

# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## I INTRODUCTION

### WELCOME

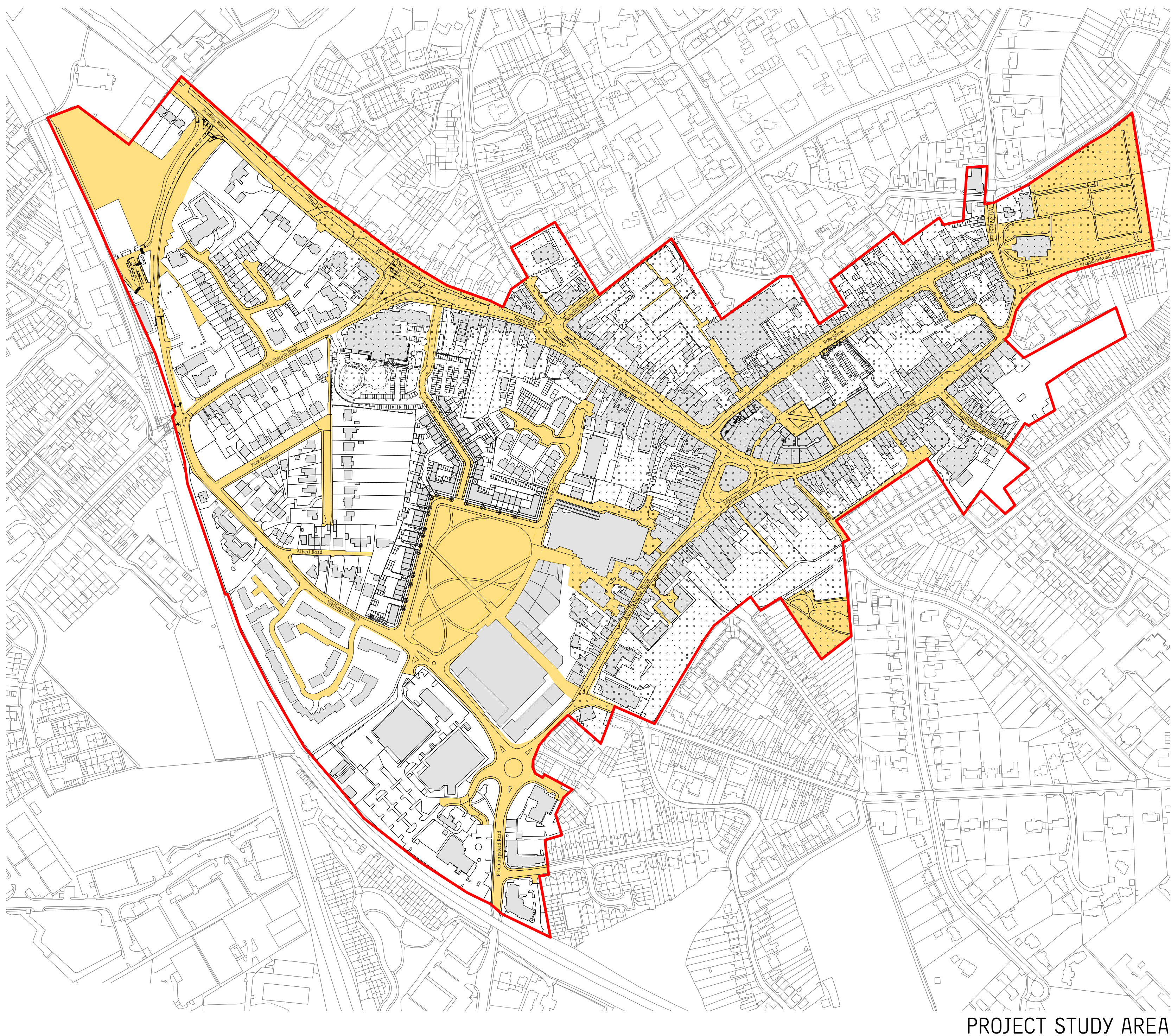
Welcome to this informal public exhibition. We would like your thoughts on our emerging strategy for existing town centre streets and public spaces including Market Place, The Plaza, Denmark Street, Broad Street, Peach Street and Rose Street.

You may wonder what public realm is. It is a term used to describe ‘the spaces between buildings’ amongst other things, this includes the pavements we walk on, the streets we drive down, the seats we sit on and art we look at.

The Strategy, prepared on behalf of Wokingham Borough Council aims to establish a clear and coherent strategic plan for the town centre streets and public spaces to ensure consistency and quality in the appearance of the public realm. The town centre study area for the work is shown on the plan below.

This exhibition shows how the streets and public space could evolve over time. It includes a number of potential projects. These are aspirational and subject to further stages of design, testing, consultation and project funding. Following this exhibition the next stage to get involved will be a six week consultation period on the emerging strategy to take place during the summer.

- STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
- AREAS OF PUBLIC REALM
- CONSERVATION AREA





# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## 2 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES



## PUBLIC REALM VISION

It is crucial that the character and quality of Wokingham's streets and public spaces is enhanced to complement the town's rich architectural heritage and medieval street pattern.

- CREATE STREETS AND SPACES THAT CAREFULLY BALANCE THE NEEDS OF PEDESTRIANS & VEHICLES
- PROVIDE A HIGH QUALITY SETTING FOR WOKINGHAM'S HISTORIC BUILT ENVIRONMENT
- SIMPLIFY THE RANGE OF PAVING MATERIALS & FURNITURE TO REFLECT THE UNIQUE CHARACTER AND QUALITY OF WOKINGHAM
- REMOVE UNNECESSARY STREET CLUTTER
- CLEARLY DEFINE THE ROLE AND IDENTITY OF EACH OF THE STREETS
- IMPROVE THE IMPRESSION OF WOKINGHAM AT KEY TOWN GATEWAYS
- MAXIMISE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR MARKETS & EVENTS
- ENHANCE THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT THROUGH LIGHTING
- PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW TREES & PLANTS
- USE HIGH QUALITY, ROBUST & TIMELESS MATERIALS



# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## 3 TRANSPORT ISSUES AND DESIGN PRINCIPLES

To gain an understanding of Wokingham's road network and traffic conditions the design team undertook comprehensive testing of both the existing and predicted future highway network.

What we found out:

- Wokingham's town centre road network is, and will remain, a busy mix of traffic and pedestrians
- The town is a thriving commercial centre during the day and needs to accommodate a mix of conflicting movements of traffic and pedestrians together with a variety of parking, servicing and public transport movements
- During peak periods in the morning and afternoon, town centre roads accommodate significant through traffic due to a combination of high demand coupled with the lack of alternative routes available.

Design Principles:

- It is crucial that any proposed improvements to streets and public spaces must also maintain capacity for vehicles using the town centre road network and parking and loading activity.
- Raise the status of pedestrian and cycle movements within the town centre network
- Reduce unnecessary carriageway widths to encourage lower traffic speeds
- Increase the amount of space for pedestrian movement and the improve the environmental quality of town centre streets
- Promote informal crossings to help pedestrian movement
- Simplify junctions based on the adoption of low-speed design principles
- Improve the management and enforcement of parking and loading restrictions in the town centre to reduce congestion and provide suitable off-carriageway provision
- Ensure that extents of carriageways, footpaths and pedestrian crossings are clearly defined for the safety of all user groups.



EXAMPLE OF A UK PROJECT WHERE HIGH LEVELS OF TRAFFIC ARE BALANCED AGAINST PEDESTRIANS NEEDS



EXAMPLE OF A UK PROJECT WHERE HIGH LEVELS OF TRAFFIC ARE BALANCED AGAINST PEDESTRIANS NEEDS



WHERE CONFLICTING STREAMS OF TRAFFIC INTERSECT A SIMPLIFIED APPROACH TO TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT IS POSSIBLE BASED UPON DESIGN PRINCIPLES THAT ENCOURAGE LOWER TRAFFIC SPEEDS



# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## 4 POTENTIAL DELIVERABLES

### PLANNING GUIDANCE

The Strategy provides guidance across the town centre project study area. This guidance aims to ensure that all future work to town centre streets and public spaces will comply with a consistent plan and create

continuity in the design, quality and appearance of the public realm. It is anticipated that all projects planned within the town will be informed by this guidance.

### POTENTIAL PROJECTS

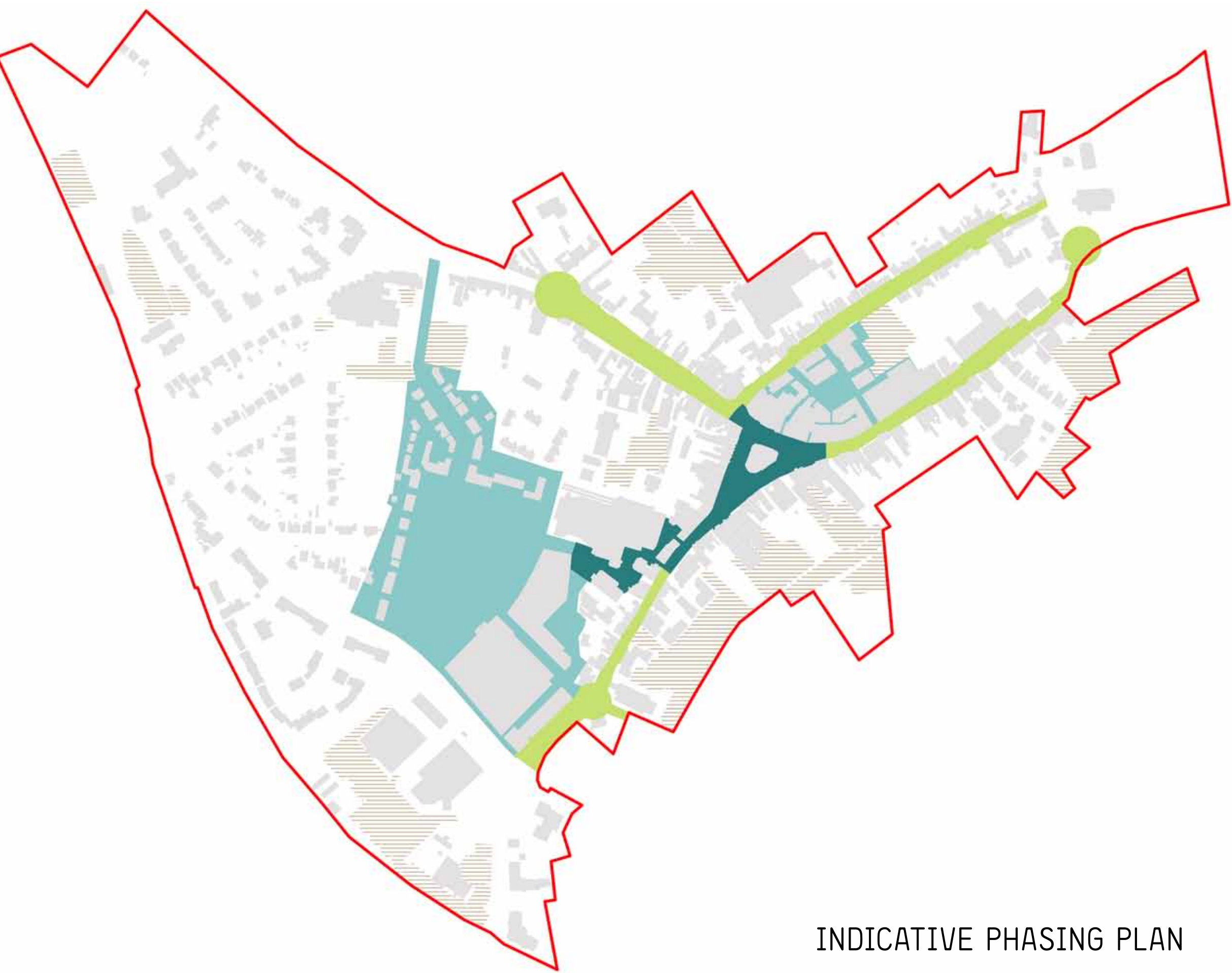
The Strategy includes a number of potential projects, but the list is not exclusive. The potential projects aim to:

- Coordinate improvements to the town centre’s existing street network and key town centre streets and spaces in accordance with clear guidance and strategy
- Support wider regeneration, enhancing the evening economy and improving the competitiveness of the town centre as a destination

- Provide a clear brief to inform the detailed design process. The potential projects are strategic and high level. They will be subject to a detailed design process, further highway testing and consultation before any aspect of them can be built
- Provide a basis to cost and coordinate potential forward funding of town centre public realm improvements via planning contributions.

### INDICATIVE PHASING PLAN

Given the scale of transformation, potential challenges and build costs it is acknowledged that these projects may come forward over many years.



- SHORT TERM: INCLUDING REGENERATION PROJECTS AT ELM’S FIELD AND PEACH PLACE.
- SHORT/MEDIUM TERM: INCLUDING IMPROVEMENTS TO MARKET PLACE AND THE PLAZA (SUBJECT TO FUNDING AND THIRD PARTY NEGOTIATION).
- LONGER TERM: INCLUDING IMPROVEMENTS TO DENMARK STREET, BROAD STREET, ROSE STREET AND PEACH STREET. ALL PROJECTS REQUIRE MORE DETAILED WORK TO ASSESS VIABILITY AND ARE DEPENDANT ON ALTERATIONS TO THE WIDER HIGHWAY NETWORK

INDICATIVE PHASING PLAN



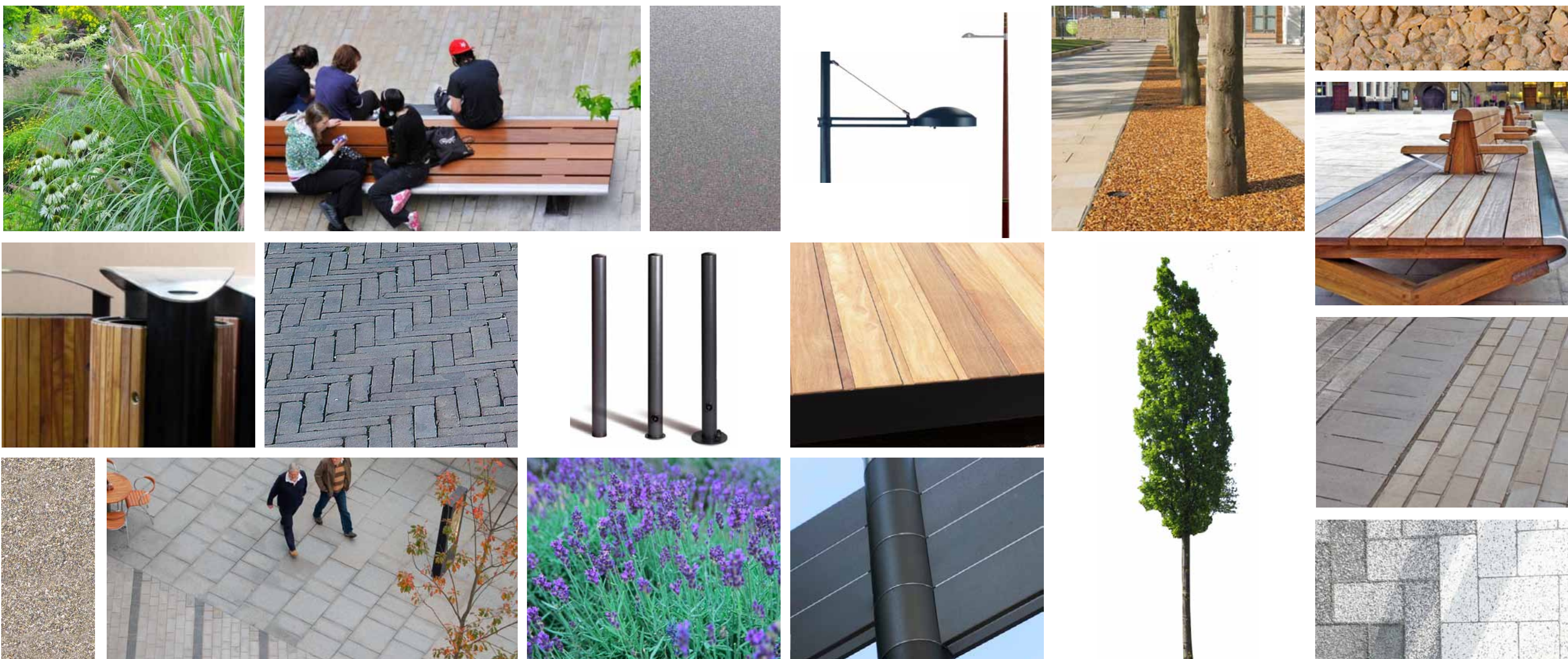
PUBLIC REALM GUIDANCE

In addition to the potential projects. The Public Realm Design and Delivery Strategy provides comprehensive guidance on how paving materials, street furniture, planting, public art and lighting should be designed to provide a distinctive character to the streets and spaces in Wokingham.

Materials used in the public realm should be simple, durable, easy to clean and compliment adjoining historic architecture. Over the years there has been a piecemeal approach to the selection of materials, evident in the existing array of different materials and patterns. The aim of the Public Realm Guidance is to ensure better continuity in the town centre area.

Wokingham has a rich diversity in architecture and styles. Therefore, we propose a really simple approach to materials using a restrained selection of materials throughout the town to unify the streets and spaces and provide an appropriate backdrop that does not compete or clash with the surrounding architecture. This backdrop however will have a richness and use changes in material carefully to either demarcate a change in use or in response to a local variation in the character of the town.

Opportunities for tree planting within the town centre area will also be maximised. However, trees will only be planted where they can reach a mature size without causing unnecessary maintenance issues.



EXAMPLES OF MATERIALS AND FURNITURE SUGGESTED FOR WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE

PUBLIC ART

Public art is best appreciated when it is a fully integrated part of the design. Public art can help the town to assert its individuality, with imaginative and forward looking interpretation of local history which helps to forge a new and distinctive identity

for the town. This for example may include reference to less well known aspects of the town’s history such as events which took place in Market Place such as bull baiting or ox roasting or the town’s reputation in bells and lace industries.



EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC ART WHICH ARE WELL INTEGRATED INTO THE PUBLIC REALM

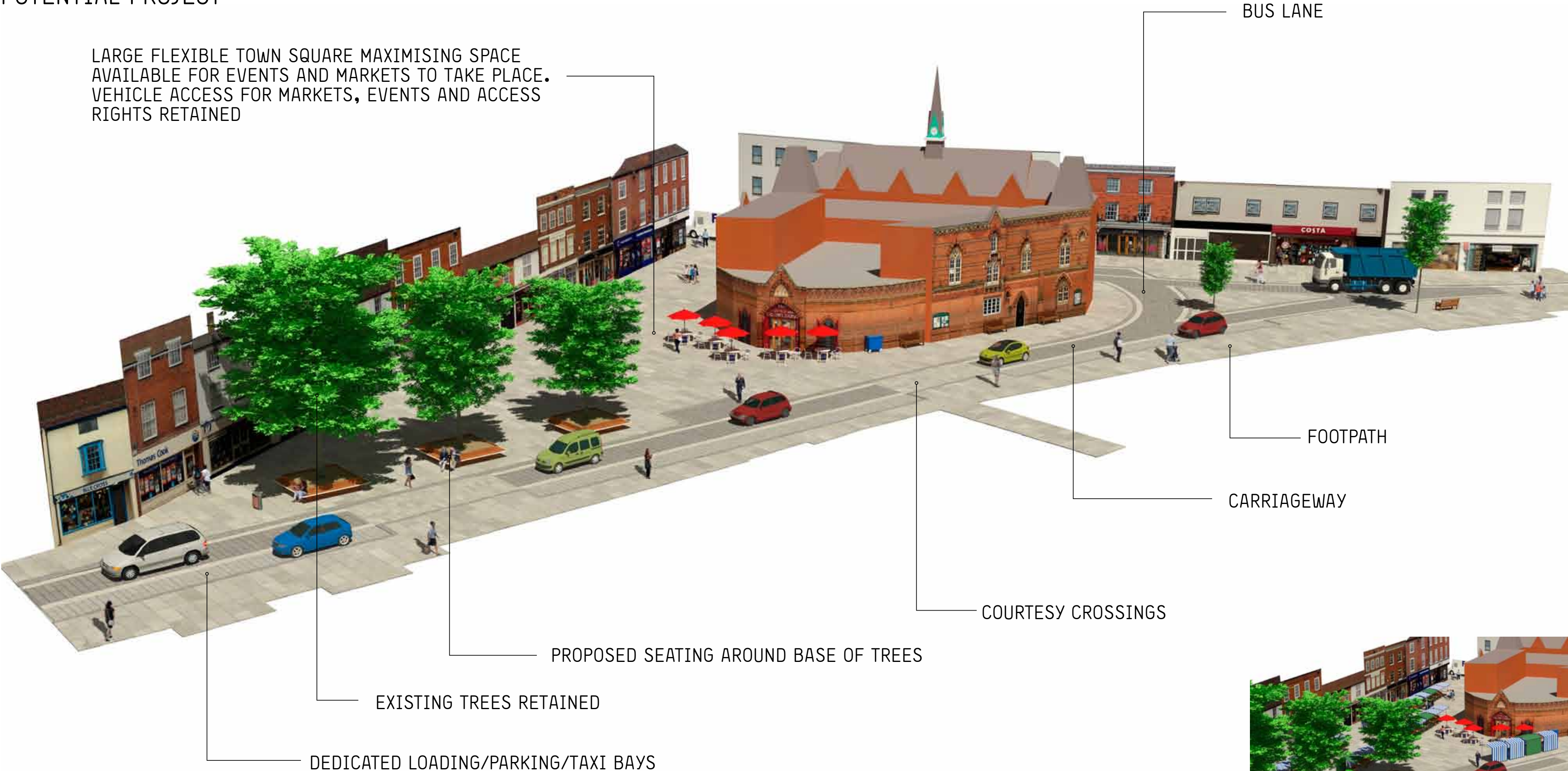


# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## 6 POTENTIAL PROJECTS

### MARKET PLACE

#### POTENTIAL PROJECT



- Market Place to continue hosting markets and important civic events
- Maximise quality and flexibility of the space
- Carriageway potentially re-configured to maximise pavement space, while keeping capacity for vehicles
- Consistent paving material used so Market Place appears as a unified space
- Dedicated loading/parking/taxi bays provided
- Signalised crossings removed and replaced with more frequent 'courtesy crossings'
- Seating positioned around the base of

- mature trees to provide a sheltered place to sit
- Unnecessary street furniture removed from the space to provide more flexible space for the operation of markets and events
- Additional feature lighting provided to key buildings, trees and seating
- Existing cafe spill out space retained
- Existing bus lane retained to the north east of the Town Hall building
- Power supply provided to space for markets and events



CURRENT

### THE PLAZA

#### POTENTIAL PROJECT



- Dark, slippery pavers replaced with light coloured, high quality materials
- More seating provided
- Walls of planters to be rendered or re clad
- Evergreen planting replaced with more colourful planting and ornamental grasses to add colour and interest
- Step and ramp access between The Plaza and Denmark Street retained
- Feature lighting added
- Outdoor café spill out space retained
- Opportunities for 'pop up shops' and stalls to be explored
- Potentially incorporate public art and lighting



CURRENT



# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## 7 POTENTIAL PROJECTS

### DENMARK STREET NORTH

POTENTIAL PROJECT



- Carriageway potentially re-configured to maximise pavement space, while keeping capacity for vehicles
- Wider footpaths remove the 'pinch points' at narrowest sections of the street
- Consistent paving materials used
- Unnecessary clutter removed from streets
- Remaining street furniture located in single organising strip
- Loading/parking/taxi bays provided in defined bays where width of the street permits
- 'Courtesy crossings' provided for improved pedestrian accessibility



CURRENT

### DENMARK STREET SOUTH

POTENTIAL PROJECT



- Carriageway potentially re-configured to maximise pavement space, while keeping capacity for vehicles
- Access to Denmark Street Car Park provided via Langborough Road to the south to remove two way traffic to the southern part of Denmark Street.
- Space made available for street tree planting at this important entry point into the town centre
- Unnecessary clutter removed from streets
- Remaining street furniture located in single organising strip
- Consistent paving materials used
- 'Courtesy crossings' provided for improved pedestrian accessibility



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# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## 8 POTENTIAL PROJECTS

### BROAD STREET

POTENTIAL PROJECT



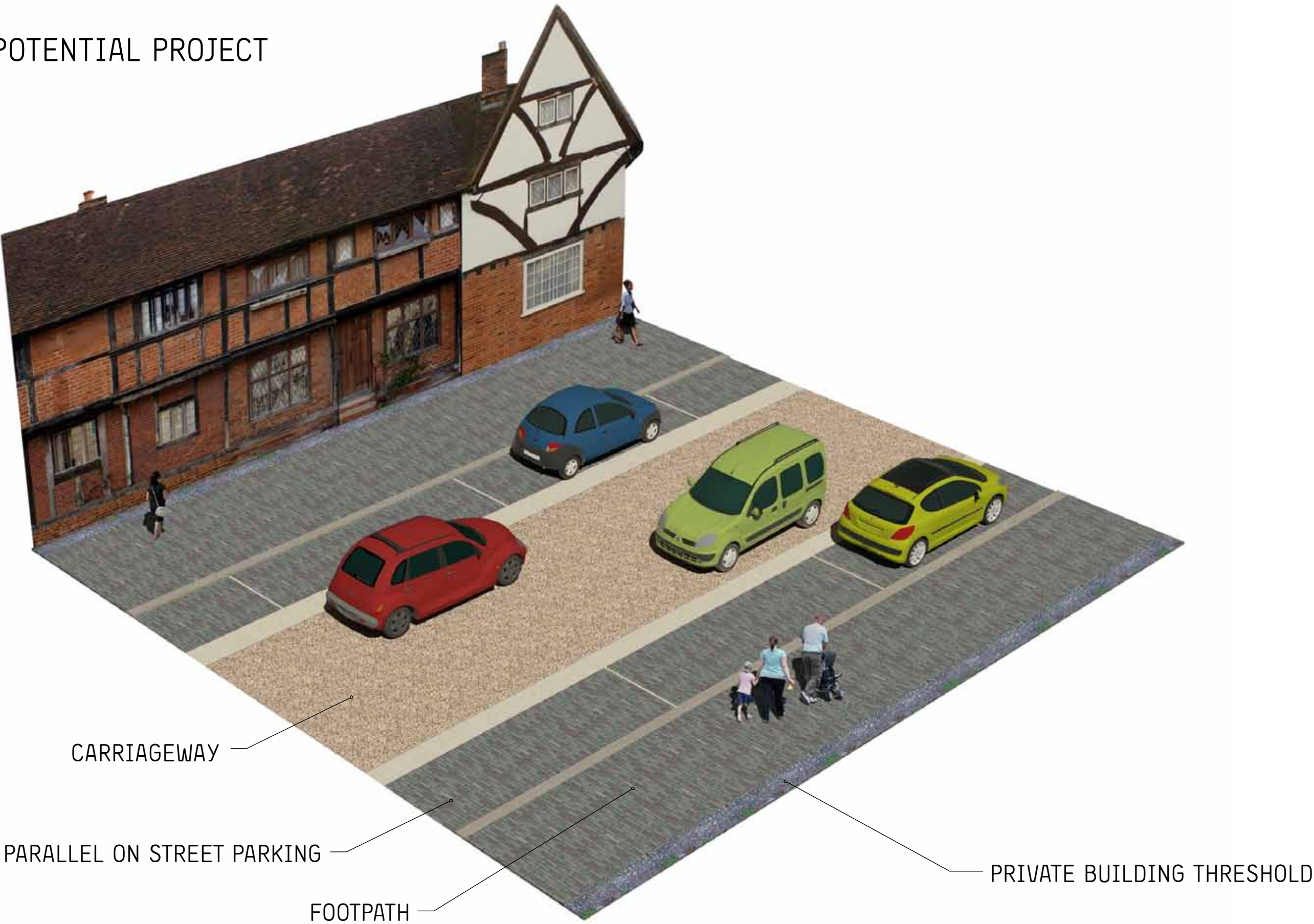
- Carriageway potentially reconfigured to maximise pavement space, while keeping capacity for vehicles
- Wider pavements provided to maximise space available for pedestrians and allow for a formal avenue of street trees to be planted to the length of Broad Street
- Signalised crossings replaced with more frequent 'courtesy crossings'
- High quality paving to provide better continuity through the town centre
- Loading/taxi/parking bays and bus stops provided in designated bays
- Unnecessary clutter removed from streets
- Remaining street furniture located in single organising strip



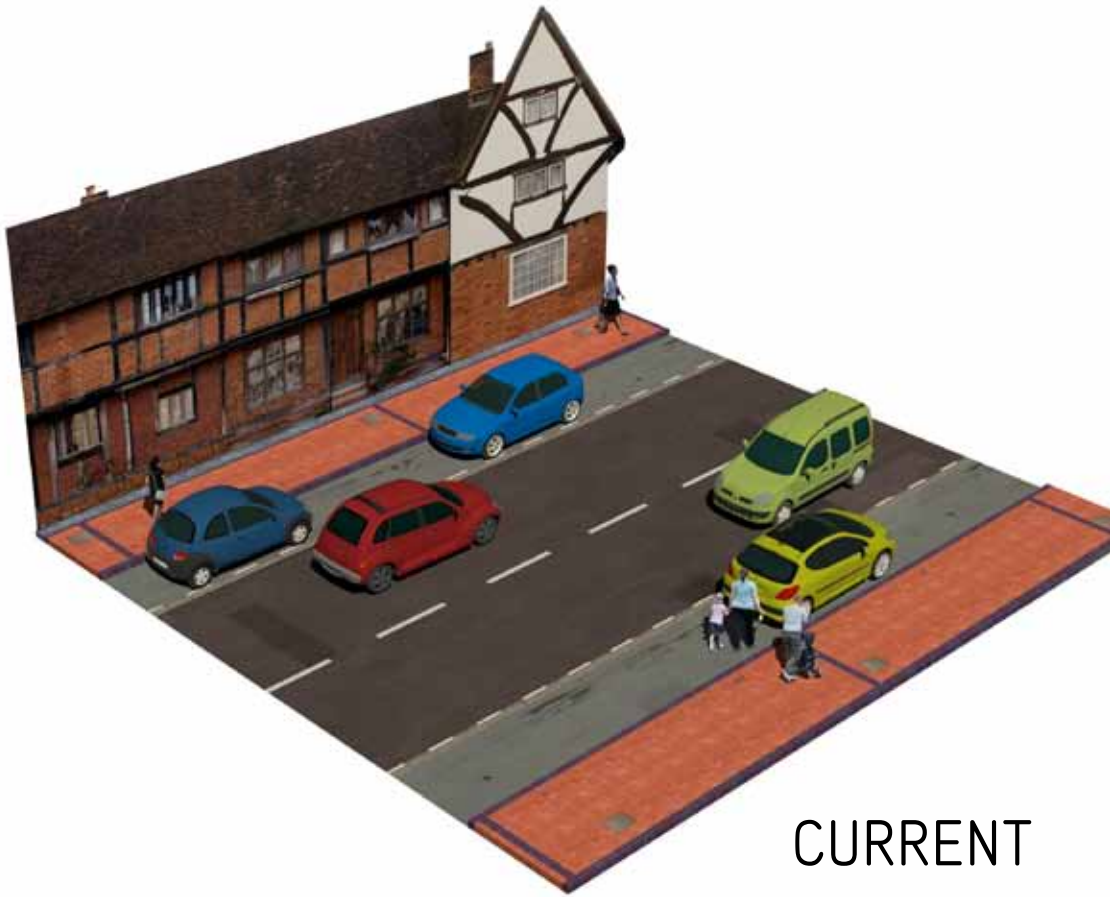
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### ROSE STREET

POTENTIAL PROJECT



- Carriageway potentially reconfigured to maximise pavement space, while keeping capacity for vehicles
- Wider footpaths provided removing 'pinch points' at narrow sections of the street
- Wider footpaths to position parked vehicles further away from buildings to improve the visibility of historic buildings
- Clearly defined parallel on street parking retained
- Slippery pavers which visually clash with the colour surrounding brick buildings replaced with a high quality, slip resistant paver
- Materials to be unique to Rose Street to reflect the predominantly residential character of Rose Street



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# WOKINGHAM TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM DESIGN AND DELIVERY STRATEGY

## 9 POTENTIAL PROJECTS

### PEACH STREET EAST

POTENTIAL PROJECT



- Carriageway potentially reconfigured to maximise pavement space, while keeping capacity for vehicles
- Potential reconfiguration of Peach Street to a single lane to improve pedestrian amenity whilst maintaining capacity for vehicular traffic
- Footpath underneath the Overhangs building significantly widened
- Signalised crossings replaced with more frequent 'courtesy crossings'
- Loading/parking activity formalised into designated bays
- Inconsistent paving replaced with consistent use of high quality materials
- Additional tree planting proposed to this important gateway to the town centre
- Unnecessary clutter removed from the street
- Remaining street furniture located in single organising strip



### PEACH STREET WEST

POTENTIAL PROJECT



- Carriageway potentially reconfigured to maximise pavement space, while keeping capacity for vehicles
- Potential reconfiguration of Peach Street to a single lane to improve pedestrian amenity whilst maintaining capacity for vehicular traffic
- Signalised crossings replaced with more frequent 'courtesy crossings'
- Loading and parking activity formalised into designated bays
- Inconsistent paving replaced with consistent use of high quality materials
- Unnecessary clutter removed from the street
- Remaining street furniture located in single organising strip

