HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL

Ref: D&L/D&LagendaPUBLIC

5 February 2016

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

A Meeting of the Development & Leisure Committee will be held on:

MONDAY, 29 FEBRUARY 2016
IN THE ROBING ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD
AT 7.30 PM

The Agenda is attached.

Yours sincerely

Joseph Whelan

Mr J Whelan
Town Clerk

Members of the Committee
Councillors P Boyle, S Cousins, Dr J Downs, Mrs S Dunkley, Miss C J Geall, Mrs B Haddock, Mrs S Newton, Miss J Sartin, A Stevenson and Miss M Tybinka

TOWN CLERK - JOSEPH WHELAN
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AGENDA - MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE TO BE HELD ON MONDAY 29 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 7.30PM IN THE ROBING ROOM, THE CASTLE, HERTFORD

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive Members' declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (as defined by the Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012) where these Disclosable Pecuniary Interests:

a) Have not already been entered into the register and
b) Relate to a matter to be considered

To note that such interests so declared must be formally notified to Town Clerk and the Monitoring Officer at East Hertfordshire District Council of the interest within 28 days.

To receive Members' declarations of Declarable Interests in accordance with Hertford Town Council's Code of Conduct (adopted 8th April 2013).

3. THE MINUTES

To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2015 and to authorise the Chairman to sign the same.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT DEALT WITH ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

The Action Sheet is attached as **PAPER A**

5. QUESTIONS AND/OR STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Members of the public may speak about specific items on this agenda which contain a recommendation, provided they have advised the Town Clerk of their wish to speak no later than midday on the Friday before the meeting (or midday of the last working day of the week before the meeting). A list giving details of the name(s) and relevant agenda item(s) will be circulated to Councillors before the meeting commences.

6. TOURISM AND PROMOTION

(a) Report on Town & Tourist Information Centre (T&TIC)

To receive a report on the recent activities of the T&TIC - **PAPER B**

(b) Hertford Town Council Events

To receive a report detailing the arrangements for the events programme for 2016 - **PAPER C**

(c) Town Centre Update

To receive a report from the Town Centre Coordinator – **PAPER D**

7. VENUES

(a) Venue Hire Update

To receive an update of the current venue hire position. – **PAPER E**

8. CCTV REPORT

CCTV Statistics and Policing Update

To receive a report on the CCTV statistics – **PAPER F**

9. PLANNING SUB COMMITTEE

To receive the Minutes of the Planning Sub-Committee meetings of 14th December 2015 and 4th January, 18th January, 1 February and 15 February 2016.

These minutes have each been circulated. Councillors are asked to bring their copies with them.

10. HERTFORD ENTREPRENEURS

To receive a report providing the Committee with an update of the Hertford Entrepreneurs.- **PAPER G**

11. TOWN CENTRE URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

To consider the details of and to endorse the Strategy in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council and East Herts Council. **PAPER H**

12. MAIDENHEAD STREET UPDATE

To receive a report outlining actions taken to improve the street scene in Maidenhead Street and to give consideration to taking forward the motion approved at Full Council. **PAPER I**

13. EAST HERTS COUNCIL ARTS STATEMENT OF INTENT

To note the Arts Statement of Intent and to consider whether the Council would wish to engage in a Community Arts Network. **PAPER J**

14. HERTFORD HERITAGE TRAIL

To receive a report to update the Committee on the progress of the Hertford Heritage Trail. – **PAPER K**

15. FINANCE - THIRD QUARTER INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2015/16

To receive a report on the income and expenditure for the third quarter 2015/16 – **PAPER L**

16. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It is recommended that in view of the confidential nature of the following item, which relate to the business matters of other individuals and organisations, the public shall be excluded while the following item is discussed. This is in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, as amended by the Local Government Act 1972.

17. PROPOSED NEW TTIC PREMISES

To consider services, layout and branding for the new TTIC – **PAPER M**

PAPER A

Development and Leisure Committee Action Plan from 14 December 2015 Meeting

EVENTS

OTHERS

Action	Required By	Lead officer	Status
Castle Kitchen Refurbishment	ASAP	MB	Ordered. Work to be carried out from 29 March 16
CCTV New Camera installation at Parliament Square		SD	Ordered
Town Centre Wifi - update	ASAP	MCaton	Work to arrange installation continuing.
Notice Boards – New notice board at Hornsmill and lower board at Old London Road	ASAP	M Caton	Ordered.
Heritage Trail	ASAP	MB/TC	Agenda item
GoHertford website – Refresh required to ensure information can be more easily accessed	ASAP	MC/MB	Agenda item
Progress Maidenhead Street Project	ASAP	TC	Agenda item
Ice Rink – Castle Grounds	ASAP	MB	No further information available.
TIC Lease	ASAP	TC	Negotiations continuing.
Neighbourhood Plan	ASSP	TC	Area Designation Consultation running currently

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE – 29th FEBRUARY 2016

PAPER B

AGENDA ITEM 6(a) – HERTFORD TOWN & TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE FOR THE PERIOD DECEMBER 2015 – JANUARY 2016

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides the Committee with an update on activity at the Town and Tourist Information Centre (TTIC) for the above period.

2. STAFFING

A Town and Tourism Development Manager started on Monday 1st February 2016. This Officer is full time and is based at the Town and Tourist Information Centre.

3. STATISTICS REPORT FOR TTIC

Visitors are up by 8.8% over the same period last year (December-January).
Telephone enquiries are up by 1.2% over the same period last year.
Email enquiries are up by 208% over the same period last year. Written enquiries are up by 50%.
Email enquiries have increased drastically. This is thought to be because of the increased use of the Internet and how user friendly it has become.

4. SALES & STOCK

Coach and event ticket sales are up 67.4% over the same period last year (December-January).

Retail sales are up by 67.4% over the same period last year.

The best selling souvenirs from December-January are:

Calendar Hertford Official (inc. envelope) RRP £6.99 – 104 sold
Greetings Cards ANCA RRP £2.00 – 60 sold
Postcards RRP £0.25 – 53 sold
Phil Clements Hertford Tea Towel RRP £6.50 – 19 sold
Tea-Towels RRP £3.50 – 17 sold
Pen RRP £0.60 – 14 sold
Phil Clements Hertford Mug RRP £7.00 – 14 sold
Phil Clements Hertford small magnet RRP 3.00 – 13 sold
Pencil with rubbers RRP £0.30 – 12 sold
Hertford Pin Badge RRP £1.50 – 7 sold

5. CURRENT PROJECTS

The Town and Tourist Information Centre Officers continue to provide key services to local residents and tourists.

The new events programme for 2016 which include additional large-scale events in Hertford is now available. The Officers contacted organisations such as Hertford Museum, Hertford Theatre and Hertford Arts Society for details of 2016 events. This information is featured within the printed events programme as well as on the gohertford website. All council events are advertised on gohertford, the Hertford Town Council website as well as 13 other external websites. The tickets for the Open air cinema have been released and Officers have promoted the event on the gohertford website and have already sold 260 tickets across the two events. Further publicity for this event will be issued closer to the event date.

Officers have been promoting the 2016 Hertford Calendar which was still selling into the second week of January. The Calendar has now sold out, the majority of which were sold at £6.99 each but it was discounted in January but all copies were sold above cost price.

Officers have also been working with the Marketing and Events Manager to revise the 2016 Town Guide, which has now been printed and is available in the TTIC. Alterations include adding local parks such as Panshanger and Foxholes to promote a healthy lifestyle and Health Walks.

Officers have been assisting the Marketing and Events Manager in taking enquiries and payments for the Hertford Entrepreneur events. They have also sent confirmation to attendees and produced sign in sheets and badges for the Awards ceremony.

Officers have been taking stall holder enquiries for Hertford Castle events. In addition, Officers have organised Castle tours on behalf of the Mayor for the Sea Scouts and for local schools.

Throughout the year the Officers have worked with a local tour guide to offer guided walks around town which took place during the Christmas Gala and continued during the month of December.

The Officers have been monitoring the rubbish being left in Market place and provided Cllr Sartin and Cllr Deering with reports and updates.

The officers have sourced new 2016 out of area brochures for display in the TTIC. Additional souvenirs have been ordered to sell in the Town and Tourist Information Centre such as new design Phil Clements mugs and coasters and Hertford landscape puzzles. The new stock also includes books on London Hidden walks with 30% already sold over December and January.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that:

a) The Committee **notes** this report.

Report by: Jenny Bullen – Town and Tourism Development Manager

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE – 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

AGENDA ITEM 6 (b) – EVENTS UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides the Committee with an update on proposed events for 2016.

2. STAFFING

The Marketing and Events Manager is currently recruiting for a new Events Coordinator who will be based at Hertford Castle.

3. EVENTS UPDATE

Afternoon Tea with the Mayor at Hertford Castle
The Visit Herts Big Weekend website was launched in early January and lists competition details of forty-seven attractions around Hertfordshire. The Hertford Castle Afternoon Tea event hosted by the Mayor (as of February 4th) has received fifty entries.

Hertford Arts Festival
Wilkins Kennedy has secured sole sponsorship for this event.
Twenty-five venues have confirmed that they are willing to be part of the art trail and offer artists exhibition space. Courtyard Arts and the Hertford Arts Society have been actively promoting the art trail to artists.
Stallholders continue to book for an exhibition space at the Craft Market and Open Day at Hertford Castle.

Carnival at the Castle
Hertford Town Council has been working closely with Hertford Rotary on the event progression. Hertford Town Council has awarded the Rotary an £800 grant to put towards the event that will cover equipment costs.

Hertford Castle Teddy Bears' Picnic
Event sponsorship has been secured for this event.
A brass band has been booked to perform at the event as will a Punch and Judy act and bouncy castle.

Rock at the Castle
McMullens have secured sole sponsorship for the event. In addition, associate sponsorship has been secured by SPJ Event Specialists.
Multiple stallholders have also been booked to trade at this event.

Charities will be able to apply to become the event beneficiary from the beginning of March 2016 and the deadline for applications will be Friday 27th May 2016. The Development and Leisure Committee will consider all applications at the next committee meeting.

Hertford Castle Open Air Cinema

Event sponsorship for the event has been secured by Thomas Childs and The Auto Agency.
Due to public demand, tickets are already on sale for the two open-air cinema events with over two hundred tickets being sold to date.
Multiple stallholders have been booked to trade at this event and also a Bluesmobile will be present during the Friday evening event.

Hertford Food and Drink Festival
Sponsorship for the event has been secured from the McMullen Brewery. In addition, associate sponsorship has been secured by SPJ Event Specialists.
The McMullen Brewery intend to host brewery open days during the festival. Multiple stallholders have also been booked to trade at the Beer Festival.

Hertford Christmas Gala
Think Christmas Think Hertford
Following a recent traders meeting, the Hertford retailers are keen for the two events to be branded and promoted in unison. This should help to increase the footfall for the Saturday Think Christmas Think Hertford event.

4. EVENT SPONSORSHIP

In the previous committee meeting, it was requested that a proposed Event Sponsorship Policy be brought to the February committee meeting (see appendix a)

5. EVENTS PROGRAMME

A 2016 printed events programme has been designed to promote all major events taking place in Hertford. This publication has been distributed to all SG13 and SG14 postcodes within Hertford Town Council's boundaries as an a5 flier posted through the doors of local residents. In addition, the same publication has been distributed around various Hertford organisations and public buildings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

a) The Committee **note** the report.
b) The Committee approve the proposed Sponsorship Policy.

Report by: Melissa Bolton, Marketing & Events Manager

APPENDIX A

HERTFORD TOWN COUNCIL
POLICY FOR GENERATING INCOME THROUGH SPONSORSHIP

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the policy is to set out the terms upon which sponsorship may be sought and accepted by Hertford Town Council.

The Council is committed to developing appropriate sponsorship opportunities, to support its core activities either directly or indirectly. It will encourage commercial relationships that do not conflict with the delivery of its strategic goals.

The policy aims to provide helpful advice to Council officers and prospective sponsors on what is, and is not, an acceptable form of advertising for the Council.

The policy relates to sponsorship opportunities connected to the Council's events and other activities that it has responsibility for.

SPONSORSHIP

Sponsorship is defined as
'An agreement between the Council and the sponsor, where the Council receives either a money or a benefit in kind for an event, campaign or initiative from an organisation which in turn gains publicity and branding or other benefits.'

The policy aims to:

- Maximise the opportunities to attract commercial sponsorship for appropriate events, campaigns or initiatives.
- Make sure that the Council's position and reputation is adequately protected.
- Make sure an appropriate return is generated from sponsorship agreements.
- Make sure that a consistent and professional approach is adopted to the development of sponsorship agreements.
- Protect Councillors and Officers from potential allegations of inappropriate dealings or favouritism with sponsors.

The Council will welcome all opportunities to work with sponsors where such arrangements support its core values. However, it will not enter into a sponsorship agreement if, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, the agreement:

- May be perceived as potentially influencing the Council or Officers in carrying out its statutory functions in order to gain favourable terms from the Council on any business or other agreement.

- Aligns the Council with any organisation or individual which conflicts with its values and priorities.

The Council will not therefore enter into sponsorship with agreements with:

- Organisations that do not comply with the Advertising Standards Authority code of practice.
- Organisations in financial or legal conflict with the Council.
- Organisations with a political purpose, including pressure groups and trade unions.
- Organisations involved in racial or sexual prejudice or discrimination on the basis of disability, faith or gender.

The list above is not exhaustive and the Council retains the right to decline sponsorship from any organisation or individual or in respect of particular products, which the Council in its sole discretion considers inappropriate.

The Council will agree with the sponsor, the nature and content of the publicity anticipated from the sponsorship opportunity, and will retain the right to approve all advertising material. The Council has a strong corporate identity and material relating to sponsorship agreements must not conflict with, or compromise this.

Sponsors must comply with the following:

- Ensure that when promoting a sponsored event, it is clearly identifiable that the event is organised by Hertford Town Council. The sponsor will therefore only refer to their organisation as sponsor or associate sponsor of the event.
- The sponsor must ensure they get sign off on press releases detailing the event from Hertford Town Council prior to distribution.
- Ensure the sponsor gets approval on the use of any event images or Town Council logos prior to use.

PROCEDURES

Before agreeing sponsorship, Council officers will consider the policy document and follow the guidelines provided.

The overall coordination of sponsorship agreements across the Council will be the responsibility of Marketing and Events Manager.

All potential sponsors should be referred to the policy for information and guidance.

Event sponsorship income will be transparent and therefore no deals or discounts will be offered to organisations.

Sponsorship agreements must be signed by the organisation and approved by the Town Council.

PAPER D

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

AGENDA ITEM 6 C - HERTFORD TOWN CENTRE CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT ON NON EVENT PRIORITIES IN TOWN CENTRE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To update the Committee on the progress of the Committee's priorities for the town centre apart from those included in the Events report.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The economic downturn, which accelerated major structural changes in retailing, inevitably had an effect on Hertford town centre and local businesses.

2.2 As part of its priorities for the period 2011-15, the Council agreed to actively support the town centre through a range of initiatives to encourage a thriving local economy. The main priorities for the Town Centre and supporting activities until end of the 2015/16 financial year were agreed by the Committee at their meeting on 3rd March 2015.

3. NON EVENT TOWN CENTRE PRIORITIES

3.1 Monitoring

The half yearly occupancy survey was last undertaken in early September. This data was fed into the national vacancy survey undertaken by Springboard in October.

The Hertford survey results were exactly in line with national results which saw a decrease in number of vacant units of 1.2% compared to October 2014. Hertford's vacancy rate of 7.4% is 1% lower than the average vacancy rate in the South East region.

Hertford's major difference with other towns in the South East and nationally is the high percentage (70%) of independent traders in the town. The comparable figures are 21.3 % in South East and 34.9% nationally. The figures confirm the strength of specialist retailing in the town.

The next survey will be undertaken at the end of February. It is hoped that the survey results will be available at the meeting.

3.2 Support to Town Centre businesses

Town Centre newsletters to businesses are issued approximately bi monthly to report back on traders meetings and plans for future events. A newsletter was issued in December and one is planned for end of February.

Routine meetings of Town Centre traders and Food and Drink Festival Steering Group have also been organised.

3.3 Christmas Lighting

In order to reduce the visual impact of the Christmas Lighting scheme on the historic street environment throughout the year, consideration should be given to including the removal and storage of the catenary wires that support the cross street decorations in the new contract for the provision and maintenance of the Christmas Lighting scheme. The Committee agreed to remove the wires in 2015, and they have been removed again this year. There is no cost implication to include the removal and installation of the catenary wires in the new contract.

Committee has previously decided to purchase the Christmas Lighting scheme at the end of the current 3 year rental contract. In the new contract, that will also be in place for 3 years, the lighting system would be installed, removed, stored, repaired and maintained by a local contractor. This local contractor has been responsible for repair of the current lighting scheme as a sub-contractor to Blachere

Concerns have been raised during the Christmas period 2015 about the resilience of the lights and a number of instances of lights failing had been brought to Members attention. The contractor has confirmed that all reported faults were fixed within 48 hours and were all as a result of water ingress to the lighting resulting from continuing heavy rainfall during the Christmas period.

Officers have had detailed discussions with the contractor that has been chosen to manage the Christmas Lighting scheme. The following key points were covered:

- The frames that the lighting scheme is attached to have a workable life of around 20 years. These are made of aluminium and are therefore not prone to rusting. The frames that are currently being used are around 7 years old and should be usable for at least the next 10-12 years.
- The maintenance and repair (except in the case of vandalism, power supply failure and weather related damage) are covered in the annual contract cost.
- Blachere who currently own the lights have offered a two year warranty to the Council if it continues with the purchase of the lights.

- With the offer of a two year warranty on the table, Officers are discussing a reduction to the annual maintenance charge during the first two years of the three year contract. Members will be advised further in due course. Depending on the scale of the saving it may be possible to use these funds to extend the geographical coverage of the current lighting scheme.
- In the event of a fault being reported to the contractor, the contractor has advised that the response time to investigate and repair if needed should not normally exceed 48 hours.

Drawing all of the above together Committee is recommended to continue with the purchase of the Christmas Lighting scheme and to remove, repair and store the lighting scheme when not in use. Committee is also recommended to enter into a two year contract during which the lighting scheme will be under warranty.

3.4 Go Hertford website

(a) Refresh

The work to refresh gohertford.co.uk website has been completed since the last meeting of the committee. The refresh has improved the design, user friendliness and content of the site to increase the likelihood of search engines ranking the site higher up their searches.

1. **Content changes.**

The main changes to content has been to expand and improve the visitor information with a clearer emphasis on Hertford's heritage. This revamp includes new pages entitled Shop, Visit, Be Active, Taste and What's On.

The **Shop** page features a full listing of the traders based in Hertford.

The **Visit** page combines the previous Enjoy page and includes items on Hertford Castle and grounds, Hertford Museum, Hertford Town Centre Historic Walk, Samuel Stone statute and War Memorial. The page also includes information and links to Markets, the range of specialist shops, Hertford Theatre, Courtyard Arts and River Lea Navigation Boat Trips. It features the live music venues like Hertford Corn Exchange, Deco, The Stonehouse, Cinnebar, Jungle Bar and for classical music to Hertford Theatre, Soundbites, Hertford Symphony Orchestra and Hertford Choral Society.

The **Be Active page** features riverside walks and cycling, explore Hartham Common and Hartham Leisure Centre.

The **Taste** page links directly to Food and Drink directory pages

The **What's On** page clicks through to the current events page.

2. **Improved functionality**

Changes to the functionality now allows

- Prioritisation of events and news listed on the front page
- Automatic archiving of past events
- Improved click through facility especially from front page
- Provision for advertising in existing white space blocks on the side and top of pages to promote Town Centre and Castle events
- Has links to the Town Council's social media accounts in a more prominent positions.

(b) Directory

Currently, the directory only lists businesses in the traditional town centre as designated in the Local Plan so does not include outlets in the Madford Retail Park and on the top end of Ware Road. As these locations supplement the retail and hospitality offer in the town it is **RECOMMENDED** that these businesses are listed in directory to give a fuller picture of what Hertford has to offer.

3.5 Free town centre Wi-Fi

The Town Centre Co-ordinator (TCC) has been working with the chosen provider, ITVET, to implement free on street Wi-Fi in selected street in the town centre on a trial basis.

At the time of writing the contractor has placed orders with BT Openreach to get the broadband lines installed at the six identified locations and is confident that the system should be "live" by the end of February.

The refreshed gohertford site (see above) will act as the splash (front) page for users of the free Wi-Fi scheme.

3.6 Street Scene

As requested by the Committee, orders to lower the Visitor Information Noticeboard in Old London Road car park and install a new Community Noticeboard on the verge near the Post Office and General Store at the junction of Brickenden Lane and Hornsmill Lane have been placed.

Herts Highways have raised no objection to the proposed location of the Hornsmill Noticeboard.

3.7 Cheerful Traders Competition

The Cheerful Traders Competition will launch on Saturday 18th June which coincides with the Hertford Town Centre Charity Day. By launching the competition on this date, it should help raise the profile of the event and also encourage traders to participate in the Charity Day. Although the competition will be launched in June, the closing date and awards will be in July as approved by the Committee in the previous meeting.

It is **RECOMMENDED** that the Committee approve the proposed judging process as follows:

Fifty percent of the judging marks will be based on the quantity of nominations for each business.
The remaining fifty percent of the judging marks will be based on the Mayor of Hertford reviewing the quality of the nomination comments.

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

a) The Committee **notes** the progress made on delivering the Council's non event town centre priorities and
b) The Committee confirms as previous decision to purchase the Christmas lights
c) The Committee agrees to enter into a 2 year contract for the erection, removal maintenance and storage of the lights
d) The Committee agrees to list businesses in the Madford Retail Park and at the top end of Ware Road in the gohertford directory.
e) The committee approves the proposed judging criteria for the Cheerful Traders Competition.
f) The Committee notes the report

PAPER E

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE – 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

AGENDA ITEM 7 (a) – HIRE OF VENUES

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide the Committee with an update on hire revenue for the Castle and Mill Bridge Rooms for 2015/16.

2. DOWNSHIRE SUITE

2.1 The table below shows bookings for the April – January period as a comparison year on year.

The figure for corporate hire income for 2014/15 was distorted by one week's hire of the venue by a company for staff training at a cost of £7,020. This was a one-off event in January 2015.

Budget	Description	Apr'14-Jan'15 £	Apr'15-Jan'16 £
4200	DS Hire – Weddings & Receptions	20,672	34,204
4201	DS Hire – Corporate Hire	14,096	7,805
4202	DS Hire – Private Hire	1,810	3,185
4210	DS Catering	4,812	3,330
	Total	41,390	48,524

2.2 Income from wedding hire over the last thirteen years is shown below. The average annual income during this period has been £16,300.

Year	Income	Year	Income
2002/2003	£6,012	2009/2010	£16,167
2003/2004	£8,766	2010/2011	£18,621
2004/2005	£10,149	2011/2012	£24,293
2005/2006	£21,512	2012/2013	£16,049
2006/2007	£19,163	2013/2014	£14,329
2007/2008	£19,567	2014/2015	£21,397
2008/2009	£16,293		

2.3 Bookings for wedding and reception hire are becoming increasingly popular and last minute bookings have been taken for the 2015/2016 financial year.

PAPER E

The table below shows all of the bookings taken for the 2015/2016 financial year.

Date	Ceremony Package	Reception hours	Total
Saturday April	Deluxe Ceremony	6.5	£1,505
Saturday April	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday April	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£652
Saturday April	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday May	Simple Ceremony	n/a	£650
Saturday May	Deluxe Civil Ceremony	n/a	£780
Saturday May	Cancellation	n/a	£100
Saturday June	Reception only	6	£900
Saturday June	Simple Ceremony	n/a	£550
Saturday July	Upsold from £560 to £1500	n/a	£1500
Saturday July	Reception only	7	£1,100
Saturday July	Cancellation although 20% deposit retained	5	£150 of a £750 booking received
Thursday July	Deluxe Ceremony		£450
Saturday July	Cancellation although 20% deposit retained	n/a	£145 of a £725 booking received
Saturday July	Marquee + Ceremony	n/a	£2,725
Sunday July	Deluxe Ceremony		£657
Friday July	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday August	Deluxe Ceremony & Rec	7.5	£1,675
Friday August	Ceremony		£700
Saturday August	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Friday August	Deluxe Civil Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday August	Cancellation although 20% deposit retained	n/a	£400 of a £2,000 booking received
Thursday August	Upsold from £300 to £450	n/a	£450
Saturday August	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday August	Marquee only	n/a	£2,000
Wednesday September	Simple Ceremony	n/a	£300
Friday September	Deluxe Ceremony & Rec	7	£1,775
Sunday September	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Thursday September	Cancellation although 20% deposit retained	n/a	£90 of a £450 booking received
Saturday September	Simple Ceremony & Reception	3	£1400
Friday September	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday September	Simple Ceremony & Rec	2	£950
Friday October	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday October	Ceremony & Reception		£1,475
Friday October	Deluxe Civil Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday October	Cancellation although 20% of booking retained	8	£405 of a £2,025 booking retained

Saturday October	Deluxe Ceremony		£1,902 +£300.00 Upsell to inc 1.5Hrs extra
Saturday December	Deluxe Civil Ceremony	n/a	£725
Tuesday December	Simple Ceremony		£450
Wednesday December	Simple Ceremony & Reception	6	£1050
Thursday December	Deluxe Ceremony		£780
Saturday Jan 2016	Reception	6	£1,000
Friday February	Ceremony & Reception	9.5	£2,005
Saturday February	Ceremony & Reception	4	£1150
Saturday March	Reception	4	£1,100
Friday March	Deluxe Ceremony		£650
Saturday March	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£725
Saturday March	Deluxe Ceremony		£1,850
		TOTAL	**£44,421**

2.4 Bookings have already been taken for 2016/17, which is a promising sign for the **future viability** of the venue.

An additional Facilities Officer will be appointed to cover weekend hire when required during the peak months. This will ensure that existing Officers have sufficient rest breaks and days off between May and October.

Date	Ceremony Package	Reception hours	Total
Friday April 2016	Simple Ceremony		£550
Saturday April 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£800
Saturday April 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£800
Friday April 2016	Simple Ceremony		£650
Saturday April 2016	Simple Ceremony		£650
Saturday May 2016	Simple Ceremony		£650
Saturday May 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£725
Saturday May 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£780
Friday June 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£780
Wednesday June 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£525
Friday June 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£780
Saturday June 2016	Marquee/Reception		£2,000
Friday June 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£775
Saturday July 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£780
Saturday July 2016	Marquee/Reception		£3000
Saturday July 2016	Simple Ceremony		£780
Friday July 2016	Ceremony & Reception	1 Hour	£1025
Sunday July 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£730
Saturday August 2016	Reception	5 Hours	£1500
Saturday August 2016	Simple Ceremony		£630
Saturday September 2016	Cancellation		£110
Saturday September 2016	Marquee/Reception	6.5 Hours	£2,000
Friday September 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£775.00
Saturday September 2016	Ceremony & Reception	6 Hours	£2130
Sunday September 2016	Simple Ceremony		£650
Friday September 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£775
Saturday October 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£775
Saturday November 2016	Deluxe Ceremony		£775
Friday January 2017	Ceremony & Reception	4 Hours	£1600
		TOTAL	**£28,500**

2.5 The table below shows bookings taken during the 2017/2018 financial year. The price increase hasn't detracted customers from placing a booking at Hertford Castle.

Friday May 2017	Ceremony & Reception	7.5 Hrs	£2637
Saturday May 2017	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£825
Saturday July	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£780
Saturday July	Simple Ceremony	n/a	£650
Saturday September	Deluxe Ceremony	n/a	£780
		TOTAL	**£5672**

2.6 Over the last couple of months, private hire bookings have increased. Below is a table of bookings taken since October 2015.

Saturday October	Birthday Party	5	£675

Sunday October	Afternoon Tea Party	2.5	£250
Saturday October	Birthday Party	5	£840 (Inc glass hire etc)
Saturday December	Birthday Party	6	£750
Wednesday December	Wine Tasting (Series Booking)	3	£230
Thursday December	Corporate Christmas Party	6	£655
Friday December	Murder Mystery Night	4	£550
Wednesday December	Wake	3	£180
Wednesday January 2016	Corporate	4	£299.50 (Inc Lunch)
Monday February	Corporate	3.5	£179.50 (Inc Lunch)
Wednesday February	Corporate	3	£69.00
Saturday February	Private Party	7	£965
Wednesday February	Wine Tasting (Series Booking)	3	£230
Thursday February	Corporate	3.5	£179.50 (Inc Lunch)
Wednesday March	Wine Tasting (Series Booking)	3	£230.00
Wednesday Match	Cancellation Opus Retained Deposit	n/a	£80.00
Saturday March	Private Hire	2	£200
Wednesday March	Corporate	2.5	£150
Friday April	Private	2	£120
Sunday May	Birthday Party	5	£950
Wednesday May	Wine Tasting (Series Booking)	3	£230
Sunday June (Geve)	Birthday Party	4	£750
Friday August 2	Wedding Anniversary	5	£700
		TOTAL	£9462

3. HERTFORD CASTLE KITCHEN

3.1 The new Hertford Castle kitchen refurbishment will take place between 26th March and 30th April 2016. An order has been placed for the works to be carried out within the allocated budget.

4. MILL BRIDGE ROOMS (MBR)

4.1. Bookings for the Mill Bridge Rooms have increased and it is therefore appropriate to review the pricing structure at the next Committee meeting. Prices have not been increased for over one year.

Budget	Description	Apr'14- Jan'15 £	Apr'15-Jan'16 £
4400	Millbridge Room Income	3,843	10,563

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

a) The Committee note the report.

Report by:

Melissa Bolton, Marketing & Events Manager
Stephen Davies, Finance Manager

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE - 29 FEBRUARY 2016

AGENDA ITEM 8 – CCTV UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide a commentary on the CCTV statistics for 2015 and update the Committee on the current issues relating to the town's CCTV cameras.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Stevenage CCTV monitoring centre produce a monthly report giving the numbers of incidents and arrests involving CCTV cameras. The reports for the different areas covered by the CCTV network are available for viewing or download at http://www.hertfordshirecctv.co.uk along with back copies of "Camera Shy" the quarterly newsletter of the Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership.

3. INCIDENTS - JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2015

The CCTV cameras in Hertford recorded the following numbers and types of incident and the figures for 2014 are shown as comparatives:

Code	Type	Jan to Dec 2014	Jan to Dec 2015	Difference	% Inc/(Dec)
AL	Alarm action	9	5	(4)	(44.4%)
AB	Abduction	0	1	1	N/A
AF	Affray	37	34	(3)	(8.1%)
AR	Arson/fire	1	3	2	200.0%
AS	Assault/robbery/offensive weapon	41	46	5	12.2%
ATT	Attention kept	0	0	0	N/A
B	Burglary	1	1	0	0.0%
BE	Begging	0	0	0	N/A
BO	Bomb threat/susp. Package	0	0	0	N/A
BR	Broken Down Vehicle	1	0	(1)	(100.0%)
BRE	Breach of bail	3	2	(1)	(33.3%)
CR	Criminal damage	9	16	7	77.8%
D	Deception	6	2	(4)	(66.7%)
DO	Domestic	12	4	(8)	(66.7%)
DR	Drug related	9	17	8	88.9%
EM	Emergency inc.	1	0	(1)	(100.0%)
FA	False Abandoned/999 Call	4	3	(1)	(25.0%)
INI	Indecency	4	0	(4)	(100.0%)
LIT	Littering/Flytipping	0	1	1	N/A
MI	Missing Person/welfare concern	51	55	4	7.8%
MU	Murder/sudden death	1	0	(1)	(100.0%)
NU	Nuisance / Disorder	14	12	(2)	(14.3%)
O	Other	15	11	(4)	(26.7%)
P	Police request	1	6	5	500.0%
POD	Public order / drunkenness	63	51	(12)	(19.0%)
PUB	Public request	0	1	1	N/A
PUR	Purse dipping	0	2	2	N/A
RA	Racial abuse	4	0	(4)	(100.0%)

Code	Type	Jan to Dec 2014	Jan to Dec 2015	Difference	% Inc/(Dec)
RAP	Rape	1	2	1	100.0%
RO	Road traffic accident	3	9	6	200.0%
SU	Suspicious activity	27	24	(3)	(11.1%)
TH	Theft /shoplifting	33	34	1	3.0%
TR	Traffic offences	10	10	0	0.0%
UA	Unauthorised Access (Trespass)	0	1	1	N/A
VE	Vehicle crime	2	4	2	100.0%
WA	Warrant or wanted	10	9	(1)	(10.0%)
		373	366	(7)	(1.9%)

The relatively low number of incidents means that small increases or decreases in numbers translate into apparently high percentage changes. Overall the statistics for 2015 show a decrease of 1.9% in the number of incidents recorded compared to the same period from 2014

4. ARRESTS - JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2015

The CCTV cameras in Hertford recorded events that led to arrests for the the following numbers and types of incident:

Code	Type	Jan to Dec 2014	Jan to Dec 2015	Difference	% Inc/(Dec)
AF	Affray	40	23	(17)	(42.5%)
AR	Arson/fire	0	2	2	N/A
AS	Assault/robbery/offensive weapon	28	36	8	28.6%
B	Burglary	0	2	2	N/A
BRE	Breach of bail	1	2	1	100.0%
CR	Criminal damage	5	14	9	180.0%
D	Deception	4	1	(3)	(75.0%)
DO	Domestic	4	0	(4)	(100.0%)
DR	Drug related	4	4	0	0.0%
INI	Indecency	1	0	(1)	(100.0%)
MI	Missing Person/welfare concern	1	2	1	100.0%
MU	Murder/sudden death	1	0	(1)	(100.0%)
NU	Nuisance / Disorder	2	0	(2)	(100.0%)
O	Other	3	3	0	0.0%
P	Police request	0	2	2	N/A
POD	Public order / drunkenness	30	21	(9)	(30.0%)
PUB	Public request	0	1	1	N/A
RA	Racial abuse	3	0	(3)	(100.0%)
RAP	Rape	0	2	2	N/A
SU	Suspicious activity	2	1	(1)	(50.0%)
TH	Theft /shoplifting	21	21	0	0.0%
TR	Traffic offences	1	4	3	300.0%
VE	Vehicle crime	0	1	1	N/A
WA	Warrant or wanted	7	3	(4)	(57.1%)
		158	145	(13)	(8.2%)

The statistics for 2015 show a decrease of 8.2% in the number of arrests recorded compared to the same period from 2014.

5. OTHER NEWS

The Hertfordshire CCTV Partnership (HCCTVP) has a new dedicated website and all the information and reports previously available on the Stevenage Borough Council website have been moved to the new site (http://www.hertfordshirecctv.co.uk).
Requests for review/supply of footage from members of the public or insurance companies should be directed to the "Contact Us" section of the website where there is a form to fill out to submit a request.

The CCTV Partnership Manager has applied for the Certificate of Compliance for the "Surveillance Camera Commissioner's Code of Practice – 12 Guiding Principles" on behalf of the HCCTVP.
All authorities operating public CCTV systems should aim to comply with the Code of Practice which came into force in August 2013. So far only five authorities have applied for the Certificate of Compliance.

A new camera (918) for Parliament Square was ordered in January with the purchase and installation cost of £7,635 being funded from the CCTV Reserve. Additional monitoring and maintenance charges will be met from the existing CCTV revenue budget. The new equipment, subject to successful testing, should be in place by the 26th February.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

For **2015/16** the anticipated revenue costs of the cameras funded by the town council are as follows:

Monitoring and maintenance	£22,135
Fibre optic rental	£5,400
Electricity supply	£300
Dedicated phone line to control room	£200
Budget contingency	£2,263
Total	**£30,289**

For **2016/17** the anticipated revenue costs including the additional monitoring & maintenance charges for an additional camera are as follows:

Monitoring and maintenance	£24,167
Fibre optic rental	£5,400
Electricity supply	£325
Dedicated phone line to control room	£200
Budget contingency	£500
Total	**£30,592**

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

a) The Committee **note** the CCTV statistics to the 31st December 2015.

Report by: Stephen Davies, Finance Manager 17th February 2016

PAPER G

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE – 29TH FEBRUARY 2016

AGENDA ITEM 10 – HERTFORD ENTREPRENEURS

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides the Committee with an update on the latest Hertford Entrepreneurs developments.

2. CROWD FUNDING EVENT

The previous Hertford Entrepreneurs event was held at Hertford Castle on Thursday 7th January 2016. The event was presented by Jonathan Littlewood and the subject was Crowd Funding.

This event was extremely well attended and saw over sixty entrepreneurs attend the presentation. Over fifty percent of the entrepreneurs were new members who had an interest in the subject matter. The presentation room was at maximum capacity, which resulted in individuals having to stand during the presentation.

The Chairman of the Hertford Entrepreneurs initiative informed all attendees about the Hertford Entrepreneur of the Year Awards and an application form was handed to everyone present.

3. HERTFORD ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

A £3000 grant has been awarded to Hertford Town Council from Cllr Andrew Stevenson's County Council Locality Budget. This £3000 grant will be awarded to the winner of the Hertford Entrepreneur of the Year.

The deadline for entrepreneurs to enter the competition was Friday 5th February. The shortlisted candidates were then invited to Hertford Castle on Tuesday 23rd February where the judges shortlisted three candidates who will present to a live audience at Hertford Castle on Wednesday 9th March.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is **RECOMMENDED** that:

The Committee **notes** the report.

Report by: Melissa Bolton, Marketing & Events Manager

REPORT TO A MEETING OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE – 29 FEBRUARY 2016

PAPER H

AGENDA ITEM 11 – HERTFORD TOWN CENTRE URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To consider and endorse the Hertford Town Centre Urban Design Strategy (HTCUDS).

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Planning and urban design consultants Tibbalds were appointed in February 2015 to develop an Urban Design Strategy for Hertford town centre. Hertford Town Council has worked with the consultants, East Herts District Council and Hertfordshire County Council at a Member and Officer level on this project.

Public engagement and consultation was carried out during March and September 2015. The draft strategy was amended to reflect the significant feedback received during the September consultation. The Committee considered the HTCUDS at a Special meeting on 15 September 2015.

Once adopted by East Herts District Council the HTCUDS will:

- support the East Herts District Plan; and
- be used to inform Development Management decisions.

The HTCUDS is intended to be relevant for a period of 20 years, therefore there are short, medium and long term solutions contained within it. A full copy of the Strategy is attached to this report.

3. HERTFORD TOWN CENTRE URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

The Strategy comprises the following four key parts:

The Vision

This is articulated as:

- 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 cafes 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.

Importantly the strategy clearly recognises that short term measures can be implemented for Maidenhead Street. These include as repaving in higher quality materials that are already in place in the vicinity of Maidenhead Street at Salisbury Square. Other short term measures contained in the HTCUDS for Maidenhead Street are restricting the hours that service traffic should be allowed to enter the street and the option of making the street one-way in the westbound direction (it is currently one-way street for eastbound traffic flow).

The guidance that the strategy provides for improvements to Maidenhead Street in tandem with recent changes to shop unit occupations (including the relocated post office) can provide the catalyst for further positive changes to the street.

Public Realm and Landscape

This section notes that quality, design and position of hard landscaping materials and street furniture is fundamental to the delivery of attractive public realm. Reflecting the historic environment of the town centre and ensuring that there is not a clutter of street furniture in place are among the key principles included in this section of the strategy.

This section utilises a street hierarchy and provides distinct design advice, including for material, for all categories of street contained within the strategy.

In conclusion the HTCUDS is a detailed document that provides clear advice for urban design in the town centre both now and to assist with the delivery of spatial development in the future.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is RECOMMENDED that the Committee:

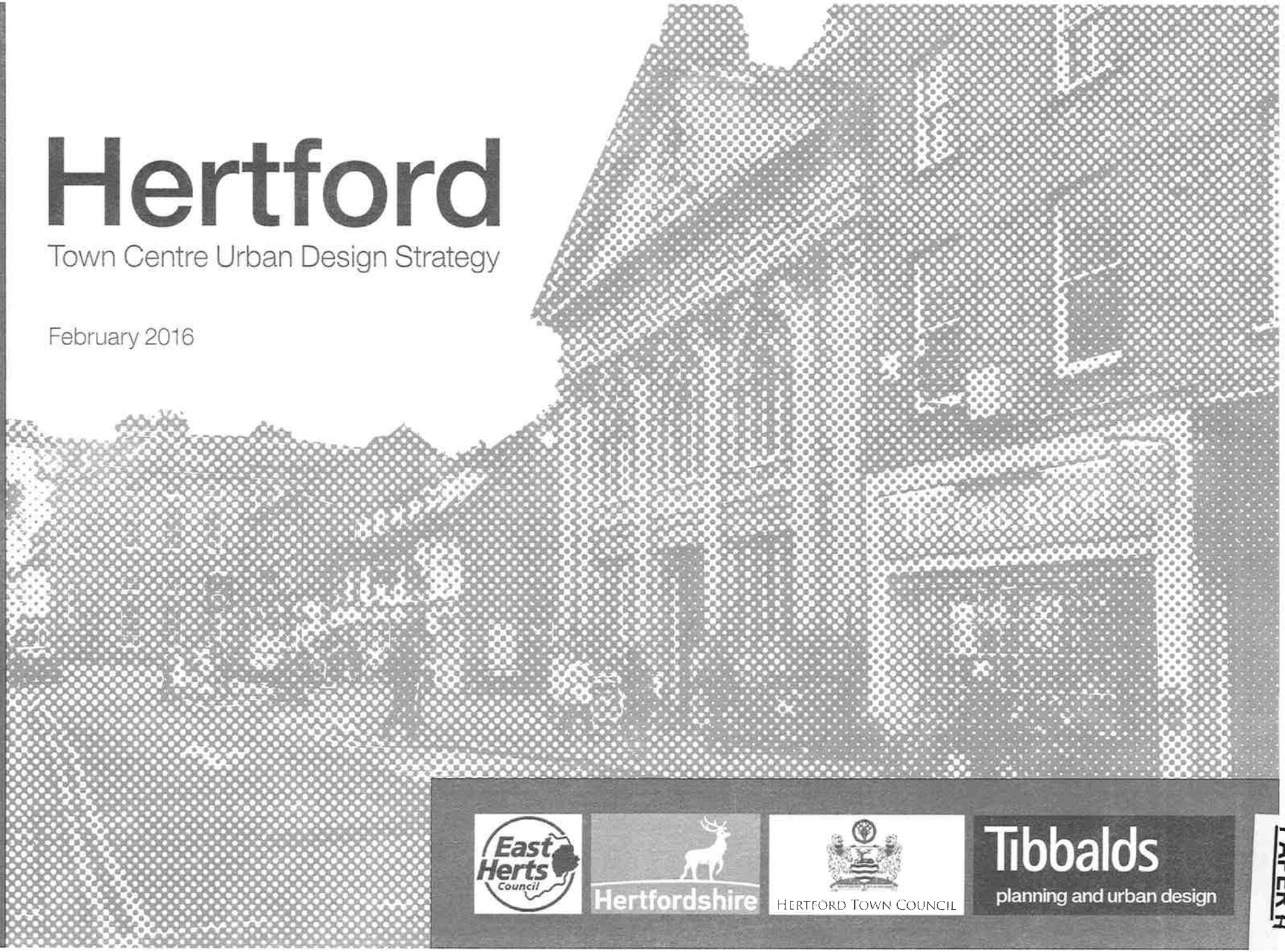
a) Comments on the strategy
b) Welcomes the opportunities for improvements to the town centre envisaged within the strategy particularly for Maidenhead Street
c) Endorses the HTCUDS
d) Requests the Town Clerk to write to East Herts District Council to confirm the Committee's endorsement
e) Notes the report

Report by: Joseph Whelan, Town Clerk

Hertford

Town Centre Urban Design Strategy

February 2016



East Herts Council

Hertfordshire

Hertford Town Council

Tibbalds
planning and urban design

PAPER H

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Appendix 3: Summary of September 2015 Consultation 101

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.

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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.

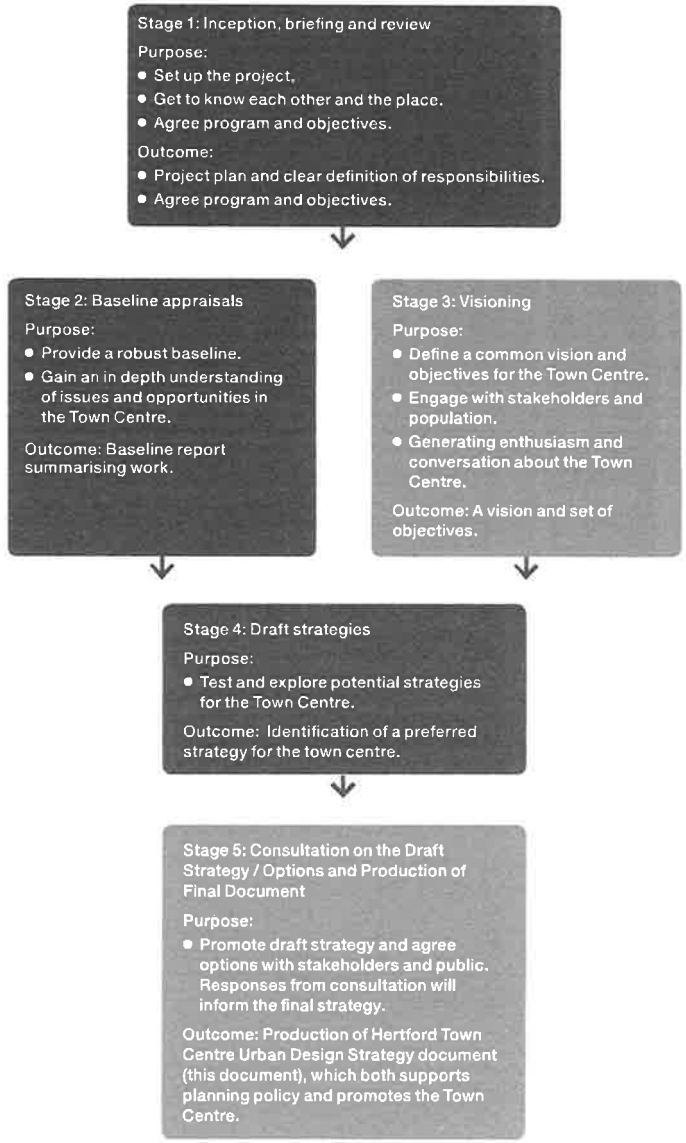

Figure 1.2: Flow chart project stages

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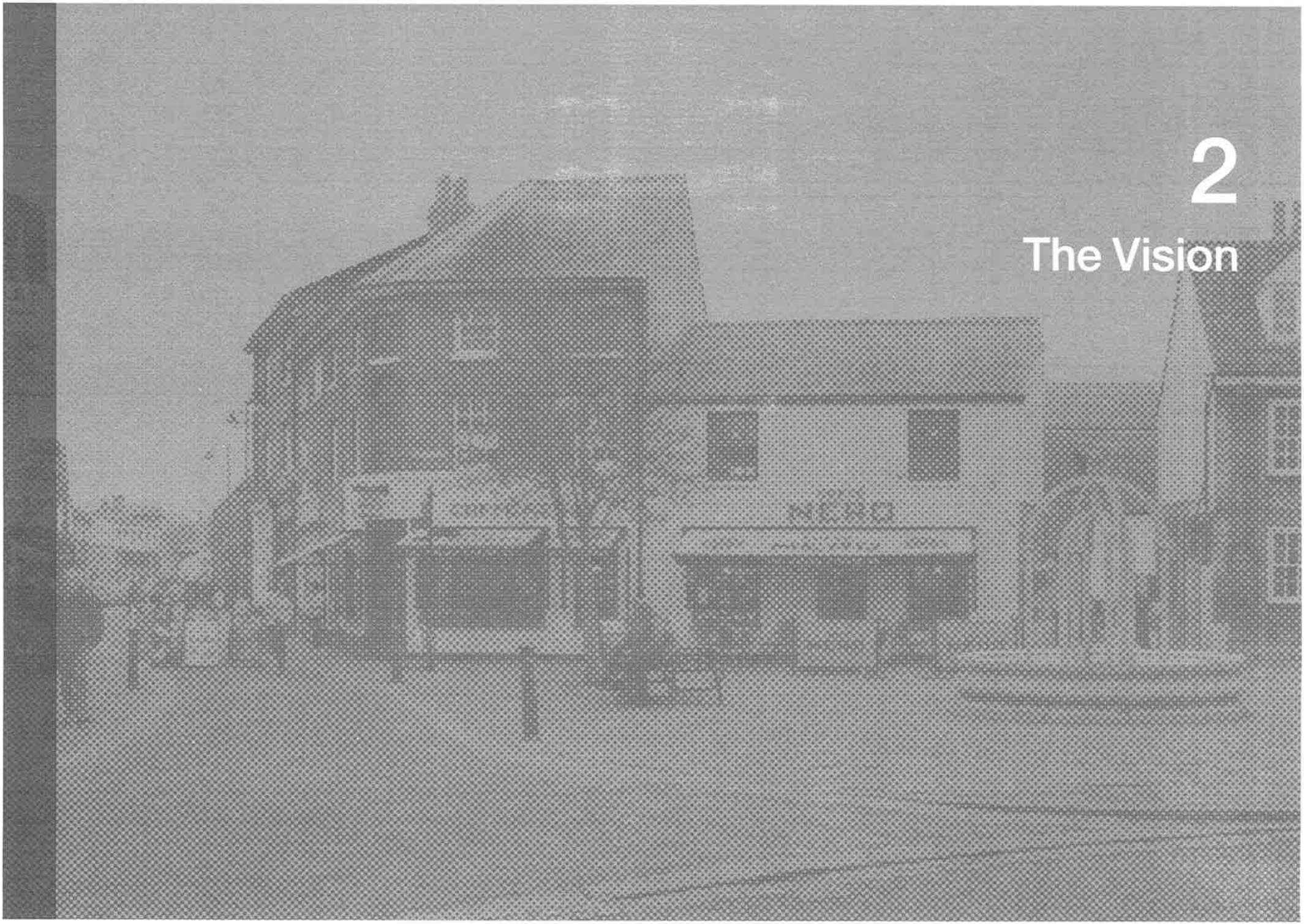

2
The Vision

2 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

©URBAN DESIGN 2015

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.

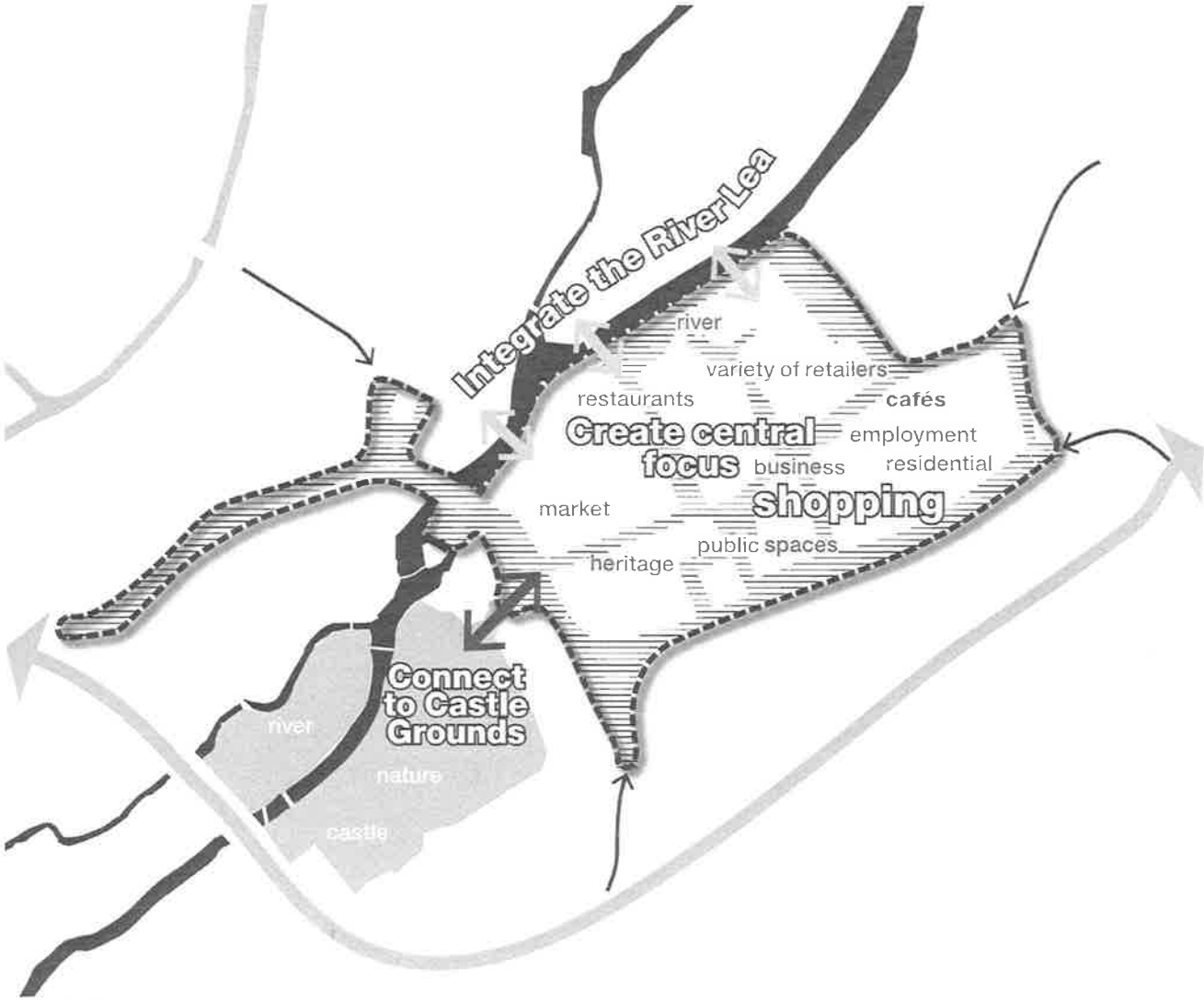

Figure 2.3: Vision of diversity in central areas

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.

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.

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 2.4: Historic buildings in Hertford as a central feature

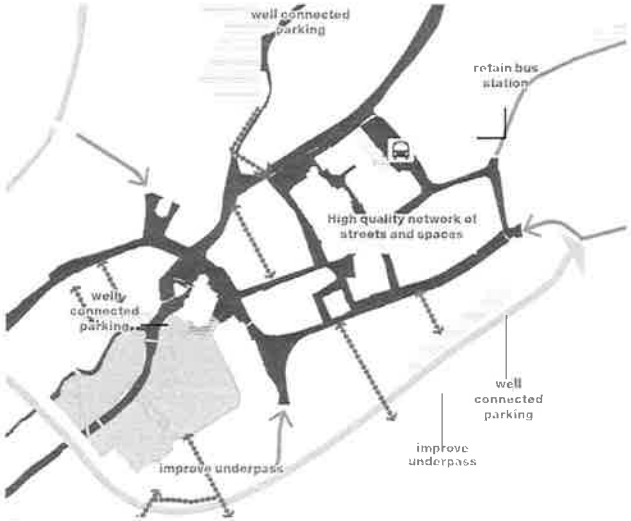

Figure 2.5: Movement and transport in Hertford

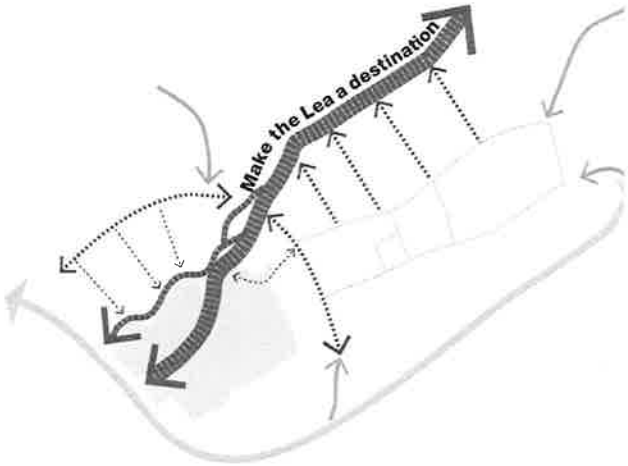

Figure 2.6: River Lea is an important feature

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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.

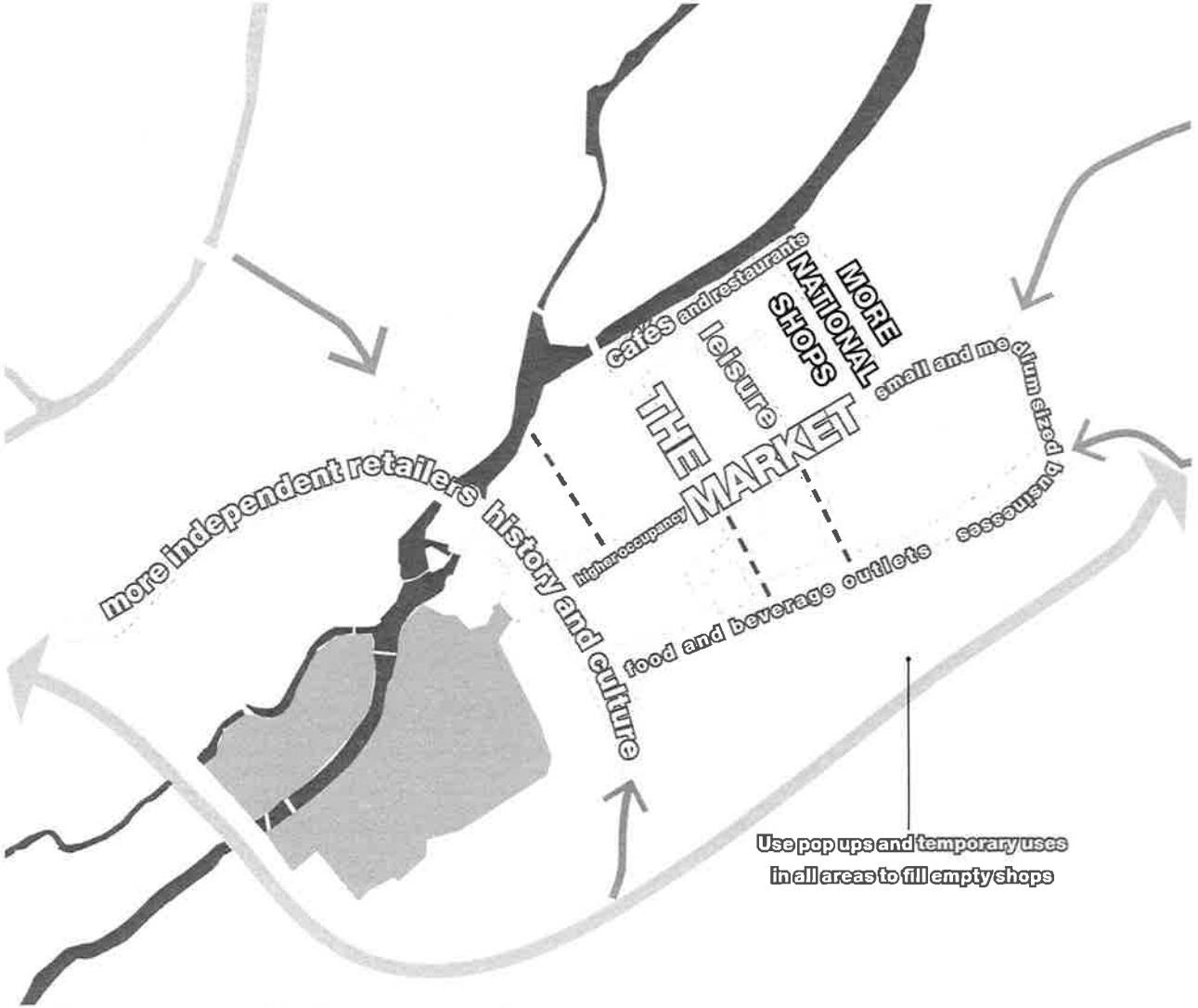

Figure 2.7: Shopping landscape in Hertford as set out in objective

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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.

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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.

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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

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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.

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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.

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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.

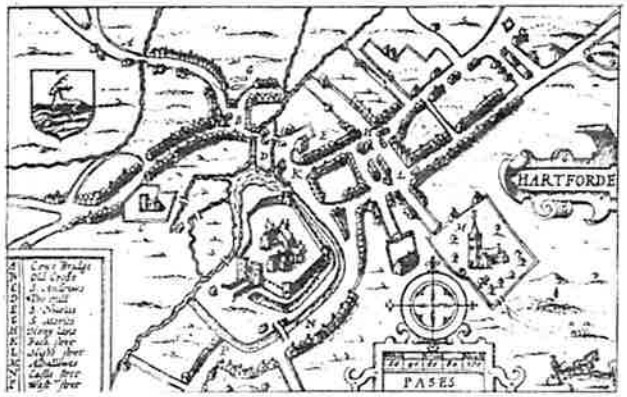

Figure 2.9: Speed's Map of 1610

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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.

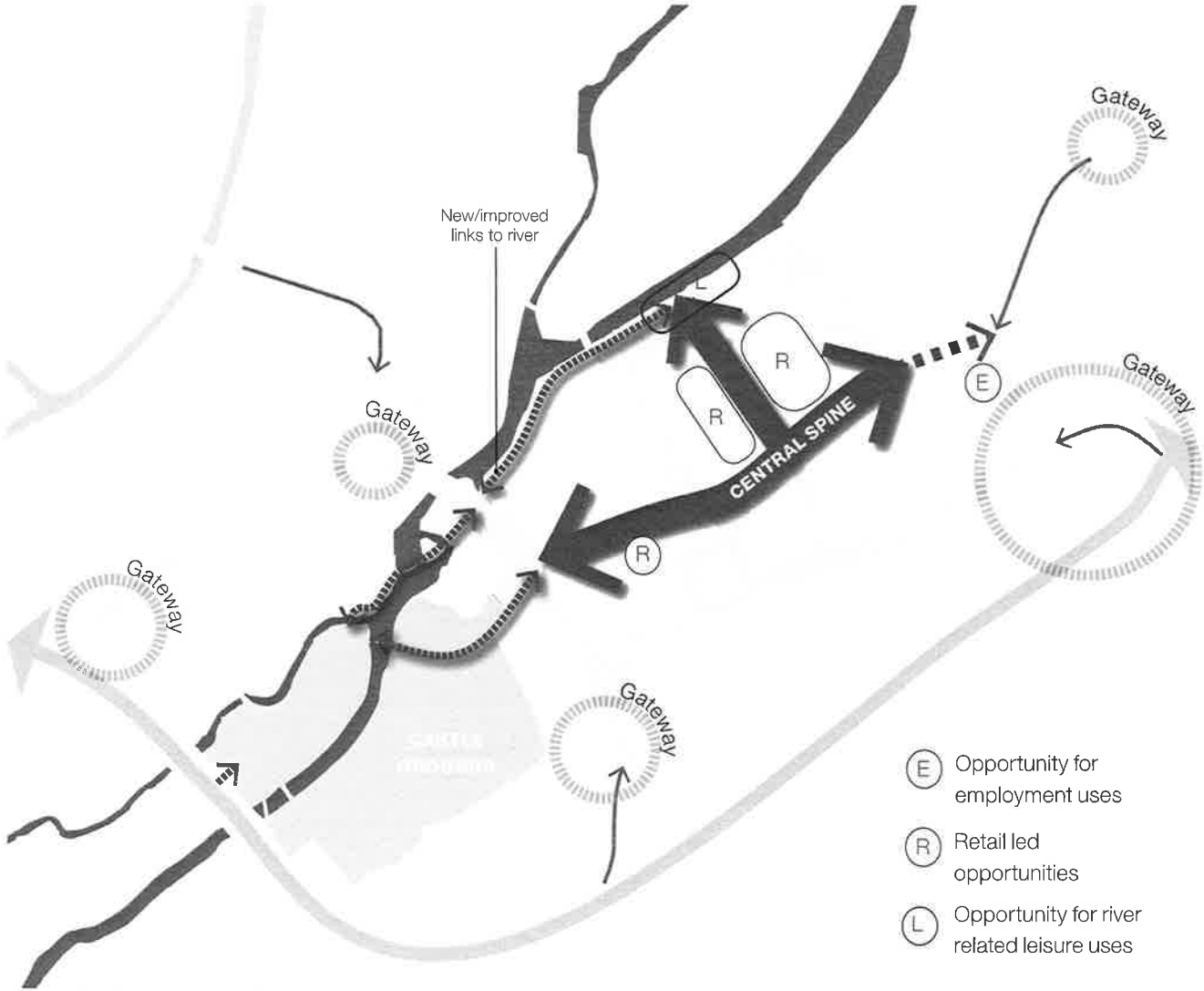

Figure 2.10: Main routes and gateways

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.

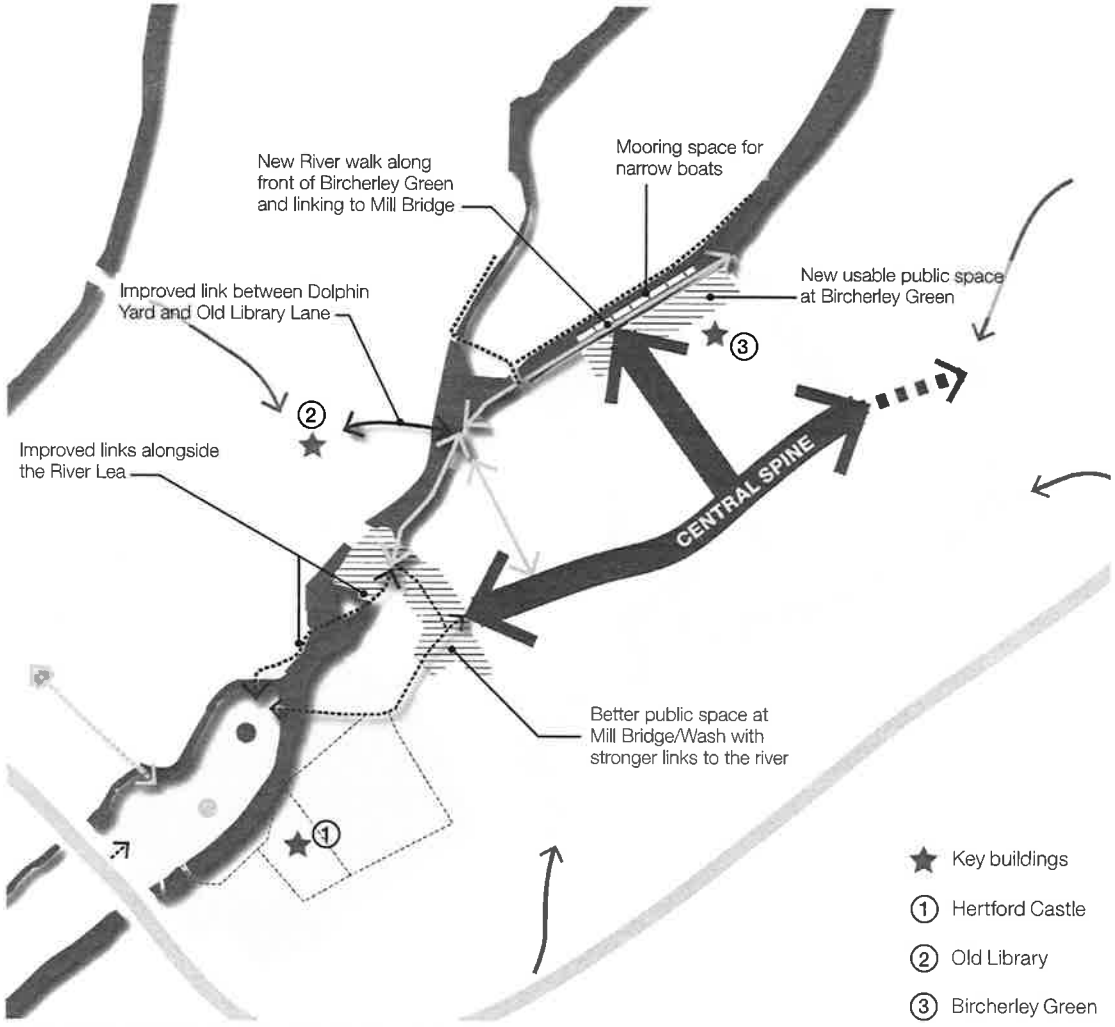

Figure 2.11: Improving and creating new pedestrian links in Castle Grounds and along the river

Key

- Hertford road network
- Castle Grounds
- Extension of central spine
- A 414
- Pedestrian central spine
- Connections into the town centre
- New River Walk
- Improved pedestrian links
- Town Loop Walk
- New seasonal refreshment facility
- Potentially relocate playground

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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.

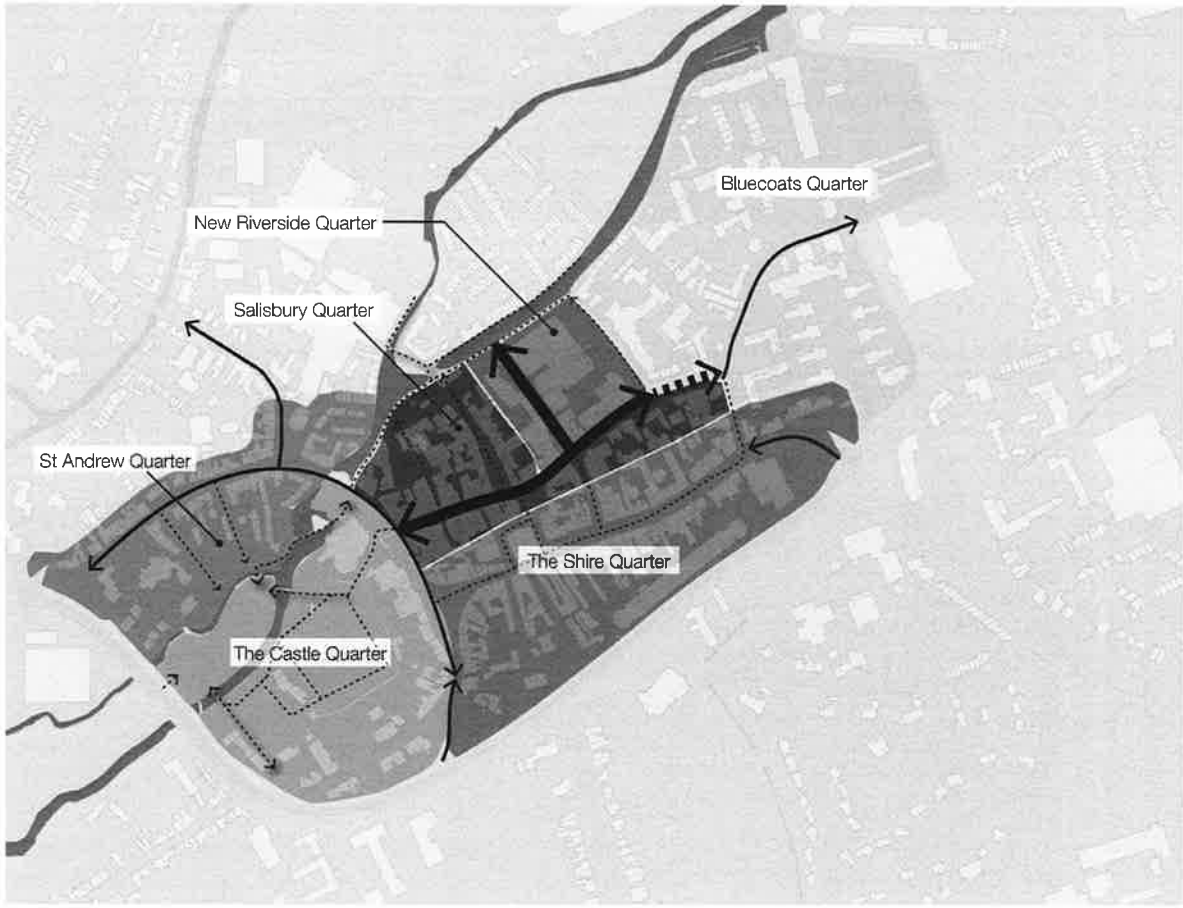

Figure 2.12: Quarters in Hertford

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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.

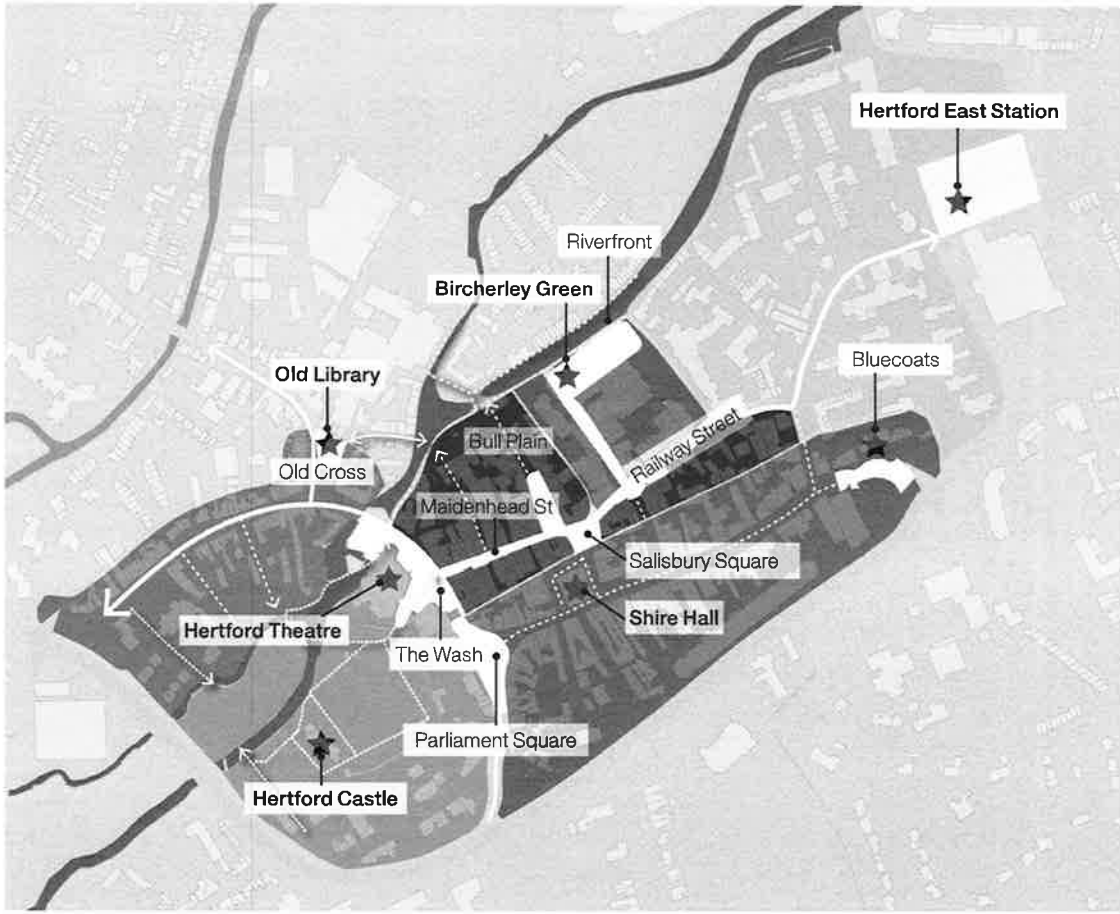

Figure 2.13: Important public realm in Hertford

Key

★ Key buildings

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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.

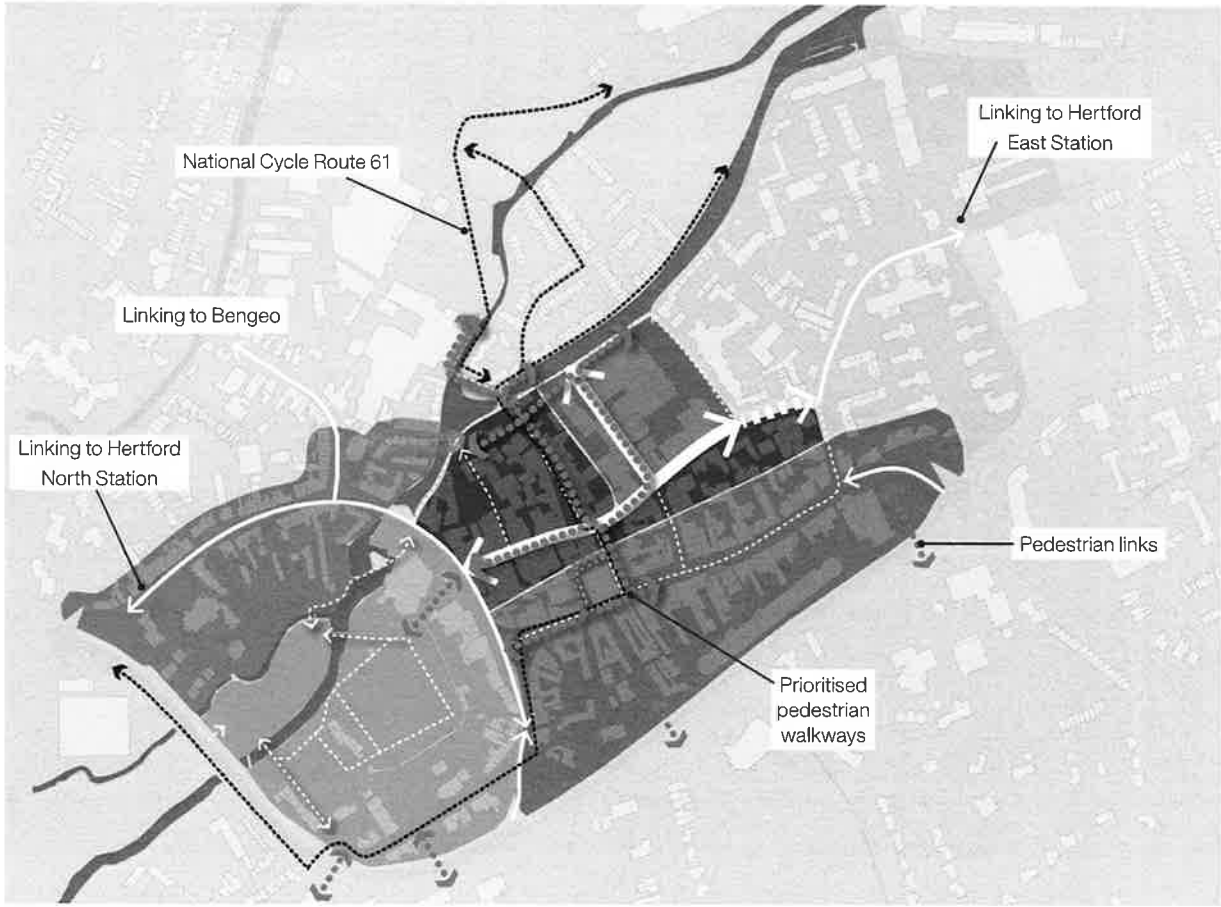

Figure 2.14: Important connections

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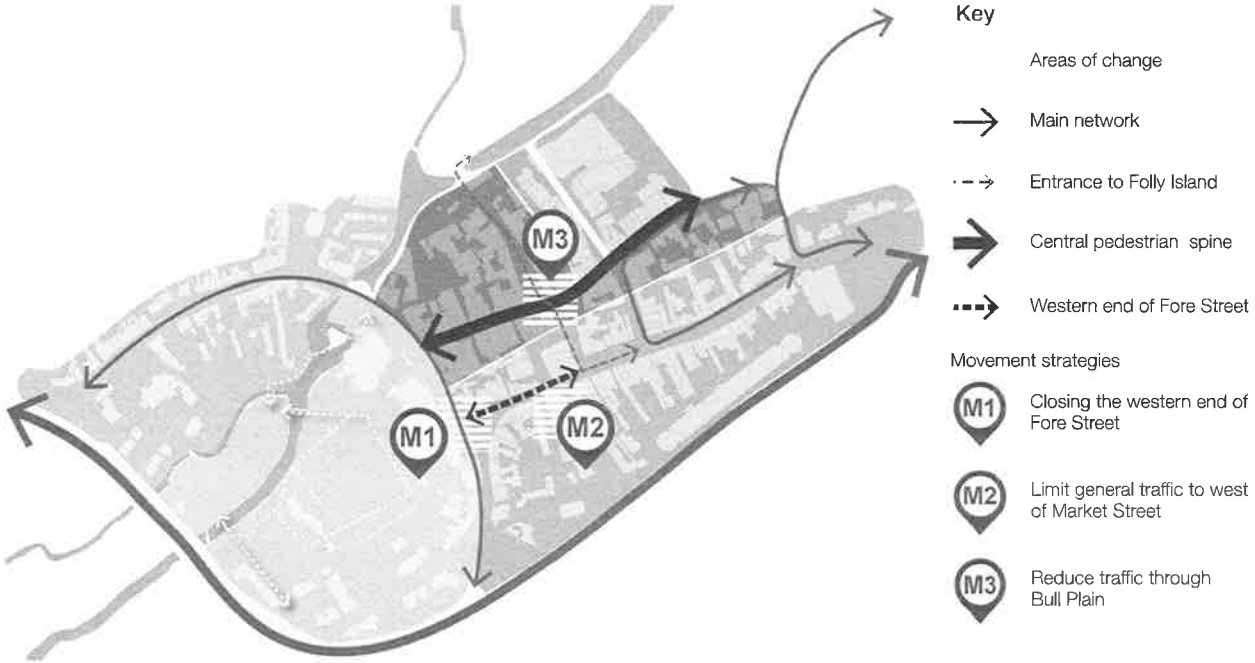

Key

Areas of change

Main network

Entrance to Folly Island

Central pedestrian spine

Western end of Fore Street

Movement strategies

M1 Closing the western end of Fore Street

M2 Limit general traffic to west of Market Street

M3 Reduce traffic through Bull Plain

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.

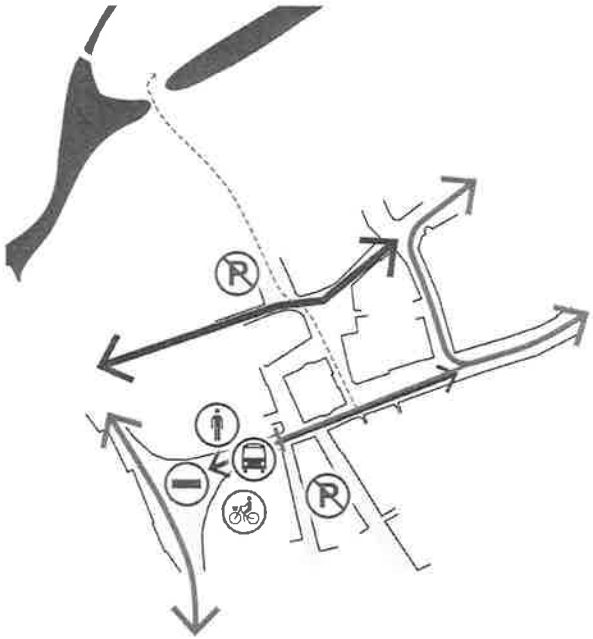

Figure 2.16: Detailed movement strategy

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

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.

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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.

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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.

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 a strain, particularly in respect of the scope for independent retailers to influence the timing of deliveries because of their size.

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2.4 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.

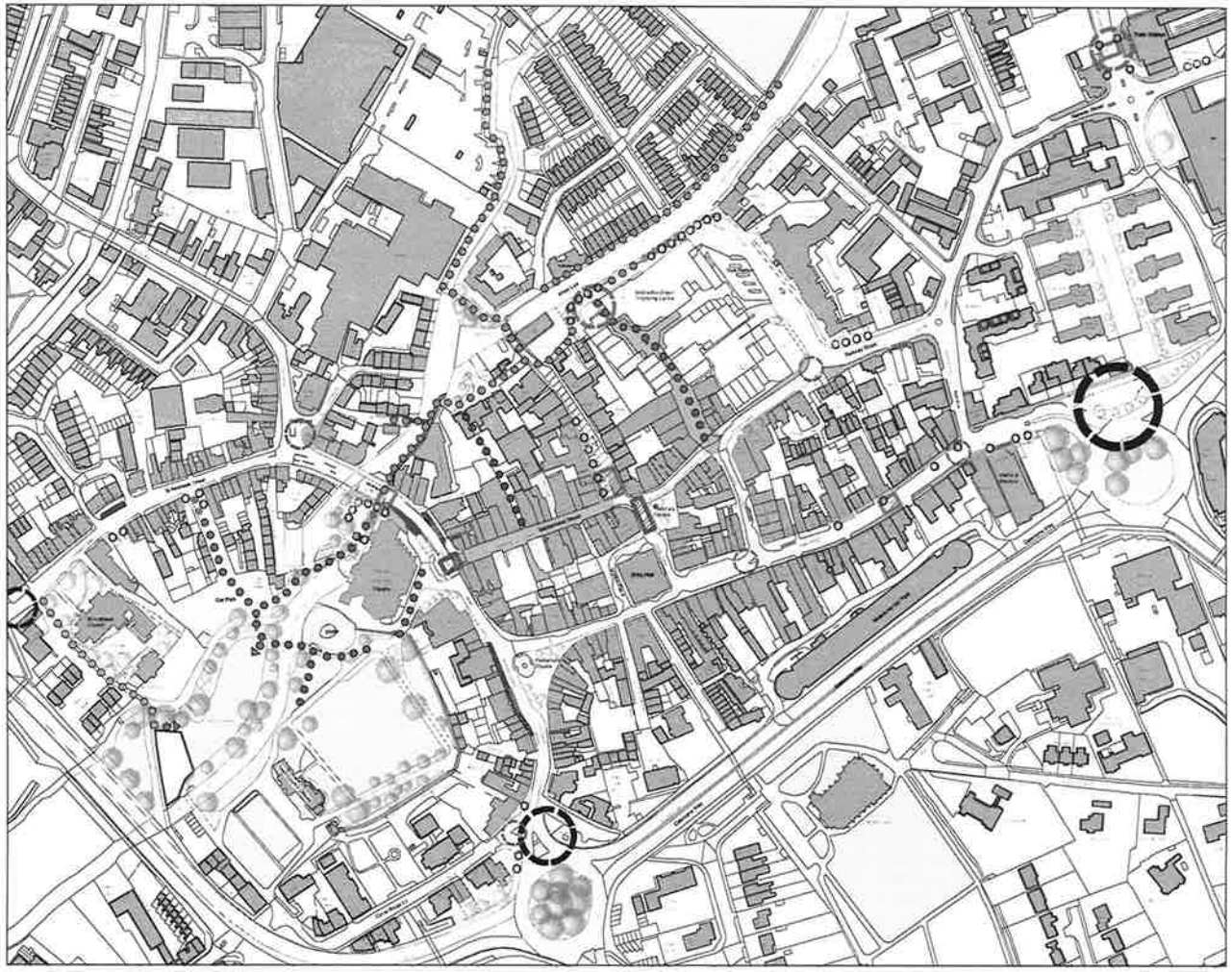

Figure 2.17: Town Centre Improvement strategy - detailed plans for each area are included in each section

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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.

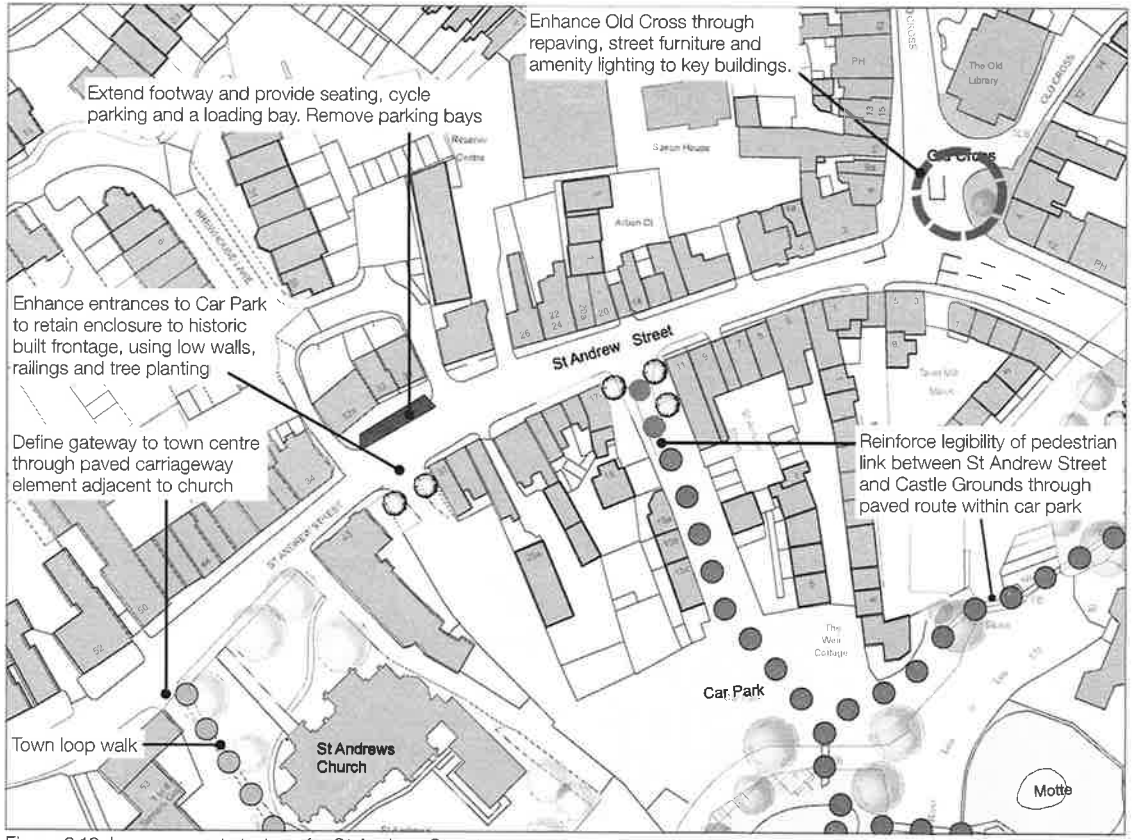

Figure 2.18: Improvement strategy for St Andrew Street

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
- Street tree planting zone
- Town loop walk
- New path through or defined route to Castle Grounds
- Paths enhanced

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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.

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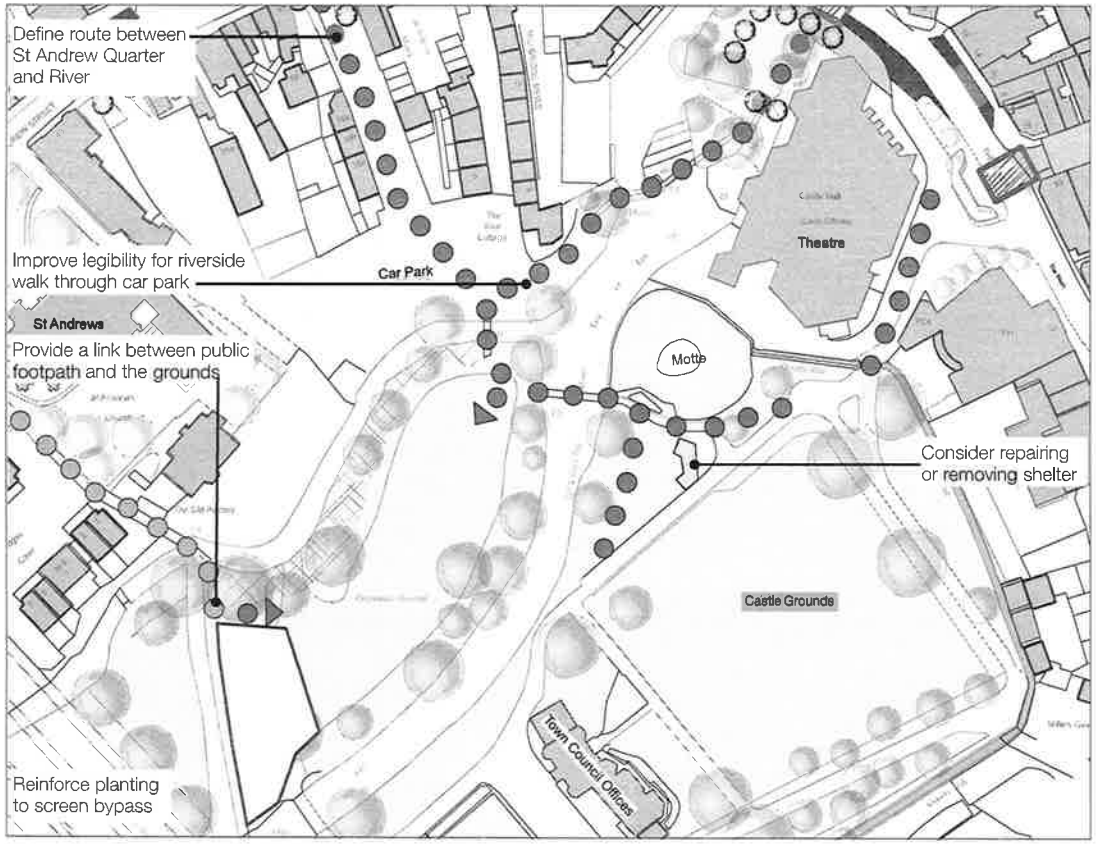

Figure 2.19: Improvement strategy for Castle Grounds

Key

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

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- 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.

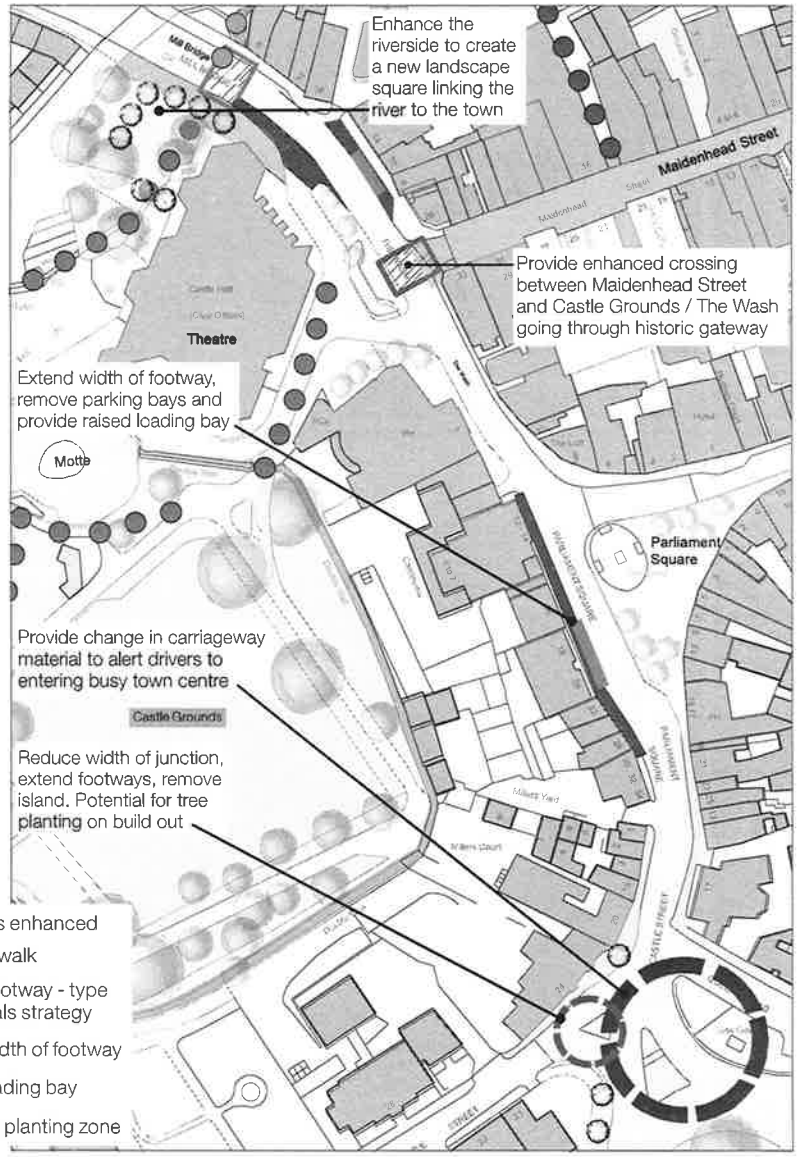

Figure 2.20: Improvement strategy for The Wash

  - 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 by-pass 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.

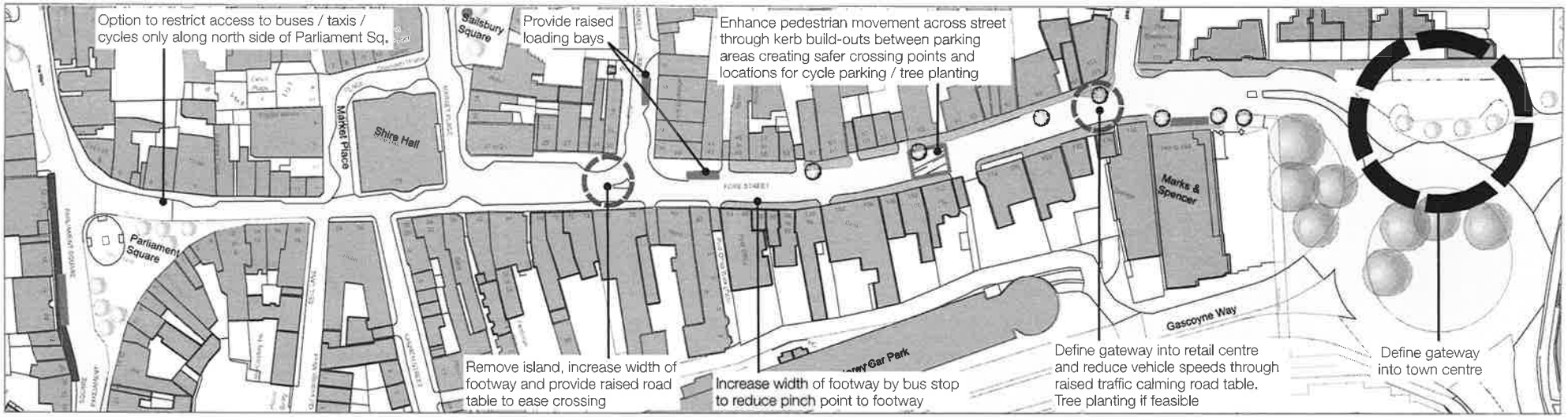

Figure 2.21: Improvement strategy for Shire Quarter - Fore Street

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
- Extend width of footway
- 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

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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 key 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.

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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.

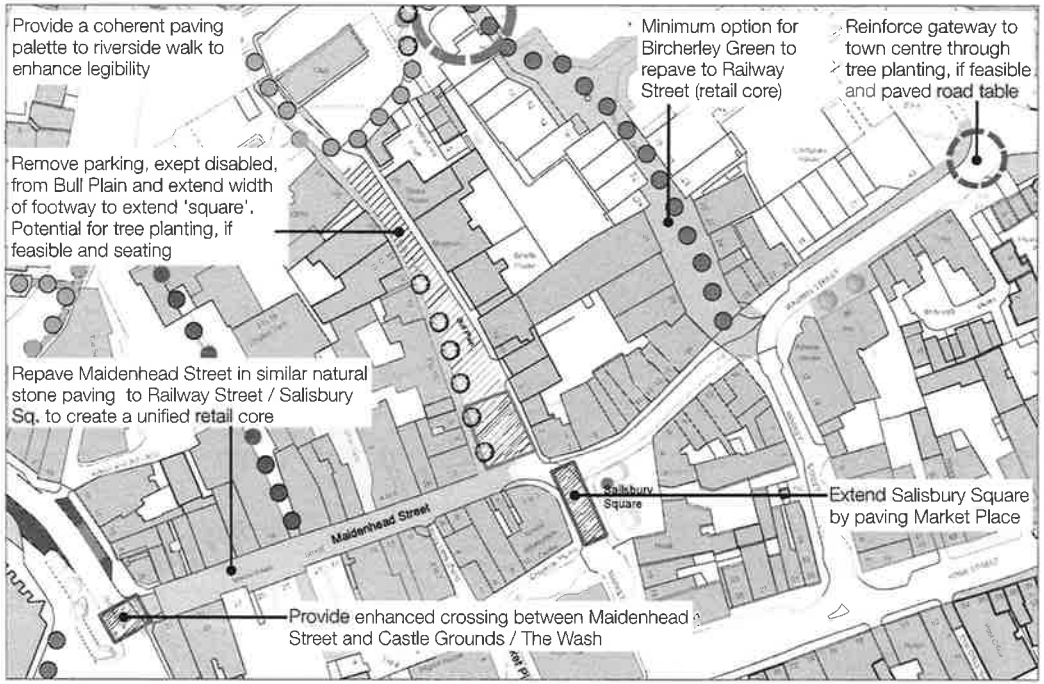
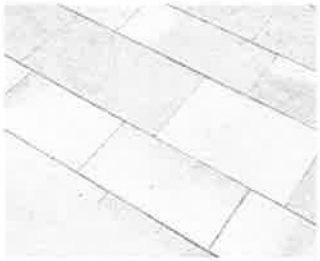


Figure 2.22: Improvement strategy for The Salisbury Quarter

Key

- Define paved square - enlarge existing
- Gateway points to alert vehicles to reduce speed
- Raised paved crossing to ease pedestrian crossing
- Riverside walk
- Repave footway - type as materials strategy
- Extend width of footway
- Raised loading bay
- Street Market extension
- Street tree planting zone



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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

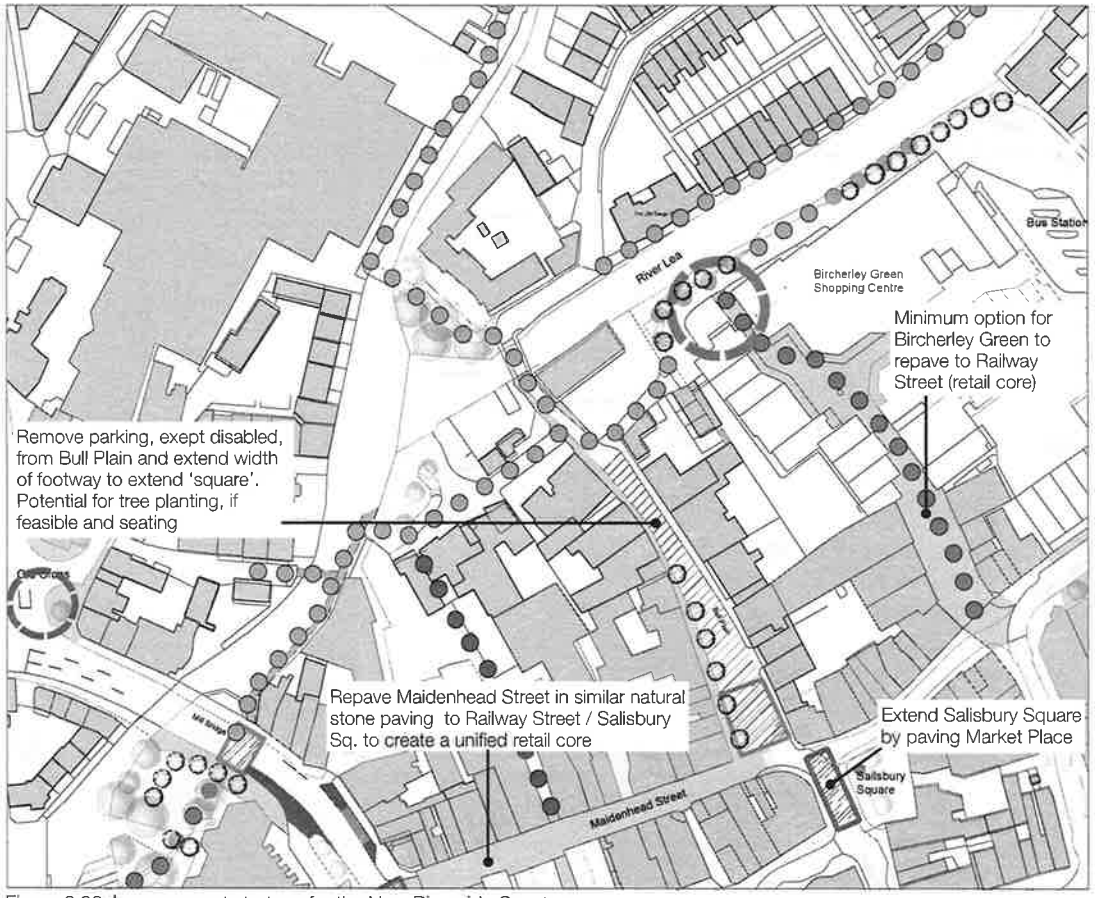

Figure 2.23: Improvement strategy for the New Riverside Quarter

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

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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.

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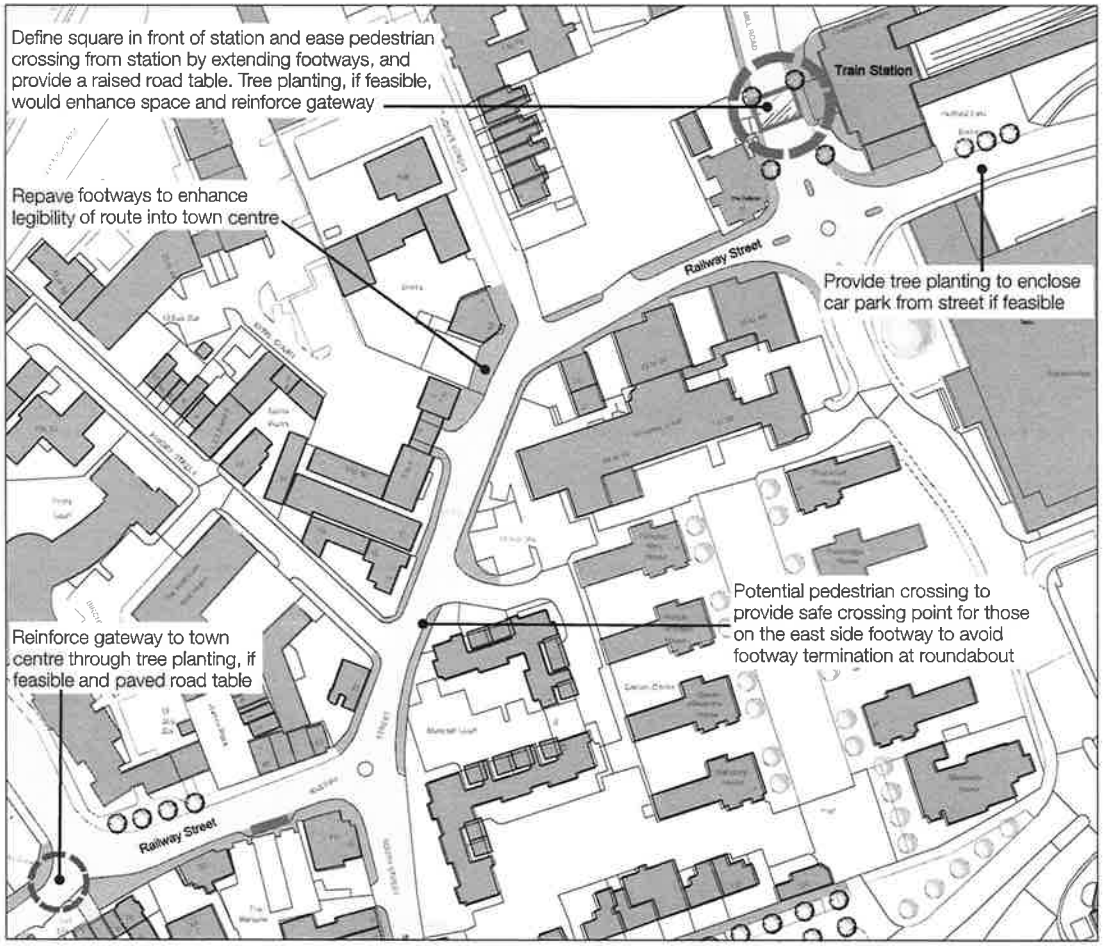

Figure 2.24: Improvement Strategy for the Bluecoats Quarter

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

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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

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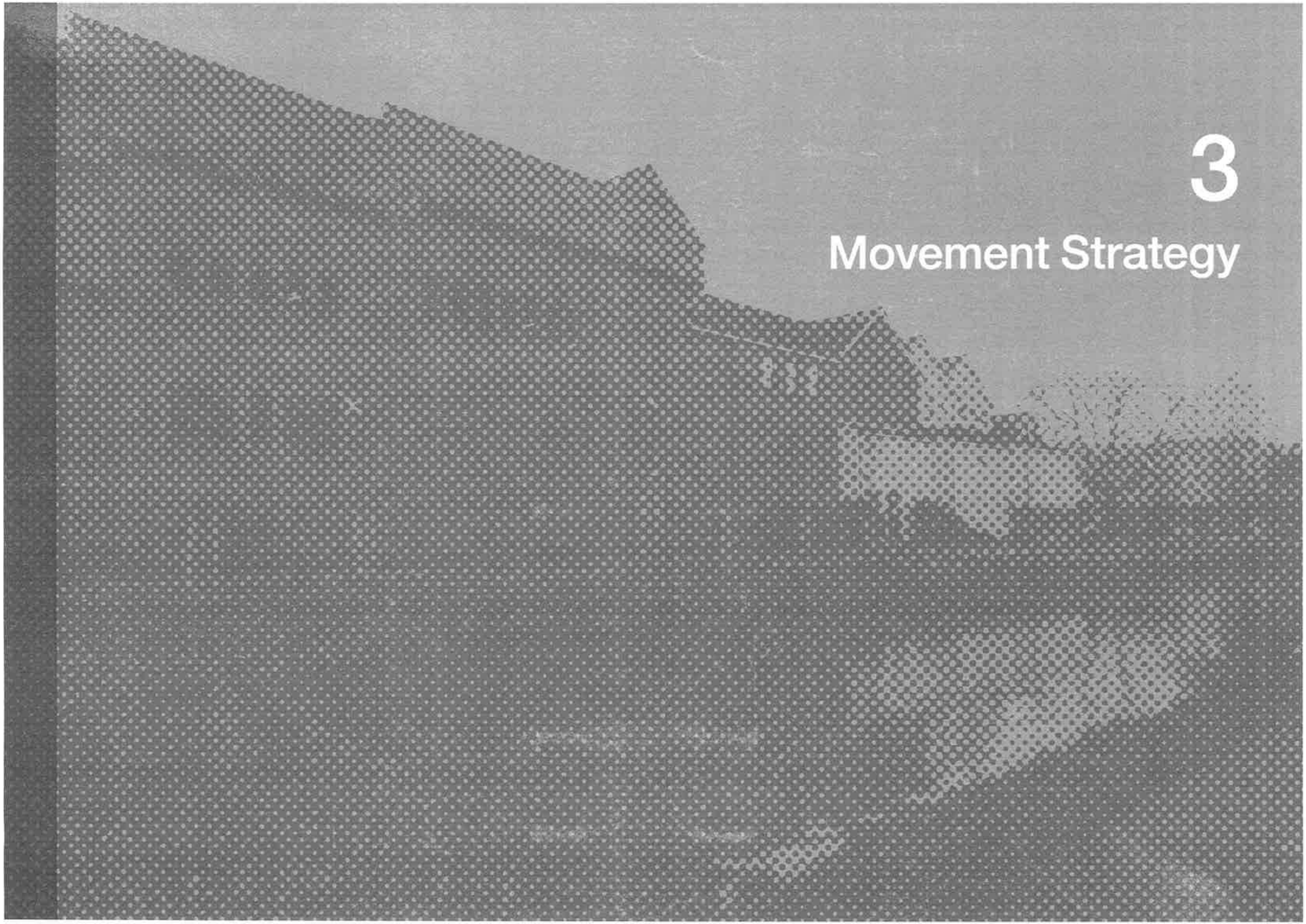

3
Movement Strategy

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.

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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 Bengeo 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.

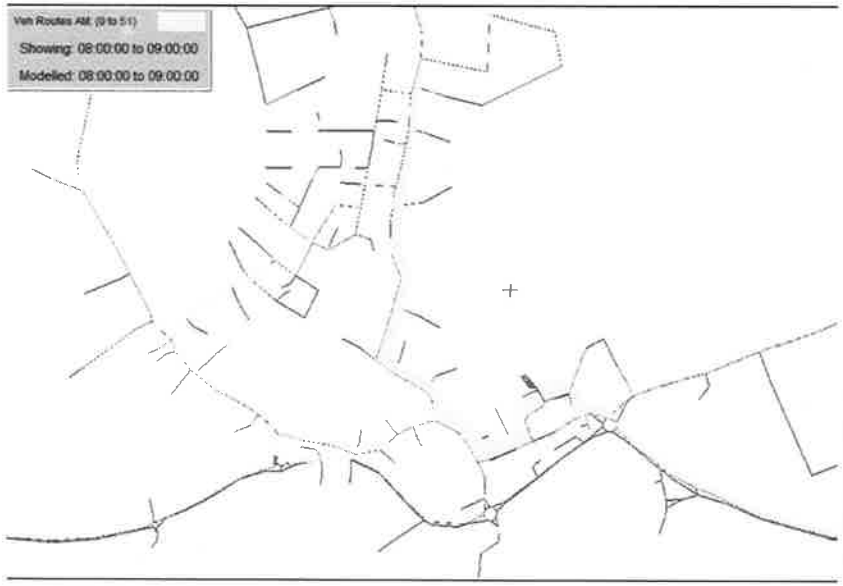

Figure 3.1: Paramics Model

Figure 3.2: Fore Street Pinch Point

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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	250	30	312
A414 Central Roundabout	Gascoyne Way (East)	101	83	64	62
A414 Central Roundabout	Hale Road	78	117	128	129
A414 Central Roundabout	Gascoyne Way (West)	340	528	182	667
A414 Eastern Roundabout	Fore Street	60	25	42	27
A414 Eastern Roundabout	A119	73	73	74	74
A414 Eastern Roundabout	A414	263	262	162	163
A414 Eastern Roundabout	Gascoyne Way (West)	166	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	6
Railway Street/Bircherley Street	Railway Street	19	3	25	5
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	6	26	30

Table 3.1: Hertford Queue Length (M)

Journey Times (Seconds)	AM		PM	
Route	Base	Option 1	Base	Option 1
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 Gascoyne 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 form 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.

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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.

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3.4 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.

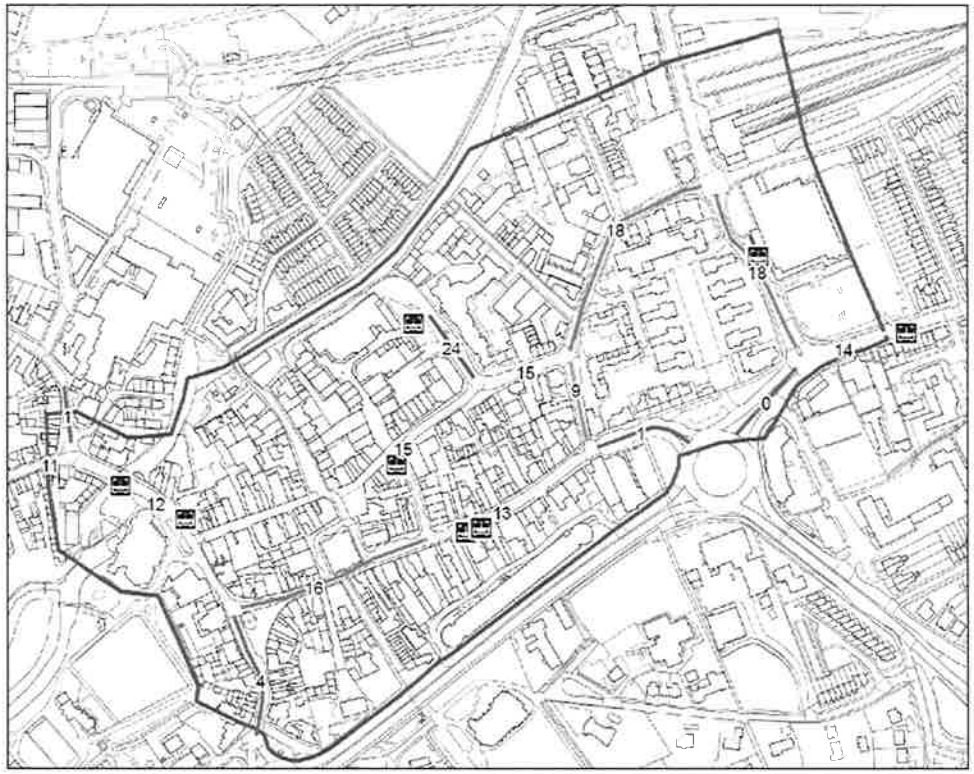

Figure 3.3: Bus Routes
*Note there are variations in the routes depending on the time of day and week; the diagram displays the peak number of routes.

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.

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