan of ground floor



Option 2 - Diagrammatic plan of ground floor



Option 3 - Diagrammatic plan of ground floor

## The Marquee

4.1.22 At the early stages of the Strategy process, property agents marketing the Marquee indicated an intention to promote the building as a centre for small businesses. Since that time, planning permission has been granted for use of the building as a gym and it is currently anticipated that this will open in 2016. It would be a new incarnation for the 1980s building that has formerly been used variously for retail, a nightclub and music venue and, prior to this, a snooker club.

### Urban design principles

4.1.23 Should the above scheme fail to be implemented, then alternative proposals may need to be considered for the site. Much of the feedback received during the consultation indicated that people felt that it was too far away from the heart of the town to be a key part of the town centre. Many stated that it would be a suitable site for residential uses.

4.1.24 The site itself is fairly constrained. Both vehicle and pedestrian access can only be achieved from Railway Street, which is a busy road. It is not an easy building to service and park in front of. There are also sensitivities in relation to the surrounding buildings. Its neighbour to the west is the Grade II Quaker Room and the Quaker Friends Meeting House, a sensitive historic building set behind a walled garden. The Marquee's neighbour to the east is the two-storey Lord Haig Pub. To the south there are a variety of small two-storey buildings that face on to the Marquee and have windows overlooking the site. All of these factors are constraints to how high and where new development can be located. With this in mind there are some key principles that development on this site should address. These are:

- Development should not exceed the three-storeys set by Railway Street. Any accommodation in the third-storey should be within attic or roof space.
- All access should be from Railway Street.
- Development must not block views or existing outlooks from neighbouring buildings.
- The building must be sensitive to the Quaker Meeting House and not negatively effect its setting in terms of form, materials or massing.
- Maintain the building line on Railway Street.

### Development options for the Marquee

4.1.25 The team developed 2 options to show how the urban design principles above could be translated into development options for the site. These were:

- **Option 1:** Refurbishing the existing building.
- **Option 2:** Residential redevelopment.

These are illustrated opposite.

4.1.26 These scenarios were presented to the public at the September round of consultation. Option 2 – residential redevelopment was more popular with the public than Option 1. However, the results were fairly close and there was not a strong preference either way.

## The Marquee: Development options as presented at public exhibition in September 2015

### Option 1 – refurbishing the existing building

The first option examined by the team was to examine the viability of the site to adopt the proposed use currently being marketed (small business units). The advantage of this approach would be:

- Provision of small business units to support local enterprises (as identified in the market report).
- Straightforward easy approach to the building.
- No further impact on the Quaker meeting house or other surrounding buildings.
- Maintains existing building line.

#### Viability

This option generates a positive residual land value. The Marquee is currently vacant and in need of improvements, it is likely that any improvement in the asset will have a positive impact on its potential to generate income, and therefore the asset value post refurbishment should be significantly higher than the current use value (i.e. vacant and in disrepair) given that the proposals involve a refurbishment and therefore make it an attractive proposition. Small business units/managed workspace tend to be let on a short-term basis and therefore this is reflected in the investment value of the asset value, which could have an impact on viability. However, there are a number of private sector operators within the market who operate such facilities on a profitable basis.

### Option 2 - residential redevelopment

The second option looked at redeveloping the site as residential. The amount of properties that can be achieved is limited by the need to maintain access from Railway Street, protecting existing buildings and the need to provide car parking. However, the following advantages could be achieved:

- Maintain the building line from Railway Street.
- Create additional residents living close to the town centre.
- Provide parking on site.
- Create a mix of units, including a mews style building to create an attractive vista from Railway Street.

#### Viability

The redevelopment of this site to deliver residential space results in a positive residual land value which is significantly above the value generated under Option 1, and therefore given the current state of the property, redevelopment is an attractive proposition and likely to generate a higher return than the current existing use value of the property. As a cross check we have compared the residual land value generated by the proposed scheme with the town Centre TLV, and can confirm that the residual value generated is in excess of the TLV, thus suggesting that the option is viable.

#### Option 1

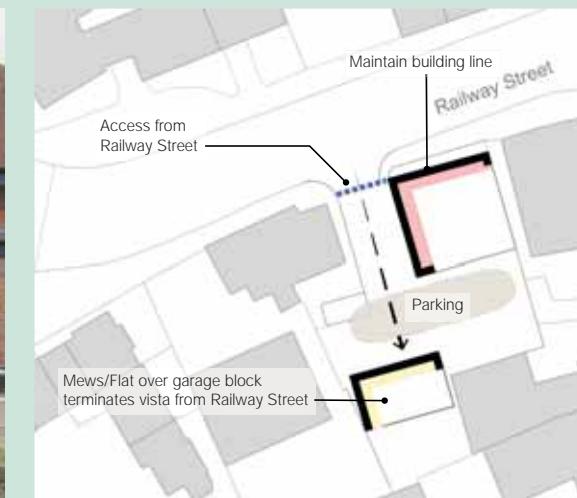


Option 1 - Examples of small and shared work spaces that could be created in the Marquee

#### Option 2



Option 2 - Architecture should reflect local character and be a maximum of 3 stories



Option 2 - Ground floor concept plan

#### Key

- Retail
- Café
- Residential

## Public Realm and Landscape

# 5 Public Realm and Landscape

## 5.1 Public realm materials strategy - aims and objectives

### Introduction

5.1.1 The quality, design and positioning of hard landscape materials and street furniture is of fundamental importance to the public realm, as is the 'space between buildings'.

5.1.2 A high quality, well maintained, public realm can improve the legibility and contribute greatly to the character and value of a place, whilst enhancing the experience for visitors, residents and workers. People will choose to spend more time within, and choose to return more often to, a quality space or environment leading to a positive impact on the success of shops and businesses in a town centre.

5.1.3 The materials that make up urban streets and spaces and the design and layout of seats, lighting, bins, bollards and signs can have a significant impact upon the overall sense of urban quality and can help reinforce the unique character and Sense of Place. Conversely, streets and spaces that have poor quality paving materials, uncoordinated and cluttered street furniture will have a negative impact on the character of a town centre or parts of a town centre, and will not inspire the public to spend time there.

5.1.4 This section of the report aims to develop a rationale for a co-ordinated approach to paving materials and street furniture within the Hertford Town Centre study area, building on the more successful areas of the urban fabric and providing a strategy for how this can be extended to other parts of the public realm to create a coherent and attractive environment. The strategy should complement and reinforce the characteristics of the historic town centre and build upon recent enhancement works. It will also suggest how more recent and future additions to the urban fabric can both reflect their contemporary architectural style within their immediate landscape setting and be responsive to the wider historic context.

5.1.5 The key principles are:

- The design should respond to the historic architectural character of the specific street and space. Where existing distinctive historic materials and street elements exist, these should be retained and incorporated into future proposals in the same locality, if feasible.
- Reduce street clutter, where feasible, by removing or consolidating excessive signage and redundant elements of street furniture, having regard to safety of road users and pedestrians. Where elements are required they should be set out in a co-ordinated alignment sensitive to potential pinch-points of pedestrian activity or desire lines.
- Within shared surface areas, elements of street furniture may be used to have the additional function of directing vehicles, though this should not be used excessively.

- Within the historic street pattern, existing kerb lines should be respected where possible to retain the historic character. However this needs to be balanced with the requirements for safe pedestrian movement, particularly where pinch points occur, and reducing vehicle speeds. Relocating kerbs may have an impact on drainage connections, and possibly other services, which can increase the costs of a scheme so the detailed design needs to fully assess these issues.
- In appropriate circumstances, lowered or no kerbs ease pedestrian movement and emphasise the shared quality of the street.
- Avoid or minimise road markings to enhance street appearance and reduce signals that it is intended primarily as a vehicle space.
- Consider the requirements for accessibility for people with disabilities through increased use of raised crossing points as part of wider traffic calming measures, where appropriate.
- Consider the needs for short length on-street parking to support local businesses ensuring their siting does not impact on the street scene. Raised loading bays enable the potential for use as footway when not in use for servicing.

- Where feasible and appropriate, incorporate street trees into the street scene to reinforce the character, particularly to reinforce the legibility of the riverside and Castle Grounds character areas. Provide tree planting in appropriate locations to suit the street width, so as not to create pinch points within narrow footways where their location enhances the historic character of the street. Ensure that the locations do not conflict with underground services, junction sight lines and street lighting and that the cost of maintenance of clearing fallen leaves has been taken into account. The specific or appropriate species (in terms of eventual height, width and leaf size) should be considered on a site by site basis.
- Wayfinding to encourage greater awareness of the different retail quarters as well as the many cultural historic and natural assets which create the unique sense of place within Hertford should be carefully developed, using both active elements such as signage, interpretation elements, and maps and passive elements through paving, respecting key views to architectural features, evening lighting and street planting.
- The choice of materials needs to take into account maintenance issues and specific site issues.

5.1.6 To establish a hierarchy of streets and to aid legibility, key routes within Hertford town centre have been categorised according to their character considering:

- street width, linear deviation and architectural form and building line;
- location within the town centre - in the centre or on the fringe;
- land use functions both at ground floor and upper floors;
- predominant users of the space - vehicles or pedestrians and how they should interact. The types of vehicle use that needs to be considered (e.g. buses, delivery vehicles, parking etc.), how they interact with the street scene and make use of (or abuse) the space available to ensure that the space is designed for its intended use but is able to resist other likely challenges such as vehicles overrunning pavements; and
- Distribution of utility services within the street - maybe a particular constraint though may not be evident at strategy stage.

5.1.7 The aforementioned factors all impact on the nature and type of materials and furniture that should be specified in each category type. The following pages outline the suggested palette of materials, street furniture and street trees for individual categories. The sheets illustrate the layout of these materials in typical situations. It should be emphasised that these are not final designs for schemes and the detailed design of any future works arising from this study would need to take into account and, where necessary, balance the factors mentioned above to arrive at a robust design that achieves the Strategy's objectives not just in the short term but provides a quality of appearance in the long term. Thus, the accompanying plans to the Strategy illustrate, in indicative concept form, the types of schemes which could be possible in these locations. However, it is important to note that these should not be viewed as prescriptive in terms of suggested design or materials, as these would be reserved as the subject of future consideration through the design process.

## Street Categories

### Purple Route

- Broad street in comparison with rest of street pattern creating importance - County Street;
- Historic buildings built up to back edge of footway - gentle undulating curve;
- Acts partly as local distributor road with street parking; and
- Shopping / Food and beverage / commercial, high pedestrian activity in evening.

### Brown Route

- Relatively narrow street widths comprising undulating kerb lines creating narrow sections of footways;
- Historic buildings built up to back edge of footway - gentle undulating curve;
- Principal distributor routes around the town centre. Routes link key spaces; and
- High street character - Core retail and secondary retail, Food and beverage / commercial, Cultural and entertainment.

### Green Route

- Narrow streets, lined with historic and contemporary buildings. Routes link or become integrated into urban spaces;
- Predominantly pedestrian use with very limited vehicle movement, preferably controlled at certain times of day; and
- Core retail areas with high footfall - High Street type activities.

### Red Route

- Routes that act as squares or become integrated into urban spaces;
- Light vehicle traffic - access only within high pedestrian flow areas. Aim to further reduce by minimising on street parking within retail area or redefine as permit only;
- Traffic speeds low. Provide speed reducing features where vehicles cross high pedestrian flows; and
- Core retail areas with high footfall - High Street type activities.

### Yellow route

- Predominantly outside the historic core, with few retail or commercial street frontages;
- Provide gateway links into the town centre from public transport hubs (Station) and links to wider employment and retail destinations; and
- Distributor routes around the town centre, vehicle dominated though pedestrian flows.

### Blue Route

- Riverside path, linking to urban spaces and open spaces along the water edge;
- Pedestrian and cycle use; and
- Informal character - mixture of riverside path, lanes and board walk / bridge elements.

### Pink Route

- Narrow street, typically no through route with narrow footways;
- Very light vehicle and pedestrian use; and
- Informal character.

### Black Route

- Narrow pedestrian alleyway linking between key town centre destinations;
- Within historic core of town centre; and
- Few ground floor activities overlooking.

5.1.8 Figure 5.1 overleaf indicates the location of proposed route categories within the Town Centre.

5.1.9 The street categories noted below apply to the town centre study area routes. Each notes the types of paving materials and street furniture that should be used within them when works are intended. It is not envisaged that all streets require works to be undertaken as part of the strategy as many already have the proposed palette, or elements of it, currently in evidence. But, to ensure a consistency within street type and character area, those streets (or parts thereof) that do not currently reflect the palette should have this considered as part of the design process when enhancement works are proposed.

5.1.10 The material and street furniture types noted below relate to the palettes as set out in section 5.2 Materials and the Street Category / Material type matrix table.

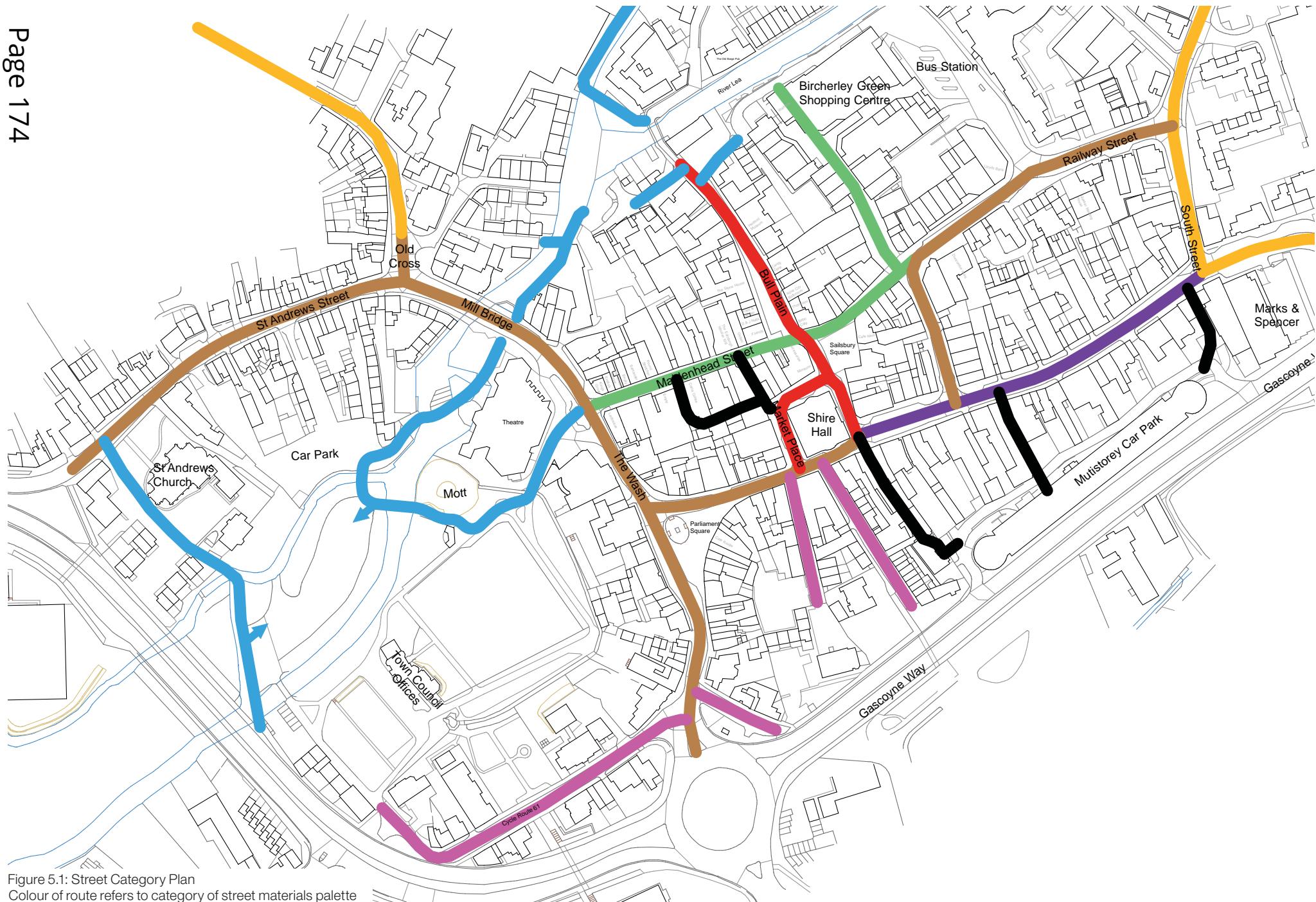


Figure 5.1: Street Category Plan  
Colour of route refers to category of street materials palette

## The principles of the palette

### Purple Route

#### 5.1.11 The principles of the palette:

- Provide a simple palette of traditional paving materials and minimal street furniture for an uncluttered streetscape appearance to complement the quality of the Street's heritage and character (See Street category material types table for detail).
- Street furniture should be of a traditional style including black cast iron painted bins with gold detailing and timber slat flat benches with metal frame (type B). If bollards are required a 'Manchester' style cast iron type painted black could be used to match existing (type A). Tree grilles to be square, cast iron painted black (type A).
- Provide a high quality paved surface for pedestrians to extend the existing paving to the eastern end of the street using large unit natural Yorkstone paving slabs of random lengths and laid in single course of mix of supplied widths, typically 300, 450 and 600mm. Granite kerbs to be 300mm flat extending the palette east of Post Office Walk / Market Street.
- Provide granite sett square block edging to where Yorkstone slabs abuts buildings.
- Where vehicle overrun may take place such as near parking bays large slabs 600mm width or more can be susceptible to cracking. Therefore within these areas either lay use thicker slabs laid on reinforced concrete base or use the smaller unit slabs - 300 or 450mm width by 350 - 500mm length x 100mm depth across width of footway on a concrete base, if considered to be more appropriate over other forms of base available at the time.

- The layout of the street will introduce elements to encourage ease of pedestrian movement between sides of road to ease browsing in shops and cafés. Where kerb build-outs and parking bays set into the paving are proposed, provide a consistent line to main carriageway to retain the strong gently curving linear quality of the street. Where parking bays are set into paving area, provide a similar width of granite between parking bay and carriageways in line with main kerb to retain strong line.
- Defined loading bays should be raised to footway level to allow use as additional footway when not in use by servicing vehicles. These should be paved in flame textured granite setts to allow ease recognition by delivery drivers.
- Develop a zone for street furniture, cycle parking, tree planting and signage away from the pedestrian route - 1.4ms wide. This will preferably be where pavement build-outs are proposed.
- Road markings should be kept to a minimum with parking lines painted in Primrose Yellow, where required, to comply with Conservation Area standards and to be 50mm wide with 50mm gap between bands.
- Tree planting should be provided to soften the street character whilst visually narrowing the vehicle corridor. Opportunities will need to be assessed on a location by location basis due to siting of existing underground services restricting opportunities. Where planted they should be within metal tree grilles or permeable resin.

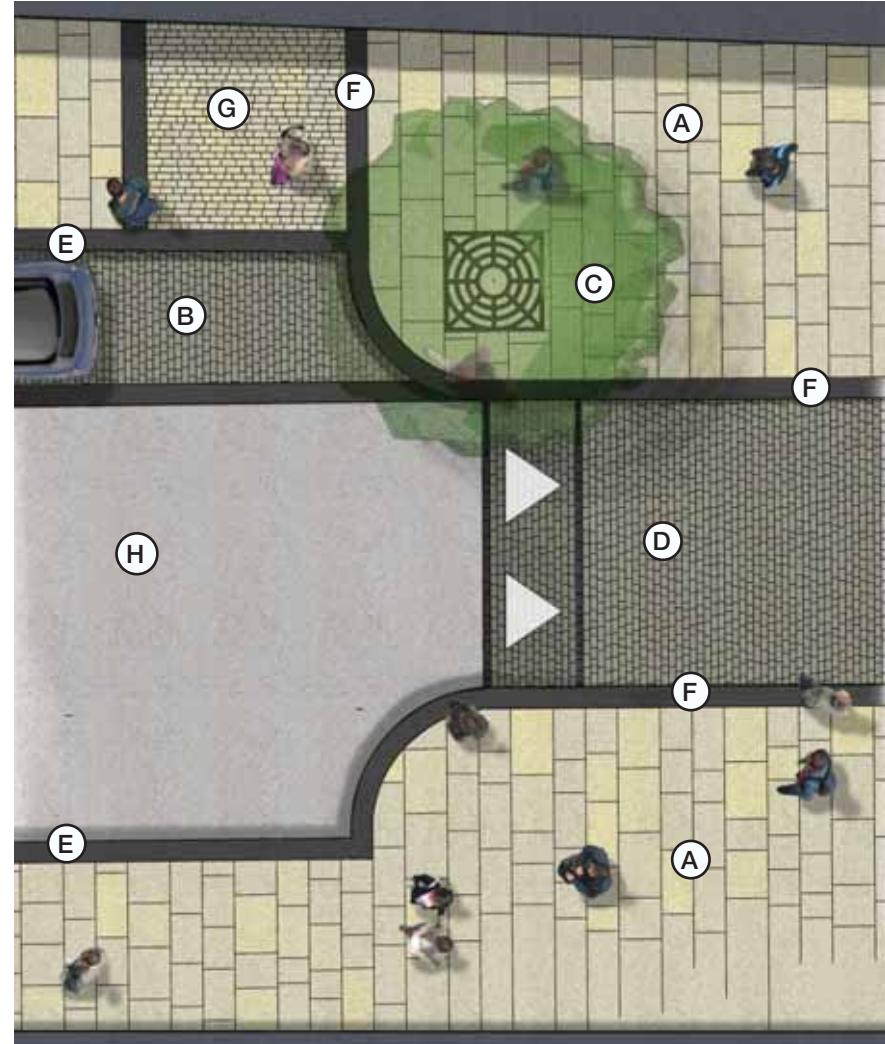


Figure 5.2: Concept sketch plan illustrating layout and materials of the street (Example Fore St.)

- A Yorkstone slabs, in single courses of 300, 450 and 600mm widths set randomly.
- B Parking bays at existing carriageway level paved in granite setts.
- C Metal tree grilles, painted black or infilled with resin bound gravel.
- D Raised Road table, flush to footway - granite setts.
- E Granite kerb, to match existing typically 300mm width 100mm kerb face.
- F Granite kerb 300mm wide, laid flush.
- G Cross over into yard - Yorkstone setts, 100mm x 150 - 250mm lengths.
- H Bituminous macadam carriageway.

## Brown Route

## 5.1.12 The principles of the palette:

- Provide a simple palette of traditional paving materials and minimal street furniture provides an uncluttered streetscape complementing the quality of the historic buildings. (See Street category material types table for detail).
- Provide a high quality paved surface for pedestrians using large unit natural Yorkstone paving slabs 300 / 450 / 600mm widths, random lengths.
- Where street furniture, cycle parking, tree planting and signage is proposed ensure it is set to avoid creating pinch points along pedestrian route. This will preferably be where pavement build-outs are proposed.
- Street furniture should be of a traditional style including black cast iron painted bins with gold detailing and timber slat benches with metal frame (type A and B). If bollards are required a 'Manchester' style cast iron type painted black could be used to match existing (type A). Tree grilles to be square, cast iron painted black (type A).
- Provide tree planting where feasible due to services and sightlines. Pit to be covered with permeable resin or traditional tree grille painted black.
- Where vehicle overrun may take place such as near parking bays large slabs 600mm width or more can be susceptible to cracking. Therefore within these areas either lay use thicker slabs laid on reinforced concrete base or use the smaller unit slabs - 300 or 450mm width by 350 - 500mm length x 100mm depth across width of footway on a concrete base, if considered to be more appropriate over other forms of base available at the time.
- Provide granite sett square block edging to where Yorkstone slabs abuts buildings.
- Provide strong linearity to the street through use of wide granite kerbs, 300mm wide. Where kerb build-outs and parking bays set into the paving are proposed provide a consistent line to main carriageway. Where parking bays are set into paving area provide a similar width of granite between parking bay and carriageways in line with main kerb to retain strong line.
- Defined loading bays should be raised to footway level to allow use as additional footway when not in use by servicing vehicles. These should be paved in flame textured granite setts to allow ease recognition by delivery drivers.
- Where raised tables are proposed at crossing points and gateways to alert vehicles to entering an area of high pedestrian movement / 20 MPH area, granite setts, flame textured are the preferred choice, alternatively a coloured macadam surface.
- Road markings should be kept to a minimum with parking lines painted in Primrose Yellow where required to be 50mm wide with 50mm gap between bands.

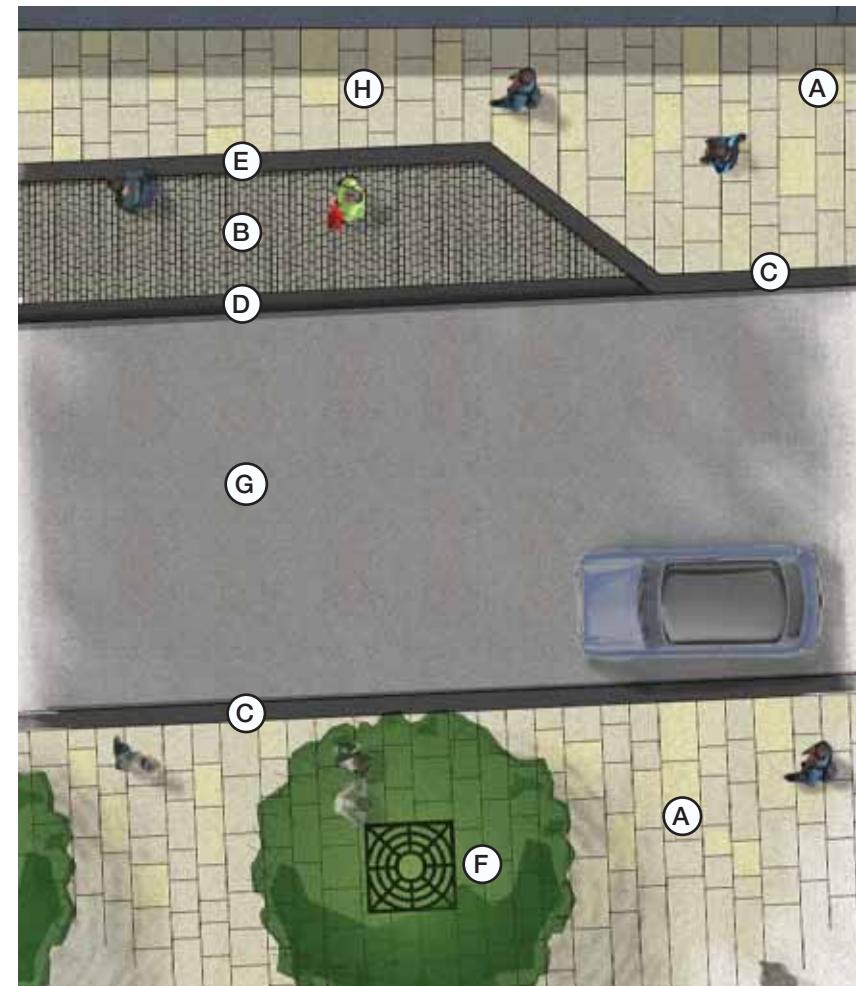


Figure 5.3: Concept sketch plan illustrating typical layout and materials of the street (Example Parliament Square/Castle Street)

- A Yorkstone slabs, laid in randomly in courses of 300, 450 and 600mm widths.
- B Loading bays - Raised pad flush to footway, paved in granite setts.
- C Granite kerb, to match existing typically 300mm width 100mm kerb face.
- D Granite kerb 300mm wide, laid with 75mm tapered kerb face.
- E Granite kerb, laid flush.
- F Metal tree grilles, painted black or infilled with resin bound gravel.
- G Bituminous macadam carriageway.
- H Yorkstone susceptible to run over by vehicles, laid in randomly in courses of 200, 300 and 600mm widths.

## Green Route

### 5.1.13 The principles of the palette:

- Palette of traditional paving materials laid as a single flush surface from building line to building line providing a high quality pedestrian paved space with allowance for occasional heavy servicing vehicles.
- Unified space created by the predominant use of Yorkstone as a single material laid as sawn setts or small slabs laid on a 150mm thick reinforced concrete base, if considered to be more appropriate over other forms of base available at the time, to withstand service vehicles. Use with wide flush granite kerbs 300mm wide as trims to reflect the historic street context.
- Reinforce legibility of alleyways and lanes connecting to the route by extending pattern of slabs across the route.
- Provide granite sett square block edging to where Yorkstone slabs abuts buildings.
- Use of street furniture and signage should be kept to a minimum due to the width of the street. Location of Shop 'A' Boards signs should be restricted to a constant zone directly outside the building line - 1m max to reduce visual clutter. Shops should be encouraged to use hanging signs only.
- Provide traditional style street furniture to including black cast iron painted bins with gold detailing and timber slat flat benches with metal frame (type B). If bollards are required a 'Manchester' style cast iron type painted black could be used to match existing (type A). Tree grilles to be square, cast iron painted black (type B).

- Loading within these routes will be restricted to certain times outside core shopping periods to reduce street clutter and create a more attractive retail environment for shoppers and businesses. When loading can occur there are no defined loading bays with all the paving being laid to withstand vehicle overrun. However the use of flush granite trims and Yorkstone setts as the central aisles is intended to keep vehicles away from the building line and retain a clear pedestrian route through.
- Road markings should be kept to a minimum with parking lines painted in Primrose Yellow where required to be 50mm wide with 50mm gap between bands.
- See Street category material types table for details of material types.
- Where the route meets other streets there should be a raised table provided to ease pedestrian movement and signify to other vehicles the high volumes of pedestrian flows. These will be paved in maintainable surfaces for longevity and vehicle flows, but materials should be sympathetic to the historic environment.

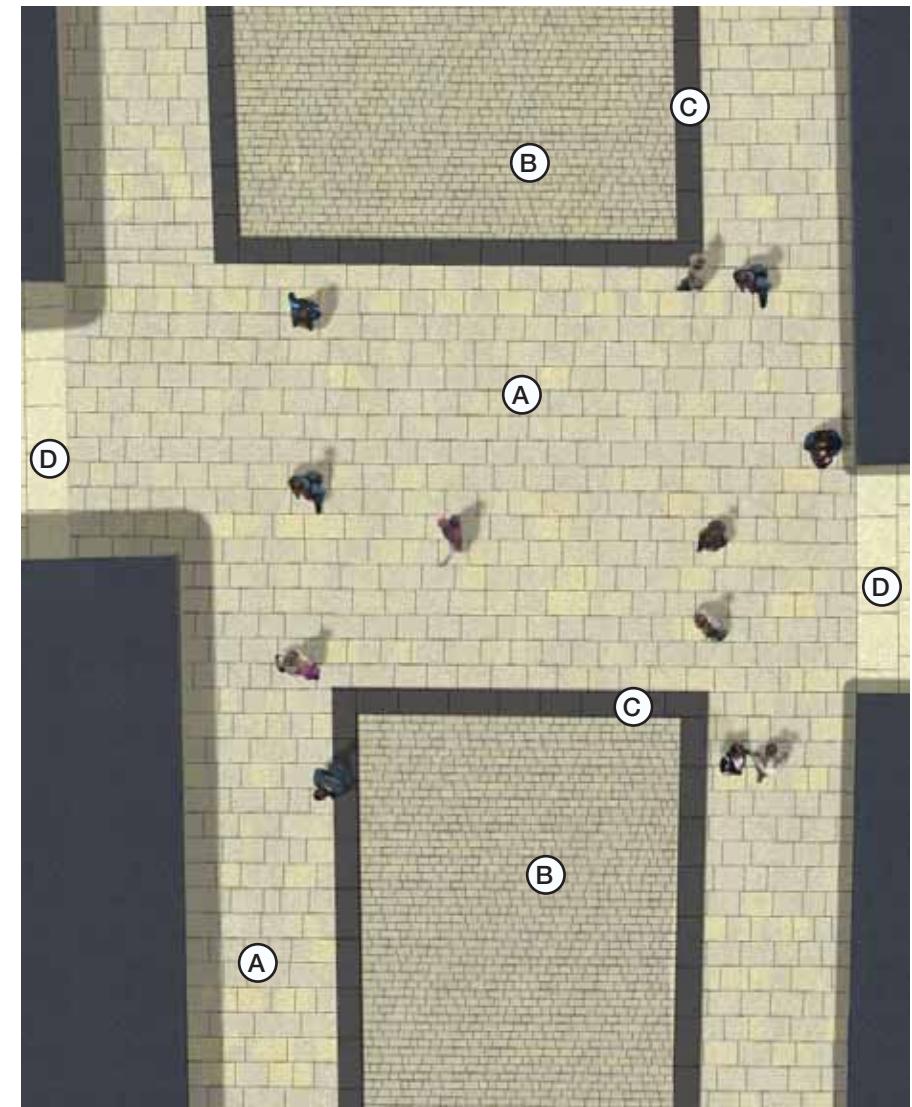


Figure 5.4: Concept sketch plan illustrating typical layout and materials of the street (Example Maidenhead Street)

- A Yorkstone slabs, 300mm widths x 350 - 500mm lengths.
- B Yorkstone setts, 100mm x 150 - 250mm lengths.
- C Granite kerb 300mm width, laid flush.
- D Alley way - Yorkstone slabs, random courses of 300mm / 450mm / 600mm widths x random lengths.

### 5.1.14 The principles of the palette:

- Provide a simple palette of traditional paving materials and minimal street furniture resulting in an uncluttered streetscape complementing the quality of the historic urban form and adjacent high quality pedestrian paved spaces.
- Street furniture will be of a traditional style including black cast iron painted bins with gold detailing and timber slat flat benches with metal frame (type B and C). If bollards are required a 'Manchester' style cast iron type painted black could be used to match existing (type A, B and C). See Street category material types table for details of material types.
- Routes are a mixture of defined traffic calmed low volume carriageways and areas where they cross predominantly pedestrian spaces. Formed of a mixture of a traditional street defined by pavement / kerb / carriageway and other areas where a single surface is required to emphasise the pedestrian nature of the space.
- Provide a high quality paved surface for pedestrians using large unit natural Yorkstone paving slabs 300 / 450 / 600mm widths, random lengths with granite sett square block edging to where Yorkstone slabs abut buildings.
- Reinforce legibility of the core pedestrianised retail area and 'Heart Square concept' by extending pattern of slabs across the surface with simple delineation of a flush kerb wherever the route crosses or is adjacent to these spaces. This should be defined by a raised table paved in Yorkstone setts provided to ease pedestrian movement and signify to other vehicles the high volumes of pedestrian flows.
- There should be minimal use of street furniture and signage due to the width of the street except where paved spaces are created as part of the objective to create a focus for Hertford Town Centre.
- Loading within these routes will be restricted to certain times outside core shopping periods to reduce street clutter and create a more attractive retail environment for shoppers and businesses.
- Road markings should be kept to a minimum with parking lines painted in Primrose Yellow where required to be 50mm wide with 50mm gap between bands.

---

A Yorkstone slabs, in random courses of 300, 450 and 600mm widths random lengths.  
 B Raised road table - Yorkstone setts, 100mm x 150 - 250mm lengths.  
 C Granite kerbs 300mm width set flush to paving to accessibility bays.  
 D Granite kerb, to match existing typically 300mm width 100mm kerb face.  
 E Granite kerb, laid flush to define edge of raised road table.  
 F Metal tree grilles, painted black or infilled with resin bound gravel.  
 G Bituminous macadam carriageway.



Figure 5.5: Concept sketch plan illustrating typical layout and materials of the street (Example Bull Plain)

## Yellow route

### 5.1.15 The principles of the palette:

- The links between Hertford East rail station, edge of town retail developments and housing, and the town centre require enhanced legibility, as well as a strong sense of being part of the town's civic space. This is in contrast to the wider residential streets.
- To provide a quality robust paved surface able to withstand occasional vehicle overrun whilst being legible as part of the town centre retaining the paved slab form of Fore Street. The use of a natural granite aggregate textured finish is recommended. Granite kerbs 125mm wide preferred.
- Limited street furniture to provide uncluttered route. Street furniture painted black.
- Street furniture should be of a traditional style including black cast iron painted bins with gold detailing (type C&D). If bollards are required a 'Manchester' style cast iron type painted black could be used to match existing (type A). See Street category material types table for details of material types.

- A Pre cast concrete aggregate textured slabs, laid in randomly in courses of 300 and 450mm widths.
- B Granite kerb, to match existing typically 300mm width 100mm kerb face.
- C Metal tree grilles, painted black or resin bound.
- D Bituminous macadam carriageway.

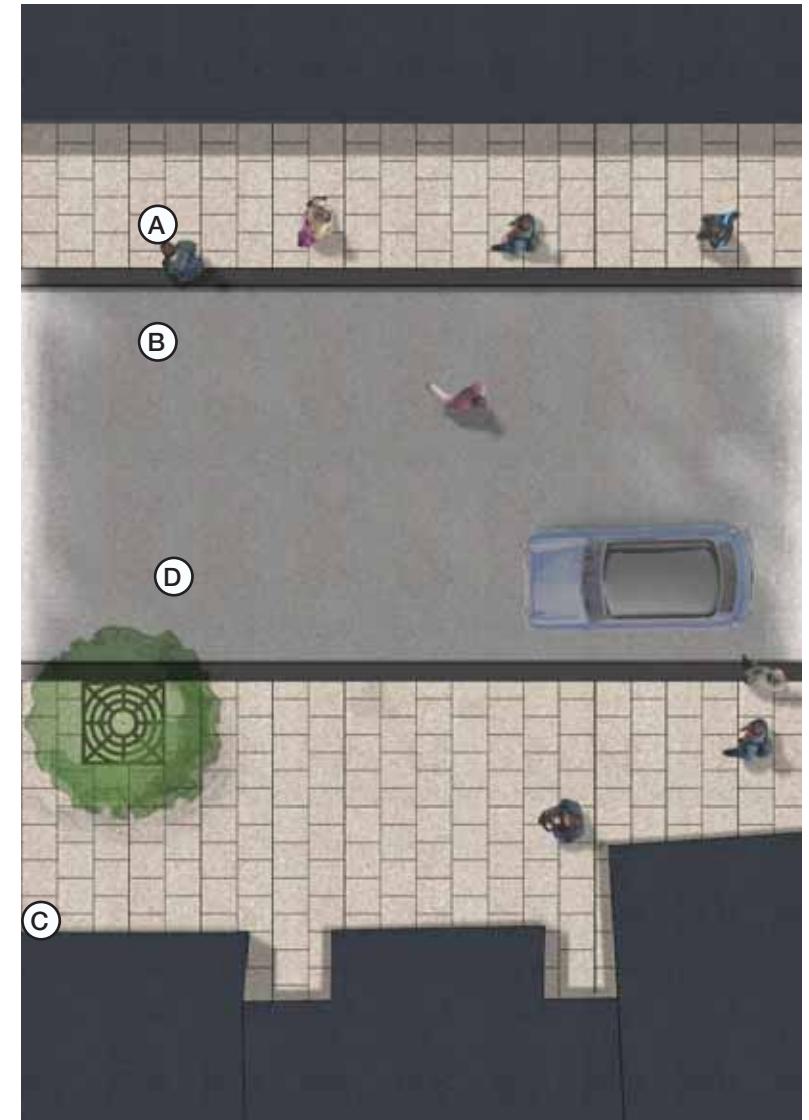


Figure 5.6: Concept sketch plan illustrating typical layout and materials of the street (Example Railway Street between South Street and Bircherley Green)

**Blue route**

5.1.16 The principles of the palette:

- Riverside footway extends through a number of character areas and open spaces.
- Predominantly pedestrian areas though sometimes may require vehicle access across.
- Street furniture including wayfinding, interpretation boards and seating to be provided but sighted to ensure a clear 1.8m wide route.
- See Street category material types table for details of material types.
- Current road marking standards are appropriate for this street category.

Footway Materials:

- Natural gravel surface dressing or resin bound gravel laid over macadam base.
- Granite sett edging two bands wide formed of 100 x 200mm setts.
- Where footway structures are formed, such as boardwalks and fishing / viewing platforms, these could be of timber boarding with non-slip strips.

**Pink Route**

5.1.17 The principles of the palette:

- Narrow urban street, typically no through route with narrow footways, subject to vehicle overrun.
- Very light vehicle and pedestrian use.
- Provide simple traditional material palette to retain informal character.
- See Street category material types table for details of material types.
- Road markings should be kept to a minimum with parking lines painted in Primrose Yellow, where required, to be 50mm wide with 50mm gap between bands.

Footway Materials:

- Yorkstone slabs, laid in courses of 300mm widths, random lengths.
- Where existing Yorkstone slabs exist they should be repaired, reset as required. Other traditional elements including stone cobbles acting as deterrent paving as found on Bell Lane should be retained.
- Granite kerb, to match existing typically 300mm width 100mm kerb face - reset where existing granite kerb exists.
- Bituminous macadam carriageway.

**Black Route**

5.1.18 The principles of the palette:

- Simple single surface from building edge to building edge to define narrow pedestrian alleyway.
- Location for wayfinding signage to identify the alleyway role linking key destinations.

Footway Materials/ Options:

- Yorkstone setts, 100mm x 150 - 250mm lengths.
- Yorkstone slabs, 300mm widths x 250 - 350mm lengths.
- Central drainage channel - Granite slab, 200 x 250.

## 5.2 Materials report

5.2.1 The choice of materials and street furniture proposed needs to take into account specific site issues, including the disruption to road users, pedestrians, shops and businesses over the period of the works and subsequent maintenance activities.

5.2.2 Certain materials, such as natural stone setts laid within a busy carriageway, will take longer to construct or repair than using clay block pavers or macadam and may be less resilient, especially in high stress locations, and harder to source or maintain at a later date. However, higher quality materials may be considered more sympathetic to the historic environment and therefore more appropriate in sensitive locations. These factors all need to be considered during the detailed design of any works developed from this strategy.

5.2.3 Maintenance considerations need to take into account the whole life cost of materials and furniture and the cost of replacing these if they fail.

5.2.4 Natural stone materials can achieve a longer life than concrete products if specified and laid correctly for the envisaged use but cost more initially to lay and can be more difficult and expensive to maintain if such work is needed during their life cycle. It can also be more difficult to source matching replacement items, especially for small repairs such as utility reinstatements which can detract from the long-term quality of the finish. Ensuring the correct construction make-up is specified for each particular site and paving type chosen following testing of ground conditions is essential. Material sizes should be appropriate for the likely use and abuse (vehicles overrunning footways) and cost of replacement.

5.2.5 At the detailed design stages, all construction details, materials and street furniture need to be agreed with the appropriate Council/s responsible for their long term maintenance.

5.2.6 The Street category/materials matrix notes specific types of paving materials and furniture suggested to be used within particular streets. The reference letters noted relate to the following pages which provide images and information on these elements.

5.2.7 Note: All drawings referred to should be viewed as outline concepts that illustrate potential schemes for locations which will be liable to alteration through the design process.

Street category/materials matrix								Suggested Material types	
Footway paving	Carriageway paved elements	Tree grille	Bollard	Litter bin	Light column	Cycle stands			
<b>Street Category</b>									
<b>Purple Route</b> Fore Street	A	E	A	A	C	A	B		
<b>Brown Route</b> The Wash Castle Street (north of Gascoyne Way)	A A	D & E D & E	A	A B	C C	A A	B B		
<b>Green Route</b> Maidenhead Street Railway Street (east of Market Street) Bircherley Green (Private ownership) Old Cross (Square)	A A A A	B B B A	B B B A	A & C A A A	C C C	B B B	B B B		
<b>Red Route</b> Bull Plain Market Place	A A	B & E E	A	A & C B	C C	A A	B B		
<b>Yellow route</b> Old Cross (street) South Street Railway Street	C C C		B A A	A A A	A & B A & B A & B	A A A	A A A		
<b>Blue Route</b> Riverside routes Castle Grounds	F					C C	B B	A A	
<b>Pink route</b> Castle Street (west of Gascoyne Way junction) Bell Lane Church Street Queen's Road	A or B A or B A or B A or B		A	A	C	A B B B	A B B B	A A A A	
<b>Black route</b> Post Office Walk Evron Place Honey Lane	A or B A or B A or B			B B B	A & B A & B A & B	B B B	B B B	A A A	

## Paving Materials

## Footways

5.2.8 Substantial areas of the pavements within Hertford's central retail area have been paved with large unit Yorkstone natural stone slabs and wide element granite kerbs following a programme of enhancement works undertaken a number of years ago. This high quality material and the large size of slab is a traditional material and reinforces the historic character of the urban fabric and reflects the prestigious status for the County Town.

**PAVING TYPE A:**

Yorkstone paving slabs - 300, 450, 600mm widths x 50mm x random lengths. If vehicle overrun is likely use 75mm thick slabs random lengths. Flame textured

**PAVING TYPE B:**

Yorkstone setts 100 (w) x 150-250mm (l) - Sawn cut - Marshalls Cromwell option for footways and parking bays within lightly trafficked areas when used with Yorkstone slabs

**PAVING TYPE C:**

Granite aggregate concrete slabs, 600x 600 x 50mm - Charcon 'Appalachian' Black Fleck ground chamferless

**PAVING TYPE D:**

Concrete setts Marshalls Tegula 80mm thick x 160mm width, 3 size lengths for carriageway paving. (Parliament Sq)

**PAVING TYPE E:**

Paved carriageway elements - Raised road table / parking bays. Granite setts on carriageway 200 x 100mm fine picked, 3 mixed colours greys and green granite

**PAVING TYPE F:**

Resin Bound footway has longer life span and is porous. Resin bonded footway as used in Dolphin Yard

5.2.9 Other areas within the town centre are either paved in macadam, in situ concrete or concrete slabs.

5.2.10 The Public Realm strategy aims to consolidate the areas of quality stone paving and to extend this material to the edges of the town centre as set out within the Place Making strategy, either completing footways within streets / squares that have only been partially paved, such as Fore Street, or repaving key areas that have yet to be enhanced such as Bull Plain, Maidenhead Street, and Old Cross.

5.2.11 The large unit of slab that has been used though traditional has been subject to damage where heavy vehicles are likely to overrun the footway. A smaller size of slab (300mm width x 75mm depth x random lengths) has therefore been considered to be more robust in these areas, with the option of laying onto concrete bases, if considered to be more appropriate over other forms of base available at the time.

5.2.12 Some streets and lanes that are within the study area but that fall outside the core area would have a quality paving using man made concrete slabs, though these should reflect the natural stone materials in colour and size.

## Carriageways

5.2.13 The vast majority of the carriageway within the town centre is formed of macadam that provides a sound utilitarian surface to support the flows of traffic within the town centre. It is economic to lay and allows use of the surface within hours of laying.

5.2.14 However in a number of core areas sections of the carriageway have been paved to either identify pedestrianised areas or to extend the character of a paved square across a carriageway to increase the historic legibility, pedestrian character of parts of the town centre. Yorkstone setts are used within the carriageway in parts of Railway Street whilst granite setts are used in small sections of carriageway to define parking bays and extend the character of a square across the road (Parliament Square). These materials provide a high visual quality and have been a traditional road surface in most town centres around the country having longevity when laid appropriately. They can be used to encourage drivers to reduce speed due to the texture of the material - such as the granite setts around Market Place or alert drivers that they are entering an area of high pedestrian activity.

5.2.15 To construct carriageway elements from these materials requires a lengthy construction period and traffic disruption to allow both the laying times of the stone but also the required concrete bases and mortar beds to cure. There are also areas where these materials when used in the carriageway in the town centre have become uneven (Parliament Square) and though this is unusual for this to happen to a natural paved road surface it illustrates the potential problems when reinstatement is required to repair the surface due to the lengthy road closure required.

5.2.16 Occasionally, man made materials have also been used within the town centre for carriageway /shared surface areas such as Tegula Concrete setts (Parliament Sq.) and clay block pavers (Maidenhead St). These man-made materials create a lower quality visual impact than the natural stone; however, they can be considered a suitable material in some areas where the surface needs to be used by pedestrians and heavy vehicles alike. Man-made materials also have the advantage of being able to be laid relatively quickly and are cheaper and quicker to repair compared to natural stone materials.

5.2.17 To strengthen the historic character and visual quality of the pedestrian environment, the Public Realm Strategy promotes the use of elements of paved carriageway to reinforce gateways, pedestrian crossing points and the construction of traffic calming elements. Natural stone is the preferred choice particularly where traffic flows are low and areas are predominantly pedestrian. However in areas where vehicle flows are higher the considerations of disruption to both servicing in retail areas and traffic flows should be considered when deciding which construction methods and materials to choose.

5.2.18 Therefore the strategy identifies different outline concept options, illustrating potential schemes for these locations, though the final choices are liable to alteration through the design process and would be reviewed at the detailed design and consultation stages. The costings noted are per sqm. for materials only (at January 2016 prices) excluding bedding granular sub base and labour).

## Light Columns

5.2.19 Light columns within the core town centre should relate to the period architecture due to their size and prominence. The existing style of column is appropriate, though in many cases requires repainting. LED fittings within traditional style fitting provide a low energy white light providing clearer colour identification helping to enhance the architecture in the evening environment. Lighting should be upgraded to LED low energy source as part of maintenance programme. Placing lighting on buildings, as in the City of London, can also help to reduce street clutter and should be encouraged as opportunities arise e.g. through new development.



### STREET LIGHTING TYPE A:

Traditional lantern for conservation area: carriage lantern on bracket fixing, painted black.  
D.W.Windsor Scroll bracket



Ornate column. D.W.Windsor Edinburgh.  
Column height dependant on road type and width. Typically between 6 - 10m tall



Alternative for narrow streets /  
alleyways. - Wall mounted option  
Post top stirrup mounted fitting  
for alleyways



### STREET LIGHTING TYPE B:

For narrow streets / parks use  
post top lantern - D.W Windsor  
Windsor lantern on Chester  
Column



### LITTER BIN TYPE A:

Existing open bins - Broxap.  
Existing require repainting and  
black inner liners



### LITTER BIN TYPE B:

Existing rectangular Litter bin -  
Wybone Glass fibre composite  
closed top litter bin



### LITTER BIN TYPE C:

Broxap BX2319 Cast iron bin,  
black painted, gold lettering. 90  
litre

## Seating

5.2.23 Seating within a town centre encourages shoppers and visitors to stay longer and is particularly helpful for elderly or those with walking difficulties.

5.2.24 Seats with backs are preferred and should be comfortable with arm rests and timber slats are warmer and which if treated dry quickly. Flat benches allow for seating in either direction and particularly useful in situations where people may be walking either side.

5.2.25 Within the town centre streets and squares has a number of differing styles of seat and flat benches. A coordinated approach should be adopted within these areas as and when replacements are required.



**SEAT TYPE A:** Funitubes Zenith seat with back and arms - optional to have four arms or arms on ends only



**SEAT TYPE B:** Funitubes Zenith Bench - Arms optional



**SEAT TYPE C:** Bespoke design benches in Salisbury Square provide a unique identity to a space and should be considered along Bull Plain if the character of the square is extended



**SEAT TYPE D:** formed of Recycled materials, plastic slats, steel frame. Appropriate along the river walk, though should be avoided in streets and urban spaces

## Bus Shelters



The existing bus shelter pictured below (left) is located on the Wash provides a simple traditional character that complements the historic environment. This model, supplied by Adshel, could continue to be used, or other sympathetic unit, subject to future agreement and taking into consideration the range of Hertfordshire County Council's preferred shelter manufacturer partner



A similar character of shelter is available from BROXAP. This model has a similar traditional form and could also be considered for use as an appropriate replacement, subject to future agreement and taking into consideration the range of Hertfordshire County Council's preferred shelter manufacturer partner



Alternatively, where a simple contemporary design is appropriate, which would be less visually intrusive within the streetscene, the use of a lightweight brushed stainless steel structure would complement the historic building fabric without visual interruption to the streetscene. An illustration of such a shelter type is the Euroshel 01706 216794 ref. 'Invincible', but any structure eventually selected would be subject to future agreement and taking into consideration the range of Hertfordshire County Council's preferred shelter manufacturer partner

5.2.26 Bollards are used to protect pedestrians, low building overhangs and prevent pavements being damaged by persistent vehicle overrun or to stop illegal parking on footways

5.2.27 They can, if used inappropriately, create visual street clutter and restrict the width of footways unnecessarily. They should therefore be used sparingly and shouldn't be used where other street furniture elements may already be having the desired effect - such as cycle parking hoops.

5.2.28 The bollard specification should match the predominant types used in the town centre.



**BOLLARD TYPE A:**

Broxap Manchester 'traditional' bollard, 940mm high x 190mm diameter. (as Fore Street / Parliament Sq.) - used in general situations where footway width allows



**BOLLARD TYPE B:**

Marshalls 'Morpeth' bollard, 900mm high x 110mm diameter. (as Fore Street) for narrow footways



**BOLLARD TYPE C:**

Bollard concealing external power sockets - Furnitubes 'Doric' bollards 920mm height x 260mm width. Painted black

### Cycle stands



**CYCLE STAND TYPE A:**

Broxap 'Sheffield' Cycle stand (as used at Parliament Sq) Black polyester powder coated



**CYCLE STAND TYPE B:**

Stainless Steel provide a higher quality appearance and a lower maintenance solution. They are though more expensive and would suit more prestigious locations such as squares, and the Central Spine

### Tree grilles

5.2.29 Tree grilles are commonly used on tree pits in urban paved situations to allow people to walk across the tree pit without compacting the soil and roots, and allows air and water to the tree soil.

Options:

5.2.30 Resin bound infill provides a robust but simple finish with natural colours to complement surrounding paving. They provide a continuous walking surface so are especially useful where footway space is constrained. The surface is porous to allow water to permeate and is the preferred choice for street situations due to the typical narrow nature of footways.

5.2.31 Cast iron Tree grille - with the appropriate strength frame these can withstand vehicle overrun. Robust simple traditional form, set flush to surrounding paving. To be used within urban squares where space permits.



**TREE GRILLE TYPE A:**

Cast iron grille as used in Parliament Square.  
Similar to Broxap 442-3-STD Limousin



**TREE GRILLE TYPE B:**

Resin Bound type - Furnitubes Resin bound gravel infill

## Street trees

5.2.32 This sheet considers potentially appropriate street trees taking into consideration the width of street / footway and the character of the space. This sheet provides an indication of suitable species that can be used within the town centre.

*Acer campestre 'Streetwise'*

**Field Maple:**  
A medium-size selection of the native tree with a neat, upright habit and yellow autumn colour. Tolerant of most soil types, drought resistant and extremely hardy. Height 7m, max 3

*Prunus 'Sunset Boulevard'*

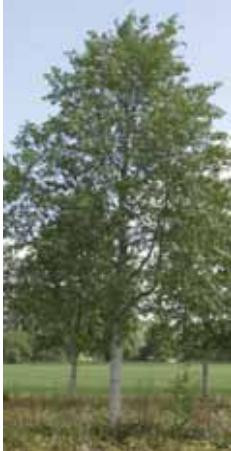
**Cherry:**  
Medium size tree with a strong formal shape, good autumn colour. Attractive delicate pink flower with narrow habit. Long-lived for a Prunus species. Height 10m, width 3m

*Tilia x euchlora - Caucasin Lime*

**Lime Tree:**  
Not susceptible to aphids and consequent 'honey dew drip'. Ideal for wider streets, avenues etc. Height 12m, width 5m. Planted within Salisbury and Parliament Squares

*Quercus palustris*

**Pin Oak:**  
Large, elegant, conical tree with good form. Glossy leaves with strong scarlet colours in autumn. Suitable for boulevard locations and broad verges. Height 10m, width 5m

*Alnus incana*

**Grey Alder:**  
Deciduous tree with conical shape when young. Catkins yellow-red in spring. Tolerant of salt. Height 12m, width 4m. Riverside tree

*Carpinus betulus 'Frans Fontaine'*

**Hornbeam:**  
A narrow, upright form of the native Hornbeam. The strongly columnar habit is maintained until maturity, making it suitable for restricted spaces such as streets and car parks. Grows well in poor planting conditions. Height 9m, width 3m

*Malus triobata*

Strong autumn colours, distinctive in winter. The tree has erect branches and narrow crown making it ideal for narrow streets and small enclosed spaces. Height 6-8m, width 2.5m

*Pyrus calleryana 'Chanticleer'*

**Pear:**  
High quality, resilient street tree, ideal for residential or restricted locations. White pear blossom in spring, glossy leaves, good autumn colour. Deep rooted so avoids problems with pavement disturbance. Height 8m, width 3m

# Appendices

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**Appendix 1:**  
**Illustrative public realm designs**

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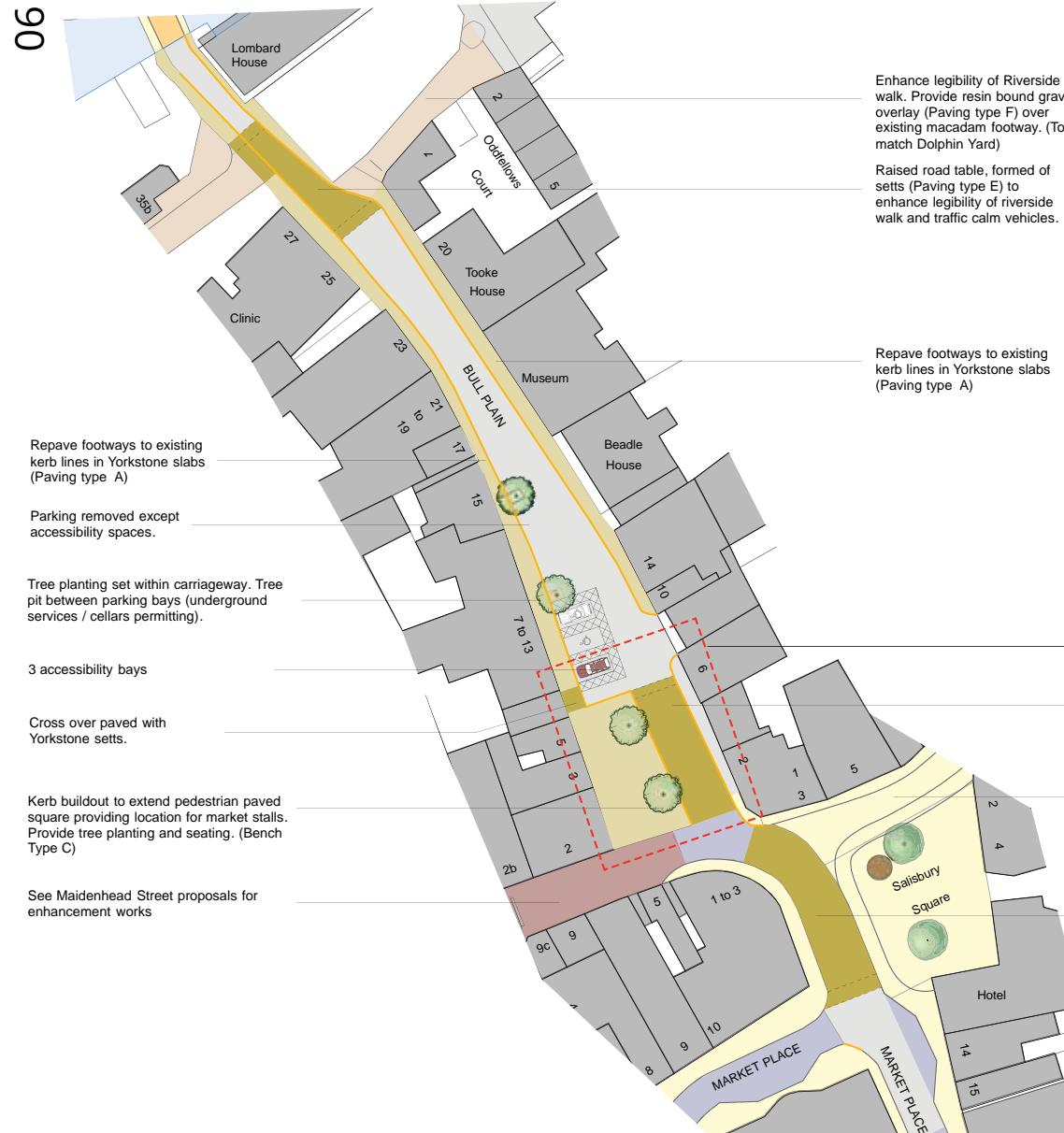
**Appendix 2:**  
**Summary of March 2015 Consultation**

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**Appendix 3:**  
**Summary of September 2015 Consultation**

# Appendix 1: Illustrative public realm designs

Page 190



Proposed realigned kerb line

Existing Yorkstone paving to be retained

Proposed Yorkstone paving to match existing (Paving spec A)

Proposed Yorkstone Setts to match existing (Paving spec B)

Existing Setts to carriageway to be retained

Existing block pavers. (To be removed as part of Maidenhead St enhancement)

Macadam roadway - existing retained. Resurface dressing if required

Proposed street tree planting

Existing Street tree planting

Note: Tree planting subject to survey of underground Services and Cellars.

Detail area paving layout - see diagram for Red Route principles (page 56)

Raised road table flush to footway to extend character of square (to match Railway Street). Sett paving (paving type B)

Existing paved carriageway flush to footway.

Raised road table flush to footway to reduce vehicle speeds and extend character of Salisbury Square (to match Railway Street). Sett paving (paving type B)

## BULL PLAIN

Please note: this is an outline concept drawing illustrating a potential scheme for this location which is liable to alteration through the design process.

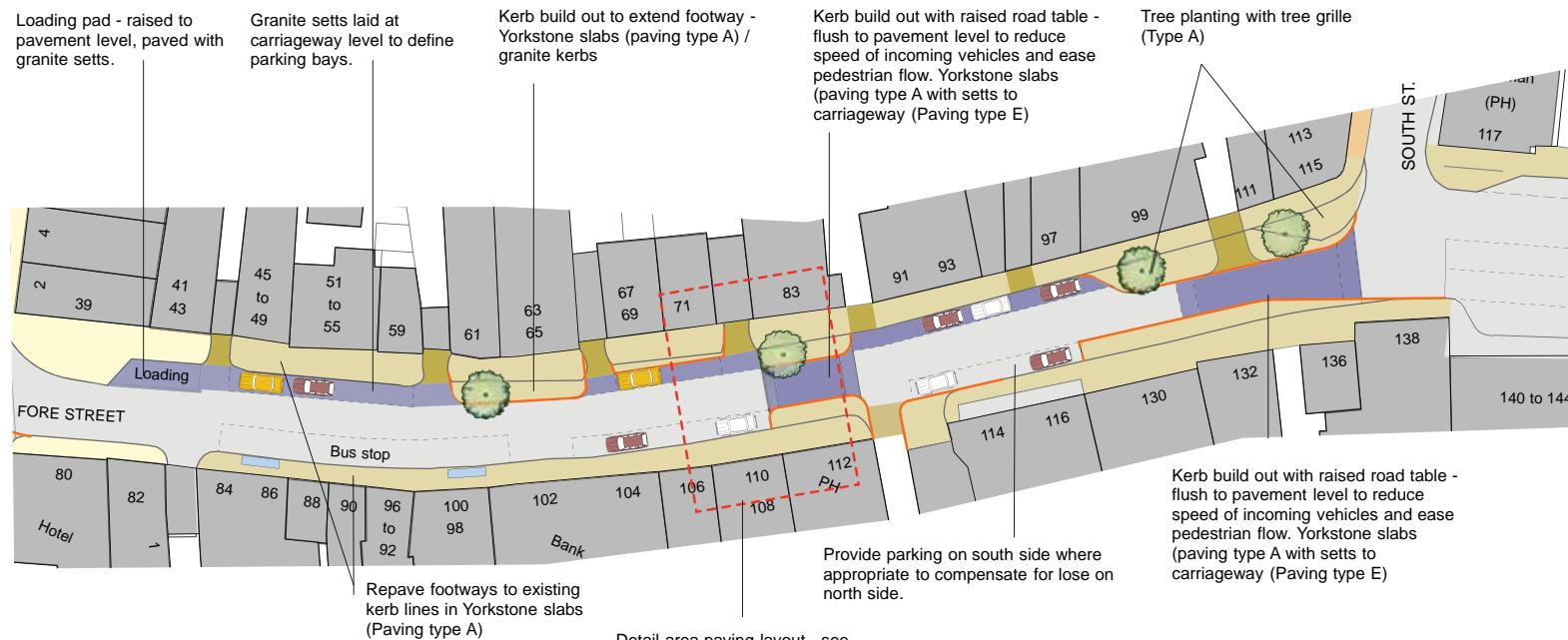


## CASTLE STREET/ PARLIAMENT SQUARE

Please note: this is an outline concept drawing illustrating a potential scheme for this location which is liable to alteration through the design process.



### Fore Street - west of Market Street

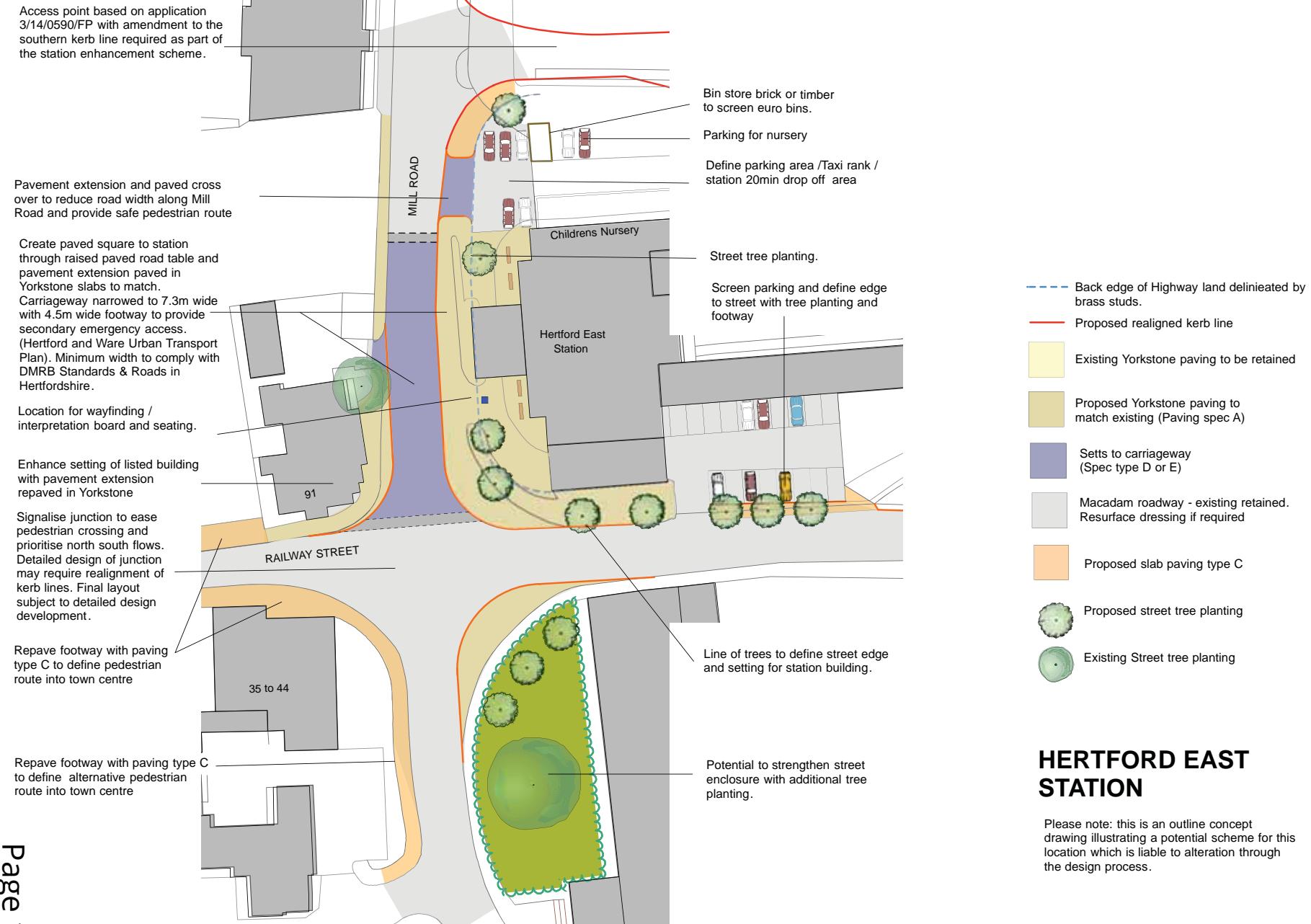


### Fore Street- east of Market Street

Detail area paving layout - see diagram for Purple Route principles (page 53)

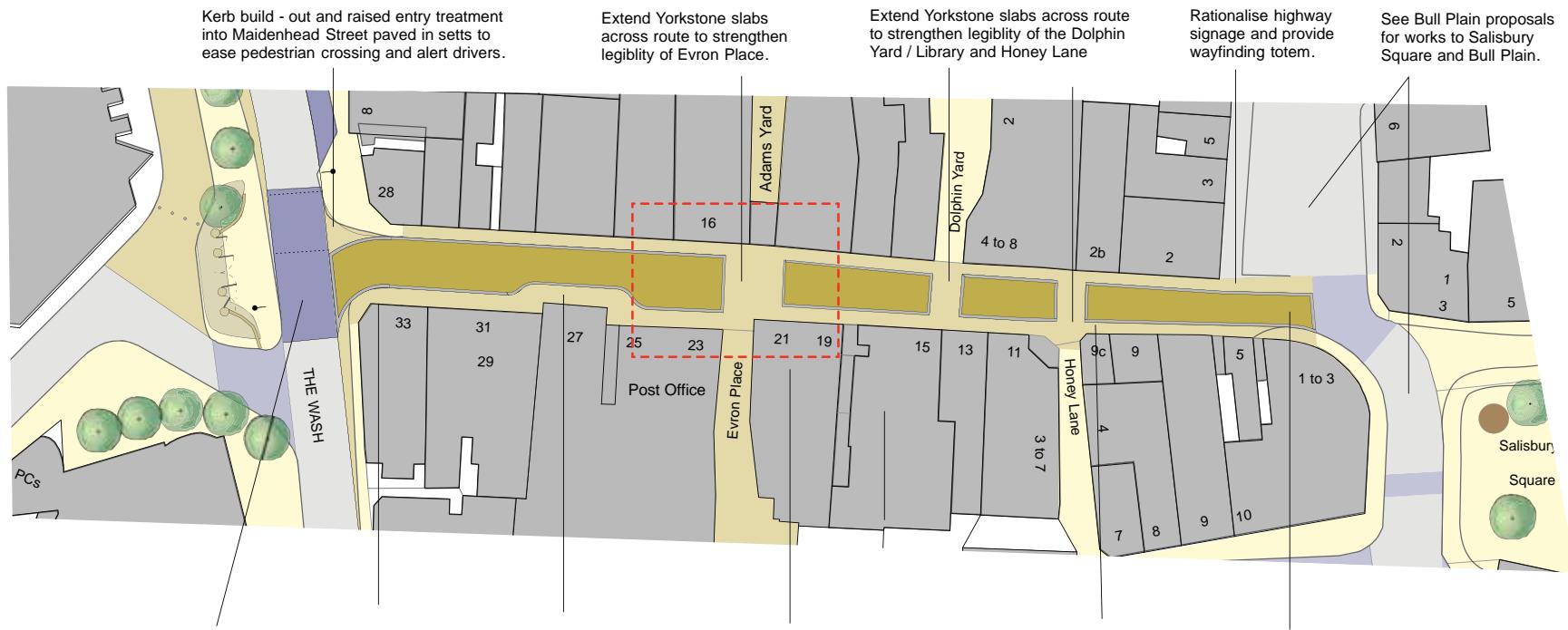
## FORE STREET

Please note: this is an outline concept drawing illustrating a potential scheme for this location which is liable to alteration through the design process.



## HERTFORD EAST STATION

Please note: this is an outline concept drawing illustrating a potential scheme for this location which is liable to alteration through the design process.



Setts to cross over - raised to pavement level to reduce speed of incoming vehicles and ease pedestrian flow.

Camera enforcement to monitor left turn only.

Repave central part of street with Yorkstone setts (paving type B)

Detail area paving layout - see diagram for Green Route principles (page 55)

Yorkstone slabs with flush granite edging defines a 'pavement' to retains historic character of the street (paving type A)

Extend Yorkstone slabs and sett to Bull Plain / Salisbury Sq.

**TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL: Maidenhead Street -**  
Change one way flow to be west bound only. Left turn only onto The Wash allows a safe pedestrian crossing point between Maidenhead Street and the Theatre / Castle Grounds via the Gateway and reduces potential rat running along Maidenhead Street, especially if the traffic regulation for the west end of Fore Street is amended to Bus only access.

- Proposed realigned kerb line
- Yellow box: Existing Yorkstone paving to be retained
- Yellow box: Proposed Yorkstone paving to match existing (Paving spec A)
- Yellow box: Proposed Yorkstone Setts to match existing (Paving spec B)
- Light blue box: Existing Setts to carriageway to be retained
- Dark blue box: Setts to carriageway (Spec type D or E)
- Grey box: Macadam roadway - existing retained. Resurface dressing if required
- Green circle: Existing Street tree planting

## MAIDENHEAD STREET

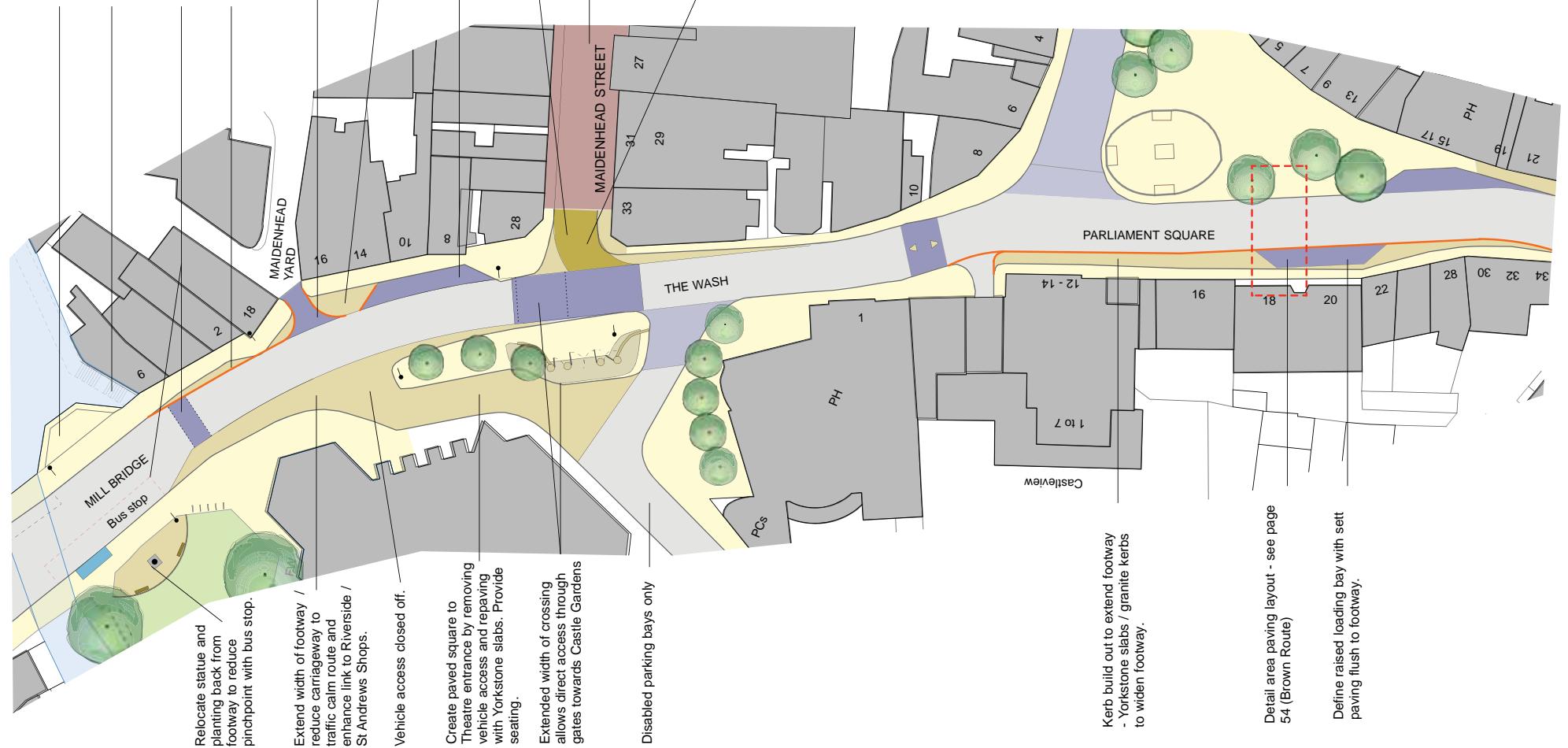
Please note: this is an outline concept drawing illustrating a potential scheme for this location which is liable to alteration through the design process.



## OLD CROSS

Please note: this is an outline concept drawing illustrating a potential scheme for this location which is liable to alteration through the design process.

Create view point from bridge over Mill Bridge.  
Planting bed, repaving with Yorkstone slabs.  
Location for wayfinding / interpretation board.



## THE WASH / MILL BRIDGE

Please note: this is an outline concept drawing illustrating a potential scheme for this location which is liable to alteration through the design process.

# Appendix 2: Summary of March 2015 Consultation

This document is a summary from all the representations received, notes recorded at the events, and general observations arising from the consultation.

- This was the first of two major public consultation events focusing on the Urban Design Strategy: a genuine opportunity for local people to shape their town's future.
- The 'Drop-in' sessions took place between 10am and 4.30pm on Friday 20th and between 9.30am and 12.30pm on Saturday 21st March 2015.
- 166 people registered as having attended on the first two days (although others also attended who did not sign in). The exhibition then transferred to the Hertford Theatre for an additional six days (unstaffed) to allow further participation in the consultation.
- Many people attending the drop-in sessions spent a considerable amount of time – often over an hour - viewing the exhibition material and providing comments.
- The enormous number of comments ranged from very broad matters to highly specific details.
- The consultant team (from Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design) are confident that they are aware of all the key issues, and have also had some really good ideas suggested by contributors.

## What was there? What could people contribute?

- The main way for people to contribute was by ticking, crossing and writing on wallsheets, which sought to illicit local people's issues and ideas around a series of 5 topics (with space for anything else to be included that did not fit within these topics).
- Participation was also encouraged via adding comments to a form called 'The good, the bad and the ugly', as well as providing views on a sheet specifically relating to issues around the way of arriving into the town.
- There was also a 60 minute sign-up walking tour around the Town Centre where discussions could be held on-site and views of participants were recorded.
- The consultant team and East Herts Council officers were present at all times to help, advise, and discuss the exhibition material. Officers of both Hertfordshire County Council and Hertford Town Council and several local Councillors also attended the event and contributed to discussions.

The following provides the 'headlines' from the results on the wallsheet topics.

## General comments

- The topics Economy and Movement received the most comments – which provided a good overview of the current situation.
- Overall agreement is shown on several boards about the regeneration of the riverbanks – 180 Ticks received throughout the exhibition period.
- There were also a great number of comments on Hertford as a tourist destination as well as thoughts about the town's identity.

## Movement and Transport

- The board seeking views about the way people arrive into the town showed that the majority of the exhibition visitors come on foot.
- There was a clear statement about the need to maintain a bus station in a central location as buses are an important means of transportation.
- The second highest score in the whole exhibition was for 'pay on exit' car parks to enable visitors and citizens to spend time in the town centre without constant worrying about pay and display tickets expiring.
- Preference was expressed for a sustainable approach to limit cars in the centre and subsequently pedestrianise the heart of the town.
- Another strong point was made concerning the walking and cycling environment, which needs to improve (e.g. pavement improvements, widening of sidewalks, prioritising of pedestrians and cyclists in daily traffic).
- The latter was added to with comments about barriers for pedestrians and cyclists (pointing out the junctions of Old Cross/St. Andrew Street, Fore Street/Railway Street).
- Concerning the A414/Gascoyne Way, a significant amount of comments were received about the difficulties of arriving or leaving the town centre.

**Environment**

- One of the biggest and clearest responses was about the need to regenerate and transform the riverbanks into a pleasant destination within Hertford.
- The high volume of traffic and its negative impact on surrounding realms were views often expressed throughout the exhibition.
- A strong concern was the missing or wrong signage throughout the centre.
- There was a clear statement about the amount of litter in shopping areas, which was also related to the untidiness around unoccupied shops.
- The latter was also related to certain shopping areas like Maidenhead St/Bircherley Green, where the need for change was expressed strongly.
- Another point was made regarding the small amount of street furniture in key locations (Bircherley Green/Castle Grounds), which needs to be improved.
- Improved street seating would enable people to stay in the centre as well as rest.

**Character and History**

- The history of Hertford, its historical buildings and the rank of County Town are important parts of the character – there was a strong support to use these assets and promote the identity of Hertford and make it a destination.
- In relation to this there was a clear interest stated in improving as well as extending the offer of cultural attractions and forming an overall tourism strategy (events, workshops etc.).
- As a Market Town, the need was expressed to expand the Market, change the frequency to weekly and offer higher diversity.

**Economy**

- There was a strong interest in widening the range of shops available in Hertford as an addition to the independent shops, which received the third most amount of ticks (variety/ more diversity/ High Street retail).
- Related to the latter, was the matter of unoccupied shops in the town centre, which should be reduced because they affect a decline in the surrounding public realm.
- Over 50 comments and ticks were received regarding a suggested reduction in business rates and thereby help encourage new shops into existence.
- The discussion also produced the idea of offering in-between uses like Galleries, Pop-up shops or Farm shops to fill in until a proper shop could be established.
- Included in the reflections over the economic future of the town centre, was the thought of an eco-system of businesses, which also gives the opportunity for offices and start-ups to settle down.
- There was very strong support for enhancing the experience of the farmers market, including a higher frequency and higher diversity of the stalls.
- There were strong feelings against Waitrose vacating Bircherley Green, as it offers specific quality products in a central location.
- There was broad agreement in terms of the unoccupied Marquee to encourage a change of use (e.g. mix of residential and business hub/workshops/creative offices).

# Appendix 3:

## Summary of September 2015 Consultation

### Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy Engagement Summary

#### November 2015

##### 1. Background

The purpose of the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy is to inform the future development of the town centre. When complete it will provide guidance for prospective developers and inform planning decisions involving applications for any development in the town centre.

The project commenced in early 2015. Tibbalds Planning and Urban Design were appointed by an open tendering process to lead the project. They were joined by a Team consultants including, transport specialists, landscape architects, viability and retail experts.

The project was split into 5 distinct stages. This report summarises the engagement activity undertaken in Stage 5, the final stage of the project.

##### 2. Purpose

The purpose of engaging with the public at this stage was to:

- Share the strategy with elected members;
- Exhibit the draft Hertford Urban Design Strategy; and
- Gather responses to various options put forward in the document.

The feedback gathered will help to inform the final version of the strategy.

##### 3. Engagement Format

3.1. A workshop with elected members from the County, District and Town Councils was held on the 18th of August at East Herts Council's offices. The Tibbalds Team presented slides summarising the strategy. The presentation followed the structure of the strategy document and was split into distinct chapters. At the end of each chapter time was given over to discuss the proposals and gather feedback surrounding the various options put forward.

3.2. The Elected Member Workshop was followed by a public exhibition. This was held on Friday the 4th and Saturday the 5th of September 2015 at the Mill Bridge Rooms, Hertford. It was open to the public from 11am -5pm on the 4th and from 10am-4pm on the 5th.

3.3. Like the presentation to members, a series of boards were designed to summarise the chapters of the Draft strategy. These were:

- A summary of previous engagement and how it has influenced the strategy.
- The vision and objectives.
- The place-making strategy.

■ Movement and transport.

■ Public realm strategy.

■ Key sites design.

3.4. Opportunities for the public to state their opinion on various issues were presented via a questionnaire integrated with the board content. The public were invited to state whether they agreed, disagreed or were neutral about the propositions made by sticking dots next to their preferred answer. They were also asked to prioritise various options presented. Paper copies and a link to the online questionnaire were made available for those who wished to provide more detailed feedback or have more time to consider their response. The paper copies could be returned on the day, or later by post or allocated collection points around the Town.

3.5. Representatives from the County and District Councils and Tibbalds were in attendance to answer any questions.

3.6. The exhibition was moved to Hertford Theatre for a further week. This was not staffed, however it offered members of the public a further chance to see hard copies of the strategy and the exhibition boards and also to provide any feedback.

3.7. All of the materials presented at the exhibition were uploaded to the East Herts website for the duration of the consultation. People were able to comment on the draft Strategy either by downloading a PDF copy of the questionnaire (with various drop-off locations provided) or by following a link to an online version of the questionnaire. Responses were also collected by email.

## Response

4.1. Approximately 200 people attended the events on the 4th and 5th of September. We received up to 150 responses per question on the exhibition boards.

4.2. We received 61 responses to the online version of the questionnaire, 11 hard copies and 2 sets of written comments.

4.3. We received 5 emails with comments via the Hertford TCUDS web address.

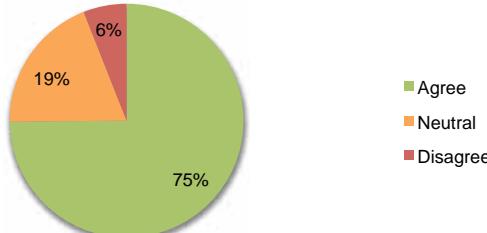
4.4. The Town Council and Civic Society provided individual responses.

## 5. What were the results?

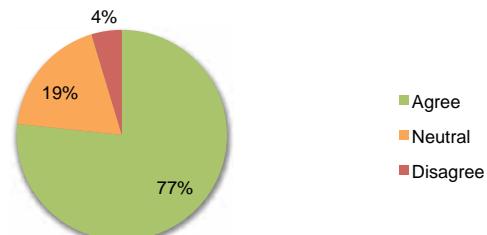
5.1. The below summarises all of the responses received on the exhibition boards, online and paper surveys. A summary of additional written responses and comments is provided in 5.6.

5.2. Place-making Principles.

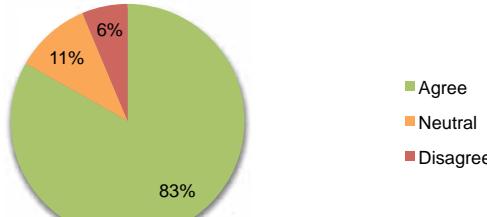
### 1. Do you agree that the strategy will create a successful focus for the town centre?



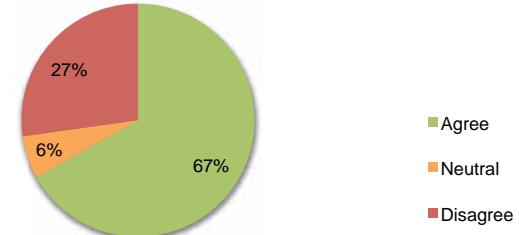
### 3. Do you agree that the strategies listed will make the most of Hertford's heritage and character?



### 2. Do you agree that the strategy will successfully refocus the town towards the river?



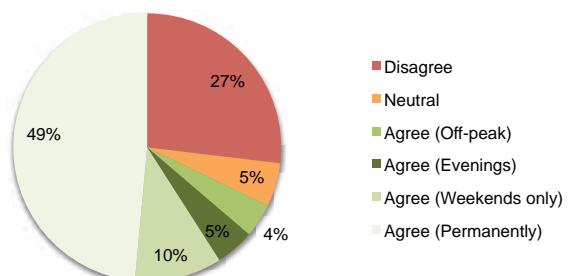
### 4. Do you agree that the quarters identified accurately reflect these areas within Hertford



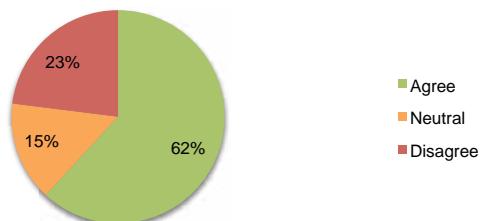
5.3. Movement, Transport and Public Realm Boards 5, 6 and 7.

5.4. Key Sites - Bircherley Green, Maidenhead Street and The Marquee.

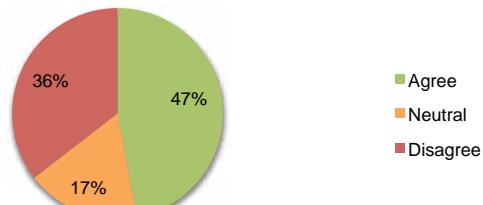
5. Considering the positive and negative impacts, would you support closing the western end of Fore St to private vehicular traffic except for vehicular access?



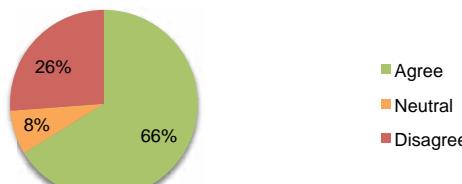
6. Would you support the area to the west end of Market Street becoming a resident and service access only zone?



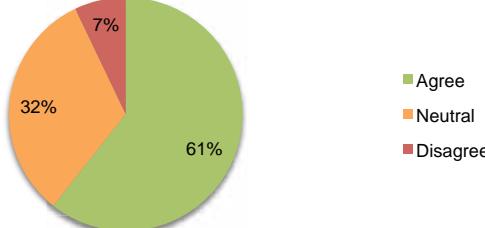
7. Would you support limiting vehicle access to Folly Island with residents parking in Hartham on certain times/days?



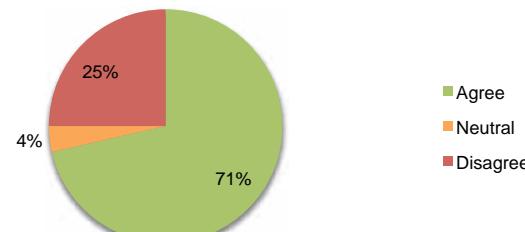
8. Do you agree that reducing the traffic through Bull Plain and removing parking would be good for the town centre to create a more useable space for events and a larger market?



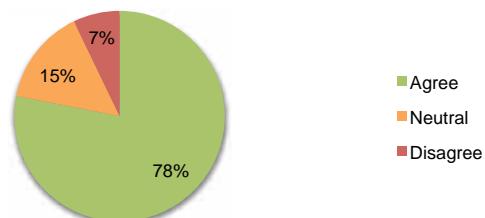
9. Do you agree that the changes will improve cycling in Hertford's town centre?



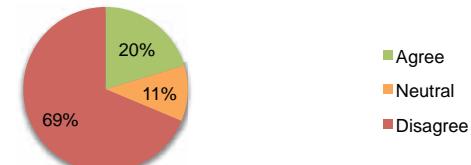
10. Have we identified the correct places for wayfinding totems?



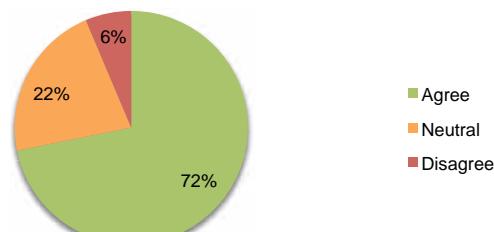
11. The bus station should remain where it is to maintain a centralised bus interchange with its associated waiting and toilet facilities.



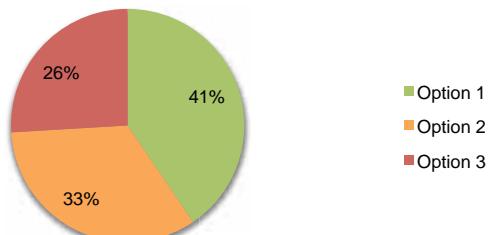
12. Allow the bus station to be replaced by distributing bus stops to other town centre locations to maximise the potential of the Bircherley Green site to improve the retail and leisure offer and open up more of the River Lea.



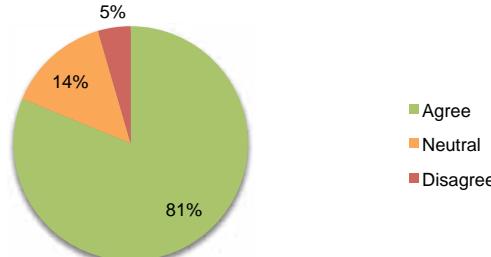
13. Do you agree with the place-making principles for Bircherley Green?



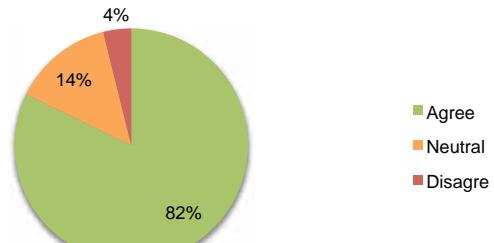
**14. Which option do you think is best for Hertford?**



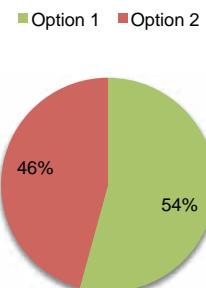
**17. Do you agree with the place-making principles for the Marquee?**



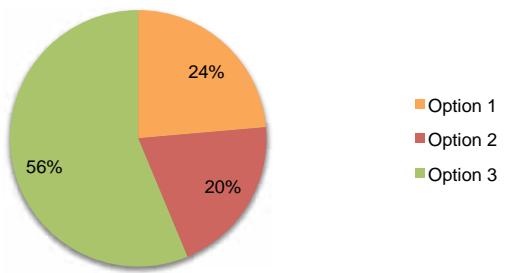
**15. Do you agree with the place-making principles for Maidenhead St?**

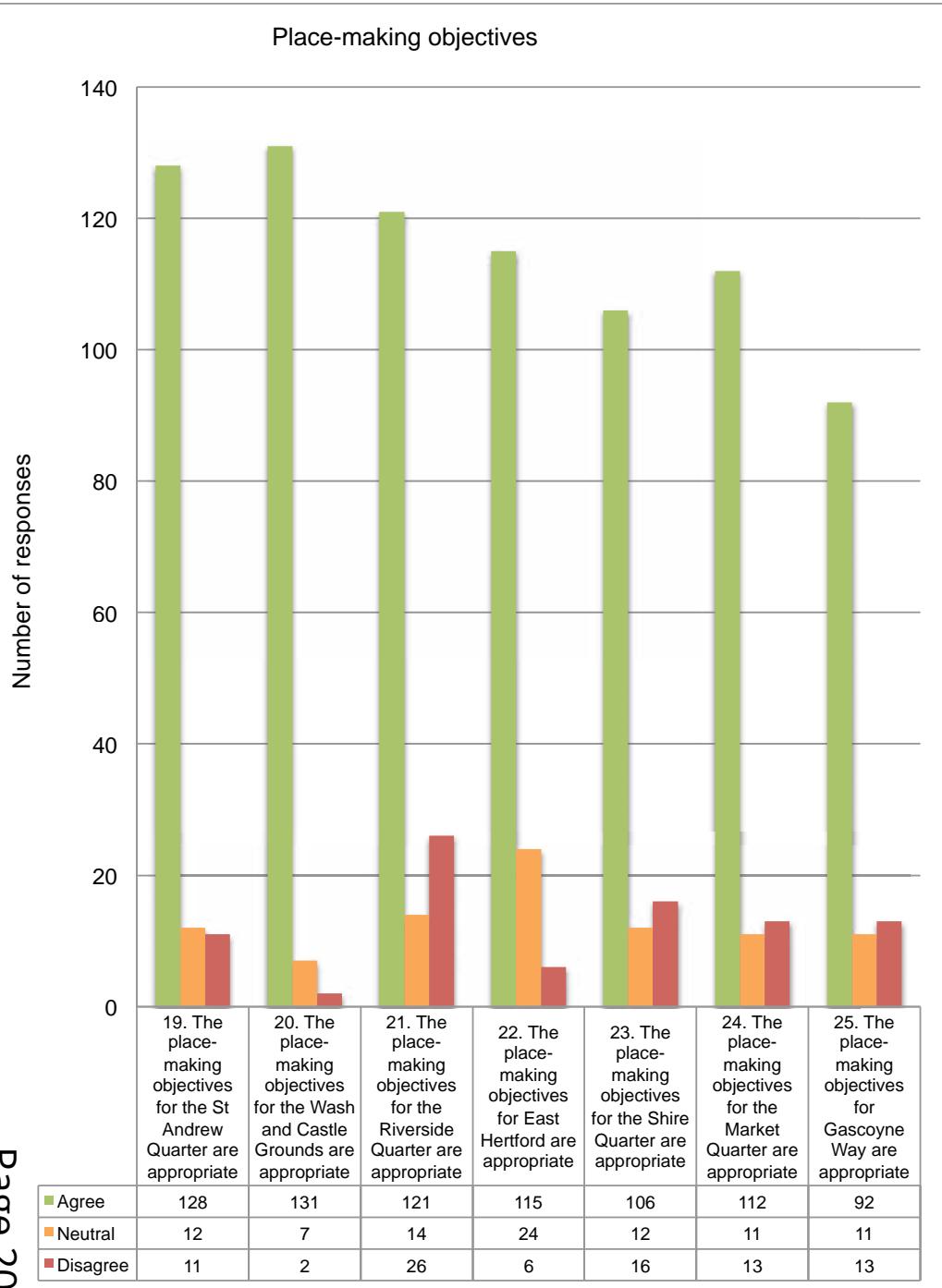


**18. Which option is best for Hertford?**



**16. Which option is best for Hertford?**





### 5.5. Summary of additional written comments.

Many additional comments were received in addition to the questionnaire responses. There were many recurring issues and suggestions. These are summarised below:

- Feeling that the town is too small for quarters (5 comments, + Civic society).
- Rename the Castle Quarter the Castle and Arts Quarter (1 comment).
- Rename the Market Quarter, The Salisbury Quarter (Town Council).
- Consider a further quarter at Hartham Common (1 comment).
- Need to look in more detail at the routes (pedestrian and cycle in and out of the town. (Suggestions include the route from Hartham, Adams yard, West Street, Cow Bridge, North Road and Bean Road (6 comments + Civic Society)).
- Requests for a bolder cycling strategy and to look at the wider area (3 comments)
- Opposition to new cinema (2 Comments + Town Council).
- Request that we investigate boating on the river in more detail – look at moorings at Meads (3 comments).
- Ensure that cyclists are allowed on Fore Street if it is closed at the western end (3 comments).
- Market Street should retain disabled badge parking (2 comments).
- Wayfinding totems/additional are unnecessary and will not complement the historic environment (7 comments + Town Council).

- Additional locations for Totems includes: Folly Island, Hartham, Sainsbury's, West Street, Hertford North/ East, junction of Fore Street and South Street, Junction of Railway Street and Bircherley Green, Castle Gates, middle of Maidenhead Street.
- Need to provide shop front design guidance / guidance on maintaining listed buildings (3 comments+ Civic Society).
- Bircherley Green redevelopment should provide office space (2 comments).
- Need to provide smaller units at Bircherley Green as well as larger ones (2 comments+ Civic Society).
- No need for banners on St Andrew Street (3 comments, town council+ Civic Society).
- Further investigate Thornton Street Bridge (3 comments + Civic Society).
- No need for additional bridge at Dolphin Yard (1 comment+ Plus Town Council).
- Support for boardwalk along Mill Bridge (2 comments + Town Council + Civic Society).
- Like the human scale of Bircherley Green (1 comment + Civic Society).
- Town Council do not approve of removal of the Shelter in Castle Grounds – a member of the public suggested that it could be converted into a café.
- Pay on exit parking desired (4 comments).
- Town Council oppose anything that changes on-street parking arrangements.
- Character of cycle racks must be historic (Town Council).

- Need to be more ambitious with plans for Gascoyne Way and consider what could be done to improve it (3 comments).
- Open up the River Front in Option 2 Bircherley Green (4 comments + Civic Society)
- Green Fingers/green infrastructure are not included in the strategy (1 comment).
- Town Council opposed making Gascoyne way car park 'an eye catching attractive landmark' preferring planting to improve its appearance.
- Consider hotel use at Bircherley Green.
- Need to look at boating on the River Lea in more detail (4 comments).
- Develop tourism strategy (3 comments).

## 6. Conclusions

### 6.1. Place-making Principles.

The results of our survey reveal a high level of support for the overall place-making principles:

- 75% of people who responded to the survey stated that they agreed that the strategy will successfully create a focus for the town centre.
- 83% agreed that the strategy will successfully re-focus the town towards the river.
- 77% agreed that the strategy would make the most of Hertford's heritage and character.
- 67% agreed that the quarters accurately reflected the areas within Hertford.

### 6.2. Place-making Principles Actions resulting from engagement.

- Although there was some objection to the creation of quarters, this is a key part of the strategy and should be retained. It does not harm the physical character of the town and allows businesses to promote themselves more effectively.
- Remove idea to brand St Andrew Quarter with banners (including opposition from the Town Council, Civic Society and concerns about maintenance from the County Council).
- Make the following name changes – Market Quarter to become the Salisbury Quarter, and rename East Hertford as Bluecoats Quarter to distinguish it from the train station.
- The study needs to be more explicit about moorings and navigation. It should also include the existing location of moorings on the River (Hertford Meads).

- There was a desire for the strategy to include more detailed design guidance for shopfronts and historic buildings. While this is outside the scope of this project, it is a desirable thing for East Herts. The final document should state that this is something that could be developed and supplement the study in the future.
- There was some support to further investigate the possibility of creating a new vehicular bridge to Folly Island at the site of the existing Thornton Street pedestrian bridge (from Hartham Lane end). The potential benefits of having a new bridge are substantial for improvements and environmental quality in the Town Centre, but this would come at the expense of traffic diversion via Hartham Lane and also disbenefit to some residents on Folly Island who would be impacted by a new structure and rerouted traffic. This had been dismissed as part of this Strategy due to technical and ownership constraints. However, a northern access is a long-term aspiration for the town and may become possible in the future.

### 6.3. Movement Strategy and Public Realm.

The movement strategies were slightly less supported than the place-making principles.

- 49% agreed that the western end of Fore street should be closed to private vehicles – with a further 24% stating that they would agree to closing the street at off peak times only.
- 62 % stated that they would support the area to the west end of Market Street becoming a resident and service access only zone.
- 47% stated that they would support limiting vehicle access to Folly Island on certain times and days.
- 66% agreed that reducing traffic through Bull Plain and removing parking would be good for the town centre and create a more useful market place.
- 61% agreed that the changes would improve cycling in Hertford's town centre.
- 78% of people agreed that the bus station should be kept in its current location and maintain a centralised bus interchange. In addition 69% of people stated that they disagreed that the bus station should be replaced and stops distributed around the town.

### 6.4. Movement and Public Realm Strategy - Actions resulting from engagement.

- While a level of support has been suggested, any changes to the movement network will need to be carefully considered in light of potential impact on the local and wider network..
- The strategy must clearly state that cyclists should be allowed to enter the western end of Fore Street if it was closed to private vehicles.
- The strategy must clearly state that Blue badge holders should be considered in the parking strategy to the west end of Market Street.
- The cycling strategy needs to be more robust and include actions to improve the wider routes in and out of the town centre, in particular from Hertford East Station. It should look at promoting the cycle route alongside the River Beane as an alternative to the A119.
- Pay on exit parking was a common suggestion. In addition to written comments, many people mentioned this verbally at the consultation events. This is not a planning issue; however, East Herts Council should consider this alongside this strategy.
- Additional wayfinding totems should be considered at: Folly Island, Hartham Common, Sainsbury's at Hartham, West Street and Hertford North Station.
- One of the primary aims of the project is to de-clutter the streets of unnecessary signs, barriers, planters, lamp columns etc. Some people were concerned that wayfinding totems would be placed in the town without removing existing poor quality street clutter. This is not the case. The final strategy must clearly express that it will be removed.

- Although most people thought that we had identified the correct routes in the town centre, there is a need to widen the study area to consider the pedestrian routes in and out of the town centre. These include the routes from: Hartham, West Street, Cowbridge, North Road and Beane Road.
- There was a high level of support for all of the area based public realm place-making principles.
- There was some criticism that the strategy is not ambitious enough in its approach to Gascoyne Way. Although it is highly unlikely that any radical changes to the Road, such as covering it over, will happen within the lifespan of this strategy, it is perhaps sensible to consider what may be possible in the future and anticipate this in the strategy.
- The strategy has not looked at wider green infrastructure. This is currently outside the scope of the study, which focuses on the town centre, but could be included in the public realm strategy.
- Options for crossing the river as well as a pedestrian walkway at Dolphin Yard should remain in the final strategy.

## 6.5. Key Sites.

The place-making principles for Bircherley Green, Maidenhead Street and The Marquee were supported.

- Option 1 was the most popular option for Bircherley Green with 41% stating that this was the best option for the town. Option 2 received 33% and 26% supported Option 3.
- Whilst the mix of uses presented in Option 2 was often praised by the comments received, the development along the riverfront was not. This may have influenced preferences towards Option 1 rather than the provision of a large superstore.
- Option 3 was the most popular option for Maidenhead Street with 56% stating that this was the best option for the town. Option 2 received 20% and 24% supported Option 3.
- Option 1 was the most popular option for The Marquee with 54% stating that this was the best option for the town. 46% preferred Option 2.
- 78% of people agreed that the bus station should be kept in its current location and maintain a centralised bus interchange. In addition 69% of people stated that they disagreed that the bus station should be replaced and stops distributed around the town.

## 6.6. Key Sites - Actions resulting from engagement.

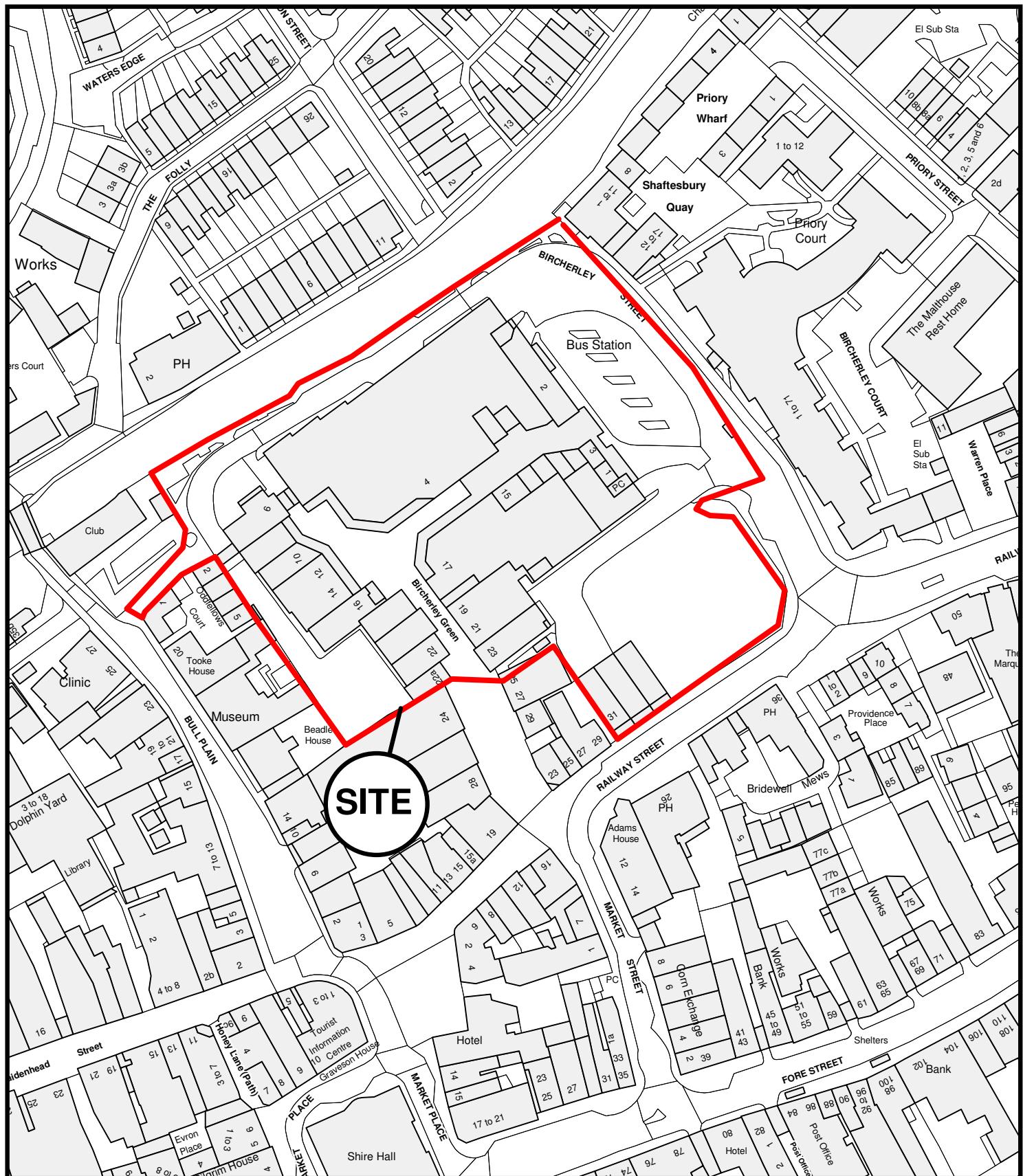
- The mix of uses in Bircherley Green Option 2 Green was generally welcomed. However, the development of apartments along the riverfront was not. Considering the written comments received it seems that it was this rather than the mix of uses that made people choose Option 1. An option for Bircherley Green should be developed that delivers a hybrid of Options 1 and 2 and is flexible enough to house a number of uses. It should mix the land uses of Option 2 and the open riverfront of Option 1. Office uses should also be considered.
- Option 3 was the preferred option for Maidenhead Street. This option would involve comprehensive redevelopment of the western edge of the street. This would potentially be difficult to achieve. Verbal and written comments suggest that people chose this Option as it closes down Evron Place (currently perceived as a location for anti-social behaviour). This principle could be integrated into one of the other options.

NOTE: We propose to include an 'Urban Design Framework' in the final document. This would set out the principles for development rather than a clearly defined option.



# Hertford

Town Centre Urban Design Strategy



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**Reference: 3/19/2614/FUL**

**Scale: 1:1250**

**O.S Sheet: TL3212**

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