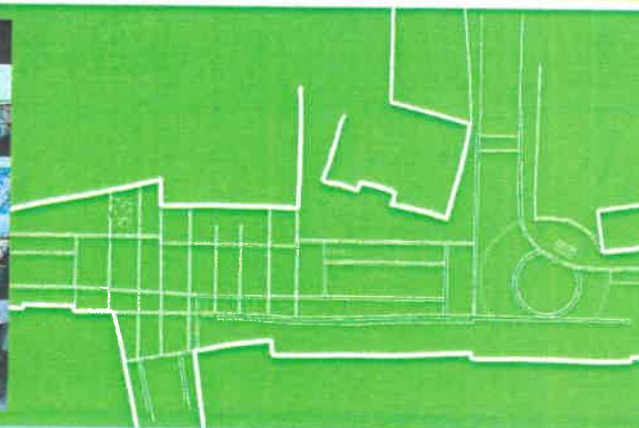


public realm strategy

Stage 2 Report

November 2016





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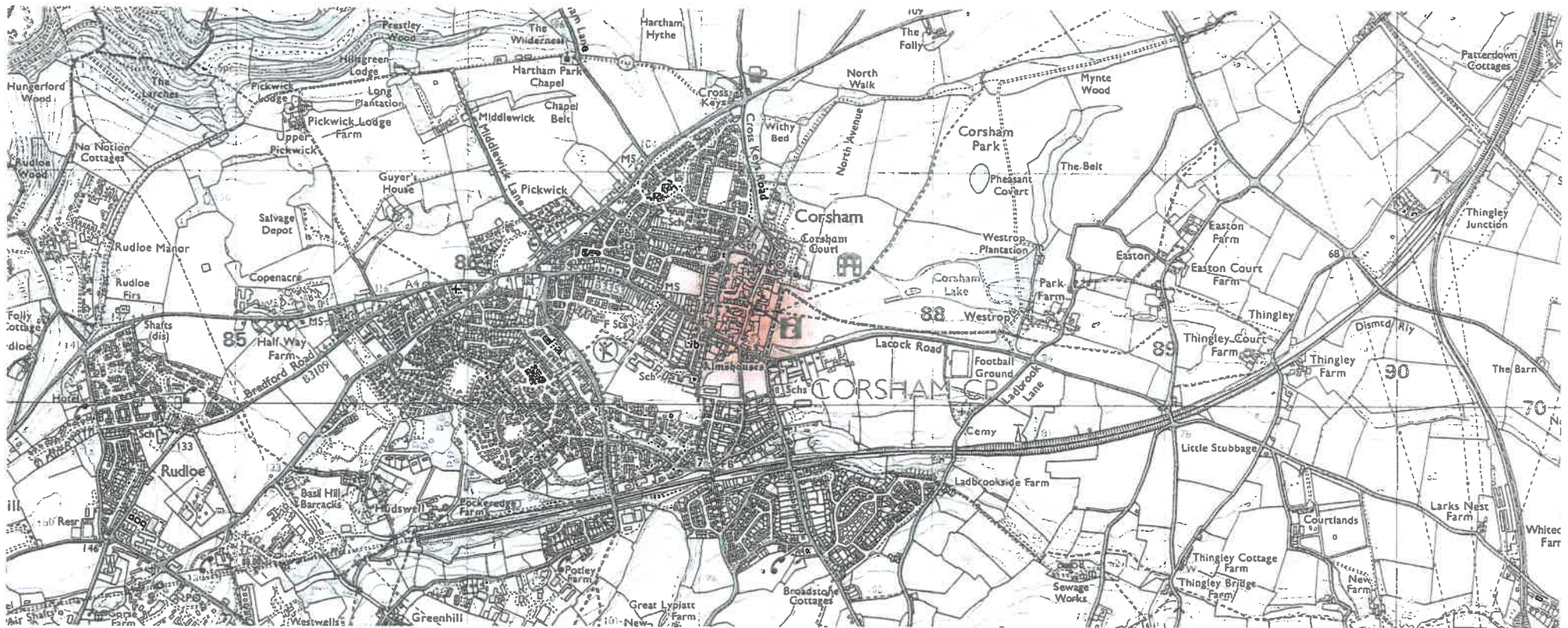
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01 Introduction



Location of Corsham



Corsham's need for a public realm strategy is the result of work conducted by the Town Council on marketing Corsham as a destination and through consultation with local residents about the Town's Strategic and Neighbourhood Plans. These processes highlighted concerns about the current physical condition, local policies and strategies in regards to the public realm in Corsham.

In March 2015, Corsham Town Council commissioned NEW masterplanning and the Urban Engineering Studio to commence with the study involving three stages:

1. An Audit & assessment (completed Sept 2015)

- To establish the current condition and character of the town and the opinions and wishes of residents, businesses and visitors.

2. A strategy (Current stage)

- To establish the overall concept and initial design solutions for the whole of the town centre, identifying key spaces where specific interventions are recommended.

3. Implementation (future)

- Preparation of detailed, costed proposals for specified areas to allow the strategy to be delivered on a phased basis.

In September 2015 New masterplanning issued Corsham Town Council with a report completing Stage 1: *Understanding Corsham: A public realm study*. The report provided an audit of the town centre's streets and spaces and feedback received from both stakeholders and local residents.

A copy of the report can be downloaded from the Council's website and should be read as a precursor to this document. (<http://www.corsham.gov.uk/information/corporateplan.php>)

This report concludes **Stage 2** of the study by introducing the strategy and suggesting the key spaces where improvements should be implemented. The strategy has been developed from the analysis and consultation undertaken in Stage 1. Clear design objectives are also provided for a number of priority projects to help fulfil the aspirations outlined in the strategy.

Consultation with local residents in Stage 2 has provided feedback on the strategy and initial design concepts along with resident's views on the priorities for delivering change.

Where possible varying levels of intervention have been suggested to help the Town Council deliver both short and longer-term improvements at varying budget levels for the project areas.

At this stage it should be stressed that the suggested design responses outlined in this report are initial concepts only. They have been prepared to help visually illustrate the proposed improvements and to assist in preparing outline costings for the Council.

As proposals are taken forward in the implementation stage they will be subject to further testing and more detailed design development as well as further public consultation prior to delivery.

Approach

The preparation of this study has utilised the initial review, detailed analysis work, and engagement conducted in Stage 1.

Developing the strategy

The team started the Stage 2 process by rationalising the public's 'wish-list' into a strategy with a concise set of goals for delivering long-term enhancements to Corsham's public realm.

The key findings from Stage 1 established three key strategy objectives for the public realm in Corsham, including:

- Improving access and arrival
- Connecting the town centre; and
- Creating memorable streets & spaces.

Developing design concepts

The strategy objectives helped to clarify a number of priority areas that were seen as imperative in helping to deliver the overarching objectives of the strategy. Guiding principles for how public realm enhancements could improve these key spaces were drafted and initial design concepts were prepared to illustrate how these key spaces could look with public realm improvements.

Workshop

A round table workshop was held with members of Corsham's Town Council on May 30th, 2016. The aim was to introduce the emerging strategy to the council as well as to review the selected priority projects and initial design concepts.

Feedback was provided to help shape the emerging proposals prior to public consultation.

Engagement

An open day was held in the Martingate Shopping Centre on 18th, May 2016, giving the team the opportunity to present the strategy and suggested areas for improvement to members of the public.

The exhibition was well attended and local residents, visitors and business owners viewed the proposals and provided the team with feedback on the suggested design concepts.

A summary presentation was given to the Town Council's P&A committee in the evening on the 18th following the Open day. The team presented the strategy, initial design concepts and a summary of feedback received during the day.

The exhibition remained on display in various locations across the town centre for 3 weeks following the initial exhibition allowing as many residents as possible to view the proposals.

Feedback

A questionnaire was used to gain written feedback and to help establish the priority projects for delivering change in Corsham.

There was overall support for the objectives of the strategy and the suggested project areas. A summary of the feedback, issues raised and analysis of the public's preferred options is included in Section 4 of this report. With more detailed analysis and feedback provided in a separate consultation report.

Report structure

The structure of the report is as follows:

Section 2 - Strengthening the town centre

- Outlines the strategic long-term opportunities for strengthening Corsham's town centre, to facilitate growth and improve its offer in the future. This will suggest opportunities that should be considered alongside the public realm strategy.

Section 3 - The public realm strategy

- Introduces the public realm strategy to help deliver improvements and achieve the objectives stakeholder and local residents outlined through Stage 1.

Section 4 - Engagement & feedback

- Reviews both the verbal and written feedback received by the team at the open day to establish local resident's priorities for Corsham's public realm.

Section 5 - Key projects for delivering change

- Outlines the priority spaces which will help deliver aspects of the strategy, provides recommendations and initial design concepts to illustrate the potential character.

Section 6 - Guidelines for materials & design elements

- Provides guidance for streetscape materials and treatments to help ensure a unified public realm is delivered for Corsham.

Section 7- Summary

- Sets out key recommendations and actions to take the strategy forward.

02 Strengthening the town centre



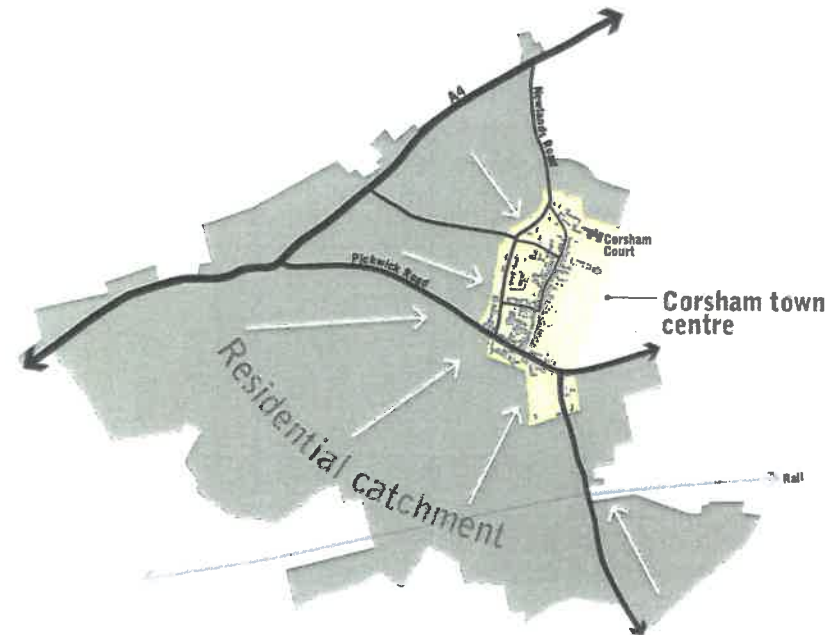
Analysis from Stage 1 highlighted that Corsham's town centre in some ways resembles that of a coastal town as its core is not centrally located. Barriers created by the A4, the railway and the location of Corsham Court have naturally pushed the town's growth to the west. This has located Corsham's catchment population somewhat removed and unevenly distributed away from the town centre.

The off-centre location of the core surrounded by the trafficked through routes of Pickwick Road and Newlands Road can make the centre feel isolated and inaccessible from the rest of the town. This is reinforced by the unattractive physical environment and poor connections along Newlands Road. These surroundings screen the historic core and High Street from passing traffic. It also makes residents more likely to drive rather than walk and cycle or drive to neighbouring centres.

To help overcome these issues this section suggests long-term development opportunities which should be considered as part of a wider regeneration / growth strategy. Unlocking the potential of these edge of town centre sites would help to create a more positive first impression of arriving into Corsham and help to improve the mixed-use offer in Corsham. Public realm improvements will be fundamental to providing improved connections from these edge of town centre sites across the historic core. The combination of regeneration and public realm improvements will deliver an improved town centre to better meet local residents needs making Corsham more competitive with neighbouring centres but also help to make Corsham more of a destination town for tourists.

The following key principles are discussed:

- **Improving arrival and connections**
- **Improving Corsham town centre's offer**
- **Creating an attractive street**
- **Creating circuits**



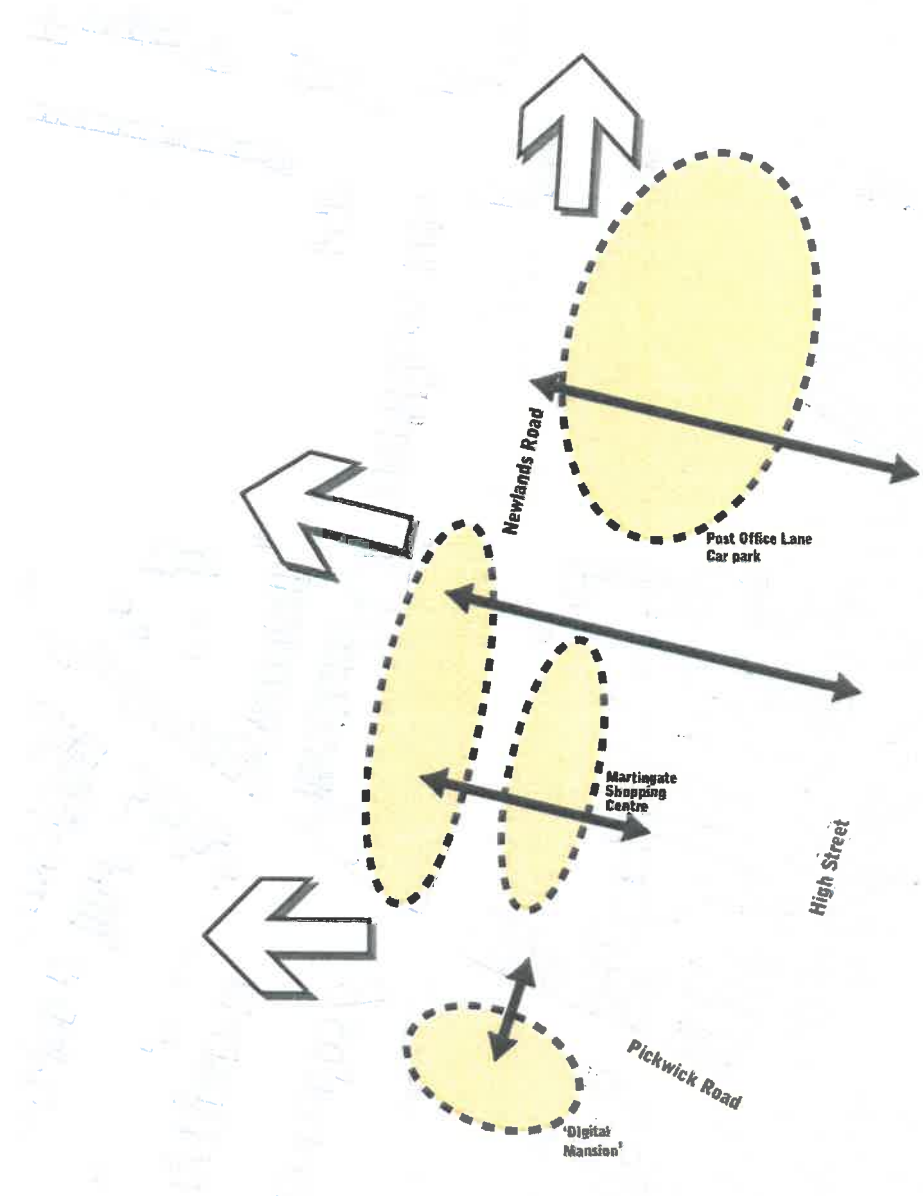
Improving arrival and connections

As outlined in the Stage 1 analysis there are several areas along Newlands Road which are not in keeping with the town centre character or as underutilised, affording potential future regeneration sites.

Redevelopment of these sites would help to deliver a more coherent urban structure at the periphery to the town centre. In turn, this could provide improved connections and more attractive routes between Corsham's residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists to access the town centre. It would also help signal to passing traffic that they are passing a town centre and help to encourage more people to stop and visit.

Creating a more welcoming 'front door' to the town at this key town centre arrival should be a priority of any future redevelopment proposals.

All of the sites are located within Corsham's conservation area. Any redevelopment will need to be sympathetic to the historic core and the existing character of Corsham.



Improving Corsham town centre's offer

The sites along Newlands Road offer the potential to improve Corsham town centres offer. Redevelopment could deliver not only mixed-use development but provide for additional uses which the existing historic building footprints in the High Street are not able to cater for.

At the southern end of Newlands Road active retail units at ground floor should be provided to expand the offer in Corsham and to help attract new retailers to the area. Redevelopment should not provide direct competition for the High Street but should provide suitable spaced units for existing businesses to expand into. Ground floor uses could also include cafés or restaurants with spill out space to encourage people to spend more time and more money in the town centre and to boost the evening economy.

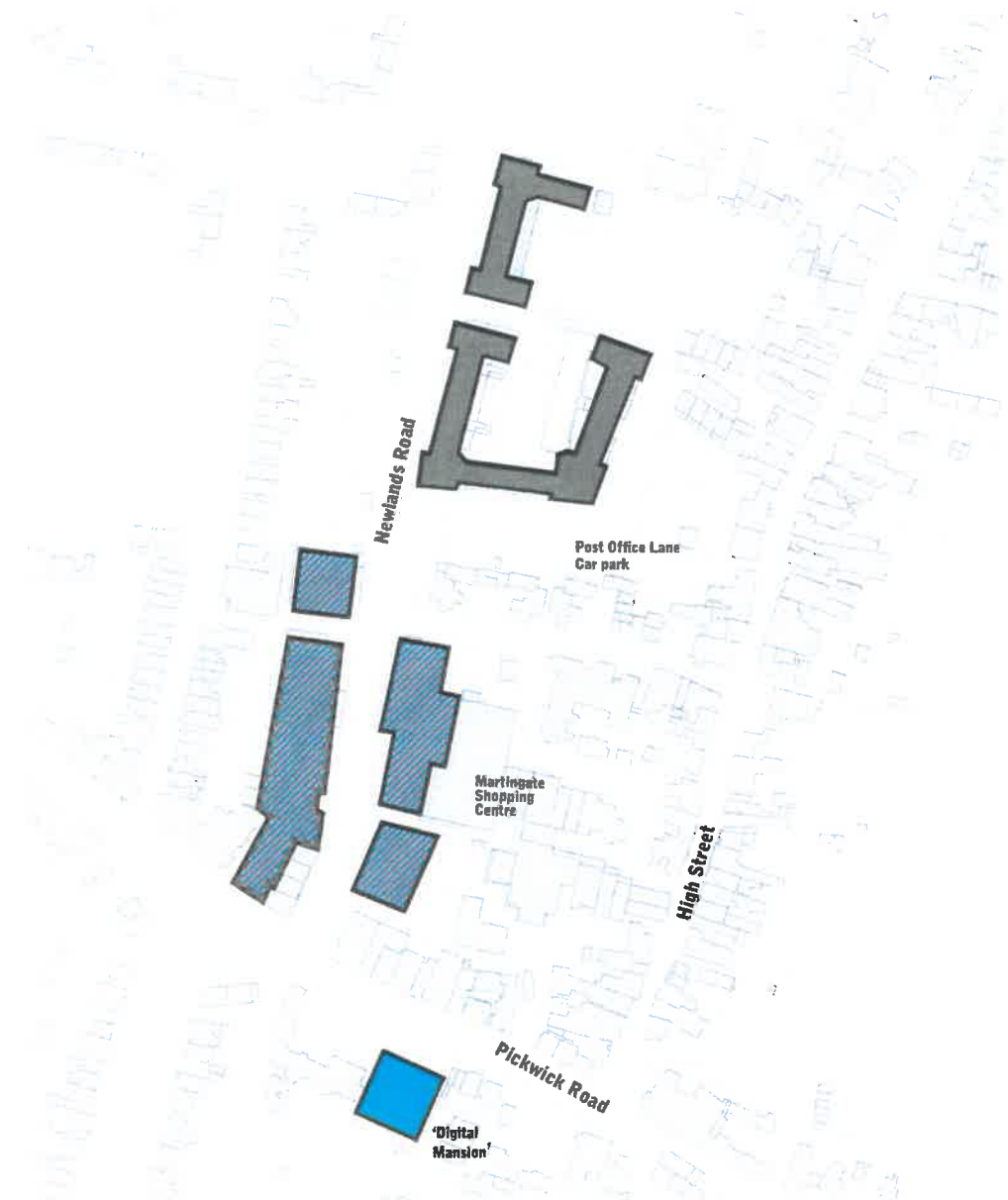
Rationalisation of the exiting car park area could see an expanded food store provided or additional retail units that extend the Martingate to create a more active street scene along Newlands Road.

Office space, or residential uses could be located on upper levels to support a mix of uses in the town centre and to bring activity and natural surveillance during the day and evening. The provision of additional office space would help to diversify employment opportunities in the town centre especially in relation to the tech sector while residential would help to better support an evening economy.

Provision of a mid-range hotel should also be considered to help add value to the local economy and to strengthen the offer for tourists. This could be located in a suitable scaled historic building in the centre or delivered as part of the wider potential along Newlands Road.

Newlands Road will remain a through route but the priority should be placed on creating an attractive street for pedestrians and cyclists with a number of improved connections to the High Street and surrounding uses.

Redevelopment would ultimately reduce large parking areas; however, smaller areas of parking could be provided tucked behind buildings reducing the visual impact on the public realm. There is also the opportunity to provide additional short term, on-street parking along Newlands Road. This could help support local businesses and naturally calm traffic along the route.



Plan demonstrates a suggested way of delivering improved uses fronting Newlands Road

Creating a attractive street

Sites located at the southern end of Newlands Road are currently dominated by parking and the blank elevations of buildings set back from the road creating an unfriendly pedestrian environment. Redevelopment along this route should enclose the street creating more of an urban form that respects the area's town centre location, makes drivers more aware that they are entering a town centre and encourage passing traffic to stop and visit the town.

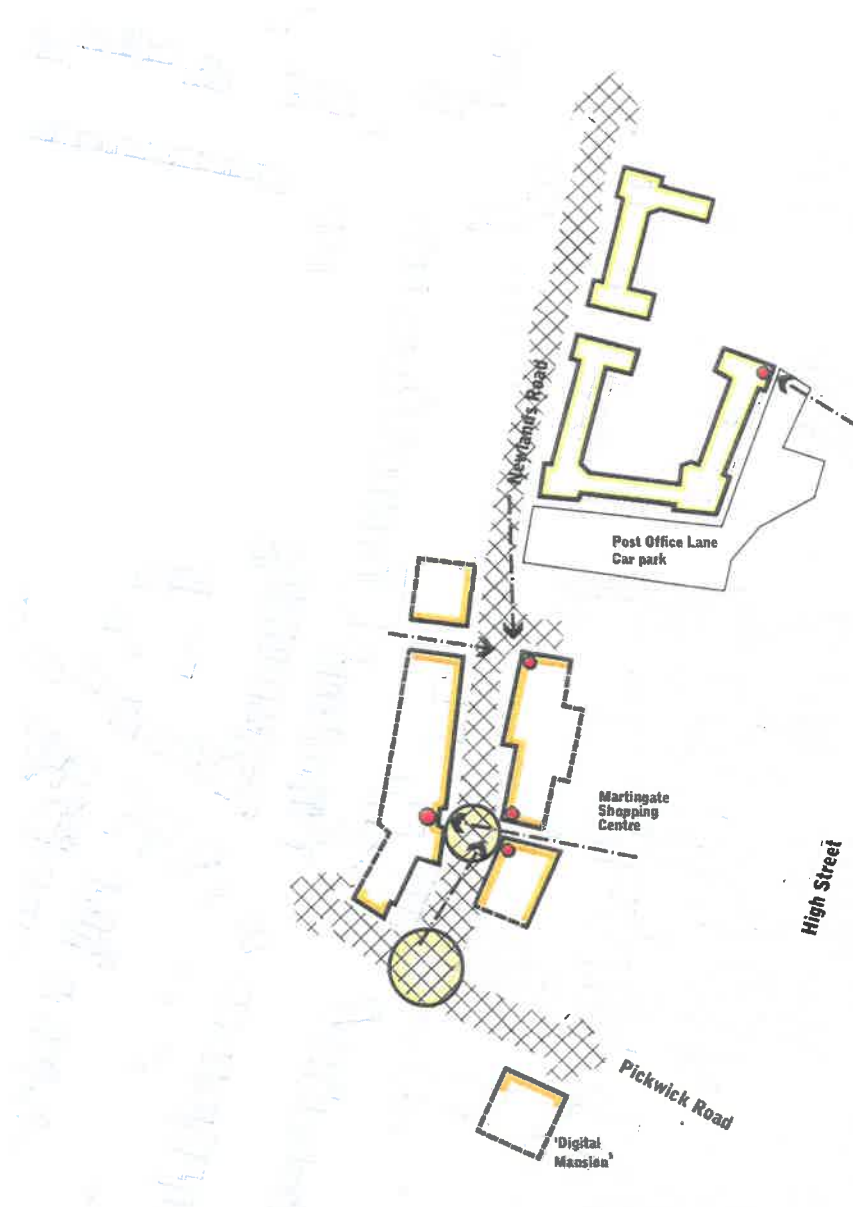
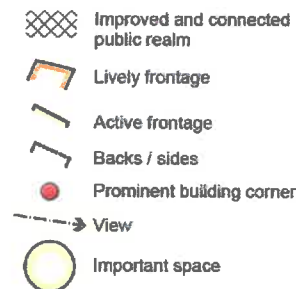
Ground floor uses should be active and lively helping to transform the character of Newlands Road from a through route into an attractive town centre destination.

The junction at Newlands Road and Pickwick is a key arrival point to the town centre and should provide an attractive space that encourages passing traffic to stop and explore Corsham.

The space to the front of the Martingate Shopping Centre should be enhanced to create a welcoming arrival point for public transport users and clearly aid connection to the High Street.

Redevelopment north of Post Office Lane, should remain residential; however, a more efficient layout could provide a frontage that address both Newlands Road and the car park edge in a more positive manner. Residential parking could be rationalised into the block ensuring it is not on show while frontages overlooking the car park will create a safer and more attractive route for visitors to the top end of the High Street.

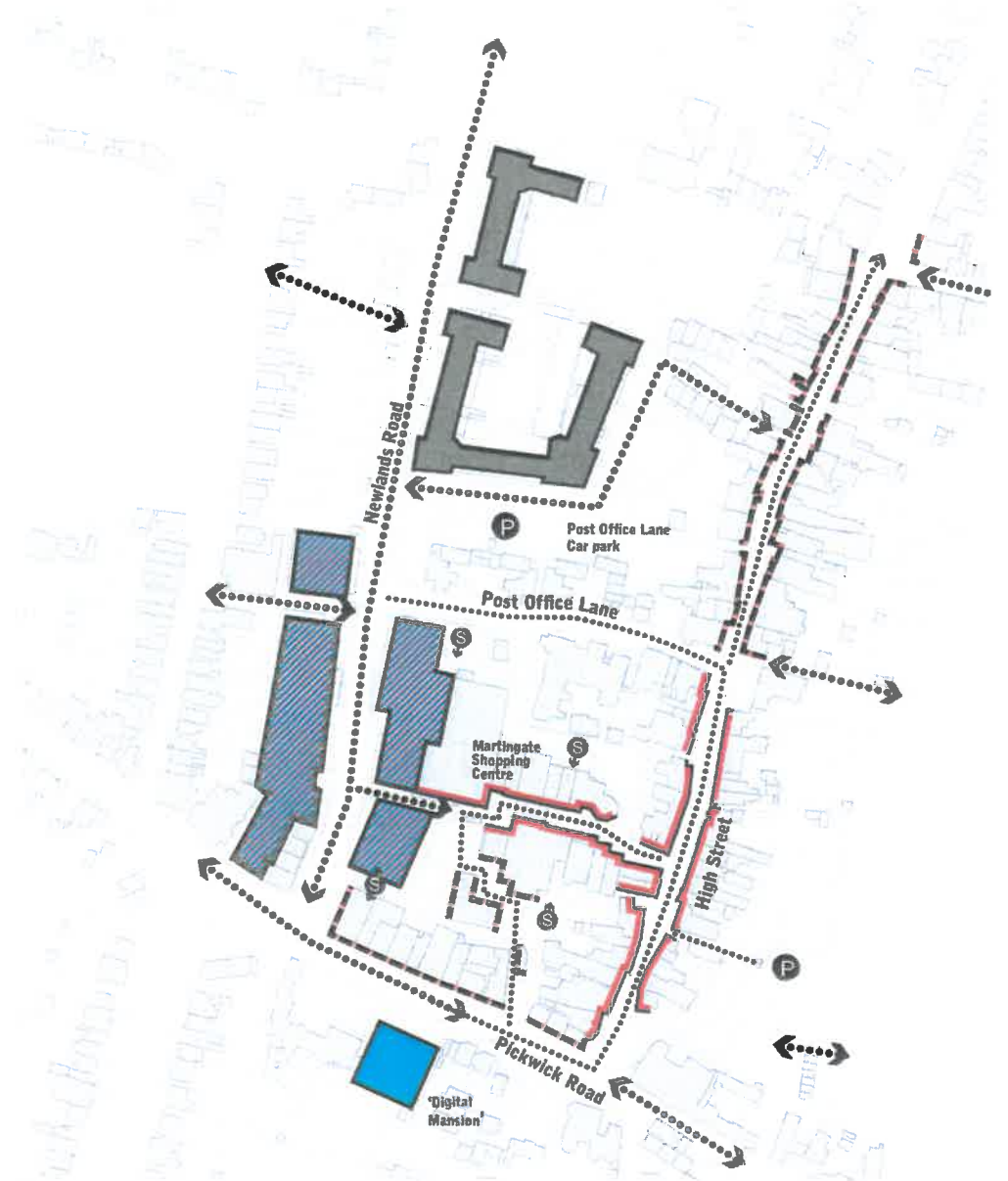
New buildings along with the public realm should respond to their location and help to aid way-finding, clearly mark key pedestrian routes and terminate views at town centre arrival spaces and create a pleasant environment for people to spend time in.



Creating circuits

By creating a more legible and accessible public realm at the periphery of the town centre it should help to facilitate pedestrian movement in particular across both Newlands Road as well as Pickwick Road which have been identified by local residents as barriers to accessing the town centre.

Improving not only the public realm along these two routes, but in particular the built environment along Newlands Road will deliver a variety of new shops and will help to facilitate a number of 'retail circuits' for shoppers. This is essential to help stimulate pedestrian footfall and to support the existing businesses in the Martingate Shopping Centre, on Pickwick Road and along the historic High Street.



Potential retail circuits & key connections

03 The public realm strategy



This section outlines the strategy objectives for delivering long-term improvements to the public realm in the town centre. The strategy establishes long-term objectives that will deliver the widest economic, social and physical return for investment. They also establish a clear set of goals for improving Corsham's public realm, aims against which any future improvement proposals can be measured.

The strategy objectives have been grouped into 3 key areas and are outlined in the following pages as:

- **Access & arrival**
- **Connecting the centre**
- **Creating memorable streets & spaces**

Access & arrival

The following points were highlighted as key issues from Stage 1:

- Benchmarking reports indicate a modal increase of 20% in recent years of uses accessing the town centre by car over walking, cycling and public transport.
- Local residents felt that outside of the pedestrianised High Street the remainder of the town centre is not designed for pedestrians and cyclists, and key connections such as Pickwick and Newlands Road are barriers.
- Residents feel Pound Pill is unsafe and a barrier to accessing local schools, attractions and facilities from the town centre.
- From arrival at the edge of the town centre it is unclear how and where to access the High Street or of its historic character.
- Existing gateways at Pickwick, Cross Keys and Pound Pill as well as edge of centre arrival points do little to 'sell' Corsham's historic past, attract passing trade or welcome visitors.

The following strategy objectives have been established to help improve access and arrival into Corsham:

- Announce Corsham and encouraging passing trade into the town centre at strategic arrival gateways including the Pickwick and Cross Keys on the A4, Pound Pill, edge of centre gateways, rail and bus destinations.
- Encourage local residents to visit the town centre more often by foot, bike and bus helping reduce non-essential traffic in the town centre.
- Creating clear and welcoming points of arrival into car parks and inviting connections to the High Street.



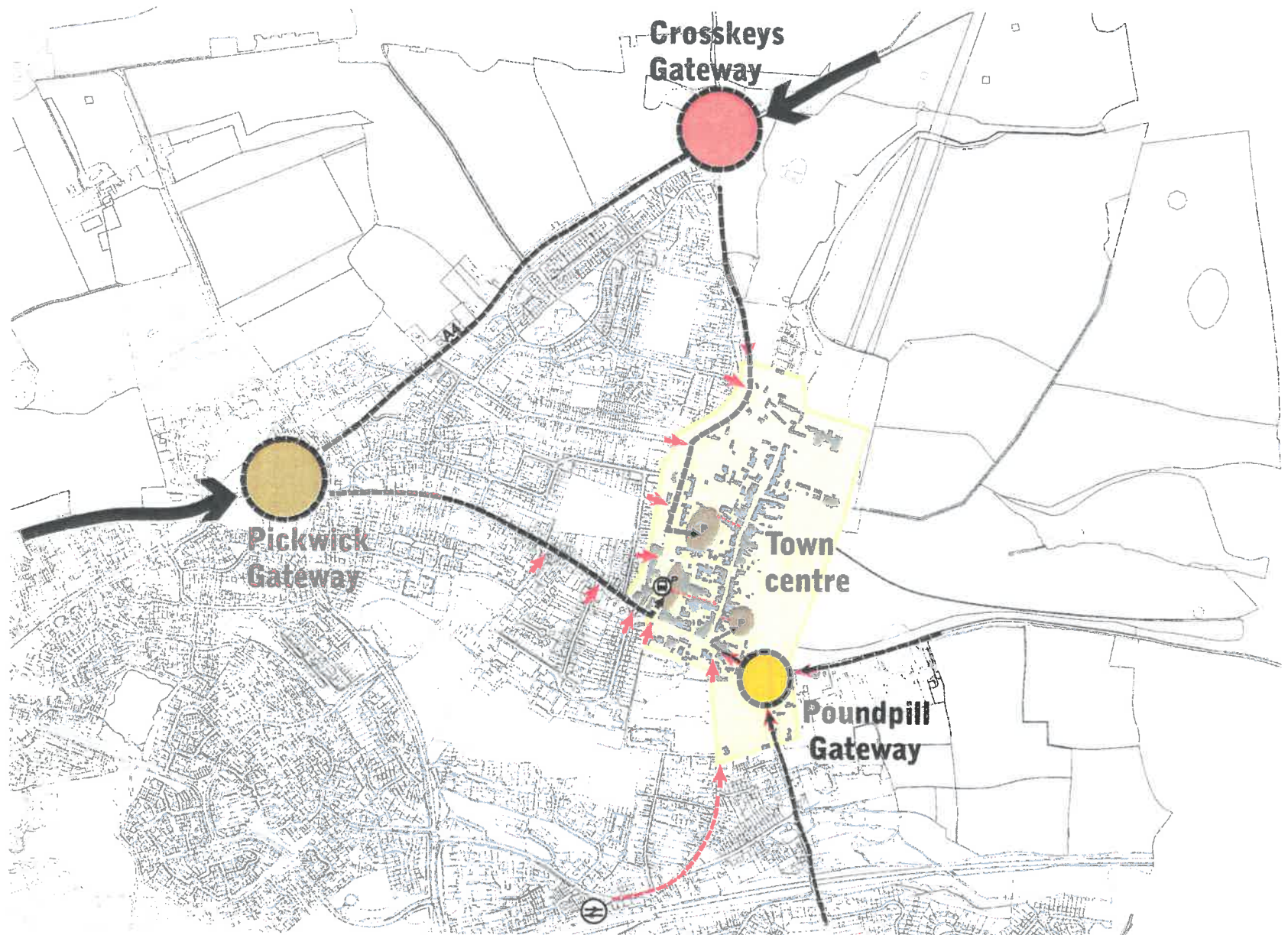
Gateways do little to sell Corsham to passing traffic.



Residents see Pickwick & Newlands road as barriers to accessing the town centre.



The main bus stop arrival does little to encourage people to visit Corsham via public transport.



Connecting the centre

The following points were highlighted as key issues from Stage 1:

- Corsham has many destinations for both visitors and local residents such as Corsham Court, the High Street, Martingate Shopping Centre, independent retailers, the market, Pound Arts Centre and tourist attractions such as the Almshouses, and Weavers Cottages but they are not well connected to promote Corsham as a destination town.
- Corsham is known for its strong offering of independent traders, however; increasing shop vacancies is of concern to local residents.
- There are a number of current and future projects such as the rail station reopening, the Digital Mansion, the Springfield Campus, potential future university expansion and growth opportunities in the town centre which could help to support the town centre.

The following strategy objectives have been established to help improve create a unified and connected town centre for Corsham:

- Reconnect and extend the High Street to create attractive arrival spaces, support surrounding attractions and aid connections between key destinations.
- Strengthen links between destinations to support joint trips and to encourage people to stay longer and explore more of the town centre.
- Create a network of spaces which foster retail circuits to support local shops and to help support both a day and evening economy.
- Ensure future growth opportunities/ projects are supported by a well connected public realm to help support the town centre.



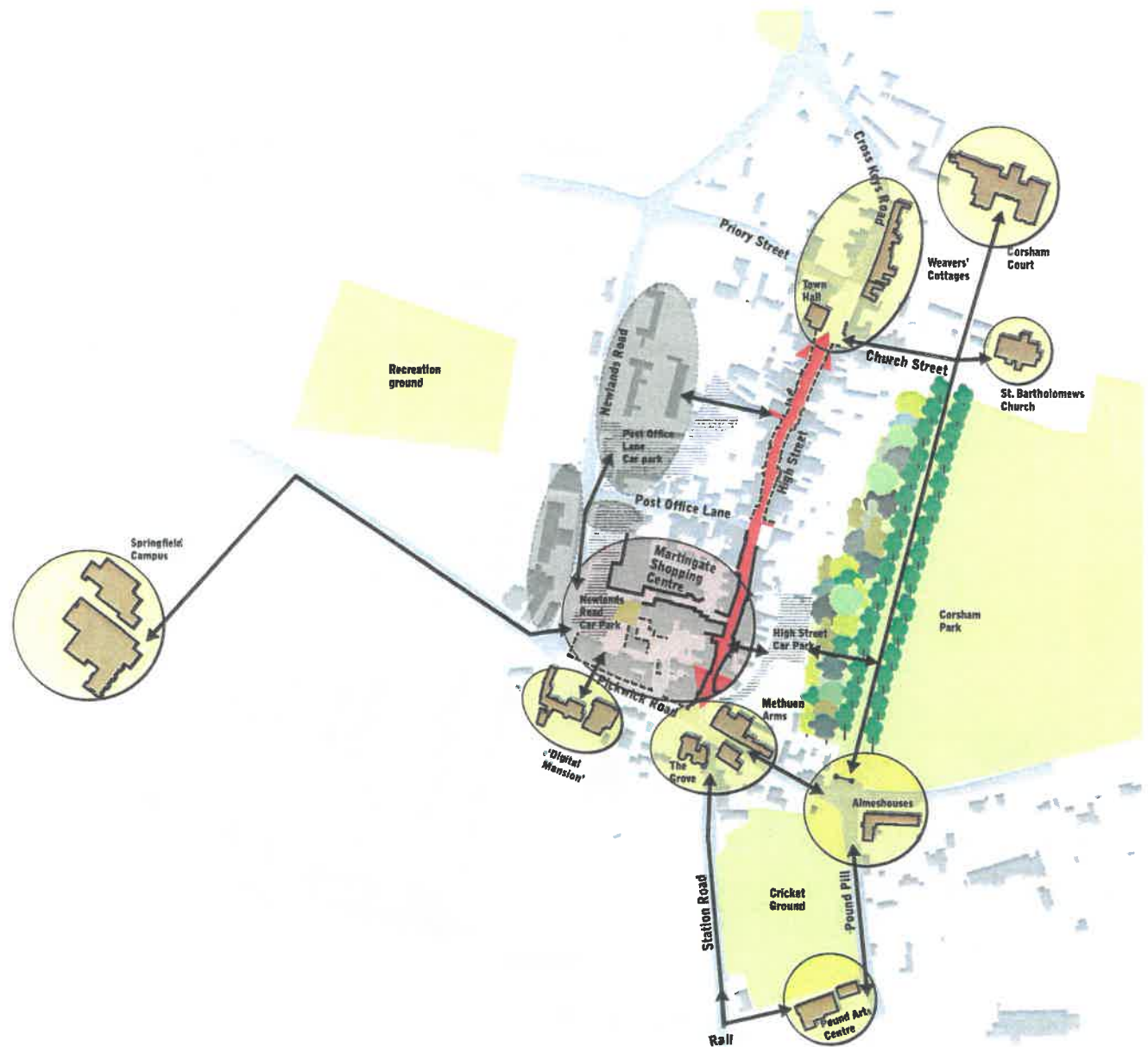
Corsham has many destinations but they are not well connected










Strong independent retailers on the High Street



Projects such as the Digital Mansion will bring jobs and people into the town centre to help support local businesses.



-  Key buildings /destinations
-  Core retail area
-  Extended High Street
-  Key connections
-  Primary retail frontages
-  Secondary retail frontages
-  Potential future growth opportunities

Creating memorable streets & spaces

The following points were highlighted as key issues from Stage 1:

- Many streets and spaces in Corsham's centre have become dominated by over engineered designs, which detract from the historic built environment and create unwelcoming environments for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Clutter, signage and a mixed approach to street furniture do not respond to Corsham's heritage and do not support a connected town centre.
- The town centre lacks places for community events, people watching, lingering and to support spill out space for shops and cafés.
- Access and views to landscape, especially to Corsham Court, are an important characteristic of Corsham's town centre.

The following strategic objectives will help to deliver a network of memorable streets and spaces for Corsham's town centre:

- Establish spaces that attract people and create opportunities for lingering, relaxing, eating and drinking, hosting community events and support local businesses and attractions.
- Develop a network of streets and spaces that balance the needs of all users and provides safe and attractive routes to and around the town centre.
- Removing clutter and developing a holistic approach to materials and street furniture which helps to unify the town centre and reflect Corsham's historic past.
- Reinforce important green views and connections to the green edges of the town centre and incorporate new landscaping where appropriate.



Areas in the town centre feel dominated by traffic and unwelcoming for pedestrians.



Poorly placed furniture does little to aid pedestrian connectivity in the town centre.






Clutter in the High Street does not reflect the historic environment.



Corsham Park provides an unique and important green fixture on the edge of the town centre.



-  Key areas for high quality materials / design elements
-  Important green views
-  Secondary retail frontage to be supported

04 Engagement & feedback



The engagement of the stakeholders and the public in stage 1 played an essential role in the development of the draft strategy in Stage 2. An initial draft was presented to members of the Town Council during a workshop session with feedback allowing the team to refine the proposals prior to public consultation. The strategy and initial design concepts were then presented to the public at an open day and available to view for a three week consultation period.

This section outlines the process and outcomes of the open day and a summary of feedback received, analysis of the written survey responses, including local resident's view of the priority projects for delivery.

Open day 02

An open day was held in the Martingate Shopping Centre 18th of May to introduce the draft strategy and initial design concepts to local residents and visitors of Corsham.

Following on from the open day the exhibition was made available on the Town Council's website and displayed unmanned in the following location:

- Martingate Shopping Centre, 19th - 23rd of May
- Corsham Town Hall, 24th - 30th of May
- Springfield Campus, 31st May - 5th of June

This format allowed for as many people to view the proposals as possible. Feedback forms were left for residents and visitors to provide written feedback.

A more detailed summary and analysis of the open day is provided in a separate public consultation feedback report.

The exhibition

A series of A1 boards were exhibited and included an introduction of the public realm strategy, the priority objectives for improving Corsham's public realm and an introduction of the key project areas. A mix of sketches, photomontages and photographs were used to help convey the potential character for the key project areas. It was stressed to the public that the designs were not final but initial ideas of how the spaces could be improved.

Members from the consultation team were on hand to discuss the proposals with the public, answer questions and to receive initial feedback. The exhibition was well attended receiving a constant flow of residents, visitors, shop keepers and business owners throughout the day.

General feedback

There was overall support for the strategy with most agreeing with the objectives and the suggested projects to help improve the public realm would benefit Corsham.

Improvements to the gateways were generally supported. Some residents had reservations about the suggested level of intervention shown for the gateways along the A4 due to the lack of design detail shown in the proposals at this stage.

There was more support for the local gateway design at Pound Pill. Many felt it would create an arrival to Corsham with a positive impact and would greatly improve the setting to Corsham Court.

Residents liked the idea of improving access to the car parks and the connecting routes to the High Street. Many agreed that the current junction layout for accessing the Post Office Lane car park was confusing and that realigning the position of the car park entrance would be helpful for visitors.

Pickwick Road and arrival to the High Street received the most positive feedback from members of the public at the open day. In particular, people liked the impact the proposals made on the arrival to the town centre. People liked the idea of making the space more pedestrian friendly and for giving a greater presence to the High Street to attract passing trade. The suggestion to reposition car parking and providing additional short-term car parking on Pickwick Road was also very well liked as people felt it would help to support surrounding businesses while helping to remove illegally parked cars at the pedestrianised area to the High Street.

Proposals for the Town Hall civic space were liked, in particular people liked the reduction in signage and the idea of creating a setting for the Town Hall and agreed that improvements would help to make the area more of a destination.

Most reacted positively to the idea of 'reconnecting the High Street' and agreed this would help to support businesses, creating a better use of the space and entice tourists to explore further up the High Street. Specific feedback noted that the final designs must balance the needs of surrounding residents, tourists and businesses.

The proposals to use a palette of materials in the Martingate Centre which was complimentary to the High Street was well received. Reaction to the design suggestion of improving building façades varied. Most felt that the proposals were a drastic improvement, as this would help integrate the shopping centre with the surrounding historic core. However, some expressed concern over the suggested removal of the central glass canopy as it offered the surrounding shops an external display space safe from the elements.

People liked the idea of improving the arrival area along Newlands Road. The suggested improvements to the bus stop and waiting areas were well received. Residents liked the idea of increasing the footways along Newlands Road and the idea of replacing low level planters with trees was liked as people felt this would improve the appearance of the street.

In addition to feedback regarding the public realm, general feedback was received from many residents in regards to parking and parking fees for the town centre while there were also concerns regarding vacancy rates and existing business rates into the town centre.



Written feedback

During the consultation period the public were invited to fill in a short questionnaire to provide the team with more detailed responses on the strategy and suggested projects. Overall, 22 written responses were received; 9 on the open day and an additional 13 being returned to the Town Council before 8th June, 2016.

Not all of the respondents completed all parts of the form and not all responses were relevant to the public realm study, however where possible those comments have been incorporated and the overall responses are summarised in the following tables.

Question 1 The Strategy

Do you agree with the strategy and the key projects it identifies? Are there any other areas for improvements to Corsham's public realm you would like to see?

Do you agree with the strategy and the key projects it identifies	
Percentage	Responses
53%	Yes
47%	Broadly support strategy
0%	No

Are there any other areas for improvements to Corsham's public realm you would like to see?	
Percentage	Responses
18.75%	Reducing shop vacancy / business rates/ loss of facilities
12.5%	Parking
12.5%	Permitting vehicular access to whole of High Street
12.5%	Improving pedestrian / cycle priority & accessibility (Including wheelchair and elderly access)
12.5%	Location of market
6.25%	Railway station
6.25%	Tourist info
6.25%	Redevelopment of Co-op car park
6.25%	Mansion House
6.25%	Event space

Question 2 The Projects

The feedback form asked residents to provide feedback on what they felt were the priority projects for delivery in the future. Respondents were asked to rate how important they felt each project was using a number rating scale of 1 to 9 (1 = least important and 9 = most important.) The rating scale allowed residents to consider the merits of each individual project and avoided asking respondents to rank the projects against one another in terms of importance.

The scores shown below were achieved by multiplying the number of responses received against each scale rating and totalling the score for each individual project. For example, if 3 people rated a project as 9 (most important) it received a score of 27.

Of interest, while most of the projects received a mixture of low and high scores respectively, the central High Street project received not only the highest overall score it also did not receive a rating lower than 5 in terms of importance to the public. The ranking of priority projects and scores is shown in the table below:

Please explain your selection of priorities	
Total score	Responses
127	High Street (transition from pedestrian to traffic area)
119	Martingate Shopping centre
103	Improve car park arrival and connections to the High Street
93	Improve town-wide gateways
90	High Street arrival & Pickwick Road
87	Newlands Road
79	Civic arrival space - town hall

Question 3 The Projects

Following on from rating in terms of importance, respondents were then asked to explain if there was a specific reason or issue that made them give the ranking that they provided. Several common themes emerged from the feedback and they are outlined below in order of importance:

Please explain your selection of priorities	
Percentage	Responses
22.5%	Improves connectivity between uses
22.5%	Keep the focus on the town centre
16%	Martingate not in keeping of town centre character
10%	Improving town centre arrival and access
6.5%	Attracting and maintaining retail
6.5%	Prioritises people over cars
6.5%	Uncertainty over shared space (rated other projects higher)
3%	Retains / enhances Corsham's character
3%	Calming traffic at gateways
3%	Providing safer access to school

The themes that emerged from the public feedback reiterate the importance of the Strategy objectives for improving the connectivity between destinations in Corsham's town centre, in particular within the historic core. It also demonstrated how strongly local residents feel about Corsham's historic character. This is most notable from feedback on the Martingate shopping centre which most residents feel detracts from its surrounding historic environment. Finally several of the themes highlight the importance of the need to create streets and spaces that balance the needs of all users, enhance access to the town centre and which help support local businesses.

General comments and specific feedback for the individual projects were also received and a summary of these are provided in a separate public consultation feedback report.

05 Key projects for delivering change



This section introduces the place-based projects which have been identified to help deliver the strategy and which were taken to public consultation. It must be noted that the list does not include all of the potential projects as outlined at the end of Stage 1. However, the projects selected have been suggested as ones which will help achieve the strategy objectives of improving access and arrival, connection the town centre and creating a network of memorable streets and spaces.

At this stage the options shown are indicative only, they have been prepared to illustrate the potential character of the suggested public realm improvements. The designs will be subject to further testing and more detailed design development and consultation prior to implementation in future.

Where possible the **suggested design responses** have been ordered to provide notable stages of improvement. This includes:

1. **Tidy & declutter** - to make the space look more cared for
2. **Improved design / layout** - which looks at the streets overall design
3. **Create a memorable place** - which involves changing elements of the space to give the surrounding character more prominence.

This will provide the council, in some cases with both short and long-term delivery goals which can be implemented as opportunities and funding arise for each of the project areas.

The projects for consideration and their key role in delivering the strategy are as follows:

Improve town-wide gateways

The gateways along the A4, including Pickwick and Cross Keys, need to announce Corsham to passing traffic and make routes to the town centre clear and inviting, drawing people into the town. In particular, the gateway at Pickwick needs to create a setting that is appropriate for the historic Hare and Hounds Pub. The gateway at Pound Pill must announce its edge of town centre location and create a setting that respects the surrounding historic environment while providing safe connections to surrounding uses, including schools, for pedestrians and cyclists.

Improve car park arrival and connections to High Street (Post Office Lane Car Park & High Street Car Park)

These car parks need to provide clear points of arrival into the town centre with inviting connections to the High Street to ensure visitors have a positive experience making them more likely to return.

High Street Arrival & Pickwick

This area needs to fulfil its role as a key arrival space into the town centre and to announce the High Street to passing traffic on Pickwick Road. It should also encourage greater pedestrian connectivity to support surrounding businesses and provide links to edge of centre attractions.

Civic arrival space - Town Hall

This area must better support its role as the main civic space in Corsham and create an attractive arrival space at the top end of the High Street that encourages visitors to Corsham Court to stay and explore more town centre destinations.

High Street (transition between Pedestrian and traffic areas)

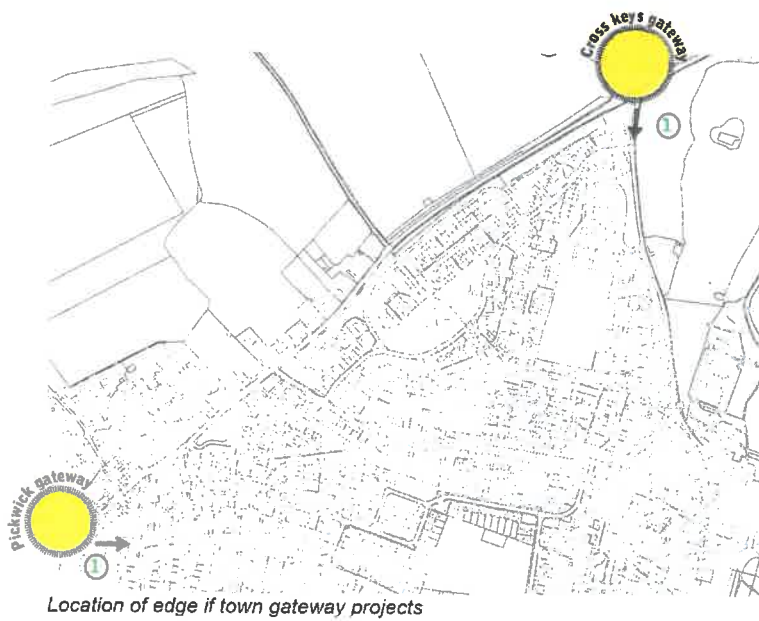
This area should reconnect the High Street and provide safe and inviting connection to the top of town. Encouraging greater footfall to support local businesses and encourage visitors to explore more of the town as well as support the surrounding historic environment are key priorities for this area.

Martingate Shopping Centre

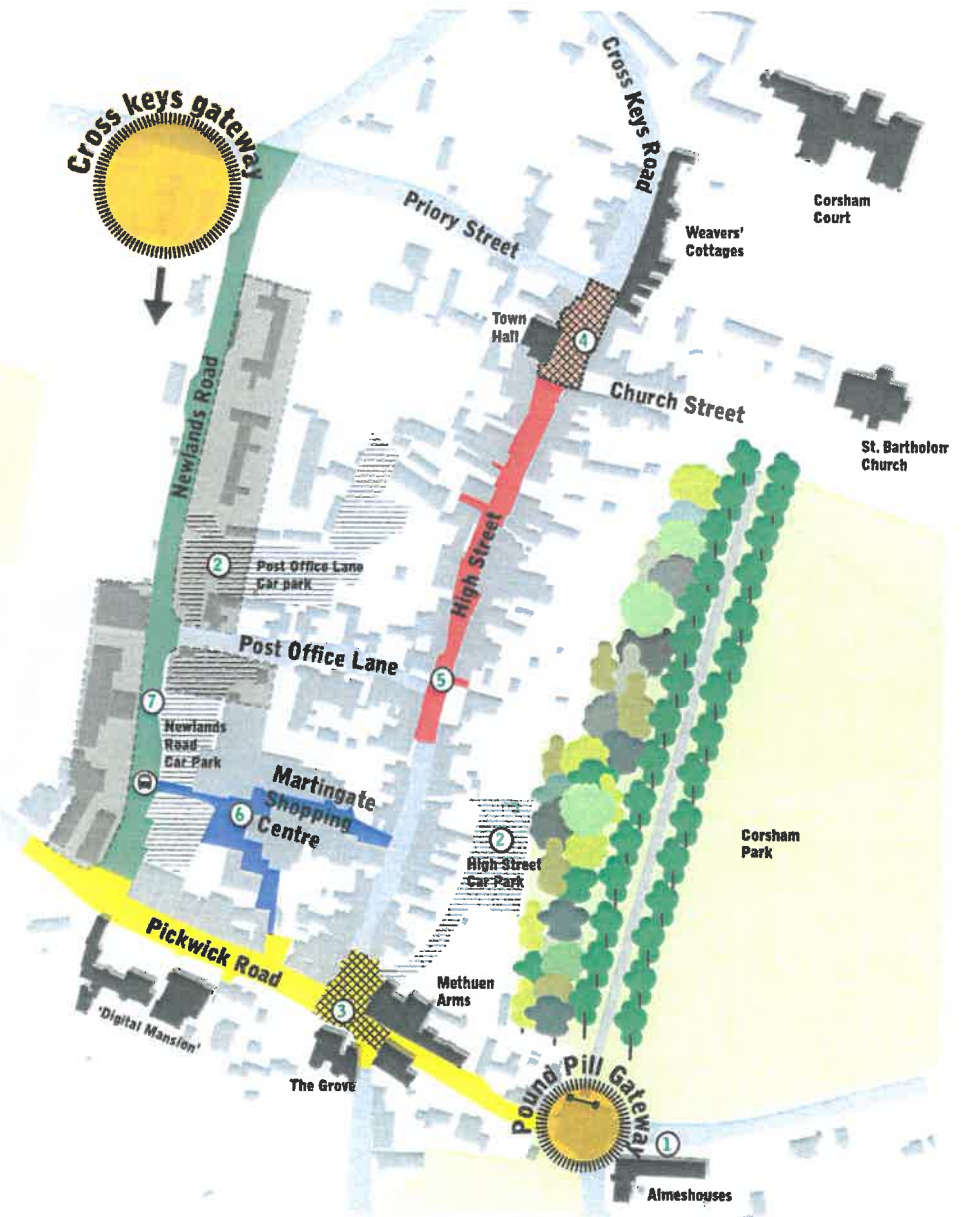
The Martingate Shopping centre needs to fulfil its role as a town centre retail destination and integrate more sensitively with the historic core to facilitate wider retail circuits. Improvements should help to raise the profile of the Martingate to encourage future retail and investment opportunities in and around the surrounding area.

Newlands Road

This street, which currently defines the boundary of the town centre, needs to provide a more welcoming 'front door' to the town centre providing clear points of arrival and connections to the High Street for all users. It should look to encourage redevelopment of poorer quality sites to provide long-term growth opportunities to expand Corsham's town centre and to improve its offer to local residents and visitors.



- ① Improve town-wide gateways
 - Pickwick gateway
 - Cross Keys gateway
 - Pound Pill gateway
- ② Improve car park arrival and connections to the High Street
 - Post Office Lane car park
 - High Street car park
- ③ Pickwick Road/ High Street arrival
- ④ Civic arrival space - Town Hall
- ⑤ High Street (transition between Pedestrian and traffic areas)
- ⑥ Martingate Shopping Centre
- ⑦ Newlands Road



Improve town-wide gateways

Pickwick Gateway

General principles

Improvements should deliver a gateway which announces Corsham to visitors from the north and west, encourages passing trade into the town centre and creates a positive first impression for visitors. In particular, improvements should be made to aid pedestrian and cycle connectivity. This will help to integrate outlying areas to central Corsham, while also providing an attractive and safe route to encourage walking and cycling.

Enhancements should also improve the visual setting of the historic Hare and Hound Pub and adjacent village of Pickwick while clearly signing visitors towards the town centre, key destinations and car parks.

Suggested design response

1.
 - Remove any unnecessary or redundant road marking and signage.
 - Clearly indicate location and access to Corsham's town centre, the use of signage should respect the historic buildings and not add clutter to the space.
2.
 - Improve the design of the environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
 - Use of high quality materials to help calm traffic and signify an arrival space.
 - Opportunity to enhance the setting of the historic Hare and Hounds Pub and surrounding village of Pickwick.
3.
 - Alter the design of the space to change the character of the area and to signify to drivers they are entering a different sort of space and need to drive accordingly.



Pickwick Gateway: existing



1. Tidy up and tidy up



2. Improve design / layout



3. Create a memorable place

Improve townwide gateways

Cross Keys Gateway

General Principles

Improvements to the junction at Cross Keys will help to deliver a gateway which announces Corsham to visitors from the east and north, encourages passing trade into the town centre and helps to improve the setting of the surrounding historic and landscape features.

Prominent signage or a welcoming feature should be included at the south-western corner to mark the town and access to the town centre, key destinations and car parks.

Enhancements should support pedestrian and cycle connectivity. In particular, improvements at the junction should aid connections north along Cross Keys Road towards Biddestone via the Wiltshire Cycle Way.

Suggested design response

1.
 - Declutter and tidy area around junction removing unnecessary signage and clutter.
 - Improve forward visibility towards junction and mature feature chestnut tree (located south-west corner) to announce Corsham and make the access more visible to passing traffic.
2.
 - Provide clear and welcoming signage to Corsham and town centre (including car parks).
 - Repair /improve poor quality areas of paving. If possible use materials to help slow traffic on their approach to the junction.
 - Improve the design of the environment for pedestrians and cyclists by creating crossings for pedestrians which are direct, safe and not over engineered.
3.
 - Alter road layout to remove the traffic dominated feel, calm traffic and the approach to Corsham. Explore the opportunity to incorporate a green verge to edge of route to reflect rural location.



Cross Keys: existing



1. Lay out the road



2. Improve design / layout



3. Create a memorable place

Improve townwide gateways

Pound Pill Gateway

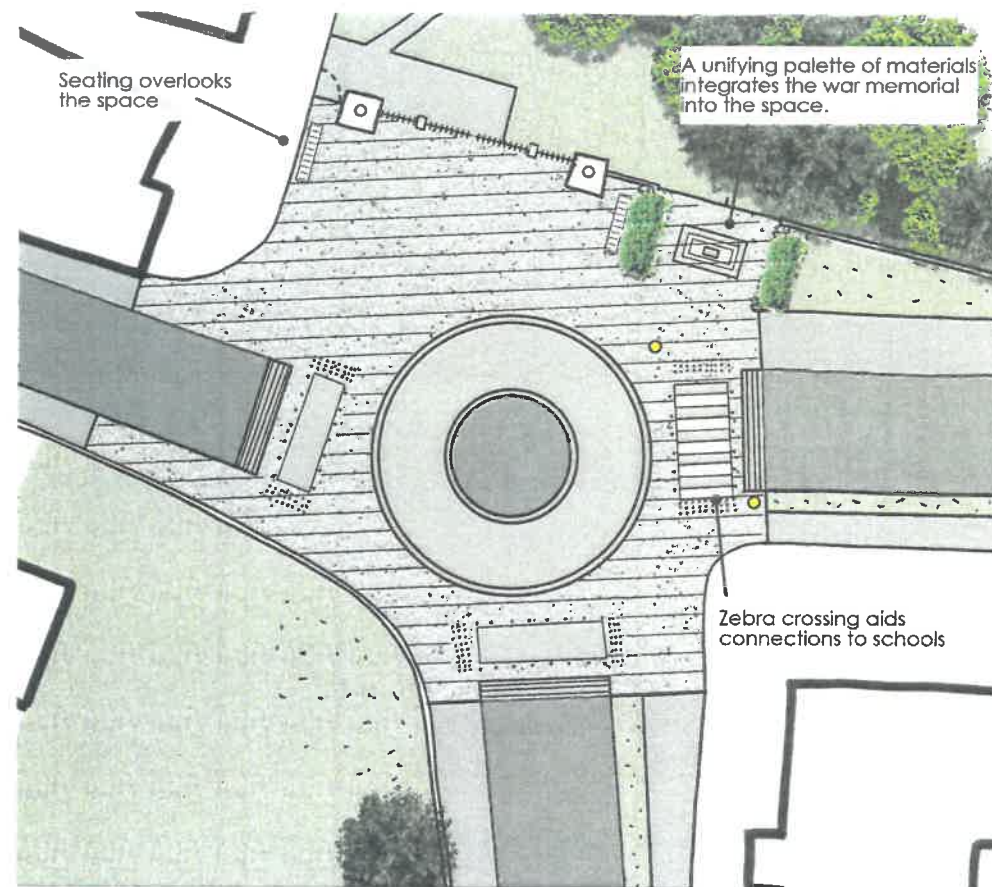
General Principles

Improvements should announce arrival to Corsham and connectivity to the town centre. They will also deliver an attractive setting to The Avenue at Corsham Park, the park gates, Almshouses and the open green at the adjacent Corsham Cricket Club.

Enhancements need to reinforce to drivers that they are entering a different environment, in particular this is important from the rural approach of Lacock. It should signal to drivers they are entering a town so will need to drive appropriately. This is particularly important due to the gateways close location to two primary schools.

Suggested design response

1. • Declutter the streetscape and remove highway dominated markings.
- Improve footpath surfaces to create attractive links towards town centre, schools, and Pound Arts Centre to reinforce pedestrian connections.
2. • Provision of multiple courtesy crossing points to encourage pedestrian movement.
- Reposition seating to look into the space, avoiding pedestrian desire lines.
- Gradually reduce the visual appearance of road width to reduce approach speed at junction.
- Provision of Zebra crossing to improve pedestrian access to schools.
3. • Improve the visual setting of the surrounding buildings, gate piers, The Avenue at Corsham Park and the War Memorial by minimising visual clutter by providing a unifying high quality palette of materials.
- Continue and widen existing grass verge to connect to junction providing a buffer between pedestrians and the carriageway on primary route to schools.
- Provision of feature lighting to reinforce the space (suggest up-lighting of gate piers).



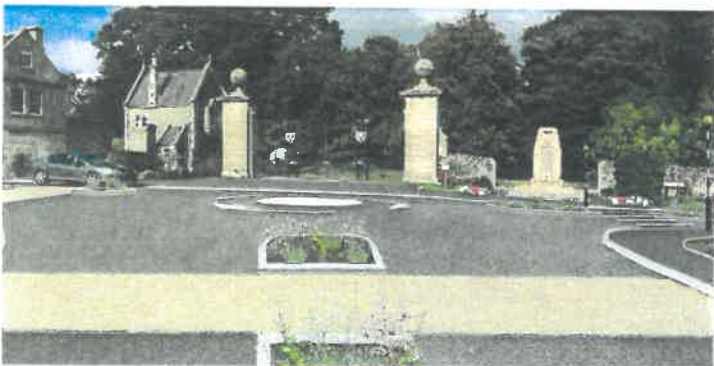
Indicative design guide for layout



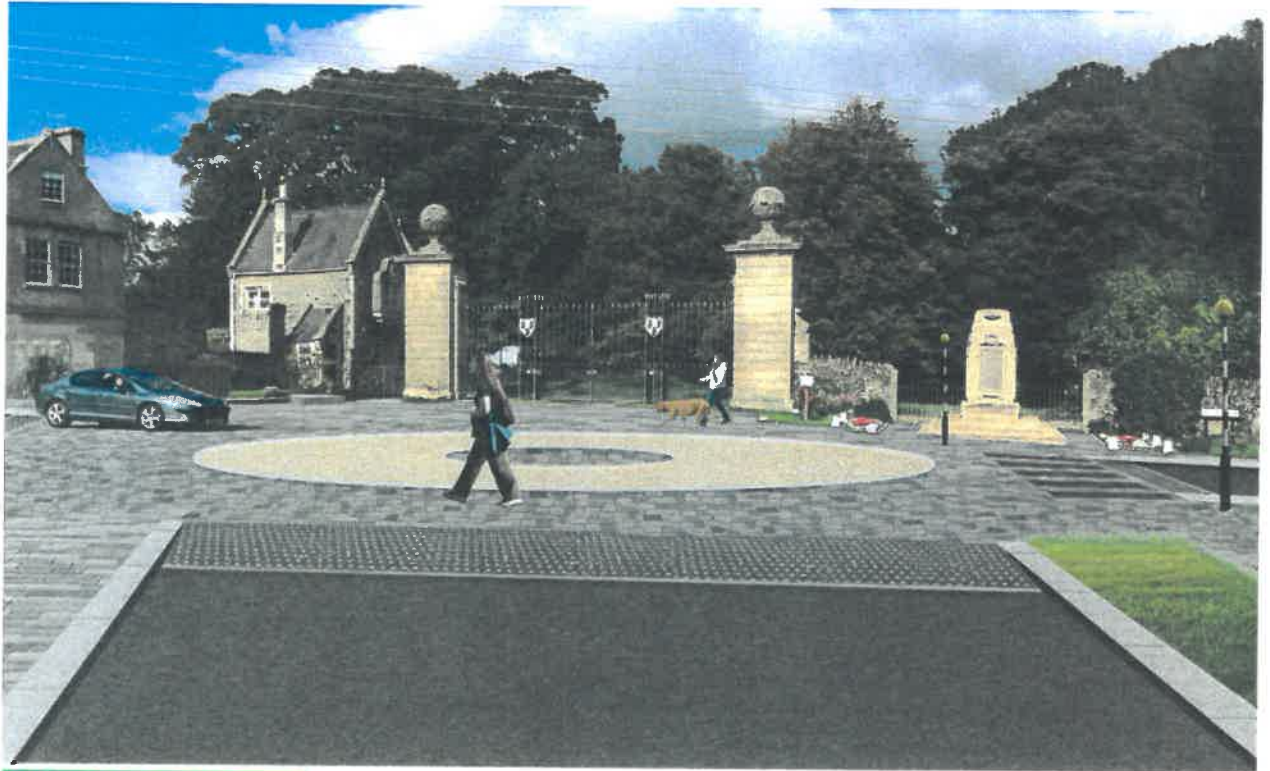
Pound Pill: existing



2. Improve design / layout



2. Improve design / layout



3. Create a memorable place

Car park arrival & connections

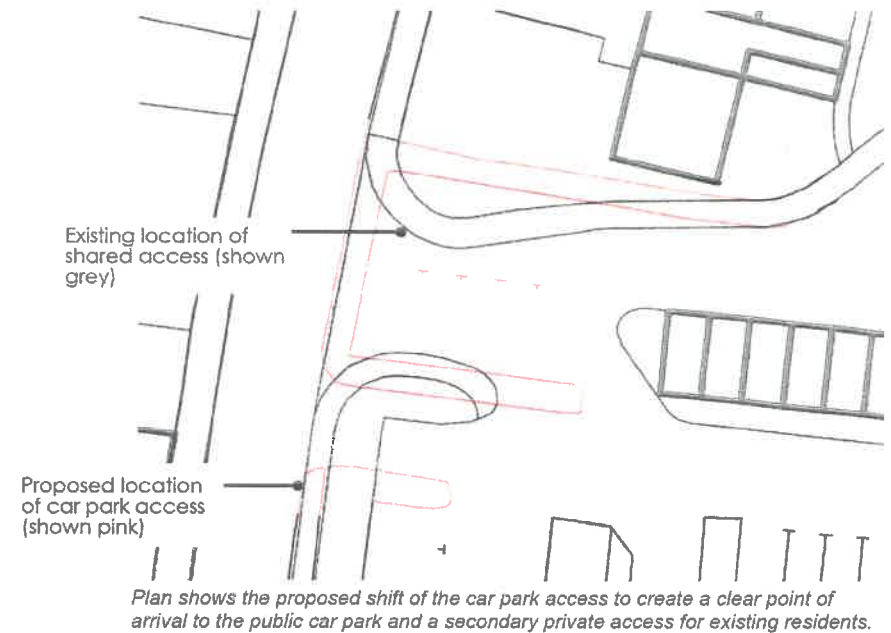
Post office Lane Car Park arrival

General Principles

Improvements to the Post Office Lane car park are intended to make arrival in Corsham welcoming and easy, providing a clear point of arrival and well defined routes to key town centre destinations. The location of this car park plays an important roll in helping to support connections to the upper end of the High Street, ensuring that people can easily explore the attractions and businesses in this area of town. Clear and co-ordinated signage and payment facilities will also help to ensure visitors are well informed and can easily navigate from the car park to the High Street. Minimising confusion over what Corsham has to offer and how to access it will help to encourage return visits.

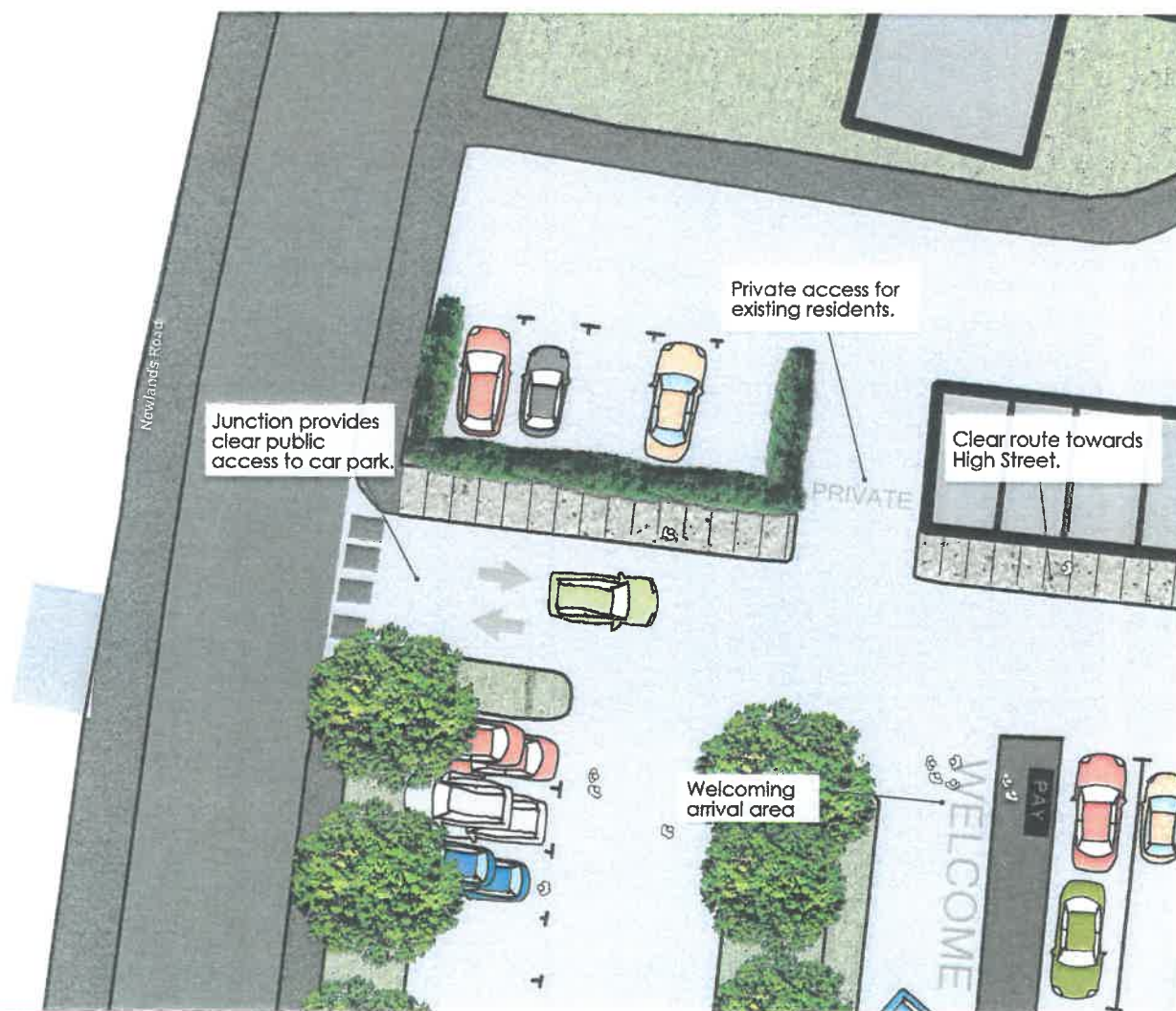
Suggested design response for arrival

1. • Remove highways orientated markings / materials, use paving materials to define the area as a clear welcoming space for pedestrians and simplify signage around payment centre to reduce cluttered appearance.
2. • Provide a clearly defined route leading visitors towards the High Street using pedestrian friendly materials.
 - Potential to rename car park to reflect its road access location avoiding confusion for visitors.
3. • Realign position of access from Newlands Road providing a clearly defined point of entry for visitors and provide a private secondary access for residents in adjacent flats.





Post Office Lane car park: existing



3. Create a memorable place

Indicative design guide for layout

Car park arrival & connections

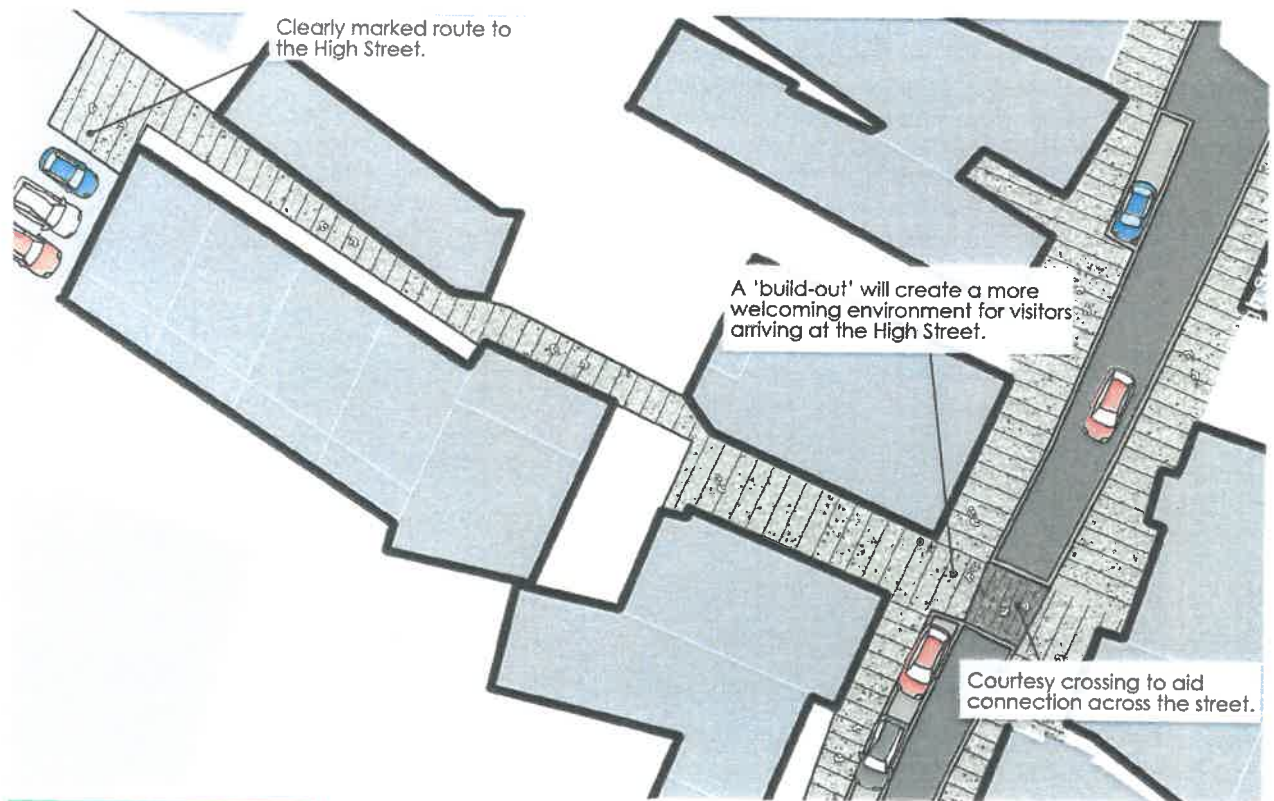
Post office Lane Car Park connection to the High Street

General principles

For this improved connectivity to succeed the connections to Hobbs Walk needs to be clearer and more inviting. Arrival at the High Street should provide pedestrians with an attractive space that allows them to find their bearings, and affords views up and down the High Street. This will help to increase footfall into the upper end of the High Street.

Suggested design response for connections

1. • Reposition way-finding signage and bin at High Street away from key pedestrian desire and visibility lines.
2. • Reconfigure parking arrangement surrounding Hobbs Walk allowing additional pedestrian space, making the route more accessible, visible and welcoming to users.
 - Consistent use of pedestrian friendly paving materials to clearly connect the spaces.
3. • The loss of one on-street car parking space on the High Street would allow for a pedestrian build-out allowing a more substantial arrival area for pedestrians.
 - Explore opportunities to provide a courtesy crossing at the arrival point providing connection across the street and a traffic calming measure.



3. Create a memorable place

Indicative design guide for layout

Car park arrival & connections

High Street Car Park

General Principles

Improvements should create a more welcoming pedestrian route between the car park and the High Street. Reducing visual clutter and improving footpath surfaces along this route will give a positive first impression to visitors and clearly indicate how to access the town centre. Clear pedestrian connections back to Pickwick Road should also improve connectivity to this secondary retail area. Delivery of a more appealing route may also help to foster connections towards Corsham Park, and Pound Pill via the new footpath connection. This will help to support joint trips to both the town and countryside.

Suggested design response

1.
 - Declutter the space removing any inessential streetscape items including road markings which make the space feel unwelcoming for pedestrians.
 - Look to reposition signage /notice board so it is clearly visible and easy to use.
2.
 - Improve the quality of materials creating an enhanced arrival experience for visitors.
 - Make connections to the High Street clear and inviting.
 - Coherent palette of materials can more clearly define public and private spaces to users.



Connection to High Street from Car park: existing



2. Improve design / layout

High Street Arrival & Pickwick Road

General Principles

Improvements to the area should look to extend the High Street to connect with Pickwick Road creating a strong arrival space in the town centre and extend along Pickwick Road between High Street and Newlands Road junctions to help redefine the street as part of the town centre.

Continuation of the existing pedestrian friendly environment on the High Street will help to create an attractive arrival space that compliments the outstanding buildings which surround it, provide opportunities for dwell time, seating an improved space to support local businesses.

The design of the junction design signal pedestrian priority to drivers entering the historic centre, maintain a clear access route to the High Street Car Park and notify passing traffic the location of the town centre's shopping area.

Enhancements to the public realm on Pickwick Road should provide a unified and attractive streetscape to encourage greater pedestrian activity to support surrounding businesses. Low speed designs on Pickwick Road should help to manage traffic flows, and improve connections across the street for pedestrians and cyclists.

These improvements should also be seen as an opportunity to improve connectivity to town centre fringe destinations such as the proposed redevelopment of the Mansion House, The Springfield Campus, Pound Arts Centre, the enhanced College Site, residential areas and in future, the potentially reopened rail station.

Suggested design response

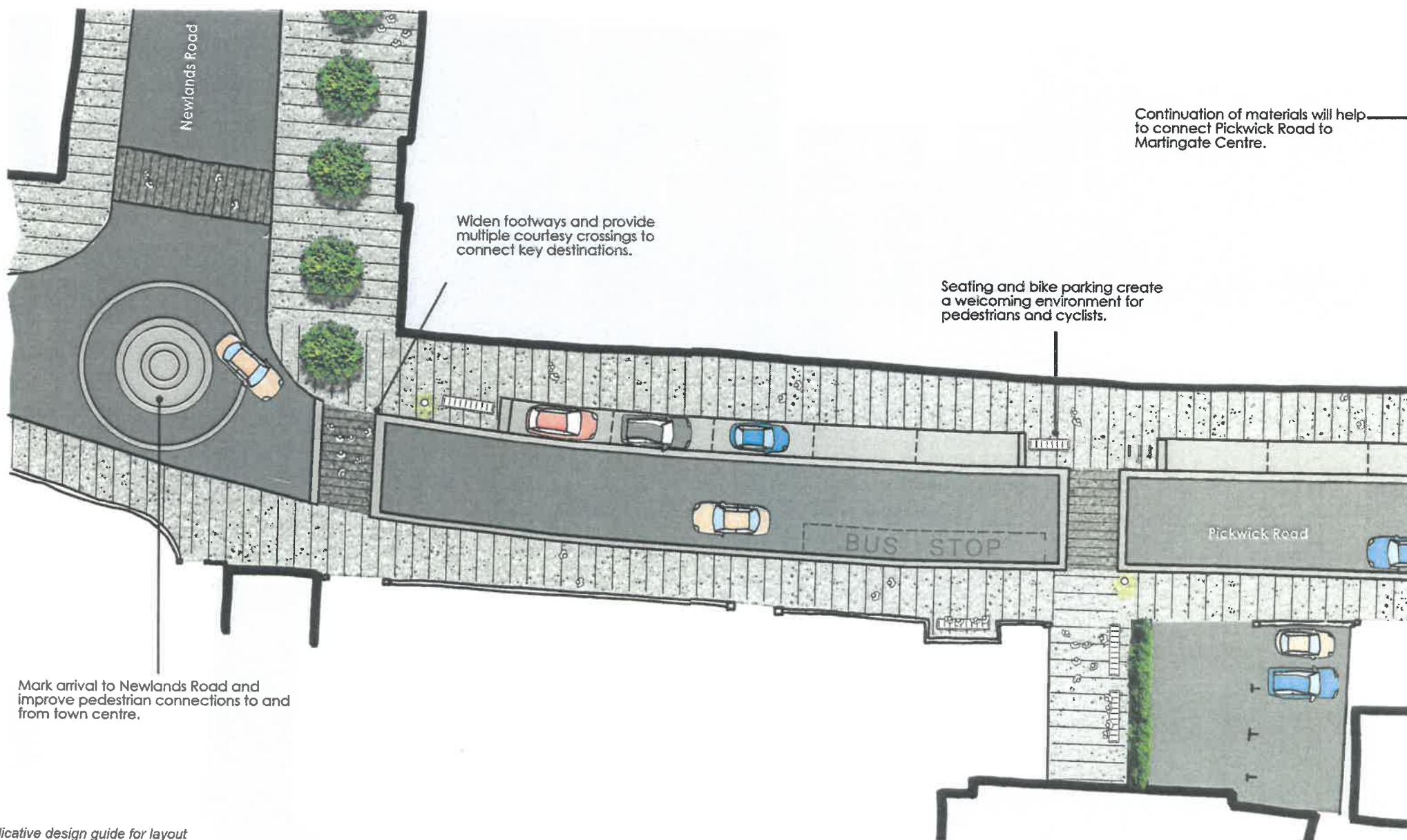
1. • Removal of street clutter and redundant signage which visually detract from surrounding historic buildings.
2. • Provision of well located, overlooked cycle parking facilities on both Pickwick Road and at bottom of High Street.
• Provision of multiple courtesy crossing points along Pickwick Road to aid desired pedestrian connections.
• Provision of short stay parking bays on Pickwick Road to support local businesses.
3. • Use of high-quality materials to help define the carriageway, footways and crossing points which reflect the character of the historic core and help calm traffic.
• Explore possibility to reduce carriageway widths and junctions to provide additional space for pedestrians.
• Extend the pedestrianisation of the High Street to meet Pickwick Road creating a distinct arrival space that promotes pedestrian priority and provides space for lingering, hosting community events and supports local businesses.
• Potential to incorporate a feature element, such as a seating area, or public art installation to reduce the need to incorporate bollards in the space.



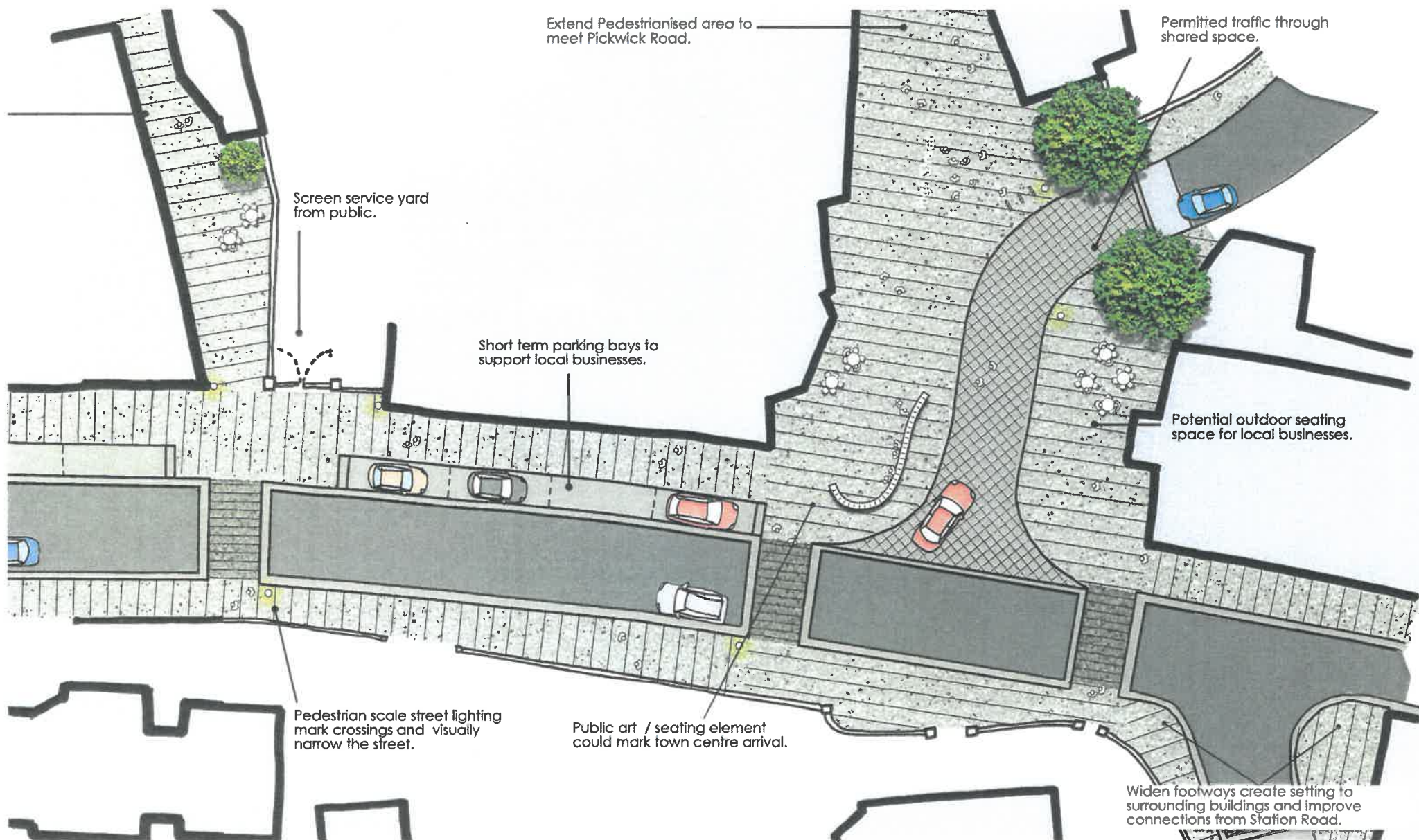
High Street & Pickwick Road junction: existing



3. Create a memorable place



Indicative design guide for layout



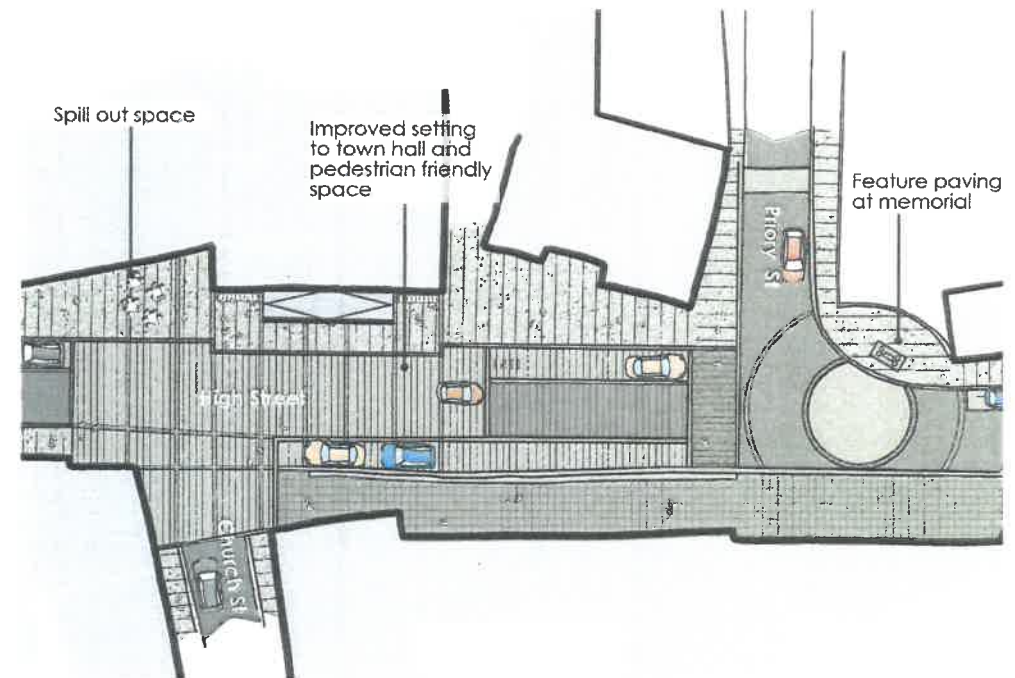
Civic arrival - Town Hall

General principles

Improvements should support the role of the area as an important civic space and arrival point at the top of the High Street and key connection to Corsham Court. It should create a memorable space to entice visitors to Corsham Court back into the town centre to explore. This area should provide an enhanced space for pedestrians that is high quality, safe, flexible. It should support the surrounding pubs, retail outlets and consider providing events space. Most importantly improvements are intended to provide an improved visual setting for the Town Hall and surrounding historic buildings, encouraging footfall up the High Street and to Corsham Court.

Suggested design response

1. • Declutter the street and remove / reduce need for signage in historic setting.
2. • Relocate parking in front of Weavers Cottages to opposite side to increase exposure of a major tourist asset.
 - Maintain short stay parking to support local businesses and look to reconfigure their location to maximise space for pedestrians.
3. • Demarcate parking bays in a material which reinforces this is a pedestrian and not traffic orientated space.
 - Feature paving at the junction of Priory Street to clearly indicate arrival at the High Street and to improve the setting of the surrounding monument.
 - Feature lighting to reinforce Town Hall and create a pleasant environment after dark.
 - Narrow appearance of carriageway to calm traffic and widen pavements where possible to afford spill out space to surrounding pubs / businesses.
 - Use of high quality materials which can accommodate traffic movement while maintaining the spatial integrity of the space.
 - Extend setting of Town Hall creating a coherent space between the Town Hall and post office, extending towards Priory Street and Corsham Court via Church Road.



Indicative design guide for layout



Town Hall: existing



3. Create a memorable place

High Street (transition between pedestrian and traffic areas)

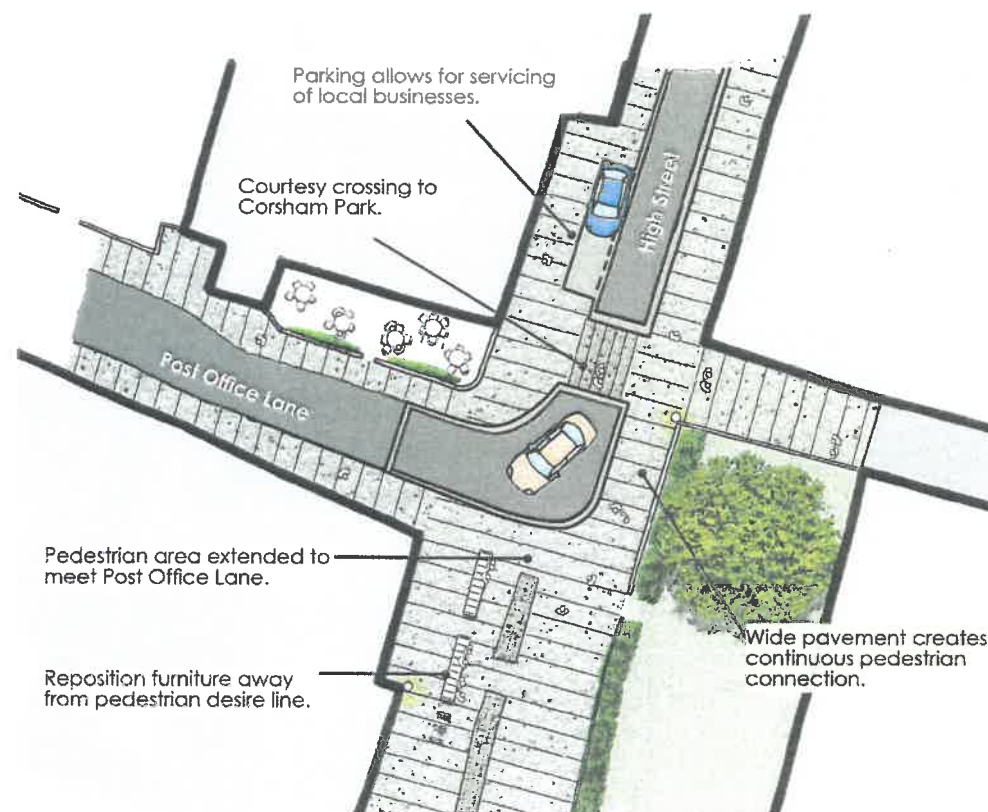
General Principles

Improvements here should remove highways dominated materials and signage which detract from the historic buildings and sends the wrong message to pedestrians about priority. Enhancements should deliver a space that extends the current perceived length of the High Street and more naturally reintegrates pedestrians and traffic. This would help to encourage shoppers and visitors to explore the whole length of the High Street. Further improvements could be made to the length of trafficked areas to increase and improve pedestrian areas at narrowest points.

Consideration will need to sensitively account for the day to day needs of the surrounding residents and businesses.

Suggested design response

1. • Declutter inessential streetscape items and signage, in particular highways orientated signage which sends the wrong message to pedestrians about the space.
2. • Reposition seating and bins to look onto the space and avoid pedestrian desire and visibility lines.
 - Remove the highways orientated white and yellow lining as far as possible and consider using materials to reinforce impression this is a pedestrian and not traffic orientated space.
 - Organise vehicular servicing to create a safer pedestrian environment.
 - Explore implications of reversing the one-way traffic, removing car/ pedestrian conflict at the corner of Post Office Lane allowing pedestrians and traffic to see one another on approach to junction.
3. • Widen pavement along eastern edge to create a continuous pedestrian connection.
 - Use high-quality materials on the carriageway and footways to encourage improved connections between the pedestrianised and trafficked areas and to surrounding secondary lanes.
 - Where possible continue to increase space for pedestrians at narrow pinch points providing additional dwell space to shop-fronts along length of High Street to encourage footfall towards the Town Hall.





High Street: existing



3. Create a memorable place

Martingate Shopping Centre

General Principles

Improvements should help to provide an attractive shopping area that encourages even greater pedestrian activity to support the surrounding businesses, supports the historic High Street and facilitates wider retail circuits. Enhancements that extend from the High Street through to Newlands Road will create a welcoming environment for visitors and shoppers arriving by all modes of transport and aid tourists in finding the historic core.

Suggested design response

1.
 - Reduce streetscape clutter and rationalise the positioning of furniture to avoid pedestrian desire lines.
 - Provide a single type of seating and bins to reinforce a unified space and a coherent identity for the town centre.
2.
 - Selection of a simple palette of high-quality paving materials which are complementary to and will help to better integrate the modern shopping centre with the Historic High Street.
 - Explore opportunities to provide a bespoke seating area between the High Street and Martingate to encourage people to sit and dwell. Potential to be designed by a local artist to reflect Corsham's past in the stone and wool industries.
 - Improve shop fronts to reflect the Martingate's prime retail location, help attract more shoppers and attract potential investors / new occupiers.
3.
 - Explore long-term redevelopment opportunities to increase and improve retail presence towards Newlands Road.



Martingate: existing



2. Improve design / layout

Newlands Road

General Principles

Improvements to Newlands Road should breakdown the perceived barriers the route presents to people accessing the town centre and provide a positive 'front door' to Corsham's town centre and clearly signal routes to the High Street. Where possible, enhancements should look to increase the area afforded to pedestrians. Improved footway surfaces along this street would address the current mixed palette of materials and provide pedestrians a safe, inviting route to access the town centre. It would also help improve connections to the Martingate Shopping Centre, Pickwick Road, and help facilitate retail circuits for shoppers.

The provision of coach drop/off - parking facilities will help to encourage tour groups in to support Corsham and its businesses; however, the arrival space needs to be inviting and clearly direct visitors towards Corsham's destination. Public transport facilities should be improved to encourage visitors to the town centre.

Overall the redevelopment of Newlands Road needs to signify to investors a commitment to improving quality in the area helping which could to help deliver new uses such as a hotel or additional town centre office space.

Suggested design response

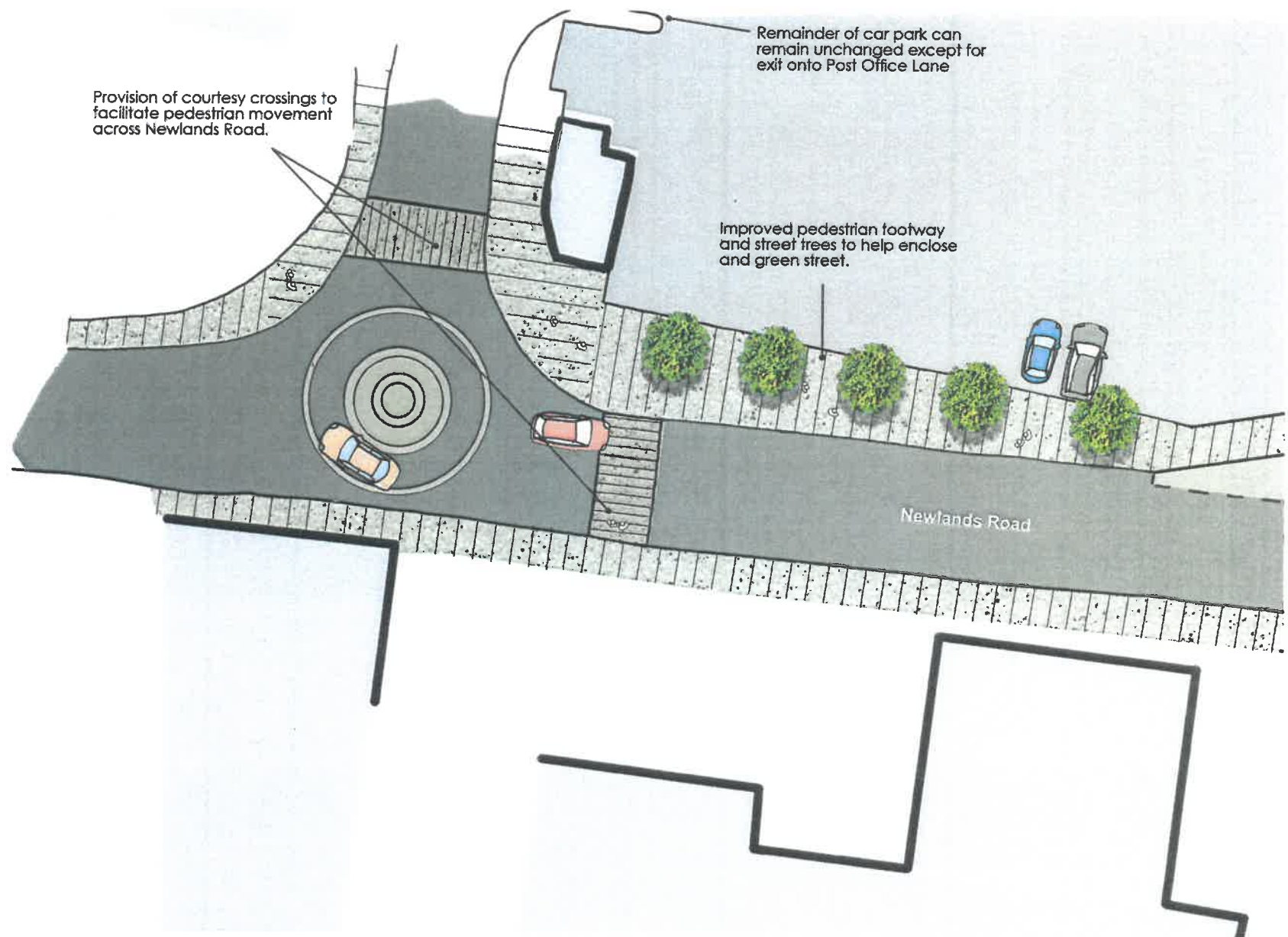
1. • Declutter and clear elements from pedestrian desire lines.
2. • Provide a raised and planted edge that screens the car park edge and incorporates seating, planting and trees to create an attractive bus stop waiting area and to mark the arrival route to the Martingate / High Street.
 - Replace poor quality, low level planted areas along the edge of the car park with trees adding a vertical element to help enclose the street.
3. • Clearly define the route from Newlands Road into the Martingate shopping centre to provide a clear connection into the town centre.
 - Improve the pedestrian environment by widening footways where possible.
 - Simplifying the palette of materials to help link the space with more historic materials already used in the town centre.
 - Remove exit only onto Newlands Road to allow for the provision of coach drop-off / waiting area, allowing tourist groups to visit Corsham. This will require reconfiguration of the remaining car parking area to maintain taxi rank and 29 car parking spaces.
 - Provide on street parking, where possible to help calm traffic and to change the character of the route to from a through route to a street for people.

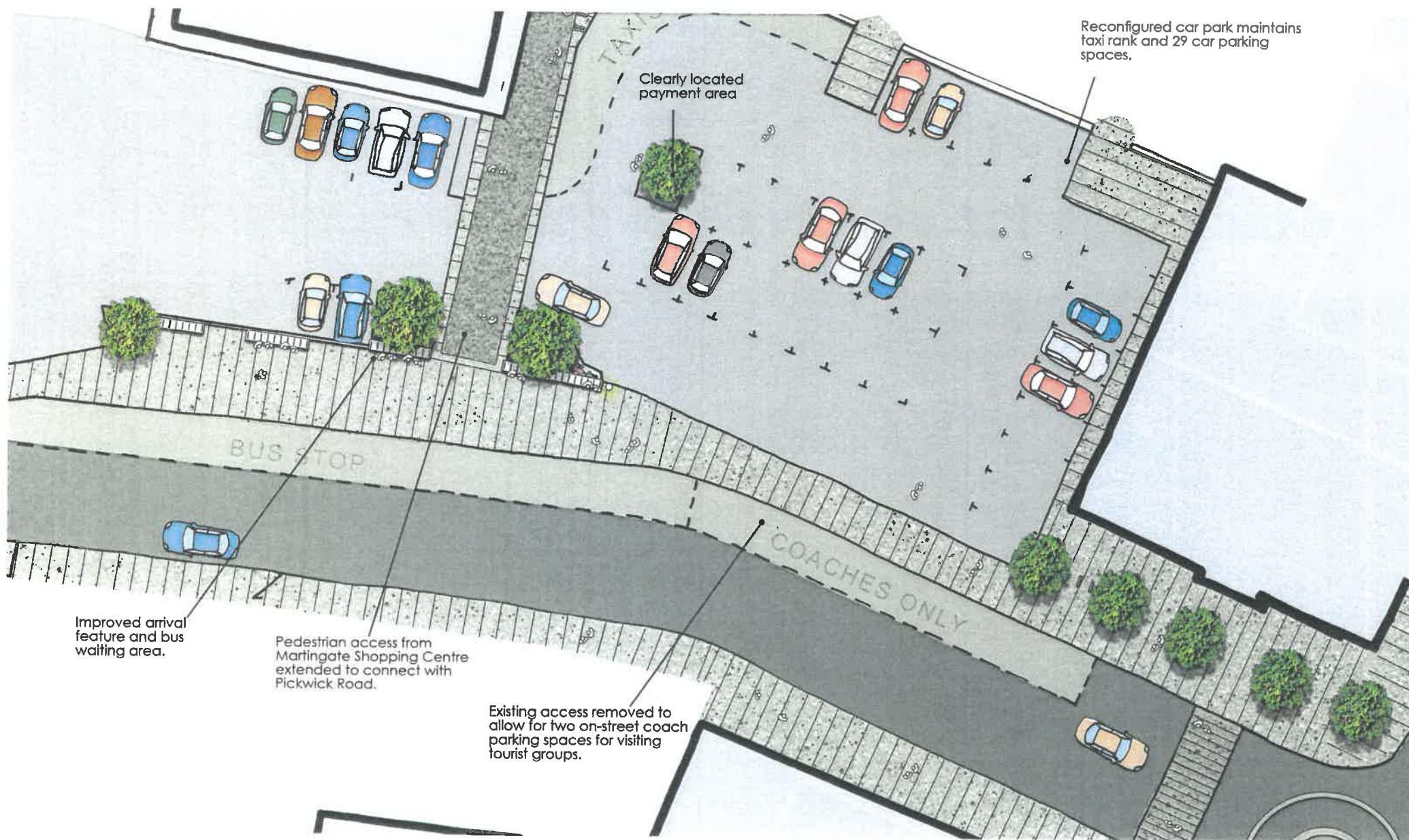


Newlands Road: existing



3. Create a memorable place





Reconfigured car park maintains taxi rank and 29 car parking spaces.

Clearly located payment area

Improved arrival feature and bus waiting area.

Pedestrian access from Martingate Shopping Centre extended to connect with Pickwick Road.

Existing access removed to allow for two on-street coach parking spaces for visiting tourist groups.

06 Guidelines for materials & design elements



There are over 400 listed buildings in and around Corsham, the majority of which are located along the High Street. Paving or surface materials of the public realm are important for the character and setting of those buildings and thus for the distinctiveness of the place. It is of particular importance in Corsham that the approach to materials including street furniture, lighting and signage is simple, robust, and easy to maintain. A continuous use of a limited pallet of materials will tie together the wide variety of buildings and make the town centre recognizable as a character area.

Materials will have a key role to play in delivering the strategy objectives of providing safe and attractive routes to and around the town centre, complementing the setting of the historic buildings and creating attractive spaces that encourage residents and visitors to spend more time in the town centre and to support local businesses.

This section outlines guidelines for detailing the public realm and considers the treatment of:

- Materials
- Street furniture
- Planting
- Signage
- Lighting
- Public art

Surface materials

Surface materials for streets comprise footways, carriageways and kerbing. It is important that the materials used are appropriate for the type of use such as vehicular or pedestrian and respectful to the surrounding buildings and add to the historic identity of the street.

Using a simple and consistent set of materials in Corsham will help to create a clearly understandable and legible town centre. It can help to distinguish the more commercial town centre from the residential streets around it. An agreed and limited set of materials, as suggested in this strategy, should not result in a repetitive and boring streetscape. It is important that each street maintains its own identity but that it relates to the others as a 'family' of streets.

The following key principles should inform the selection of surface materials and on-going maintenance of existing spaces for Corsham:

- The application of surface materials should be consistent to help unify the streets and spaces within the town centre.
- Surfaces should compliment and not compete with the surrounding buildings, spaces and features.
- Where possible, natural, local materials should be used ahead of man made alternatives. But also readily available to maintain consistency.
- Surfaces should be fit for purpose, supporting the functions and demands placed upon them from all users (pedestrians and vehicles) and be easy to clean and maintain.
- Where vehicle over run is probable, surfaces should be designed to withstand vehicle-load.
- Details of how materials will be cut and laid, at corners, and around street furniture elements should be considered prior to construction.
- Ensure on-going maintenance is done in a planned and sensitive manner.

- Materials should be used to clearly delineate footways, parking bays, and the carriageway. Paint on delineation is a secondary solution and should be avoided if possible.
- Diamond sawn is the preferred surface finish as its smooth finish is easier for people with mobility issues to navigate. Riven finish should only be used in areas of existing similar paving.
- Prior to construction sample materials should be requested and checked on site to ensure continuity of materials with existing areas of paving.

In making the final selection it will be important to ensure consistency and compatibility across the surface elements (footways, carriageways and edging). A restrained approach to materials will work best in unifying the town centre.

Prior to detailed designs being worked out the suggested palette of materials should be agreed with the relevant Wiltshire Council departments.

Footways

The following is not an exhaustive list of suggested materials but provides guidance on footway materials for various street environments in the town centre including:

Pedestrianised High Street

In Corsham the pedestrianised area of the High Street sets a precedent for footway materials for the town centre. Yorkstone paving, cut in both square and rectangular flags are laid in a random course that runs both parallel and perpendicular to the building line. The flags have been cut with a riven sawn (rough) finish.

The current paving pattern is appropriate to the setting of the surrounding historic buildings and should be retained. Future repair work should be undertaken in a sympathetic and appropriate manner to help restore and retain the paving in this area.

High Street / Historic Streets

In the remainder of the High Street, where traffic is permitted, Yorkstone paving is used. Flagstones are traditionally laid in a transverse course (running from the building line to the kerb), in an off-set bond pattern and finished with a riven sawn finish. The flag sizes vary depending on the footpath width.

In areas where there is the potential for vehicle overrun or to demarcate important side routes / lanes, small module York stone setts should be considered. The smaller size of these paving slabs reduces their potential to crack under pressure and will help to announce secondary routes from the High Street.

Across lesser access ways (single drives / private accesses) smaller Yorkstone pavers 30 x 200 x 75mm are suggested.

This approach to paving should be retained along the High Street and extended to include Church Road and Priory Street. Areas of concrete paving should be replaced when the opportunity arises.



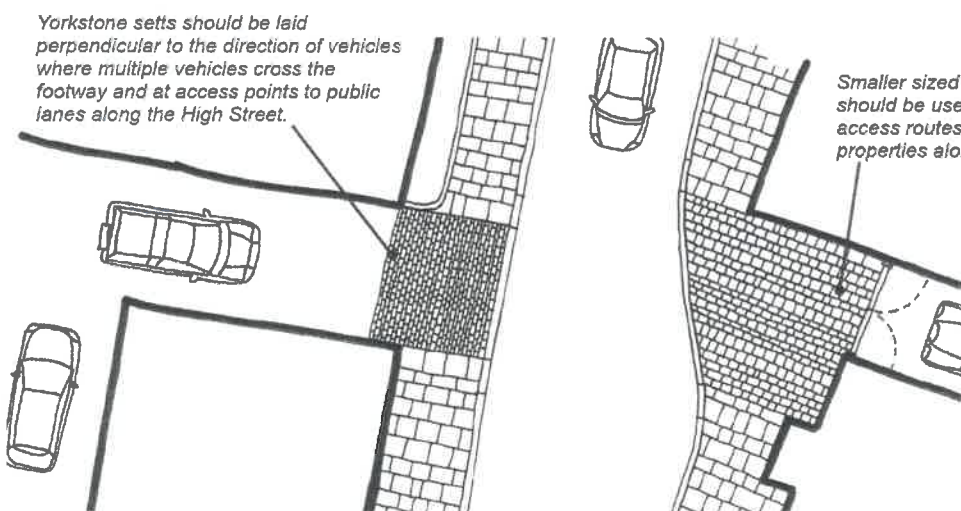
An important characteristic of Corsham's pedestrianised High Street is the randomly laid Yorkstone slabs which should be sensitively restored and retained where possible.



Example of smaller York Stone pavers



Example of small York Stone setts



Yorkstone setts should be laid perpendicular to the direction of vehicles where multiple vehicles cross the footway and at access points to public lanes along the High Street.

Smaller sized Yorkstone pavers should be used for individual access routes such as to individual properties along the High Street.

Other town centre streets

Diamond sawn Yorkstone paving should be introduced in other town centre streets and spaces including Pickwick Road, Newlands Road and potentially the Martingate Centre.

Flag sizes should be selected which reflect existing paving patterns in the historic core. Paving should be laid in a transverse course (running from the building line to the kerb), in an off-set bond pattern.

Stones should be selected in a colour range which is sympathetic to the surrounding buildings and which will compliment existing areas of natural stone paving.

Where newer areas of diamond sawn Yorkstone will meet existing areas of riven cut stone consideration will need to be given to how the two areas should be integrated.

Lanes

Lanes which provide connection to the park or other back land areas could be laid in a resin bound gravel to provide an inviting high quality appearance.

Lanes which provide connections from car parks should be laid in a similar material as the street they meet to help unify the spaces and create a continuous connection.



Examples of diamond sawn Yorkstone paving



Examples of resin bound gravel



Carriageways

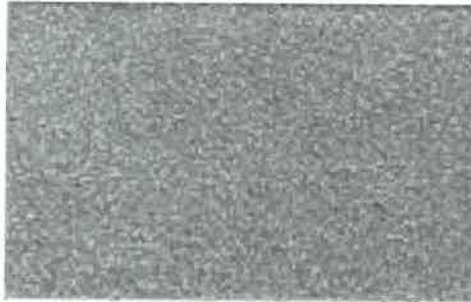
Treated asphalt (natural aggregate mix) is suitable help to distinguish general traffic streets in the historic core.

Care should be taken to ensure that road markings placed on the surface are designed and laid so as to minimise their visual impact, while still conforming to the relevant legal requirements as outlined in The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002. The standard width of yellow lines is 100mm, but narrower 50mm lines are permitted where the highway authority consider them to be suitable such as along the High Street or Pickwick Road.

In certain areas special materials may be used to help delineate shared spaces, pedestrian courtesy crossings or to help create a high quality environment. In these spaces Yorkstone or Granite setts could be used to delineate the space.

Edging

Kerb edging should complement the selected material for the carriageways and footways. Granite or sandstone options are suitable or a granite aggregate mix.



Example of treated asphalt



Example of setts being used to define a courtesy crossing



Example of granite kerb



Example of sandstone kerb.

Street furniture

Street furniture includes elements such as seating, cycle racks, litter bins and bollards. A priority for Corsham should be to take a uniform approach to street furniture to connect the town centre. Elements should only be located where they can provide a clear public benefit and enhance the setting in which it is placed. This will help to respect Corsham's character, reduce clutter and maintain the focus on the buildings.

When considering the selection of new furniture the following design guidelines should be followed:

- Furniture should be timeless and be appropriate to the whole of the town centre.
- Items should be positioned to avoid obstructing obvious pedestrian and visual desire lines but also located in convenient locations where people want to use it to provide an attractive view, or allow for people watching.
- Items should be robust, low maintenance and vandal resistant
- Furniture should be comfortable, user-friendly and accessible for all users.
- A common approach should be agreed with all departments and bodies involved in the management and maintenance of street furniture.

Seats and benches

Seating should be selected which is above all else comfortable and encourages people to use it. It should be robust, and require little if any maintenance.

If possible, it could incorporate natural materials such as hardwood, ideally one which will silver and blend in with the existing buildings. Locally sourced stone could also prove to be a robust material to explore and one which reflects Corsham's mining past. Fussy, ornate and colourful elements should be avoided which would not add to the historic environment.

The positioning of seating should take account of the micro-climate of the street, ensuring protection from the wind and maximizing sunlight.

Cycle racks

A simple design that is elegant, robust and practical should be selected. Cycle racks should be positioned at key entry points to the historic centre and overlooked ensuring cyclists feel safe leaving their bike in that location.

Consideration should be given to installation and a method which reduces the need to break and fill the surface pattern should be used.

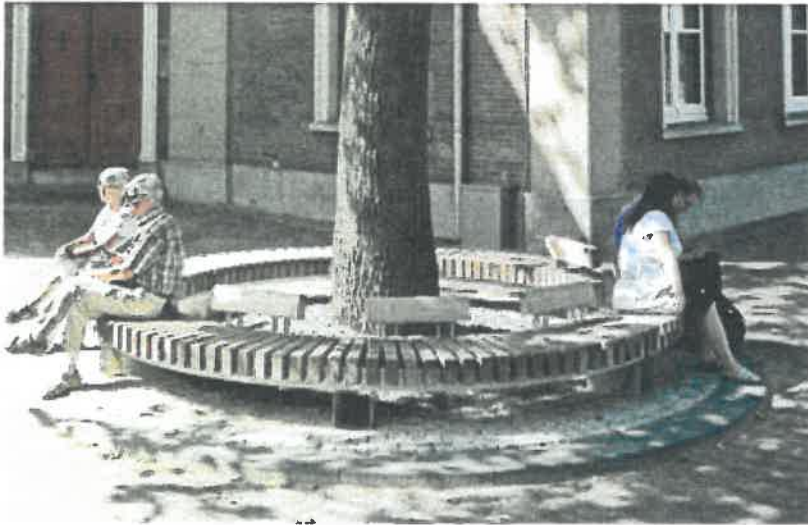
Litter bins

A uniform style of bin should be selected, which is functional and meets the requirements of those responsible for cleaning and emptying.

Bollards

Bollards should only be installed when strictly necessary and when there is no viable alternative. They often impede pedestrian movement, are visually intrusive.

Where possible a higher quality kerb definition should reduce the need for bollards or consideration should be given to the use of other street furniture / soft landscaping as an alternative.



Examples of potential street furniture styles

Planting

The desire to maintain and enhance the planting in the town centre was expressed a number of times during consultation events and through feedback forms.

Corsham's town centre is strongly influenced by its surrounding green areas, in particular Corsham Court. Within the town centre mature individual trees and views to clusters of tree canopies or shaped topiary influence spaces and provide the backdrop for numerous views.

While the opportunity to incorporate planting in the historic core is limited due to the build form; where it is considered possible the following guidelines should be followed:

- Trees must be of an appropriate scale to the context in which they are to be planted. Consideration should be given at the detailed design stage to ensure their location does not screen views to historic buildings or obstruct pedestrian desire lines.
- Where possible tree species should be selected which are native, provide seasonal interest and which enhance biodiversity.
- The specific location of new trees will need to take into consideration the position of underground services. Root protection barriers may need to be considered to direct root growth away from services, buildings and to avoid disruption to footpath surfaces.
- Planting should only be considered if it will add to the street scene and compliment the surrounding environment and should be avoided if it will add visual clutter.
- Consideration should be given to planting methods to encourage healthy growth.
- A level and porous surface should be used around the base of trees which provides a flexible surface to accommodate wheelchairs and pushchairs and avoid collecting litter.
- New trees should be 'guyed' underground where possible to provide additional support aboveground, avoiding the need for vertical tree guards, which can easily collect litter.



Level tree pits are easier for people in wheel chairs or pushing prams to navigate. In Corsham, there is also an opportunity to combine seating and tree protection as a feature as long as it does not impede pedestrian movement.

Signage

The design of streets and spaces should create a legible network that is easy to navigate for residents and visitors. Signage should be used to aid orientation, which is essential for guiding visitors around the town and for providing information to existing residents.

For Corsham the key guiding principles for signage in the public realm include:

- Minimise the number of new signs introduced to reduce visual clutter.
- Where older street signs remain, they should be retained and restored to reinforce local character.
- Where possible street nameplates should be fixed to walls, buildings or railings or placed at the back edge of footways to minimise obstruction.
- Other signs, such as information boards or finger posts, should if possible, be mounted on existing furniture and should not block pedestrian and visual desire lines.
- 'Branding' including the use of a logo, consistent colours, or typeface will make signage instantly recognisable and unique to Corsham.
- Traffic signs and signals where possible should be fixed to existing lamp columns, posts, railings or buildings to avoid the need for additional poles.
- Signage guiding visitor to the town centre and car park is required at key gateways directing people to the town centre and the most appropriate and available parking when they first arrive.
- Signage should be robust, easy to maintain and vandal resistant.
- Traffic signage should be restricted to those which display essential information, but if required provided in a manner which is sympathetic to the historic environment.



Recently installed finger posts in the town centre, aid way-finding are in keeping with the historic environment.



Newly commissioned maps available at the tourist information office could be printed in a large format and displayed adjacent to payment areas in town centre car parks to aid way-finding for visitors.



Examples in historic settings where required signage has been displayed in a discrete manner.

Lighting

Corsham's outstanding historic town centre offers a great opportunity to showcase some of its key destinations through architectural and feature lighting, helping to attract additional evening footfall in the centre.

Lighting also plays a key role in making streets and spaces feel safe and welcoming for residents and visitors in the evening. During the day, carefully selected and located lighting elements will help to reinforce the setting of the historic environment. The guiding design principles for lighting in Corsham include:

- Retain and restore historic lighting fixtures where possible, particularly in the high street and conservation areas.
- Where new lighting is introduced the design should be in a simple, contemporary style that complements the street and other furniture elements.
- Consider street lighting in conjunction with other light sources, including shop windows and floodlit buildings.
- In general, building mounted or ground fitted lights are preferred to pole mounted lights in the town to minimise clutter.
- Where appropriate look to up-light historic buildings and key features in the evenings.



In less historic areas more contemporary lighting could be introduced



Historic lighting should be retained and restored where possible.



Architectural lighting could be used to showcase historic buildings or key spaces in the town centre at night

Public art

Public art affords the opportunity to take a space from functional to a space that reflects the life and history of a community. In Corsham public art has a role to play in celebrating the town's rich heritage in the wool and stone industries and evoke civic pride in the community.

Corsham has a strong local arts community which should be consulted with regarding public art and an opportunity to establish a working relationship with Bath Spa University and its various arts programmes and students.

For Corsham the following guiding principles for public art should be taken into consideration:

- Public art should represent the highest standards of quality in both design and materials.
- Art should be site specific and have a clear relationship to the location in which it is to be placed.
- There should be a clear economic / social / environmental benefit associated with a commission for art.
- Artists should be involved at the earliest opportunity in the design process in order to successfully integrate commissions.
- Participation by the community, including local artists, through consultation and /or a practical contribution to the process will be essential to engender a sense of ownership.
- Different approaches to procurement should be explored including open competitions (particularly useful for engaging the local community), selected invitation competitions or specific invitations to a single artist for prestigious or difficult commissions.
- Short term exhibitions or installations could be used to market Corsham as a destination or to reflect its history.



Examples of art in the public realm.

Accessibility for all

The aspiration for the public realm in Corsham's town centre to be more accessible for all, in particular for users with special needs, the elderly, cyclists, and those with small children pushing prams was expressed at consultation events and through public feedback.

The strategy objective recognises the need in Corsham town centre to establish a better balance between all users. This can be achieved by creating safe and inviting routes into the town centre, by reducing the traffic dominated feel of streets and spaces in the town centre and by ensuring all surface materials are safe, co-ordinated and accessible for all users.

The key guiding principles for improving accessibility for all in Corsham's historic centre include:

- Highway and planning authorities must comply with the Disability Equality Duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. This means that in their decisions and actions, authorities are required to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life.
- Consultation should continue with interest groups particularly at the detailed design stage.
- Efforts should focus on improving areas where people make the transition from the car to the pedestrian environment. Car parks, bus stops and the train station should present a safe and easy connection to the town centre wherever possible.
- Detailed streetscape elements such as tactile paving must be integrated sensitively to ensure they do not detract from the appearance and quality of the surrounding treatment.
- The introduction of new street furniture should ensure that the design meets the needs of all users and is sited to ensure unimpeded routes.
- Public lighting should be at an adequate level to help create safe routes and space for all.
- Detailed consideration must be given to kerb heights and the demarcation of carriageways, and to the approaches to shops and town centre facilities.



Improvements to the public realm in Corsham need to ensure that create a more balanced environment which takes into consideration all users needs

07 Summary



The public realm strategy for Corsham is a long-term vision for delivering change to key streets and spaces in the town centre. The timing and delivery of these improvements in Corsham will depend on a range of factors including funding availability, planning, local opinion and opportunities presented by both the private sector and Wiltshire Council.

Prior to delivery the key principles and suggested design responses outlined in this report will be subject to further testing and more detailed design development as well as further public consultation.

This section organises the projects in terms of their importance in contributing to the overall vision and strategy for Corsham. The projects are organised into High, medium and lower priority groups, based on professional judgement and feedback from the public / stakeholder consultation. Where there are opportunities for 'quick wins' this is identified.

High Priority

- High Street arrival & Pickwick Road
- High Street (transition between pedestrian and traffic areas)

Medium Priority

- Civic arrival space - town hall
- Improving car park arrival and connections to the High Street
- Improving town-wide gateways

Lower Priority

- Newlands Road
- Martingate Shopping centre

High Priority Projects

High Street Arrival & Pickwick Road and The High Street are high priority projects due to their prominent town centre location and ability to deliver a large number of the strategy objectives.

High Street Arrival & Pickwick Road

Improvements here would deliver transformational change to the High Street arrival experience and this edge of centre street. It achieves a number of the strategy objectives including: improving access and arrival into the historic core to attract passing traffic, improving connections into the town centre for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as improving connections between key destinations and helping to create a memorable space in the town centre.

There was great enthusiasm for changes to the High Street arrival and Pickwick Road at the open day; however, this was not as well supported by written feedback.

Due to the suggested scale of improvements ensuring there is project buy-in will be critical for delivery. Discussions would need to be undertaken with local business owners, Wiltshire Council, Wiltshire Highways authority and further consultation with local residents. Detailed investigations would also be required to explore the implications of traffic flows through the space.

If comprehensive redesign of the space is seen as undeliverable the Town Council should seek to phase the project by making initial improvements to the High Street arrival space and delivering further improvements to Pickwick Road at a later date. This would provide initial support to the surrounding businesses and demonstrate to the local community that change is being delivered.

This project is more likely to be delivered in the medium-long term; however, if possible, consideration should be given to delivering the project alongside other major proposed improvements such as the Digital Mansion to take advantage of potential funding opportunities.

'Quick-wins' could be delivered through decluttering of the space at the arrival to the High Street which currently detracts from the surrounding historic buildings.

High Street (transition between pedestrian and traffic areas)

This project would help to deliver one of the key objectives of the strategy to reconnect the centre. This is particular important as the High Street is currently perceived to finish at the end of the pedestrianised area. It would also help to create a memorable street by reducing clutter in the historic core and improve access by redressing the balance more favourable for pedestrians and cyclists. Written feedback determined this as a high priority project for local residents. This was also well supported throughout the stage 1 consultation process and stakeholder engagement.

More detailed studies, in particular, traffic and the impact of reversing the one way system would need to be undertaken. An understanding of the potential implications of changing the space for surrounding residents and businesses as well as servicing requirements are also necessary. These issues will need to be considered more comprehensively to enable the delivery of improvements in the short-medium term.

Initial stages such as decluttering and the removal of redundant signage or replacing required signs with ones that are more sympathetic to the surrounding historic environment could provide the Town Council with 'quick-win' improvements to the area.

Medium Priority Projects

Improvements to the Civic arrival space at the Town Hall, car park arrival and connections and town-wide gateways are medium priority projects for delivering the strategy objectives.

Civic arrival - Town Hall

This project would help to deliver a number of strategy objectives, mainly creating an attractive arrival space at the end of the High Street, and improving connectivity by encouraging footfall towards this area of town. Improvements to the Town Hall and surrounding area were seen by local residents as less of a priority over other suggested projects.

Comprehensive improvements should look to be delivered in the medium to long-term and tie in with proposals further down the High Street or potential future improvements to Corsham Court.

In the short-term a number of 'quick wins' could be delivered. These include removal of unnecessary traffic dominated signage and markings which detract from the setting of the Town Hall or direct traffic away from the centre. Relocating car parking away from the frontage of the Weavers' cottages would also improve the setting at a key tourist attraction. These small but notable changes would help deliver a more positive image of the town to visitors of Corsham Court.

Improving car park arrival and connections to the High Street

(High Street Car Park / Post office Lane Car Park)

These two projects would help to deliver the strategy objectives by improve access and arrival into the town centre and legibility to key destinations from the main points of arrival for visitors. Improvements to car park arrival and access to the High Street were seen as a high priority for local residents.

The proposed level improvements to the space are relatively easy to delivery, lower cost and could be delivered by the Town Council in the short-term.

Improving car park connections from Post Office Lane should be considered comprehensively with suggested works for reconnecting the High Street but should be deliverable in the short-term.

Improving town-wide gateways

(Pound Pill)

This project would deliver a memorable setting to its surrounding historic and 'green' context and facilitate safe pedestrian connections to the town centre and surrounding schools.

Improvements to Pound Pill were viewed as being more crucial than improvements at town-wide gateways. Local residents liked the proposals and felt improvements here could help to 'sell' Corsham to through traffic and aid connections between a number of key destinations.

More detailed studies would be required to explore the implication of improvements on traffic flows. Consideration would need to be given to suggested enhancements at the College Site and public realm improvements further along Pickwick Road at the High Street to ensure the designs are coherent. Improvements could be deliverable in the short-medium term.

Improving town-wide gateways

(Pickwick & Cross Keys Gateway)

Gateway enhancements will help to improve access to the town and attract new visitors to Corsham; however, delivering some level of improvements in the core, prior to gateway locations will help to ensure more return trips are made from visitors who have been attracted at town-wide gateways.

Improvements at town-wide gateways were rated by local residents as less of a priority over projects which improved access in the town centre. Therefore gateway enhancements should not be viewed as a higher priority over town-centre projects unless funding or opportunities become available at an earlier opportunity.

'Quick-wins' could be provided at both gateways through decluttering of the space and the provision of signage which makes people aware of and clearly directs people to the town centre.

Lower priority projects

Improvements to The Martingate Shopping Centre and Newlands Road are lower priority projects. Both projects deliver a number of the strategy objectives and are important for delivering long-term change in Corsham. However, the future potential for redevelopment surrounding these areas makes them a lower priority to other town centre projects which are more deliverable in near future.

Martingate Shopping Centre

Improvements at the Martingate Shopping Centre will deliver the strategy objectives by improving the arrival experience at the edge of the town centre and facilitating improved connections to the historic High Street.

Local residents rated the Martingate Shopping Centre as a high priority project for delivery. However, there was little consensus regarding the level of intervention which should be implemented, with some even suggesting a comprehensive redevelopment of the centre.

The Martingate Shopping Centre is not under the control of the Town Council and is a privately owned facility. It is understood that the current owner is keen to invest in improvements.

More comprehensive improvements are likely to be delivered in the medium - long term. These should be considered in the wider context of growing and expanding the town centre to ensure that future potential opportunities are not undermined.

A number of 'quick wins' could deliver public realm improvements in the short-term. Decluttering the main retail thoroughfare and improving the transition of materials between the shopping centre and the High Street would provide an improved pedestrian environment and make the Martingate feel more connected to the Historic High Street.

Newlands Road

Improvements to the public realm along the town through route are crucial for delivering a more positive arrival at the edge of Corsham's town centre and delivering improved connection into the historic core. Written feedback determined Newlands Road as a lower priority project for local residents.

Comprehensive improvements such as widening of footpaths, coach drop-off facilities (requiring closure of the current car park exit) would require further investigation and could be provided in the medium term to help stimulate investment on potential sites.

In the longer-term improvements should be implemented to deliver a coherent streetscape from Pickwick through to Priory Street to delivering an improved street for people in Corsham and an expanded town centre.

Initial short-term improvements or 'quick-wins' could be provided such as decluttering, redesigned bus arrival and improved connection to the Martingate Centre, as well as a green edge to help enclose the street. Smaller scale interventions would improve the arrival experience at the edge of the town centre and help to make the environment feel more inviting for public transport users, pedestrians and cyclists.

