

HEREFORD CITY MASTERPLAN

A VISION FOR OUR CITY IN 2050
CONSULTATION DRAFT
SPRING 2023



CONTENTS

4 INTRODUCTION

- 6 Foreword
- 7 Listening to you
- 8 Why does Hereford need a masterplan?
- 10 Forces driving change
- 13 Local policy context
- 16 What makes a great place?

18 UNDERSTANDING HEREFORD

- 21 Hereford: the story so far
- 24 **Theme 1:** Movement
- 32 **Theme 2:** Communities and Culture
- 38 **Theme 3:** The Economy and Opportunities
- 44 **Theme 4:** Landscape and Wildlife
- 54 **Theme 5:** Places and Spaces

60 OUR VISION FOR 2050

64 OVERVIEW OF MOVEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2050

80 THE 12 BIG IDEAS

- 85 **Big Idea 1:** A network of neighbourhoods
- 93 **Big Idea 2:** People-friendly streets
- 109 **Big Idea 3:** Historic walls and gateways
- 121 **Big Idea 4:** Revealing the historic core
- 141 **Big Idea 5:** A vibrant historic core
- 157 **Big Idea 6:** Hereford, university city
- 167 **Big Idea 7:** Reconnecting to the River Wye
- 174 **Big Idea 8:** The Station Quarter
- 188 **Big Idea 9:** Commercial Road Corridor
- 201 **Big Idea 10:** Reestablishing the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal
- 207 **Big Idea 11:** Enterprise and Innovation corridor
- 213 **Big Idea 12:** The Lugg Green Lung
- 219 Data sources
- 221 Delivery
- 222 Next steps

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Foreword
- ▶ Listening to you
- ▶ Why does Hereford need a masterplan?
- ▶ Forces driving change
- ▶ Local policy context
- ▶ What makes a great place?



FOREWORD

With an emerging Local Plan, a recently approved Big Economic Plan in development and a new Local Transport Plan, including a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan to come, Herefordshire Council is publishing in draft a detailed masterplan for Hereford.

This celebrates the city's character and provides a blueprint for making it an even better place to live, work and visit in the future.

The draft masterplan will set out our vision to enhance the character of the city and improve connections to the market towns and villages nearby.

Our aim is to make Hereford an even better city, a greener, healthier and safer place to live, work, study and visit – and crucially, an easier place to get around.

Investing in good comprehensive planning for the city, comprising a strategy and outline plans, will mean we are ready to make compelling bids for capital funding when the opportunities arise.

Priorities set out in these pages include:

- **Ensuring the city is easier to get to and better connected with nearby villages, towns and counties, whether travelling on foot by bike by car, bus or train.**
- **Broadening the choice in how to move about, reducing short-trip car journeys, tackling congestion and improving air quality.**

- **Making Hereford's streets more people-friendly, improving infrastructure for walking, wheeling (by wheelchair or other mobility aid) and cycling.**
- **Improving transport connectivity to enable businesses to increase trade, improve productivity, attract inward investment and better enable local people to access employment and training.**
- **Improving the city as a place enhancing the historic centre.**
- **Maximising green space, exploring the potential for new affordable, high-quality city centre homes.**
- **Reducing carbon emissions while adapting the city and its suburbs for a changing climate.**

We have spoken to many of you and listened to what you have told us. This is the start of a journey. We will consult on this draft document later in 2023 and look forward to many further conversations as we work with you to ensure the masterplan will make the most positive contribution and stand the test of time.

Cllr John Harrington

Cabinet Member, Infrastructure and Transport

LISTENING TO YOU

Extensive engagement has been undertaken to inform the draft masterplan.

Stakeholder conversations took place between spring and autumn 2022 to hear the views of key organisations and groups closely involved in the future of the city.

From 2 December 2022 until 3 February 2023, we took an engagement programme across the community to:

- **Inform residents, businesses and stakeholders in and around Hereford about the emerging city masterplan and hear your priorities for the future of Hereford.**
- **Provide many opportunities to find out about the masterplan, online and in person, and give your views, making it easy to take part.**
- **Provide meaningful opportunities for feedback, and listen to what you have told us as we shape the emerging proposals.**

This has included:

- **A virtual exhibition on the Commonplace engagement portal available online via herefordshire.gov.uk/consultations.**
- **A non-staffed exhibition with display boards in Maylord Orchards shopping centre.**
- **Display boards and surveys available from 9 January to 3 February 2023 at all libraries and customer service centres in the county of Herefordshire.**

Feedback received

393 respondents took part in the survey (of which 20 were hard copy) and a further 161 respondents viewed individual comments and agreed. Over 2,000 comments were received on the masterplan via the survey.

In addition, 324 pins/comments were placed on the Commonplace engagement map identifying issues or opportunities in and around Hereford and a further 627 respondents viewed individual comments and agreed.

Many commented on the need for better public transport and issues for those living in rural areas to shift away from car use and having a bypass. Concerns were raised about those who rely on their cars, such as those who live in rural areas, are older or disabled.

Many would like to see focus on promoting economic growth in the county and support for businesses. There is a need for safe cycling and walking routes within and around the city. Reducing car use in the city could be encouraged by better public transport, making the city attractive to visitors or having a park and ride system. Some are concerned about new housing and development which is linked to concerns about a lack of infrastructure to service new homes.

Regarding heritage and enhancement of the city, the river and canal are seen as specific heritage assets and work could be undertaken to enhance these.

Many are in favour of enhancing the natural environment within the city, with more trees as well as wildflower meadows and other green spaces.

WHY DOES HEREFORD NEED A MASTERPLAN?

Hereford is a vibrant, attractive city, with a rich history and a central role in the success of the wider county. However, the city faces a number of challenges – including climate change and the biodiversity crisis. For the first time, this masterplan takes a holistic approach to placemaking and provides a blueprint to shape development in the city for a generation.

Hereford is the county town of Herefordshire. It provides regionally important employment, retail, leisure and learning opportunities used by those living and working in the city as well as in the surrounding towns and villages. It is also the focal point for visitors to the county.

However, residents and visitors alike will understand that there are challenges to address in order to continue to allow the city to reach its full potential.

The city needs more homes and employment land to ensure that future generations of people can thrive here. It also needs to adapt to climate change, address the biodiversity emergency and build a stronger and more prosperous economy.

Despite these challenges, there are clear opportunities to create a more sustainable, attractive, vibrant and economically active Hereford, which more sensitively embraces its heritage.

While work has already been done by the Council and others to shape parts of the city, this masterplan is the first to provide critical thinking as to how Hereford functions overall as a place. The masterplan seeks to:

- Provide a clear and consistent vision for the evolution of the city.
- Identify the sequence of inter-related activities required to achieve this vision.
- Guide developers, transport operators and local organisations, providing a common route-map to realise a successful shared future.

The masterplan will inform the work programme for the Council and key emerging strategies, including the Local Plan Review and new Local Transport Plan.

The masterplan uses an evidence-based approach which considers the whole city as a place. It sets out the key findings and recommendations for Hereford in the form of a vision, strategic objectives and 12 'Big Ideas' for the city. The masterplan is supported by a body of evidence-based work considering issues including transport, the historic environment and green and blue infrastructure. It is backed up by a comprehensive GIS mapping package.

The long timeframe of both this masterplan and the Council's 'Big Economic Plan' allows them to be ambitious and to demonstrate what Hereford could look like by 2050. The majority of the 'Big Ideas' set out in this masterplan will not be fully delivered within the first five years, although some will.

Given its intended long timeframe, the masterplan is drawn up with the understanding that conditions are likely to change significantly within the 25+ years until 2050. Even with the highest quality evidence base, such changes cannot be easily predicted. The COVID-19 pandemic was evidence enough of that reality. As such, the masterplan is prepared as a flexible document which includes a long-term vision for Hereford, and a pathway showing how this can be delivered.

The Council has taken the lead in the development of the masterplan but recognises that it cannot deliver its ambitions alone. This will require collaboration with partners and stakeholders across the city.



Hereford Cathedral with the Wye Bridge in the foreground.

FORCES DRIVING CHANGE

At the highest level there are significant pressures being felt in the UK and wider global context which influence how Hereford will need to adapt. It is crucial to address these 'forces driving change' in order to create a successful masterplan. They are summarised into three categories: Climate Change, Biodiversity and Economy and Prosperity.

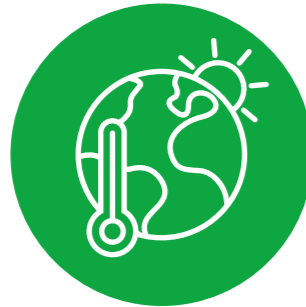
Climate change

Human-driven climate change will affect the lives of everyone. Those who live, work in and visit Hereford are no exception to this.

Recent events Hereford has experienced include severe flooding and unusually warm temperatures. Both are examples of how climate can affect us. Climate modelling suggests that climate change will result in increased rainfall during wet periods and higher average temperatures.

The UK Government has adopted a legally binding target to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions from across the UK economy by 2050. Herefordshire Council in turn declared a climate emergency in March 2019 and aims to be net zero by 2030.

As a sector, transport is responsible for the greatest contribution to Herefordshire carbon emissions, at 36% (higher than the UK average). The Government has set out its ambition for 'public transport and active travel to be the natural first choice for our daily activities'. This is one of the reasons why transport and movement ambitions sit at the heart of this masterplan.

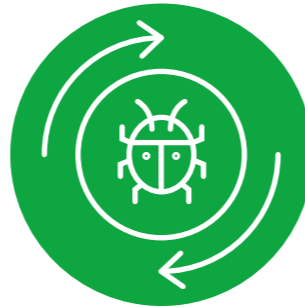


The biodiversity crisis

The UK is also experiencing a significant decline in biodiversity, which is driven in part by climate change. Since 1970, the abundance of UK species has declined by 13%. The UK Government's landmark **Dasgupta Review** highlights that our economies, livelihoods and wellbeing all depend on natural assets.

In 2021, Herefordshire Council updated its climate change declaration to reflect the ecological crisis. This recognised in particular the declining ecological status of internationally important areas such as the Rivers Wye and Lugg, which wind around the city.

Delivering more nature-rich spaces within and around Hereford to address biodiversity decline is another key driving force behind this masterplan. This will create additional habitat, bring wildlife back into the city and help people and nature to adapt to the inevitable effects of climate change.

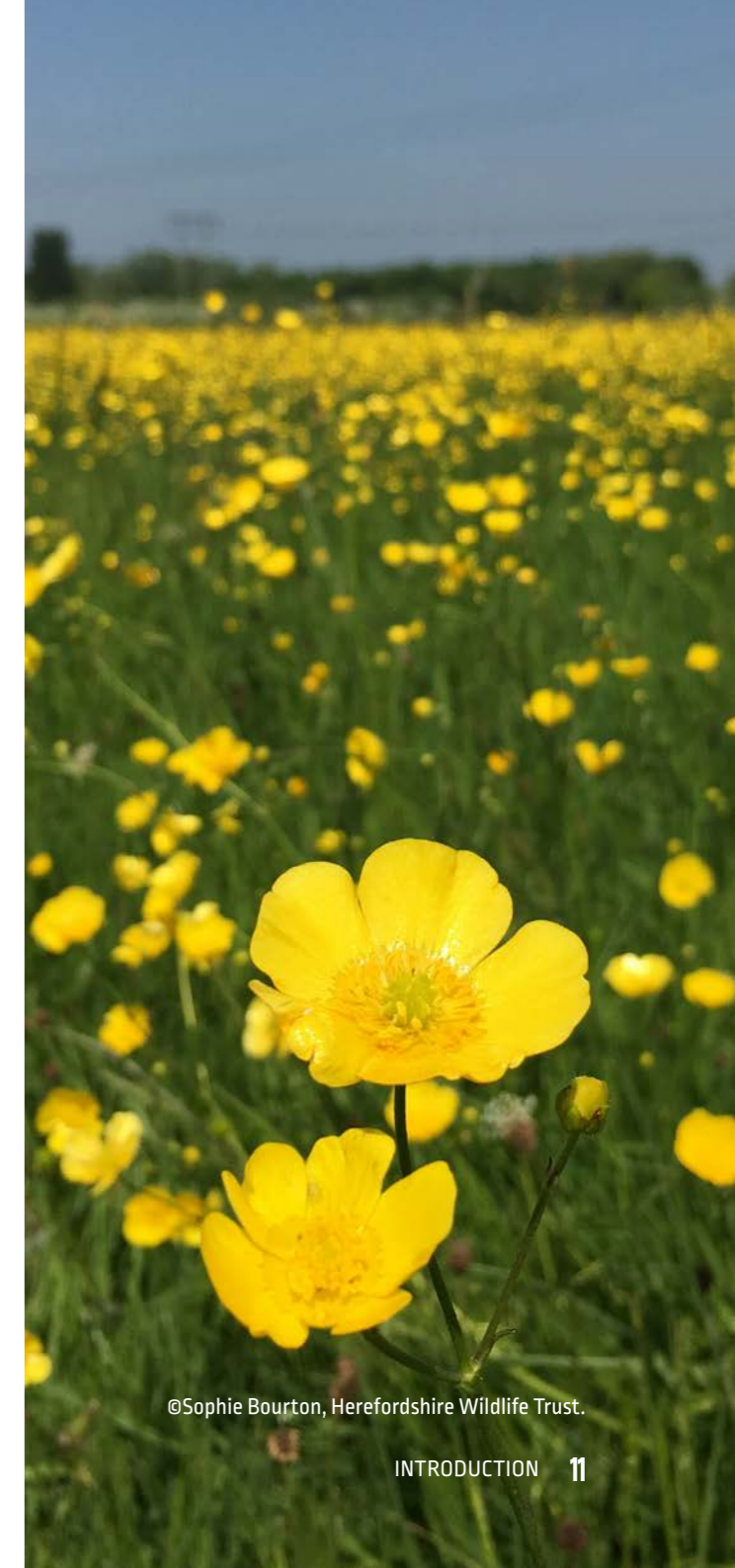


Economy and prosperity

Inequality within the economy and the drive to 'level up' is another key national issue that is reflected in Hereford. England's Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) shows that the majority of Herefordshire's most deprived areas are concentrated in the Hereford City area. It also highlights an apparent socio-economic divide between the north and south of Hereford.

As reflected in the city's Big Economic Plan, some key ways in which the masterplan can tackle inequality include creating greater opportunities for employment, expanding access to green space and increasing the ability of people to travel easily using public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling.

Much like the rest of the UK, the population of Hereford is expected to grow throughout the period of the masterplan. The city needs to provide places for people of all ages to live and work – where they can access jobs, shops and leisure opportunities on foot or by bike. This will be supported by delivering urban renewal and regeneration within central areas of the city.



©Sophie Bourton, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust.



LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

This masterplan sets out a framework for transport, wildlife corridors and redevelopment opportunities within the city. However, it does not exist in isolation. That is why it is important to review the policy context within which the masterplan sits, and to understand how it can influence policy throughout its lifetime.

The Herefordshire Local Plan

Herefordshire Council's Local Plan sets out the strategy and direction for how the county will develop. The existing Local Plan (being updated at the time of writing) will guide development up until 2031 and sets out a number of objectives for Hereford. These include the need for 6,500 new homes and 15 hectares of employment space to be provided in the city, and guidance around where these should be located.

The Local Plan also sets out strategic priorities for the area. These focus in particular on mitigating and adapting to climate change, protecting the natural environment and built heritage, improving air and water quality, revitalising the city centre, achieving high-quality design and minimising the use of new resources.

A key area for the masterplan to consider is the Local Plan's Hereford City Centre Policy area. This sets out the 'urban village' allocation – an area north of the city centre set to provide the space for the majority of 800 new homes. While some parts of this development have come forward, this masterplan helps to provide a strategy to unlock the delivery of the rest. The Local Plan also includes three 'strategic urban extensions' to the north, west and south of the city.

While development proposals for these areas are being developed outside the scope of this masterplan, the masterplan considers how these areas can be integrated into the rest of the city and contribute to place objectives. The Local Plan is supported by a number of supplementary planning documents (SPDs) which provide more detail on how the Local Plan should be implemented. Of particular relevance to this masterplan are the following:

- Environmental Building Standards SPD
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Planning Obligations SPD
- Draft Design Guide SPD (currently being prepared by the Council)

As stated, the existing Local Plan is currently being reviewed and updated. This masterplan will form a key part of the evidence base for that review, alongside an updated transport model for the county. The process of putting together this masterplan was carried out in close consultation with the Council's Local Plan team to ensure that all relevant consultation responses were taken into account.

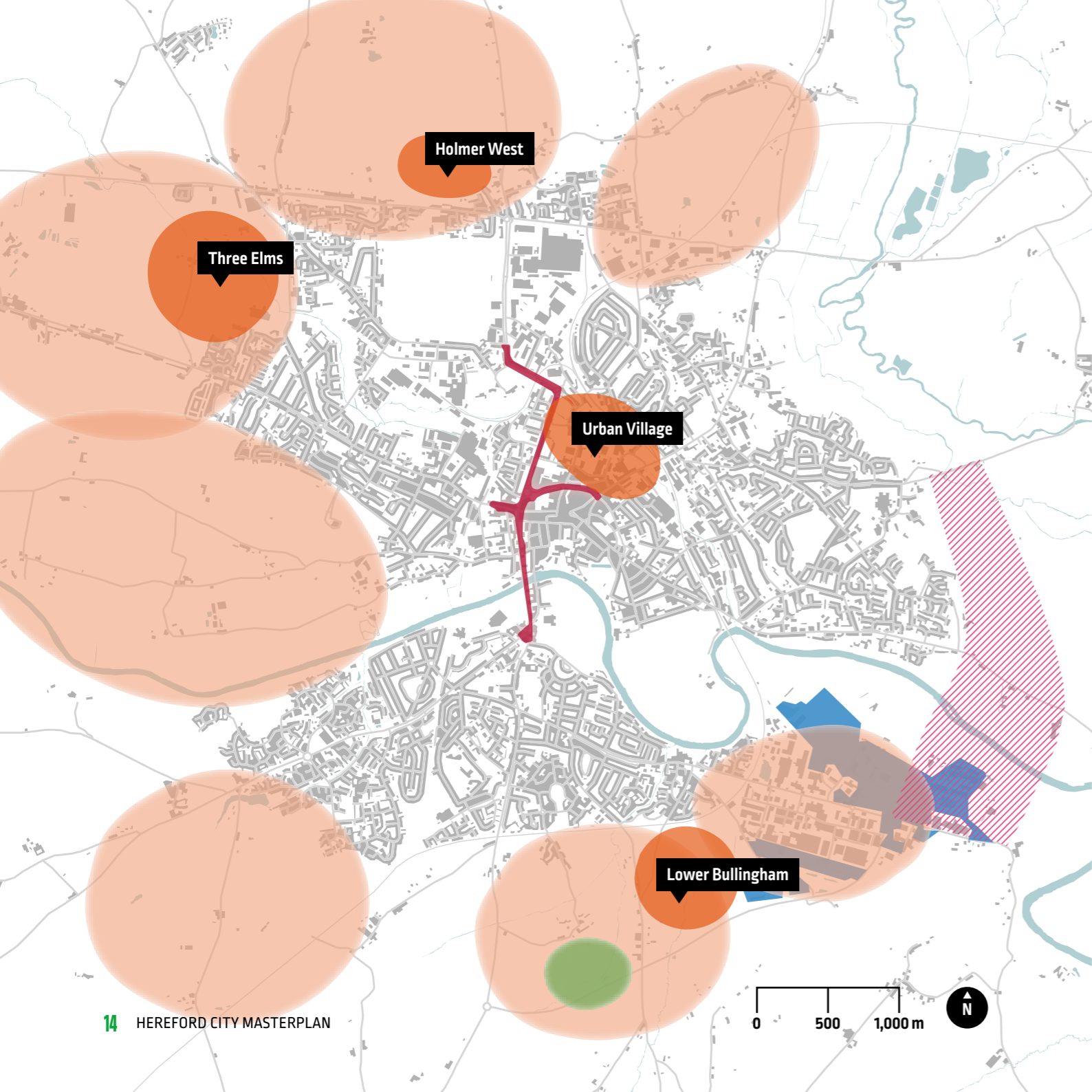








Figure 1

Strategic Allocations in Hereford's Adopted Plan

-  Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)
-  Rotherwas Enterprise Zone
-  Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)
-  Development allocation
-  Proposed country park
-  Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones (Local Plan)

The masterplan will not be allocating sites for development. That is the job of the Local Plan, which will consider potential development sites through a strict series of processes prior to allocation. Instead, the masterplan identifies opportunity areas for future development. These opportunities can be worked through in greater detail when preparing future iterations of the Local Plan up to 2050.



▲ Inside the Shell Store at the Hereford Enterprise Zone.

The Local Transport Plan

Herefordshire's Local Transport Plan (LTP) describes the Council's strategy for how the transport network within the county will develop and be maintained. It also sets out allocations for spending on matters such as road maintenance and new transport interventions. The current LTP covers the period to 2031 and its ambition is for a transport network for Herefordshire that:

- Enables economic growth.
- Provides a good quality transport network for all users.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles.
- Makes journeys safer, easier and healthier.
- Ensures access to services for those living in rural areas.

A new Local Transport Plan is due to be prepared. This masterplan will form a part of the evidence base for this work.

The Big Economic Plan

A 'Big Economic Plan' (BEP) for Herefordshire is currently being prepared. Its emerging findings and recommendations have been incorporated into the thinking described in the masterplan. The BEP will set out a wide-ranging review of the economic weaknesses, strengths and opportunities in Herefordshire.



WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE?

This masterplan takes an integrated approach to planning for Hereford's future – one which is underpinned by the importance of the city as a place.

Places are more than spaces, or collections of buildings and roads. Places stimulate feelings. People use places; they move through places; and they form memories, bonds and attachments to places.

Historic places like Hereford have stood for longer than all of us and can tell stories that pass down from generation to generation. Places shape us and we shape them.

This masterplan provides the opportunity to help Hereford get a step ahead of the challenges faced by the city. Setting a clear vision for Hereford and strategic objectives to get there will shape the direction of change and help to deliver the best place Hereford can be.

That will mean celebrating and growing our best places, reinvigorating our less-loved ones, rediscovering our historic places, adapting places for the future and planning new places that excite us.

A great place needs to deliver on several fronts simultaneously. We think of these as five key themes which work together to shape Hereford. All these themes need to support each other to make a great place. In the following pages, we go through each of them in turn to understand how Hereford is performing today and the challenges it faces.



UNDERSTANDING HEREFORD

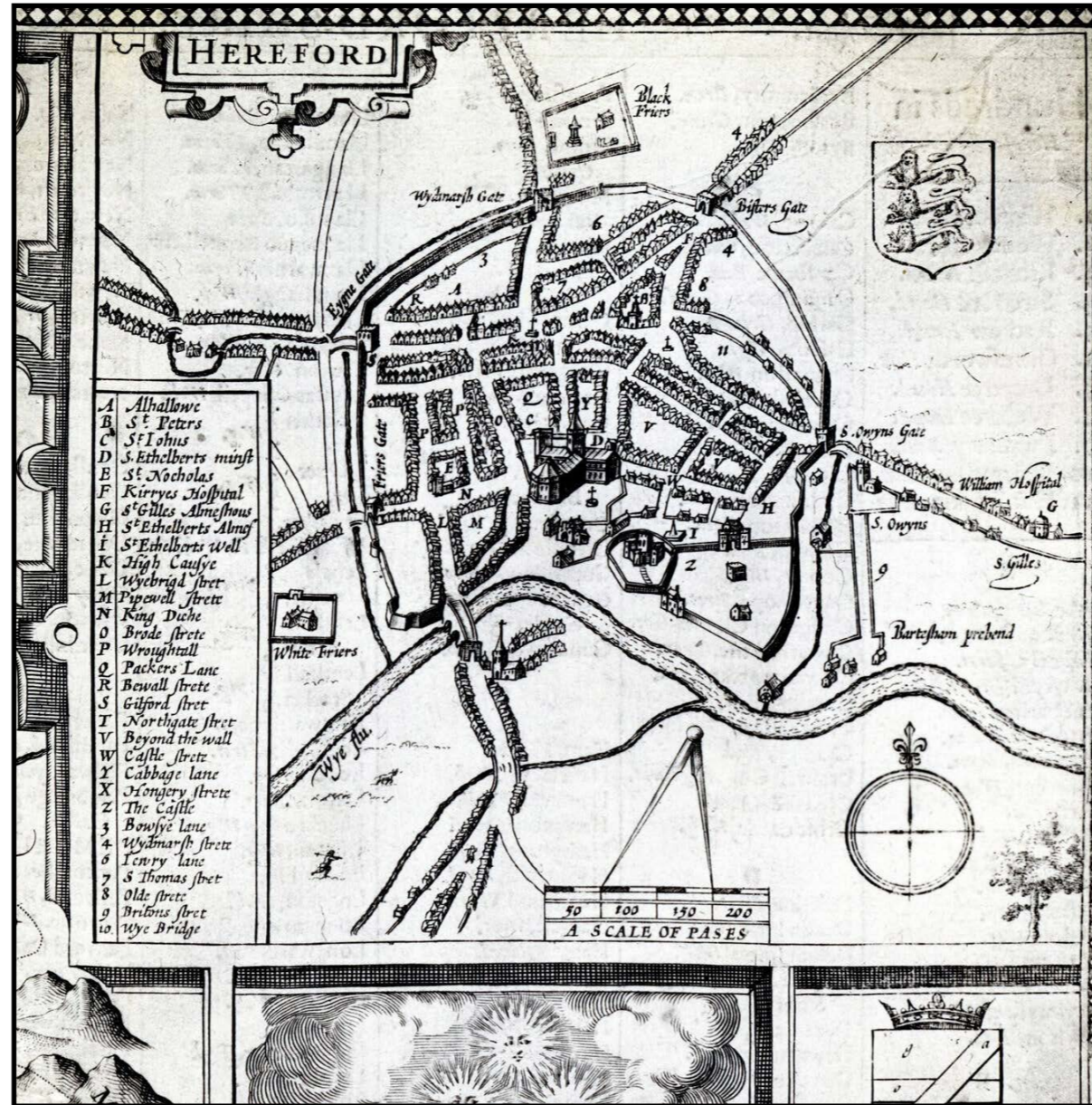
- ▶ Hereford: the story so far
- ▶ **Theme 1:** Movement
- ▶ **Theme 2:** Communities and Culture
- ▶ **Theme 3:** The Economy and Opportunities
- ▶ **Theme 4:** Landscape and Wildlife
- ▶ **Theme 5:** Places and Spaces





▲ A glimpse of Hereford's historic city walls.

- ▼ The Hereford breed of cattle originated in the county in the 18th century. Hereford cattle are now reared all over the globe.



▲ John Speed – Map of Hereford 1610. ©Herefordshire Council.

HEREFORD: THE STORY SO FAR

Hereford is something of a living artefact, where the ancient core still defines the structure of the modern city. The historic environment of the city is so pervasive that it is difficult to find locations in the city centre streets where you are not looking at or standing on top of an important piece of the city's history.



Hereford Cathedral viewed across the River Wye.

A rich heritage

Hereford has a very high density of designated and non-designated heritage assets, both above ground and below ground. Together they help to tell the story of the city.

The city's 'buried heritage' is reflected by its scheduled monument designations and the city's status as one of only five Areas of Archaeological Interest in England. This archaeology is an irreplaceable resource that has already revealed, and can reveal more, about eras, activities and societies that are not well documented, recorded or understood.

The story this archaeology tells is of Hereford as a Christian centre and as a defended settlement. However, it also tells of a place that has been continuously occupied since the 7th century – somewhere generations of people have lived, worked, worshipped and died in an unbroken sequence.

For a number of reasons, Hereford's below-ground heritage assets have not been subject to the same level of loss or destruction in the modern era compared to other towns and cities in England. While archaeological investigations have already revealed much, the ground beneath the city holds the potential to yield much more evidence about the past.

Revealing Hereford's past and adapting the city for the future

The city centre's network and hierarchy of streets, yards, passages and building plots is a mixture of Saxon, Norman and medieval planning – with relatively few later incursions. Medieval defensive walls still inform the city's structure and movement routes, even though only remnants are visible. It is remarkable that the 'Speed Map' of 1610 can still be used today to navigate around Hereford.

This historical development pattern gifts Hereford with a network of beautiful historic streets, spaces and passages and a harmonious historic townscape. Buildings erected and replaced over the recent decades and centuries have largely 'slotted in' to the city's established grain and layout, rather than disrupting it. The city today is a visual feast of architectural styles, building materials and uses. However, its skyline remains as it has been for centuries, dominated by the towers and spires of the Cathedral and city-centre churches.

In the context of the climate and ecological emergency, it is also important to understand that Hereford's historic environment represents a reservoir of 'embodied carbon' that has survived due to the city's ability to adapt to new uses and meet the changing requirements of its occupiers. As a result, the historic environment can play an important role in minimising the carbon footprint of present and future generations through the sensitive adaptation and reuse of buildings and sites.

Hereford's historic environment also provides a highly distinctive, ready-made context for placemaking – setting a high bar for the quality of new development. Through a considered, sensitive, but above all creative approach to conversion, new build and redevelopment, it is possible for 21st-century development to create a legacy that reinforces and sustains the distinctive character of the city.



▲ St Peter is one of five parishes founded in Hereford in the late 11th century. The spire of the present church is a key part of Hereford's skyline.



▲ The remains of the 14th-century Blackfriars Priory are testament to Hereford's role as a religious centre. It is the best-surviving of four such complexes that existed in the city in medieval times.



▲ The way Hereford has developed over time means the city centre has a rich variety of architecture, building types and building materials. Looking up at the buildings and their detailing is always rewarding.



▲ Hereford is the product of layers of activity and development. St Peter's Street is part of a possible Roman route running east-west through the city.

THEME 1

MOVEMENT

As a legacy of 20th-century car-centred planning, vehicle traffic has come to dominate Hereford to the detriment of space for play and travelling to school or work. Hereford's transport challenges also pose problems for net zero targets, air quality and economic prosperity.

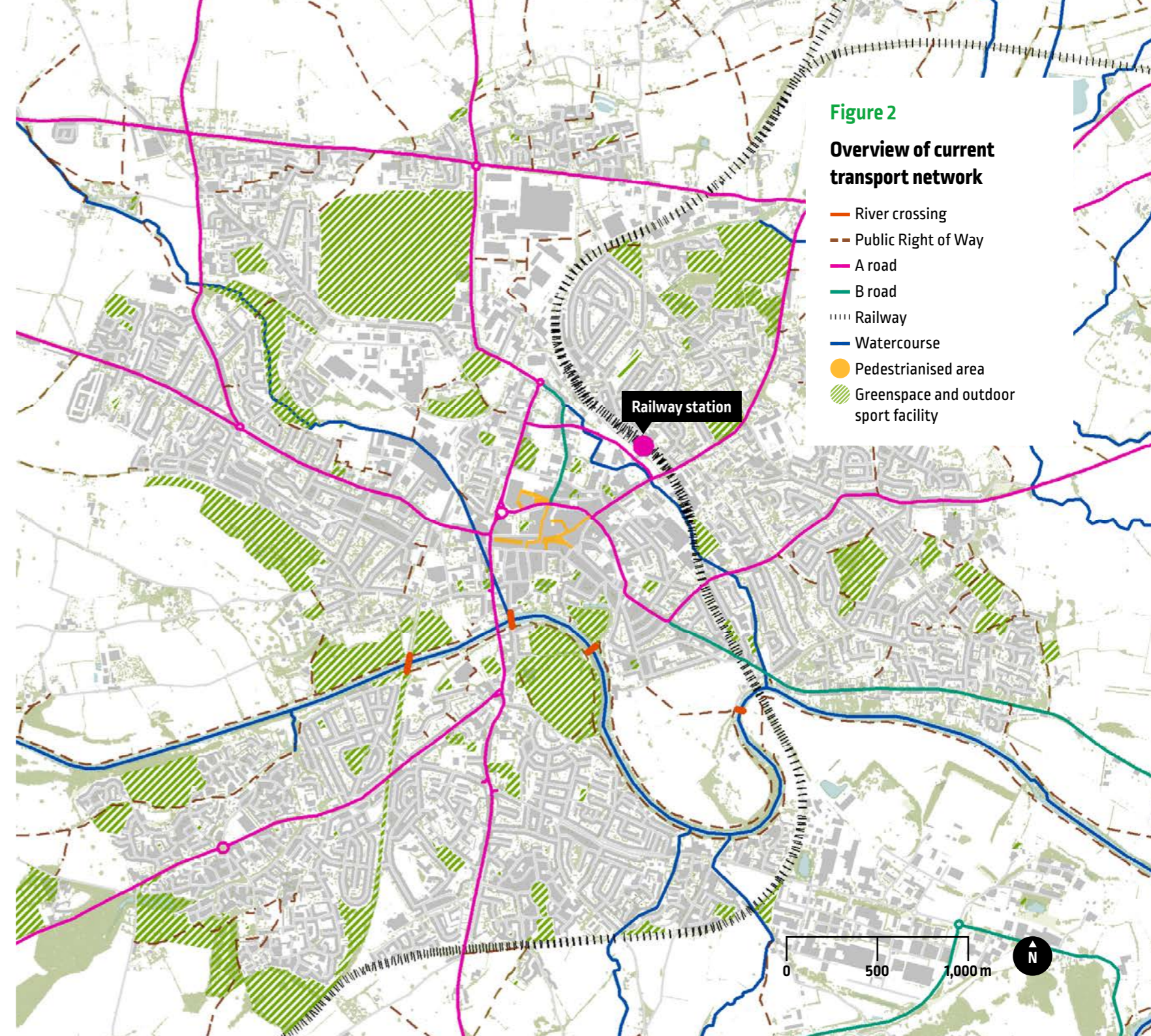
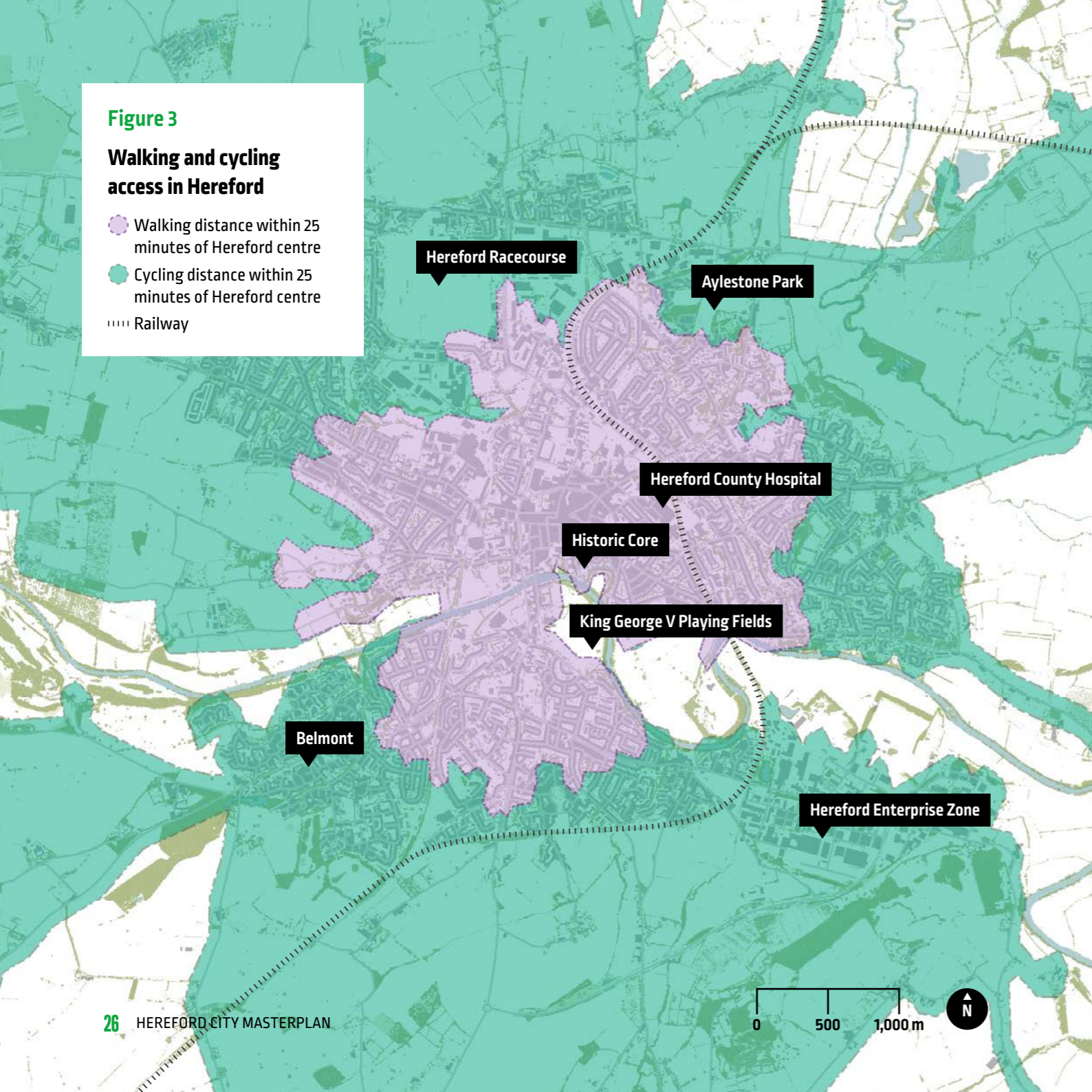


Figure 3

Walking and cycling access in Hereford

- Walking distance within 25 minutes of Hereford centre
- Cycling distance within 25 minutes of Hereford centre
- Railway



Freedom with the car, or freedom from the car?

To look at traffic today in Hereford is to look back at over 70 years of transport engineering in this country. Since 1949, motor vehicle traffic has increased more than tenfold, from about 29 billion to 330 billion vehicle miles across the country, largely driven by steady growth in car traffic.

The level of traffic growth since 1949 has varied by vehicle type. The car traffic share rose from 44% in 1949 to 78% in 2018. The increase in the personal freedom and choice arising from widening car ownership has been gained at the cost of a loss of freedom and choice for children. In the 1970s, 80% of seven- to eight-year-old children in the UK were allowed to go to school on their own. By 1990, this was 9%.

Injuries and collisions on the roads may be declining, but this is not necessarily because they are safer. Young children are no longer welcome to play out on neighbourhood streets, and the level of road danger faced by everyone contributes to parents no longer being comfortable allowing children to travel independently.

While transport helps to connect people and places, it now contributes over a quarter of UK greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. All sectors in the UK have reduced GHG emissions in recent years, with the exception of transport.

This level of traffic also comes with consequences for the quality of the air we breathe. In 2016, the Royal College of Physicians estimated that ambient air pollution causes 40,000 premature deaths per year in the UK, at an estimated social cost of £22 billion per year. Hereford's Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) shows levels of nitrogen dioxide that are worse than government standards – mainly as a result of traffic fumes. Only about 7% of motor traffic in Hereford is through-traffic (passing through our city without stopping).

The importance of short journeys

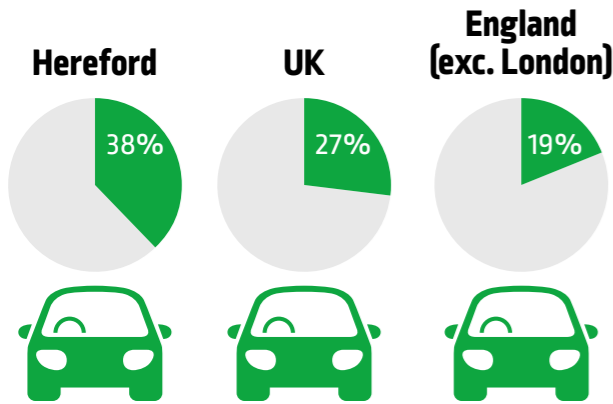
Importantly, the way our infrastructure has been designed over time has increased our propensity to jump into our cars even for very short trips. Every day, those living, working in or visiting Hereford make about 80,000 car trips that start and end within the city.

These trips are short. Some of them are very short. Findings from the 2020 Hereford Transport Strategy Review show that a large proportion of journeys made in the city are short-distance trips: 73% of journeys are less than 5km compared with a national average of 40%. Most of these trips could be walked or cycled in half an hour or less, with changes to infrastructure that provide more choice in how to move.

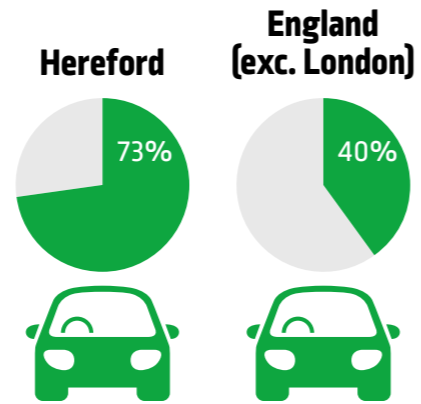
Trying to squeeze more cars and delivery vans onto the same roads and hoping for the best is not going to work. Electric cars and vans will have an important role to play in connecting rural communities with the city, while mitigating GHG emissions. Hereford needs cleaner buses and electric bikes to have an increasingly important role in moving people and goods around.

What is the cost of doing nothing? There is an economic cost associated with continued traffic congestion to the people and businesses in Hereford. Growth in much-needed housing in the city centre and in new neighbourhoods in Lower Bullingham, Holmer West and Three Elms will provide homes for local residents but could cause increased traffic unless action is taken now to provide people with genuine choice in how they move around on the many short trips that are made every day.

The high number of short car trips within the city



Trips by car that are 2km or less



Trips by car that are 5km or less



25 mins

2km

could be walked in 25 minutes, if we put in place infrastructure to enable more walking and wheeling

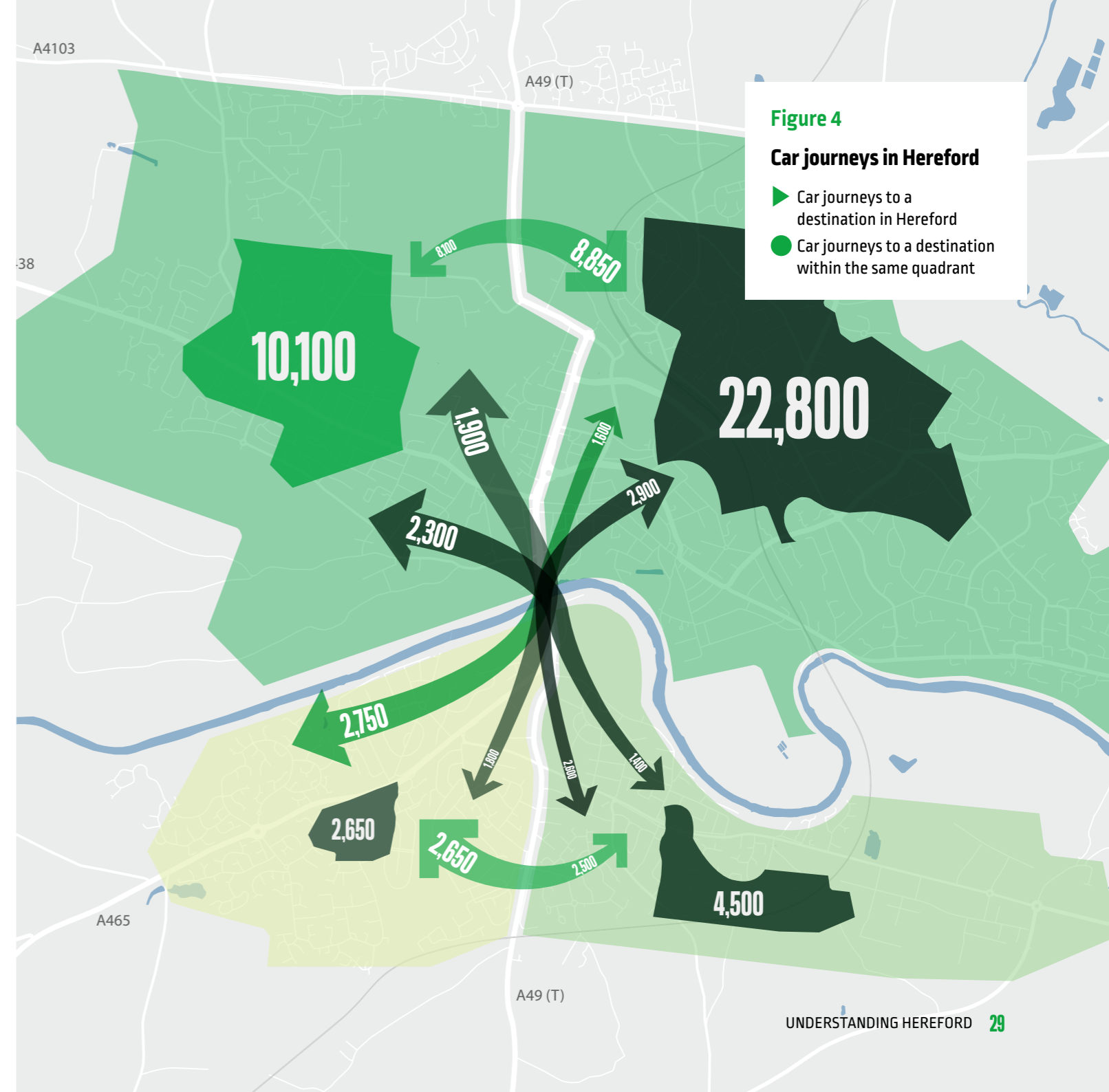


20 mins

5km

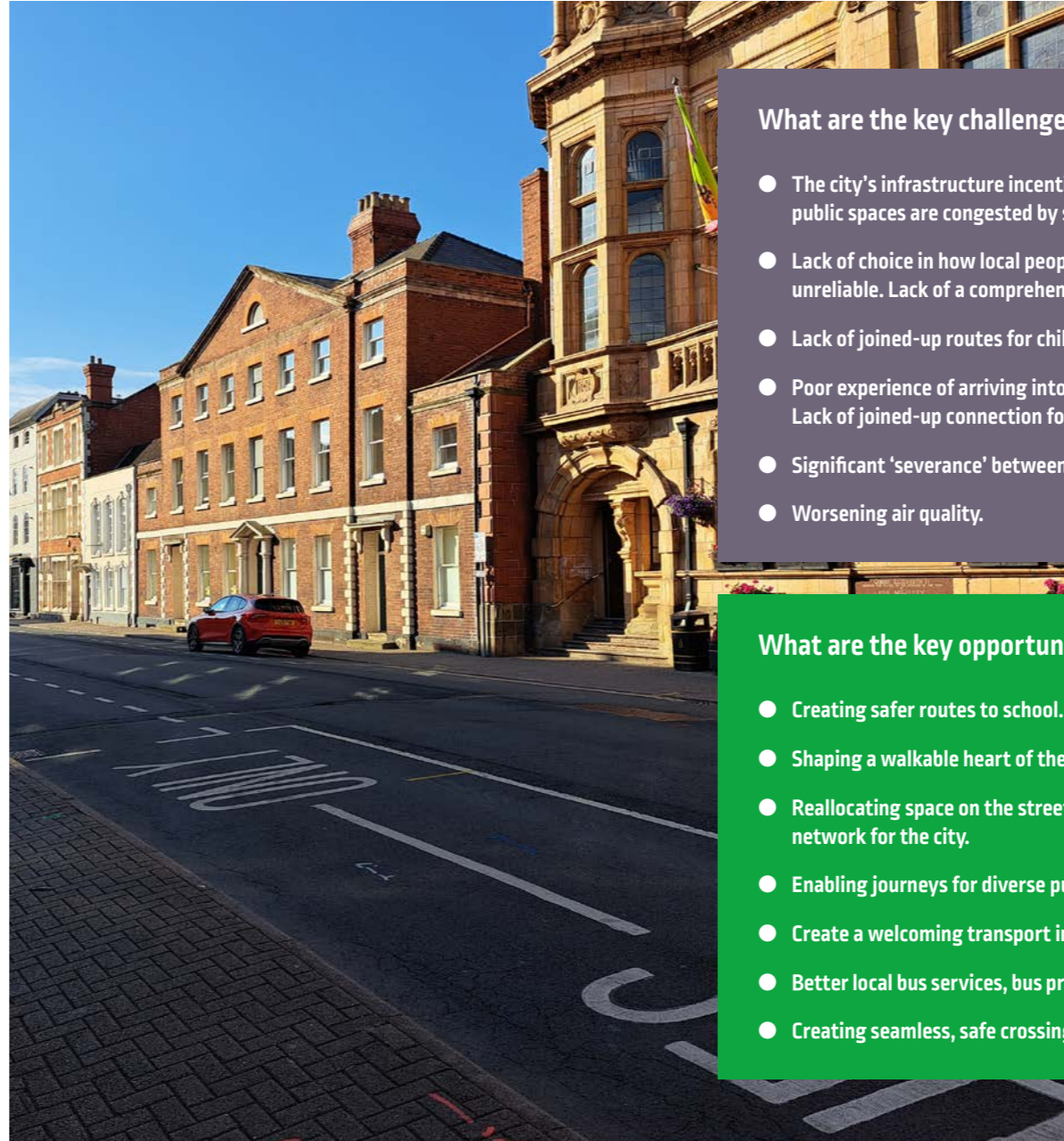
could be cycled in 20 minutes, if we put in place infrastructure to enable more people to choose cycling

2011 Census data





Traffic backed up along Edgar Street.



What are the key challenges facing Hereford?

- The city's infrastructure incentivises a lot of very short car trips. Streets and public spaces are congested by substantial numbers of car journeys.
- Lack of choice in how local people can travel around. Local journeys are unreliable. Lack of a comprehensive network of streets for cycling in the city.
- Lack of joined-up routes for children to walk and cycle to school.
- Poor experience of arriving into the city from the railway station. Lack of joined-up connection for rail-to-bus interchange.
- Significant 'severance' between neighbourhoods in the city.
- Worsening air quality.

What are the key opportunities for Hereford?

- Creating safer routes to school. Allowing children to play again on the streets.
- Shaping a walkable heart of the city – increasing pedestrian footfall in the city centre.
- Reallocating space on the streets for a comprehensive, safe and convenient cycling network for the city.
- Enabling journeys for diverse purposes, not limited to commuting.
- Create a welcoming transport interchange at the railway station.
- Better local bus services, bus priority, park and ride facilities, and regional train services.
- Creating seamless, safe crossings across busy roads to address 'severance' challenges.

THEME 2

COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Hereford's wealth of cultural assets and traditions is a source of local pride, and the quality of life the city offers is a strong attraction. However, there is a clear socio-economic divide within the city which needs to be closed, alongside shifting demographics and a skills challenge which the masterplan must respond to.



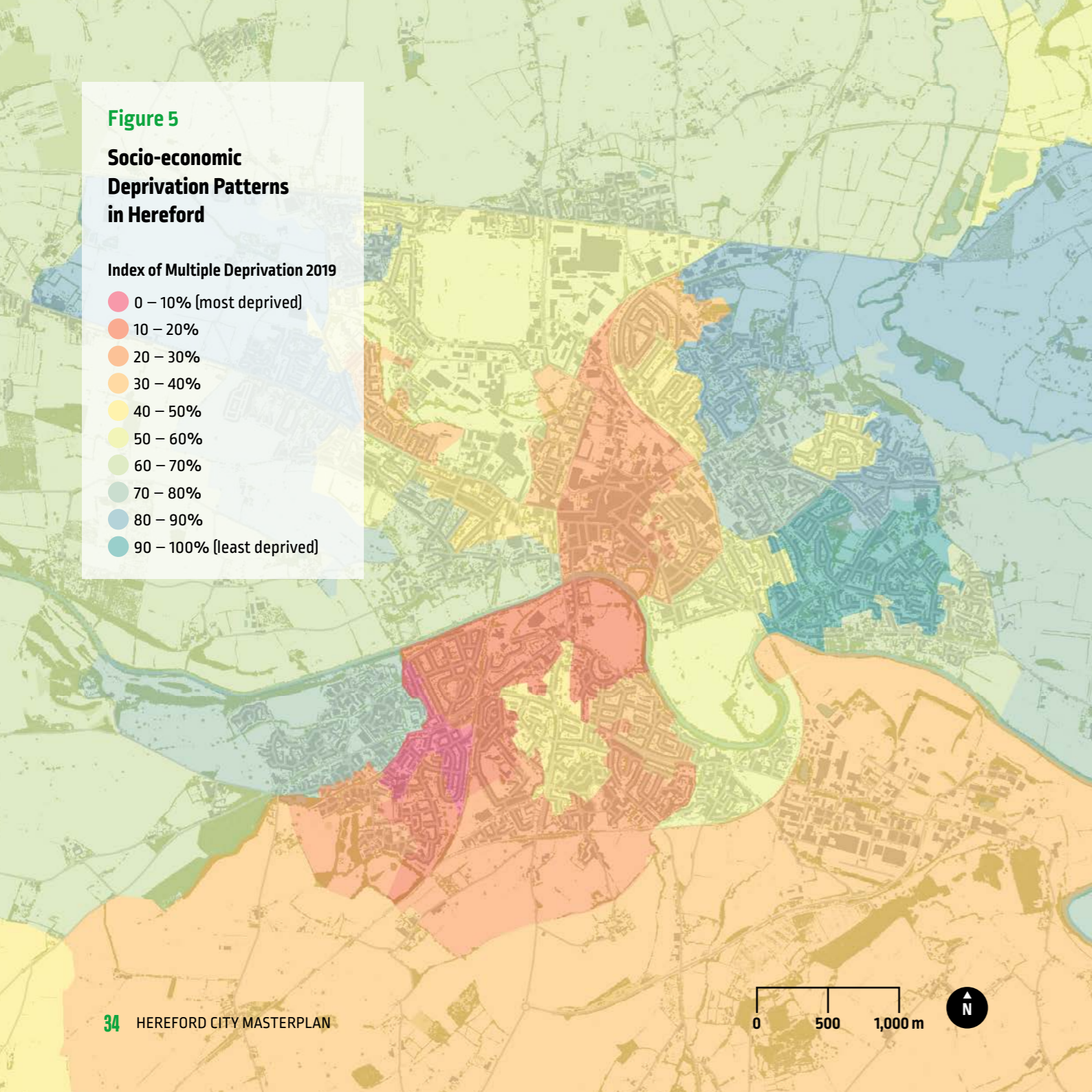
The Courtyard Gallery
(photo: Gabriella Karney).

Figure 5

Socio-economic Deprivation Patterns in Hereford

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

- 0 – 10% (most deprived)
- 10 – 20%
- 20 – 30%
- 30 – 40%
- 40 – 50%
- 50 – 60%
- 60 – 70%
- 70 – 80%
- 80 – 90%
- 90 – 100% (least deprived)



Hereford's communities

Hereford sits at the heart of a largely rural county, with the fourth lowest population density in England. Around a third of Herefordshire's population lives in Hereford (61,500 people). However, by 2031, Hereford's population is forecast to grow by around 17%, with most growth currently expected in the north of the city.

The county of Herefordshire as a whole has a significantly ageing population, with over a quarter of people currently aged 65 and over. While Hereford itself has a younger age structure, there will be increasing future demand for accommodation and facilities appropriate for older residents. This offers the opportunity for Hereford to shape itself as somewhere where older members of the population can thrive – close to key facilities, amenities and cultural assets and with a strong focus on accessibility for all.

2021 census data shows that residents of Herefordshire are predominantly white (97%), with smaller populations of Asian (1%), mixed (1%) and black (less than 1%) ethnic groups. Roughly 91% of the county's residents were born in the UK. However, there is slightly greater diversity within Hereford itself, particularly in the historic core and areas immediately to the north (roughly 76% to 88% white).

Despite the presence of the successful Enterprise Zone in the south-east of Hereford, **Figure 5** shows that there is a clear divide between social and economic opportunities and outcomes in the north and south of Hereford City – with pockets of deprivation concentrated south of the River Wye. Hereford's communities are also facing a skills challenge. The city's education level is lower than the national average and, until the recent opening of NMITE, Hereford lacked any higher education opportunities. As a whole, Herefordshire lies within the top ten safest counties in the United Kingdom. However, there are still areas suffering from nationally significant levels of crime.

City culture

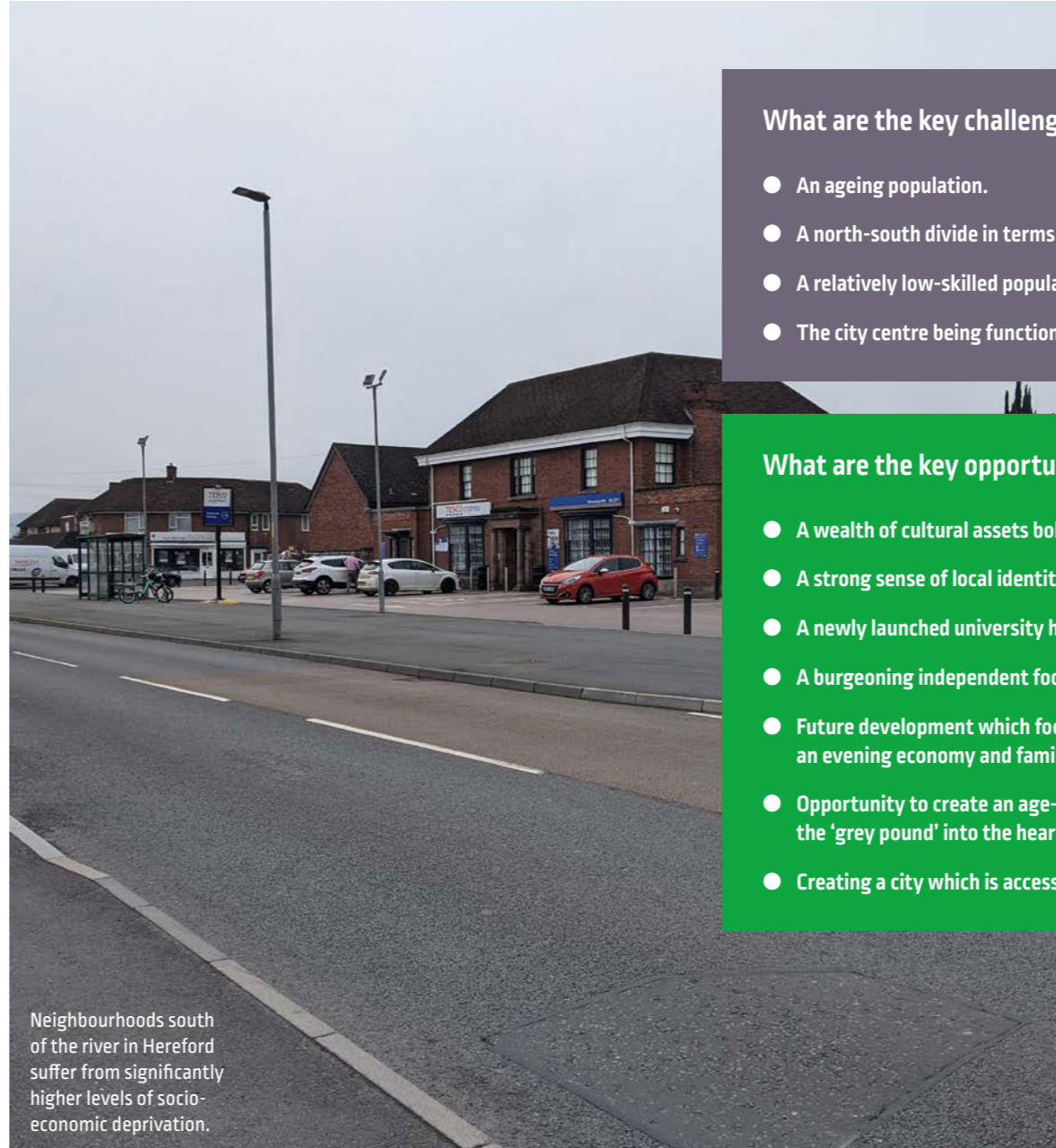
Hereford's wealth of cultural assets is a source of local pride, as are its artists and its rural identity. The Cathedral and Mappa Mundi, the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery, the Courtyard Centre for the Arts, the Museum of Cider and 300+ listed buildings and ancient city monuments are amongst globally recognised assets. Several have received a recent boost through 'Stronger Hereford' investments.

With 120+ independent food and drink producers across the county, Hereford's artisan food and independent seller offer is well established and growing. The city has a year-round programme of events, from the Hereford River Carnival, the Indie Food Festival, the Hereford Food Festival, the Hereford May Fair and the Ferrous Festival of Blacksmithing to the Three Choirs Festival. The leisure and recreational offer includes water sports on the River Wye, climbing, walking and cycling.

However, Hereford has continued to see a decline in its leisure and night-time economy following the COVID-19 pandemic, which has led to an impression of a place which seems to be losing its vibrancy.



▲ Hereford's annual May Fair.



Neighbourhoods south of the river in Hereford suffer from significantly higher levels of socio-economic deprivation.

What are the key challenges facing Hereford?

- An ageing population.
- A north-south divide in terms of prosperity.
- A relatively low-skilled population.
- The city centre being functionally disconnected from the surrounding communities.

What are the key opportunities for Hereford?

- A wealth of cultural assets bolstered by recent 'Stronger Hereford' investments.
- A strong sense of local identity and civic pride.
- A newly launched university helping to draw in a younger demographic.
- A burgeoning independent food and drink sector.
- Future development which focuses on shaping a vibrant cultural scene, an evening economy and family-friendly spaces across the city.
- Opportunity to create an age-friendly city and bring the 'grey pound' into the heart of the city.
- Creating a city which is accessible for all abilities.

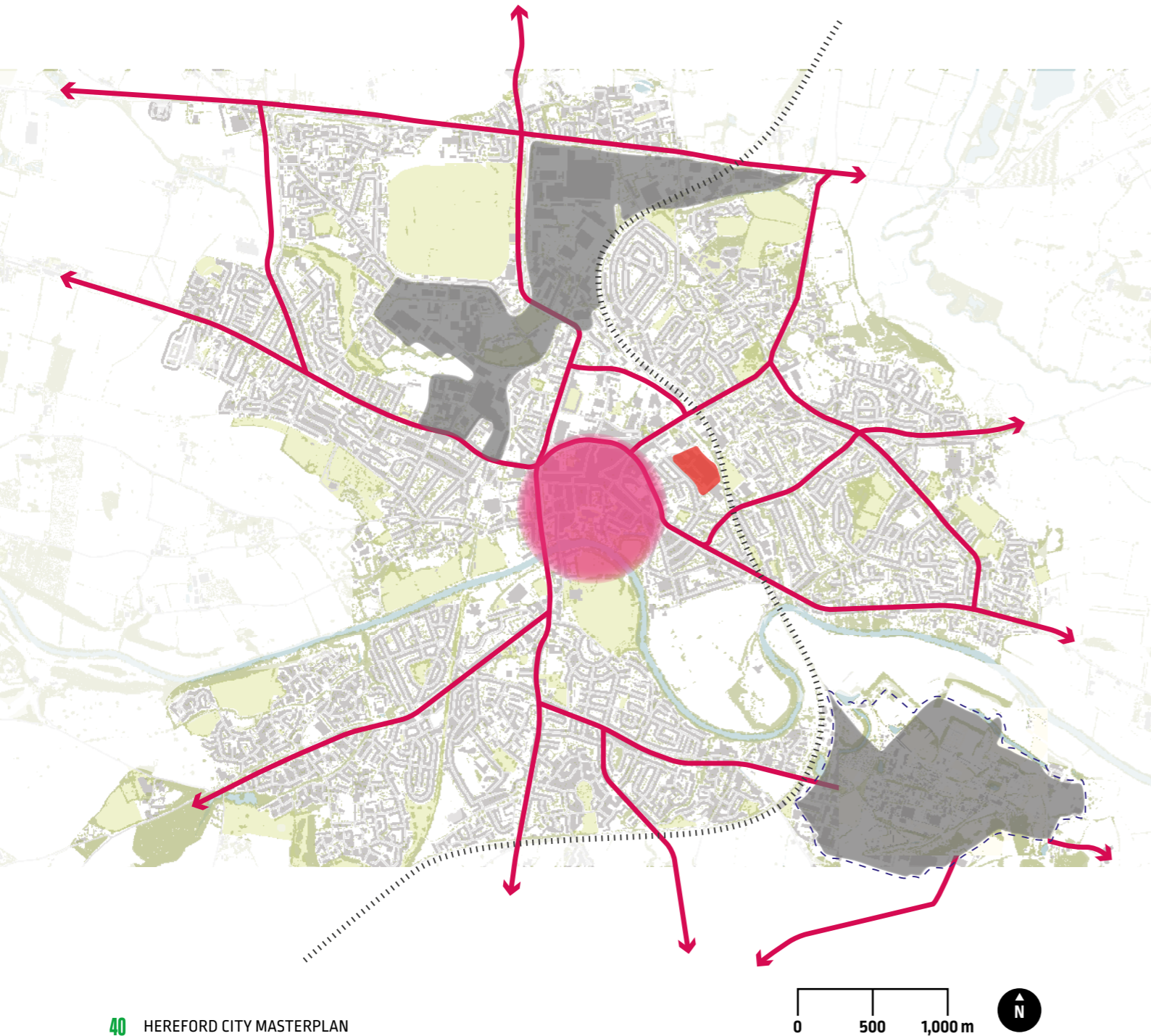
THEME 3

THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Hereford sustains much of the economic dynamism of the wider county, providing around 44% of all jobs. It can also count on valuable economic assets, including its thriving Enterprise Zone. However, skills, transport connectivity and a struggling retail core are currently holding the city back.



NMITE's new Skylon Campus within the Hereford Enterprise Zone.



Hereford's economic potential

Hereford benefits from a number of valuable economic assets. These include a cluster of spectacular heritage locations within the historic city walls, an emerging high-tech sector at Hereford Enterprise Zone and easy access to the surrounding countryside of the Wye Valley, enhancing quality of life.

NMITE, the city's new higher education institution, is also set to play a key role in the city's economic future.

Historically, jobs in Hereford have been concentrated in manufacturing, defence and security, food and drink production and agriculture and tourism. However, geographically, Hereford is relatively isolated from nearby areas due to poor rail and road links to major economic centres.

Obstacles to economic growth

As set out in the county's Big Economic Plan, Hereford faces a number of economic challenges and obstacles to sustainable economic growth. The majority of jobs available in Hereford are generally low-value, low-wage jobs. In productivity terms, the city lags behind comparable places. Herefordshire has the lowest GVA [gross value added] per hour of any county in England.

Hereford's compact form makes it an ideal location for sustainable growth. However, more creative thinking is needed to ensure a cohesive set of connections with development opportunities in the most challenged economic area, south of the River Wye. While the Hereford Enterprise Zone is thriving as a high-tech cluster, there remains a deficit in employment land across Hereford.

There are also a number of obstacles that prevent residents from accessing new skills and opportunities and hold back growth – particularly transport infrastructure. Currently, too much economic productivity in Hereford leaks away while people are stuck in traffic jams, and unreliable journey times make it difficult for businesses to plan effectively. This requires a fundamental rethink of how people move into, around and out of the city.

Hereford's environment is also under unprecedented pressure, undermining one of the city's most valuable assets. The city's future direction needs to reshape the city to reduce carbon usage and urgently tackle river pollution.

Figure 6

Economy and Opportunities

- Retail and Commercial Core
- Existing Major Industrial Site
- Hereford County Hospital Campus
- Hereford Enterprise Zone
- ⋯⋯ Railway
- Road Movement Corridors

The health of the city centre

As set out in Herefordshire's 2022 Town Centre and Retail Assessment, Hereford's city centre is facing challenges driven by the wider retail landscape, trends which were accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Hereford's vacancy rate rose from 12.5% in 2012 to 17.5% in 2022.

Over time, the retail core of the city has gradually shifted north from Broad Street to High Town/ Tesco, and now to the former Hereford Old Market. The Old Market's larger format has led to a diverse offer but also an over-supply of retail space and a challenge for existing edge-of-centre locations.

The Council's purchase of the Maylord Orchards shopping centre and the planned partial conversion of this into a Library and Learning Resource Centre is part of an agenda to diversify the city centre and drive footfall. Investment through the Stronger Hereford initiative also includes a new £18 million museum. However, there is more to be done to strengthen the centre as a whole.

Hereford can be a place where growth delivers more opportunities for people and protects the environment. However, this will require an active approach to managing inward investors and creating a successful home for sustainable businesses. It will also require a more proactive partnership between the private and public sectors.

Hereford as a city needs to provide more than just jobs. It must offer a quality of life that attracts and retains workers, particularly in younger age groups. That means providing high-quality green spaces throughout the city, a vibrant city centre and waterfront, and high-quality networks for public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling.



What are the key challenges facing Hereford?

- A largely low-value, low-wage economy.
- Poor transport networks holding back growth and productivity.
- Challenges attracting and retaining young people.
- Natural environment under unprecedented pressure.
- A changing and challenging city centre retail environment.

What are the key opportunities for Hereford?

- The growth and 'embedding' of NMITE and other learning institutions.
- Diversifying uses in the city, including the 'experiential' offer of the city centre.
- Opportunities for a higher-value visitor economy.
- Tackling congestion by providing greater choice in transport options beyond the private car.
- A strategic approach to building a higher-value knowledge economy, by clustering knowledge-based activities in appropriate parts of the city.

THEME 4

LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Lying on the River Wye corridor with the River Lugg to its east, the natural environment is one of Hereford's most defining and attractive features. However, future development must face up to the dual challenges of the biodiversity and climate emergencies in order for us all to act as responsible stewards of these natural assets.



Peacock butterfly on buddleia ©Herefordshire Wildlife Trust.



The River Wye provides an important setting for some of Hereford's most significant heritage and cultural assets.

Hereford's green and blue infrastructure (GBI) network

Hereford's most defining and unique geographical characteristic is its position on the fertile floodplains of the River Wye. The meandering corridor of the river bisects the city west to east and acts as a crucial 'blue-green corridor' through the city, bringing important strategic green space, wildlife assets and recreation potential right into the heart of the city. Similarly, the winding River Lugg, together with its ecologically rich floodplain, marks the eastern boundary of Hereford.



▲ Access to the Great Western Way from the A438.

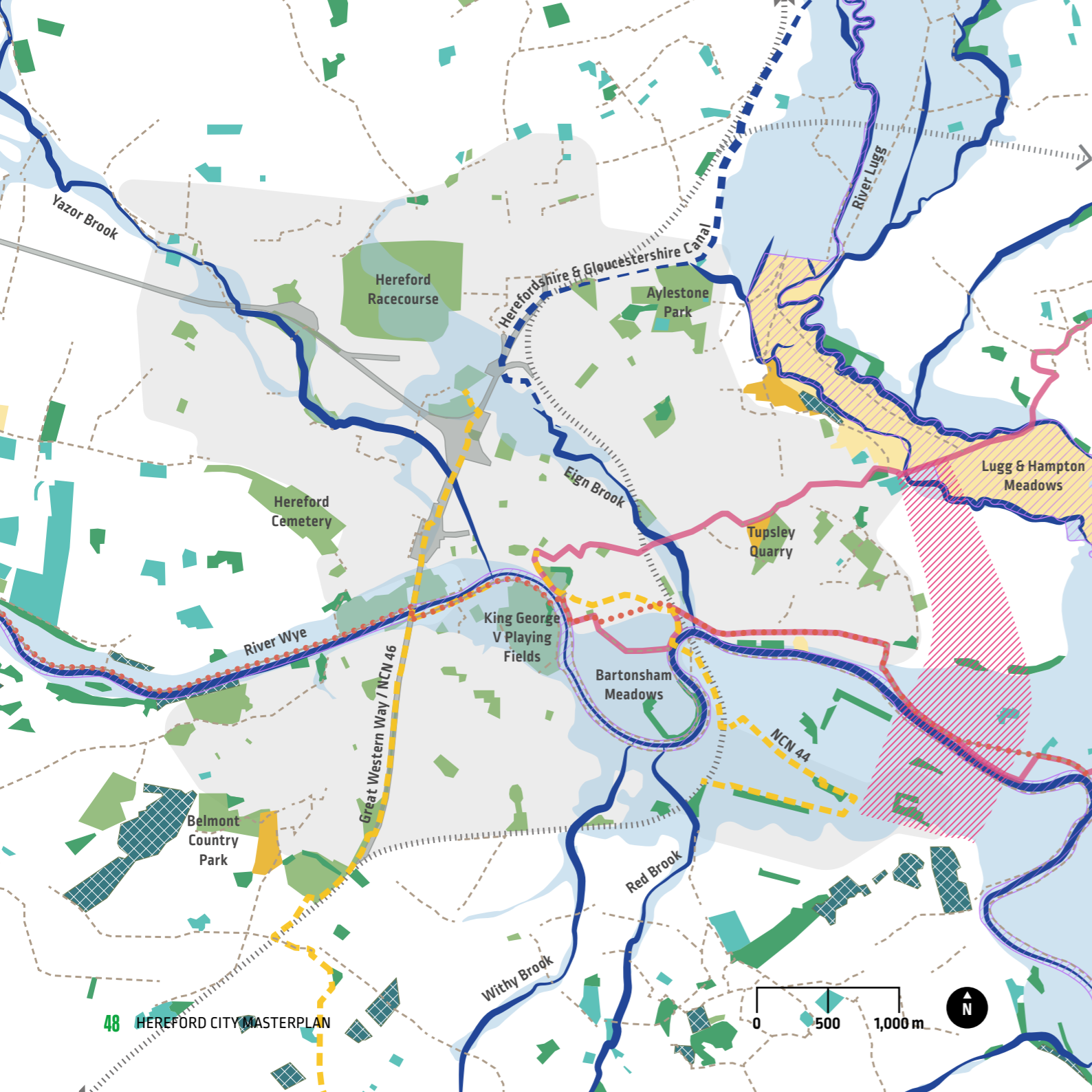


Figure 7

Hereford's Green and Blue Infrastructure Network

Recreation

- National Cycle Network (NCN)
- Wye Valley Walk
- Three Choirs Way Walk
- Public Right of Way
- Greenspace and outdoor sport facility

Linear feature

- Proposed alignment of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal
- ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing [route currently undefined]
- Railway
- Watercourse
- Disused railway

Protected site for nature

- ▨ Nationally and internationally designated nature site
- Local nature reserve
- Wildlife Trust reserve
- Woodland
- ▨ Ancient woodland
- Traditional orchard

Water environment

- Floodzone 3

The ecological value of both the Lugg and the Wye is recognised through their nature-based designations as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), with various Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Several brooks (including the Yazor, Eign, Widemarsh, Newton, Withy and Red) also weave through built-up areas and provide valuable corridors for wildlife movement.

Remnants of Hereford's industrial heritage are still present within the city's urban fabric. These provide important opportunities for the movement of both wildlife and people. Flagship examples include the Great Western Way and the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal.

Together these assets make up the city's 'green and blue infrastructure' (GBI) network – a network of natural features that should guide the development of the city and provide functions including biodiversity value, climate resilience, recreational opportunities and a sense of place.

Impact of the climate and biodiversity crises

However, in the context of the dual biodiversity and climate emergencies, Hereford's GBI network is under unprecedented pressure. One of the foremost concerns for Herefordshire's natural environment is the water quality in the county's rivers. Poor land management practices have led to high nutrient levels, which are threatening the chemical and biological balance of both the Lugg and Wye.

The increasingly urbanised environment around Hereford means that space for wildlife and GBI is becoming increasingly limited. Development, agricultural intensification and infrastructure have also contributed towards habitat fragmentation, with watercourses and the rich biodiversity along their banks being increasingly 'squeezed' by culverts and other obstacles.

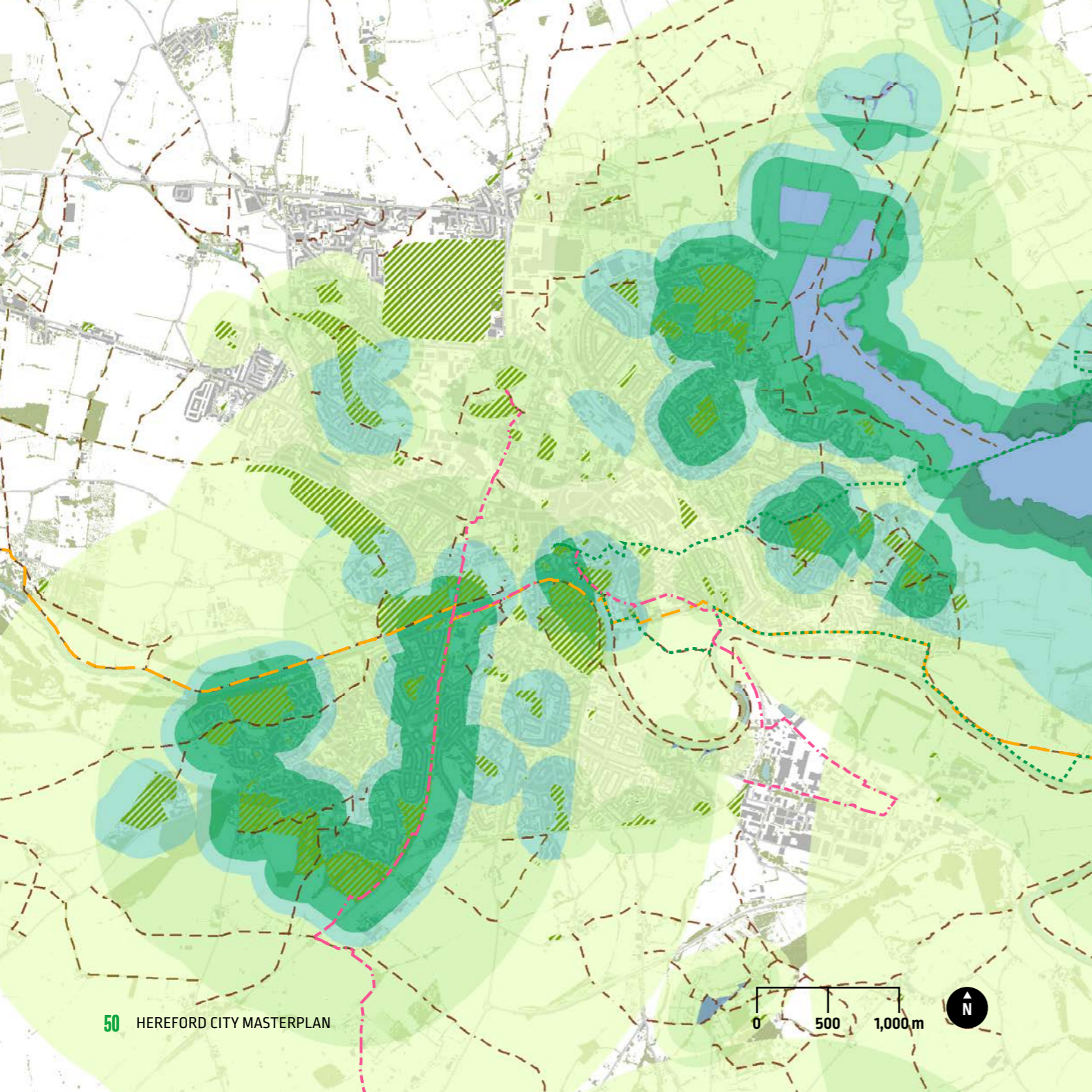


Figure 8

Access to Hereford's Green and Blue Infrastructure Network

- National Cycle Network (NCN)
- Three Choirs Way Walk
- Wye Valley Walk
- Public Right of Way
- ▨ Greenspace and outdoor sport facility
- Open access land

Access to Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt) Profile

- Meets one standard
- Meets two standards
- Meets three standards
- Meets four standards
- Meets five standards

The Accessible Natural Green Space Standard (ANGSt) is a tool developed by Natural England to measure the extent of access to natural and semi-natural green space for different communities across the country. The standard utilises 'buffers' at different distances depending on the size of the green space. The ANGSt profile in the map shown here collects the full set of ANGSt assessments into one 'combined buffer' map to allow an understanding of the ANGSt profile for any given location.

ANGSt standards

- Doorstep Standard: At least 0.5 hectares (ha) within 200m
- Local Standard: At least 2ha within 300m
- Neighbourhood Standard: At least 10ha within 1km
- Wider Neighbourhood Standard: At least 20ha within 2km
- District Standard: At least 100ha within 5km
- Sub-regional Standard: At least 500ha within 10km

One of the most important functions of GBI is the health and wellbeing dividends of having access to nature on your doorstep. However, across Hereford there are areas where there are existing deficits in access to open space and walking and cycling routes are of variable quality.

While access to nature is a key priority for Hereford, this needs to be balanced with concerns over pressure from recreational activities. Unmanaged recreation – particularly the growing popularity of dog walking – can put serious pressure on ecological sites and important species. Notably, it is known to affect nesting curlews along the Lugg Corridor.

All of these challenges will be exacerbated by the extreme weather risks which will inevitably come with climate change – including flooding, drought and extreme heat. In recent years, flooding in particular has been a central concern in Hereford. While the River Wye is the city's greatest natural asset, it also brings the threat of flooding, with several severe flooding events in recent years, causing serious distress for those affected.



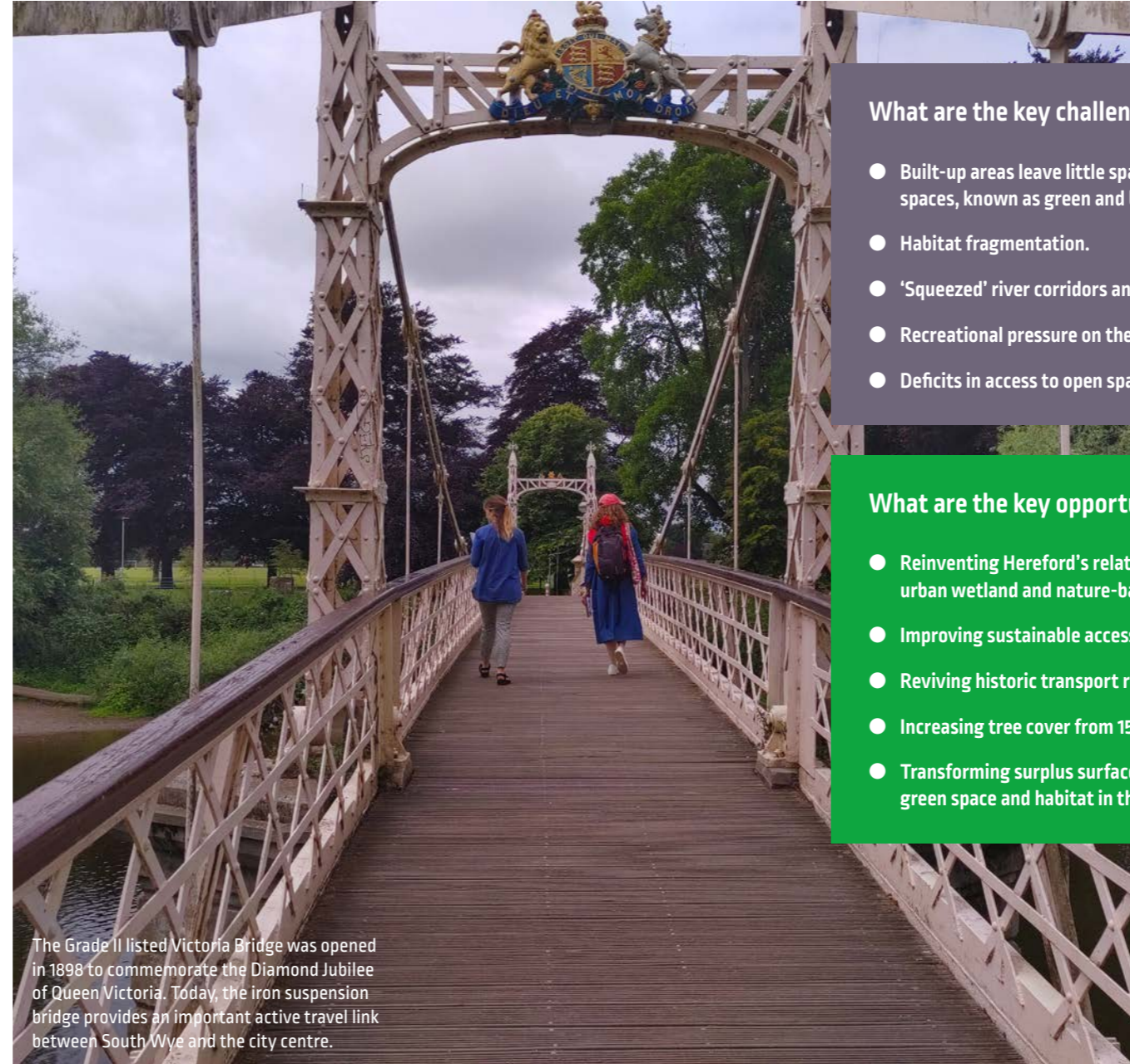
Uninviting subways along the Great Western Way.



▲ Canary Bridge provides an important active travel link between Bartonsham Meadows and the Hereford Enterprise Zone.



▲ Castle Green, Hereford Cathedral, Bishops Meadow and King George V Playing Fields provide a cluster of recreational green spaces in the heart of Hereford.



The Grade II listed Victoria Bridge was opened in 1898 to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Today, the iron suspension bridge provides an important active travel link between South Wye and the city centre.

What are the key challenges facing Hereford?

- Built-up areas leave little space for wildlife and green spaces, known as green and blue infrastructure.
- Habitat fragmentation.
- 'Squeezed' river corridors and poor water quality.
- Recreational pressure on the most sensitive habitats.
- Deficits in access to open space and variable quality of walking and cycling routes.

What are the key opportunities for Hereford?

- Reinventing Hereford's relationship with its river corridors, incorporating urban wetland and nature-based solutions to flooding.
- Improving sustainable access to green and blue infrastructure.
- Reviving historic transport routes as multi-user green and blue corridors.
- Increasing tree cover from 15% to 25%, in line with Hereford's Tree Strategy.
- Transforming surplus surface car parking into pockets of green space and habitat in the heart of the city.

THEME 5

PLACES AND SPACES

Hereford's historic assets and its setting on the River Wye present a vivid and memorable identity for the city and should act as the foundation for reimagined places. However, the city is let down by areas of poor-quality public realm, including the significant dominance of surface car parking within some of the city's most characterful areas.





Heritage and the public realm

Hereford benefits from a distinctive and characterful historic core. The city's magnificent Cathedral, nestled in an almost pastoral setting beside the River Wye and its ancient river crossing, presents a vivid and memorable identity for the city. Echoes of Hereford's historic origins are still evident, leaving an indelible mark on the city's urban form. Within the historic core, key streets such as King Street, Broad Street and St Owen Street, public spaces including High Town and St Peter's Square, and the numerous passageways that thread through the city, retain a powerful sense of the past. This is despite these locations often being compromised by vehicle priority and by poor-quality layouts and paving materials. The powerful presence of the Cathedral and its tower, together with the spires of All Saints and While Peter's churches, provide distinctive landmarks amongst the otherwise low-rise city. In contrast, the areas beyond Hereford's central core are largely suburban in nature. With the exception of several commercial and industrial areas (notably the Hereford Enterprise Zone) and large institutions including Hereford County Hospital and the Sixth Form College, the scene is more domestic. It is dominated by low-density housing, schools and other social facilities. Many of these areas have local centres containing shops and amenities. However, these local centres tend to be functional in nature

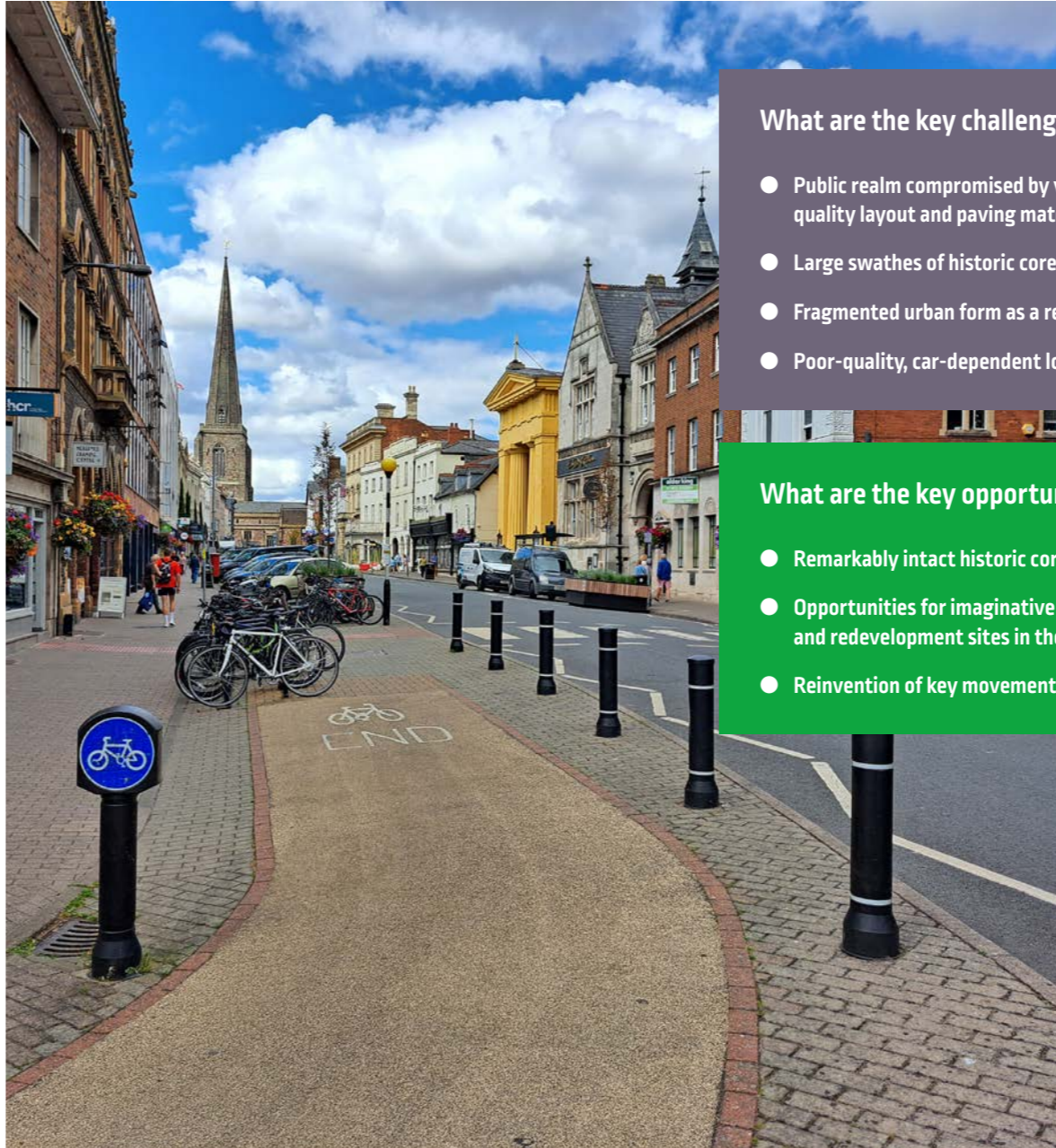
Figure 9
The distribution of car parks within the historic core

- Council car park
- Private car park
- Conservation area
- Listed building
- Green space
- Remnant city wall

and would benefit from physical enhancements to create high-quality public spaces. The wider centre of Hereford – predominantly 'outside' the city wall – is also influenced by 20th-century infrastructure and the resulting fragmentation of its urban form. The A49 is a conduit for much of the city's traffic, creating a noisy and polluting barrier to movement. Numerous surface-level car parks occupy vacant land arising from building clearance in Hereford. In total, 10% of the city's flagship historic core is currently used for surface car parking (excluding on-street parking). Together with the presence of poor-quality modern buildings, this diminishes the urban character of the wider city centre.

Reviving the public realm

At the same time, these shortcomings present opportunities for renewal. There is significant potential to revitalise key areas of vacant and underused space and to increase the number of people living and working in the city through new development. This includes a cluster of sites in the vicinity of Merton Meadow, Commercial Road and St Owen Street – an area also home to two of the city's finest buildings, Shirehall and the Town Hall. These are opportunities for imaginative reuse that could help to regenerate the city. The six radial routes connecting the centre of Hereford to outlying settlements are another vestige of the city's historic form. They still provide a strong and legible organisation of the city immediately outside its historic core. While varying in character and condition, each of these routes lends itself to physical enhancement, as well as the encouragement of walking, wheeling and cycling, and strengthening connections with underused spaces, such as Blackfriars Priory. The high-quality development at Old Market, and its associated pedestrian priority and public space, represents an excellent example of how modern design can complement and coexist with historic townscapes.



What are the key challenges facing Hereford?

- Public realm compromised by vehicle priority and poor-quality layout and paving materials.
- Large swathes of historic core diminished by use for surface car parking.
- Fragmented urban form as a result of the A49.
- Poor-quality, car-dependent local centres.

What are the key opportunities for Hereford?

- Remarkably intact historic core can be used as a foundation for placemaking.
- Opportunities for imaginative reuse of surface car parking and redevelopment sites in the city centre.
- Reinvention of key movement corridors as 'public living rooms'.





OUR VISION FOR 2050

Setting a clear vision for Hereford – and strategic objectives to get there – will shape the direction of change and help Hereford fulfil its true potential.

“ MAKING HEREFORD AN EVEN BETTER CITY – A GREENER, HEALTHIER AND SAFER PLACE ”

The delivery of this vision is supported by five Strategic Objectives. These provide direction and accountability within the masterplan. They also shape the Big Ideas that will guide what Hereford looks like in 2050.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The strategic objectives have been prepared taking account of feedback received during public consultation, the need to address forces driving change, the local policy and evidence-based context and the outcomes of the review of the five place themes in Hereford:

1 MOVEMENT

Expand choice for moving around, using an integrated transport network with better provision for active travel and public transport. This will help to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, tackle congestion, encourage healthier lifestyles and better meet the needs of different demographic groups.

2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Create a healthier and more equal city, by reducing deprivation and enabling prosperity for all across the city. This will provide greater opportunities for people to be active and healthy and to engage with their community.

3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Reinvigorate the city, maximising opportunities for living, learning and creating. This includes providing new affordable, high-quality homes for a range of people and revitalised commercial and leisure opportunities and community uses. Also, supporting education and training opportunities and providing spaces to develop and grow businesses.

4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Provide a network of high-quality green and blue spaces within the city and extending into the surrounding countryside, reducing pollution and providing nature-based solutions to help adapt to climate change and give people greater opportunity to interact with nature.

5 PLACES AND SPACES

Deliver outstanding design, which respects and enhances Hereford's built and natural heritage and deepens the 'sense of place' within the city. Good design should make Hereford more attractive for those who live, work in and visit the city. It would also help adapt to the effects of climate change and better meet the needs of an ageing population.



OVERVIEW OF MOVEMENT STRATEGY FOR 2050



Approach

This masterplan establishes a high level of commitment to tackling the status quo and delivering meaningful change to support sustainable transport. We are developing a plan to achieve a range of goals for Hereford and the wider county that include:

- Increasing footfall in the city centre.
- Growing active travel.
- Improving public transport.
- Connecting rural transport.
- Managing freight and servicing.
- Reducing demand for car travel.

Meeting these ambitions will require changes to the ways we get around, reducing dependency on cars. Given that road capacity is largely fixed, this will mean some disruption to the way many people are accustomed to travelling.

The movement strategy puts the growth of public transport, pedestrian traffic and cycle traffic at the centre of local transport. Reallocating space to these modes addresses existing issues and anticipates future problems that would arise from continued car dependency.

One more person walking, wheeling, cycling or taking the bus instead of driving is one less car in front of you waiting at the traffic lights. The Council recognises that some people will still need to use their cars for some trips, but this masterplan aims to give people who want it better choice in how they and their families move around the city.

Objectives for the future include:

- For the vast majority of parents to be comfortable for their children to walk, wheel and cycle to school independently.
- To encourage people to be more active to support a system of preventative health care as we all get older.
- High footfall in the city centre and civic spaces which is resilient to future changes in the national and regional economies.
- Businesses to embrace more sustainable logistics, and a customer-focused culture to support active travel, high footfall, e-bikes, e-scooters and e-cargo cycles.
- To work collaboratively with the private sector to build new homes with sustainable transport infrastructure.
- Over time, for the allocation of space in the city to the healthiest and most efficient modes of everyday movement.

To achieve this we have prepared a strategy to:

- Reduce road danger at the school gates, plan liveable neighbourhoods and provide safer routes to school.
- Plan for a car-light city centre and for active travel across the city, redesigning major traffic junctions to enable this.
- Enable quick and reliable bus journeys.
- Plan healthy connections to local towns and villages.



Sustainable movement

We propose to develop a comprehensive mobility and traffic circulation plan to create a car-light city which prioritises walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport.

Core components of a sustainable and reliable transport system in Hereford include city centre modal filters (a feature used to limit through-journeys along a street by certain modes of transport); rationalisation of car parking; considering a workplace parking levy; and proposals for Park and Choose facilities on the outskirts of the city.

Providing more roadspace for pedestrian movement, cycle traffic and buses will make travelling without a car an easier choice for those who want to.

Our plans should mean that those who need to travel by car or van will be able to do so more reliably in some parts of the city, because there will be fewer car trips being made as people choose instead to walk, wheel, cycle or take public transport.

We recognise these proposals are ambitious and will require some people to change the way they travel into and around the city.

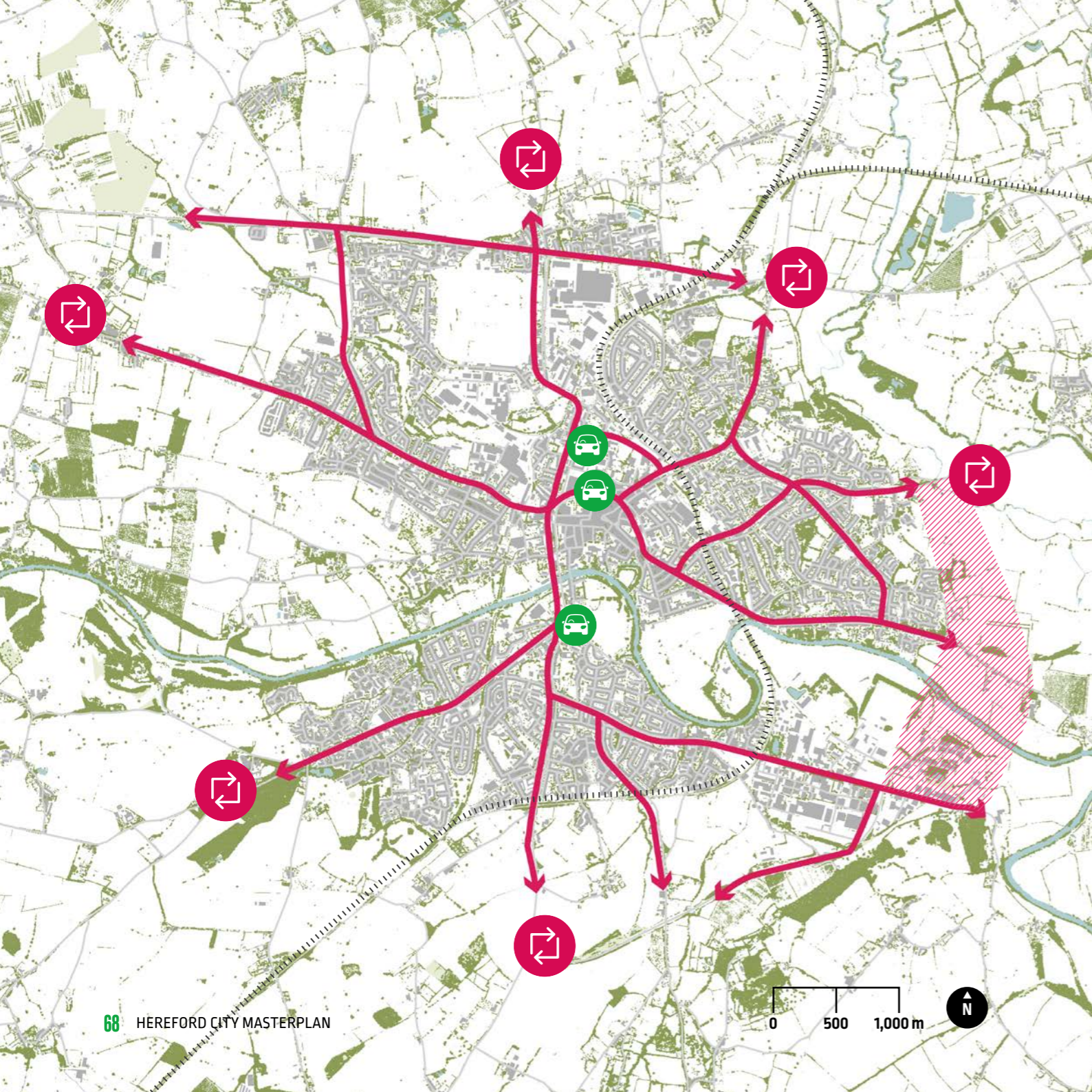
Figure 10

Proposal for managing strategic motor traffic through Hereford

- Primary route
- Secondary route
- ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)

As set out under **Theme 1: Movement** on page 24, in the Understanding Hereford section, there are a number of reasons why these schemes are being proposed:

- **Transport emissions have left parts of the city with high levels of air pollution which is shortening people's lives. Urgent action is also needed to reduce carbon emissions to help tackle climate change.**
- **Many cyclists do not feel safe using the city's roads and we want to prevent collisions.**
- **Roads are clogged with traffic, which means buses are currently slow and unreliable, and cannot adequately serve all parts of the city. Without action, more bus services will be scaled back or disappear.**
- **Chronic congestion in the city costs individuals and businesses time and money (see Theme 3: The Economy and Opportunities on page 38, in the Understanding Hereford section).**
- **Pedestrians are too often squeezed onto narrow, cluttered pavements.**
- **Traffic noise blights some of the city's communities and streets.**



Visiting Hereford

The Council is already in the process of planning a major redesign of Hereford's railway station forecourt to deliver a welcoming gateway into the city. A new Transport Hub will improve the interchange between rail and bus journeys, and enable onward active travel (see **Big Idea 8: The Station Quarter** on page 174 for further detail on plans for this area).

We will develop a plan for managing future car parking in the city, which will help those who want to visit Hereford by car to know how and where to park.

For daily visitors arriving by car, we will encourage the use of Park and Choose facilities on the outskirts of Hereford, encouraging onward journeys by public transport, walking, wheeling and cycling. As part of an integrated approach to improving local bus services, the masterplan is seeking to plan bus priority measures which will make journey times by bus more reliable.

Supporting the local economy

This masterplan aims to increase footfall and dwell time in Hereford's city centre to encourage more people to spend time and money in our shops. Making changes to our infrastructure will help employees get to their places of work reliably and cheaply. This supports Big Ideas 4 and 5 of this masterplan, which focus on reviving and rejuvenating the historic core. It is also a key element of supporting the wider economic strategy and priorities set out for the region in Herefordshire's Big Economic Plan.

We will develop a freight and servicing action plan to help the city's businesses. This will include opportunities to reduce, reschedule, reroute and re-mode deliveries where appropriate.

Movement to support the quality of places

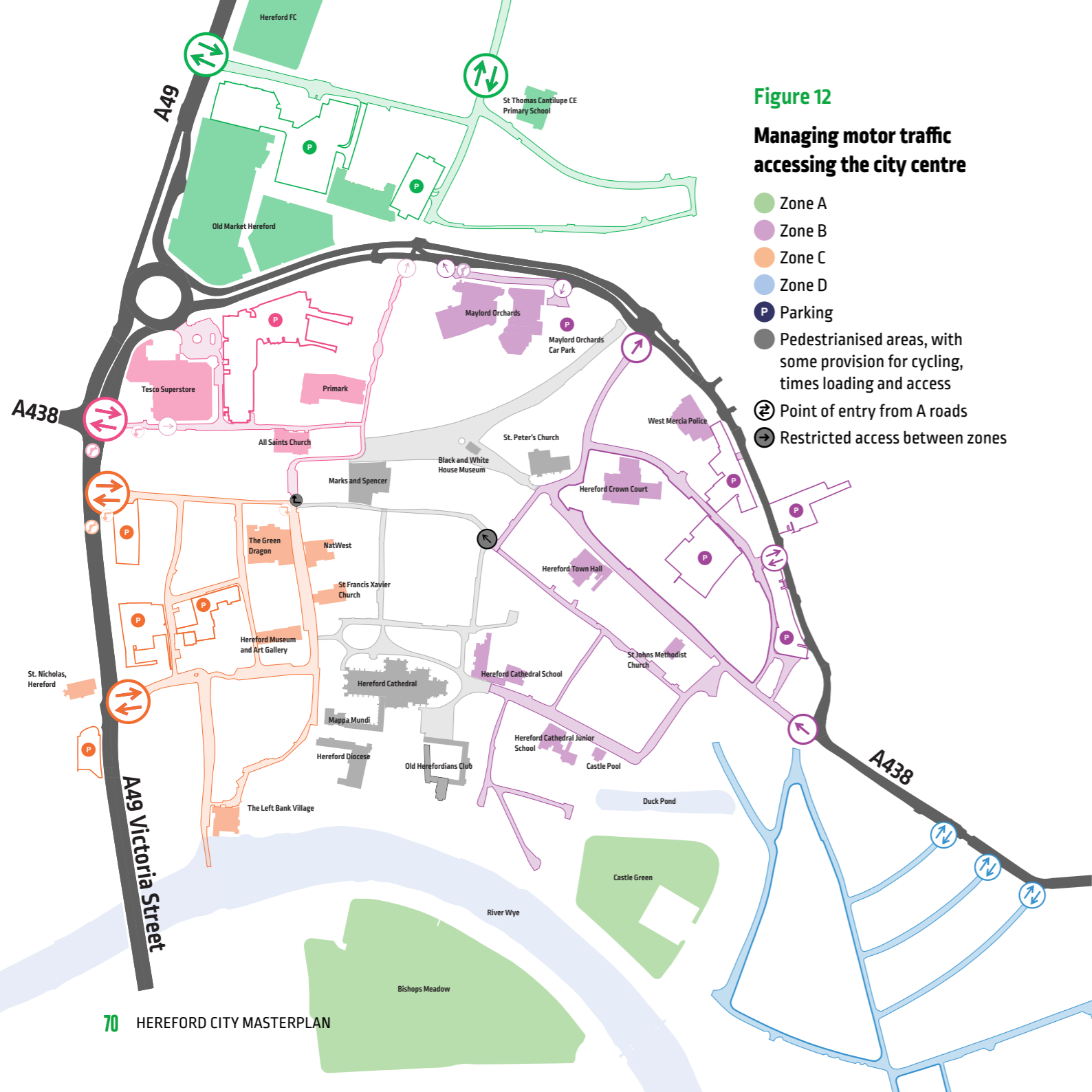
As set out under **Theme 5: Places and Spaces** on page 54, Hereford's public realm is currently let down by the significant dominance of surface car parking within characterful areas, and by traffic-dominated streetscapes. This is holding Hereford back in terms of its economic potential, its visitor economy and its potential to support wellbeing.

Space within a growing city is limited. By transforming movement patterns in the city and reducing the space occupied by cars, we can use existing land for green spaces, high-quality housing, flood-risk mitigation and public open spaces and seating.

Many of these exciting opportunities are set out in the 12 Big Ideas detailed in the rest of the document. However, their delivery relies upon tackling the status quo and fostering meaningful change towards sustainable transport in the city.

Figure 11
Proposal for reducing the level of motor traffic accessing Hereford

- Proposed residual parking
- Proposed Park and Choose location
- Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)
- Major routes



Increasing the resilience of the road network

By giving people choice in how they move around locally, an important impact of implementing this masterplan's recommendations will be more reliable journey times.

To further improve the resilience of the road network, the Council is investigating the feasibility of a new eastern river crossing over the River Wye. Other potential projects to help improve journey time reliability will be identified, such as the feasibility of continuous two-way traffic movements along Roman Road over the railway line.

Planning for a car-light city centre

To create a city centre that has fewer cars in the future, the Council will:

- Review existing traffic management measures in detail to understand what changes may be required to further reduce motorised through-traffic within the city's historic core. These include one-way streets, modal filters (including bus gates and point closures) and pedestrianised streets.
- Identify which measures are working well, which may need to be changed and where additional measures are required.
- Review the existing operation of main roads to maintain a reasonable level of access to the city centre for its residents and blue badge holders, and servicing for its business communities.

- Explore ways to simplify the road network where possible and reduce severance within the walking and cycling infrastructure in and around Hereford, caused by the main roads. Install new or improved crossing points at key locations aligned with the proposed walking and cycling network.
- Assess the operation of pedestrianised streets and zones to continue to enable access for pedestrians and cycle traffic across the city and to key destinations in the city centre. This could include allowing considerate cycling at all times in the city centre, recognising that some people with protected characteristics often use cycles as mobility aids.
- Examine existing one-way streets and continue to open them up to two-way cycle traffic where appropriate to help people get around more easily, cheaply and reliably. Two-way cycling on one-way streets helps create a coherent network of joined-up routes for door-to-door journeys when out cycling.

Taking a comprehensive approach to traffic circulation should mean that most one-way streets within Hereford's historic core will have motor traffic volumes and speeds that are low enough to enable safe two-way cycling.

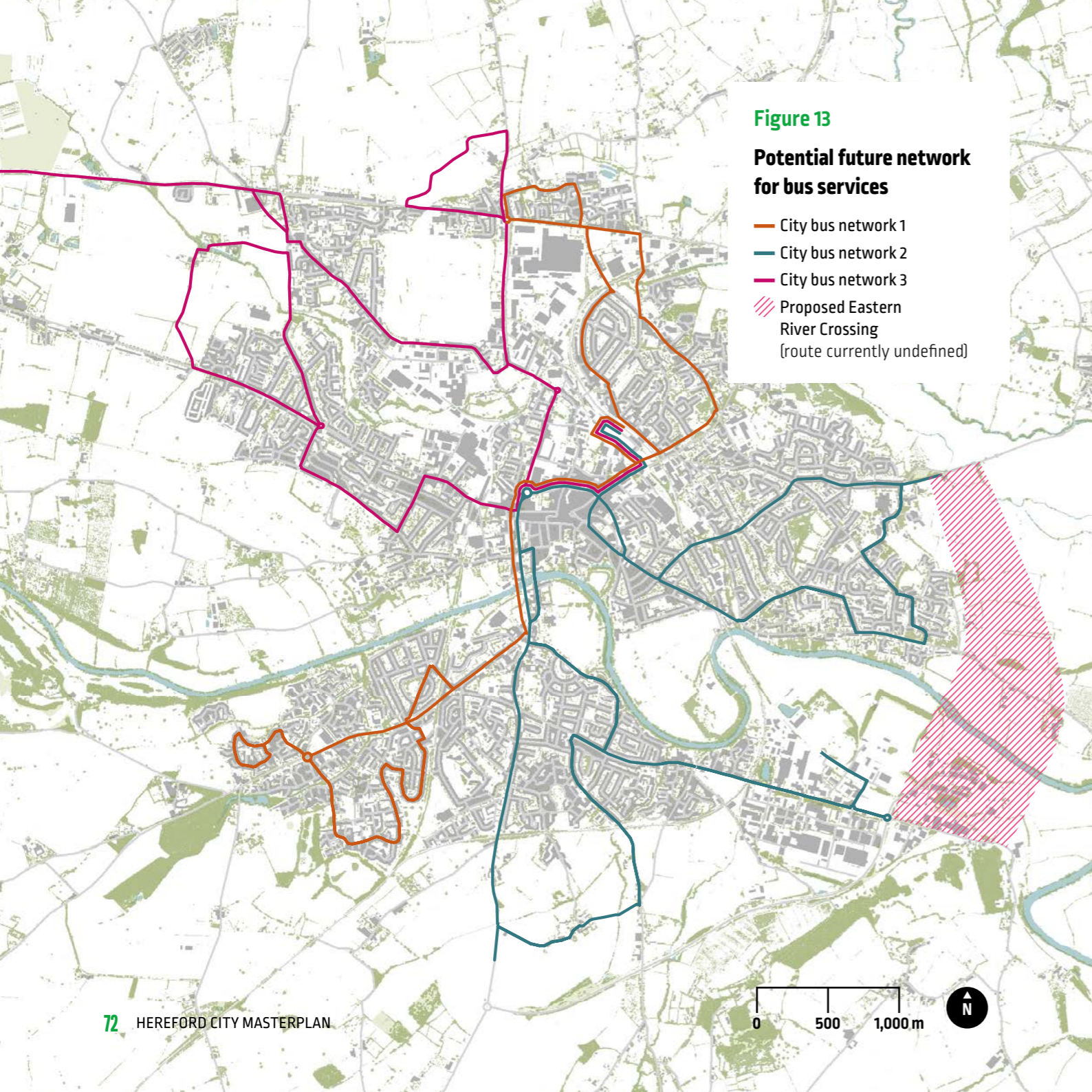


Figure 13
Potential future network for bus services

- City bus network 1
- City bus network 2
- City bus network 3
- ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)

PLANNING QUICK AND RELIABLE BUS JOURNEYS

Increasing bus patronage

The changing landscape proposed for development and transport infrastructure will need to be supported by an efficient public transport system that leads rather than follows growth. There is a strong case for changing how we deliver public transport services in Hereford and the wider county.

Bus travel continues to provide access to a range of educational, leisure and health services in Hereford. These trips are particularly important for supporting social inclusion, and they are often vital for people's ability to access opportunities. A coherent network of bus services can be relied upon for a set of trips that would otherwise be made by car and contribute to worsening journey times for all.

Bus services are crucial in communities where taking the car is not an option. For those without access to a car, the availability of buses may determine whether they can access jobs or training, or attend medical appointments, without having to resort to more expensive individual travel options, such as taxis.

Herefordshire's population is growing, and the county is likely to become a location for high levels of economic growth. A major increase in employment will support a rapidly expanding population. This growth is likely to result in a changed spatial portrait and will lead to thousands more trips on the transport network. Without an effective strategy in place, this will result in significant increases in traffic levels and overcrowding on the public transport network, hampering prosperity

and increasing levels of air pollution from transport emissions. The transport system needs to support planned growth and ensure that this benefits everyone.

Over time, and subject to securing a sustainable funding stream, we would like to replace our current enhanced partnership with a franchising model for operating reliable bus services. With limited exceptions, bus services in the county are currently fully reliant on public subsidy in various guises. A franchise proposal will be a medium-term initiative.

Anticipating future changes to transport in the county

A changing landscape of transport and development in Herefordshire could make franchising bus services a positive way forward. It could help:

- Progressively improve integration of the bus network and coordination between bus and other modes of transport.
- Provide integrated ticketing, facilitating travel across the full range of public transport options and reducing the cost of journeys that cross current operator boundaries.
- Introduce a unified brand of bus service and a single, clear point of contact with comprehensive information provided through a number of channels.
- Future-proof bus services to better facilitate the introduction of 'mobility as a service' initiatives.
- Implement bus priority measures in the city.
- Provide clear accountability for the bus service and the funding it receives from passengers and taxpayers.



Bromyard



Kington



Leominster



Ross-on-Wye

Planning healthy connections to local towns and villages

Hereford's goals for active travel and public transport also apply to the more rural areas of the county. But how they will be achieved will differ.

Journeys made by residents in more rural areas are generally longer, making them less likely to be easily walked or cycled. Similarly, lower levels of travel demand can make it harder to operate regular public transport services without major changes to how bus services are run.

This can make it harder for people living in rural areas to travel more sustainably. It can particularly disadvantage children and young people, those on lower incomes and those who are prevented from driving by health conditions or disabilities.

It is also particularly important for the county to reduce car use for longer journeys because they contribute more to greenhouse gas emissions.

Rural car-dependence is not inevitable. There are a range of interventions that over time can help. These include:

- **Better integration of public transport and active travel:** improving interchange between rail and bus services, and enabling door-to-door journeys through services and infrastructure which support easier onward connections for bus passengers.
- **Moving towards a vision for 'total transport':** improving coordination of transport services commissioned by different public bodies (such as public transport, school transport, patient transport and community transport schemes).

- **Demand-responsive transport:** where public transport services can operate on flexible routes, allowing users to summon a bus by altering its route (within reason) to pick them up or drop them off at a convenient location.
- **Planning for active travel:** prioritising what is important for rural areas might include enabling more e-cycling for longer trips, and enabling access to active lifestyles through the development of recreational and leisure routes for cycling (see also **Big Idea 10: Reestablishing the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal** on page 201). Four greenway projects are being proposed by community groups within Herefordshire, and a county-wide strategy for active travel will be produced.
- **Working collaboratively to identify opportunities for increased tourism and recreation:** This might include maintaining and opening up public rights of way to more walking, wheeling and e-cycling (see **Big Idea 12: The Lugg Green Lung** on page 213).

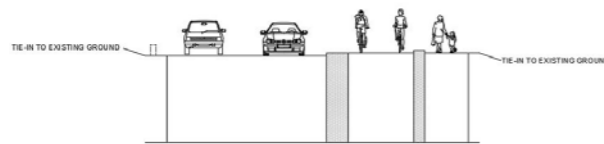
▲ Connection between Hereford and other towns and villages.

Improving highway resilience – an Eastern River Crossing

The River Wye has an important role to play in shaping the identity of the city and remains a key environmental asset. However, connectivity across the river is currently severely lacking with only one suitable for carrying large volumes of traffic. The historic bridge carrying St Martin's Street is narrow and signal controlled at either end, carrying traffic in a one-way shuttle arrangement – and therefore serves a very different purpose from the main A49 bridge.

The lack of alternative bridge crossings poses a significant resilience issue for the city – one incident along the bridge and approach roads can be enough to bring the city to a standstill. Looking forward, it is also a significant constraint to the future growth and economic prosperity of the city, with additional capacity being required to serve the increased demand on the network. As the city continues to grow and develop on both sides of the river, improved connectivity across the River Wye will become more important than ever.

Therefore, a new road connection – the Eastern River Crossing (ERIC) – has been identified, which would cross the River Wye to the east of the city centre and connect to the B4399 (south) and the A438 (north). The broad outline of the proposed route is shown on the plan, with an indicative cross-section highlighted below:



The ERIC will provide an alternative river crossing and therefore will go a long way to alleviating the existing resilience issues in the city centre and supporting the future growth of the city. Along with carrying vehicular traffic, it is proposed that the crossing would be designed in such a way as to provide a safe and desirable connection for pedestrians and cyclists which would help to promote active travel and healthy lifestyles, while reinforcing the concept of Hereford as an 'outdoor city'. The ERIC would thereby play a key role in supporting and complementing the city masterplan, specifically by:

- Improving options for active travel and encouraging healthy lifestyles.
- Improving public transport options and reducing reliance on private vehicles.
- Reducing congestion on the existing river crossing and in Hereford city centre and providing additional network capacity to support economic growth.
- Minimising the impact on the environment and contributing towards net zero objectives.

Figure 14
Potential Eastern Link Corridor

-  Potential Eastern Link Corridor
-  A roads
-  B roads
-  Streets
-  1 Rotherwas Industrial Estate
-  2 Thorn Business Park
-  3 Rotherwas Wastewater Treatment Works
-  4 Hereford Recycling Centre

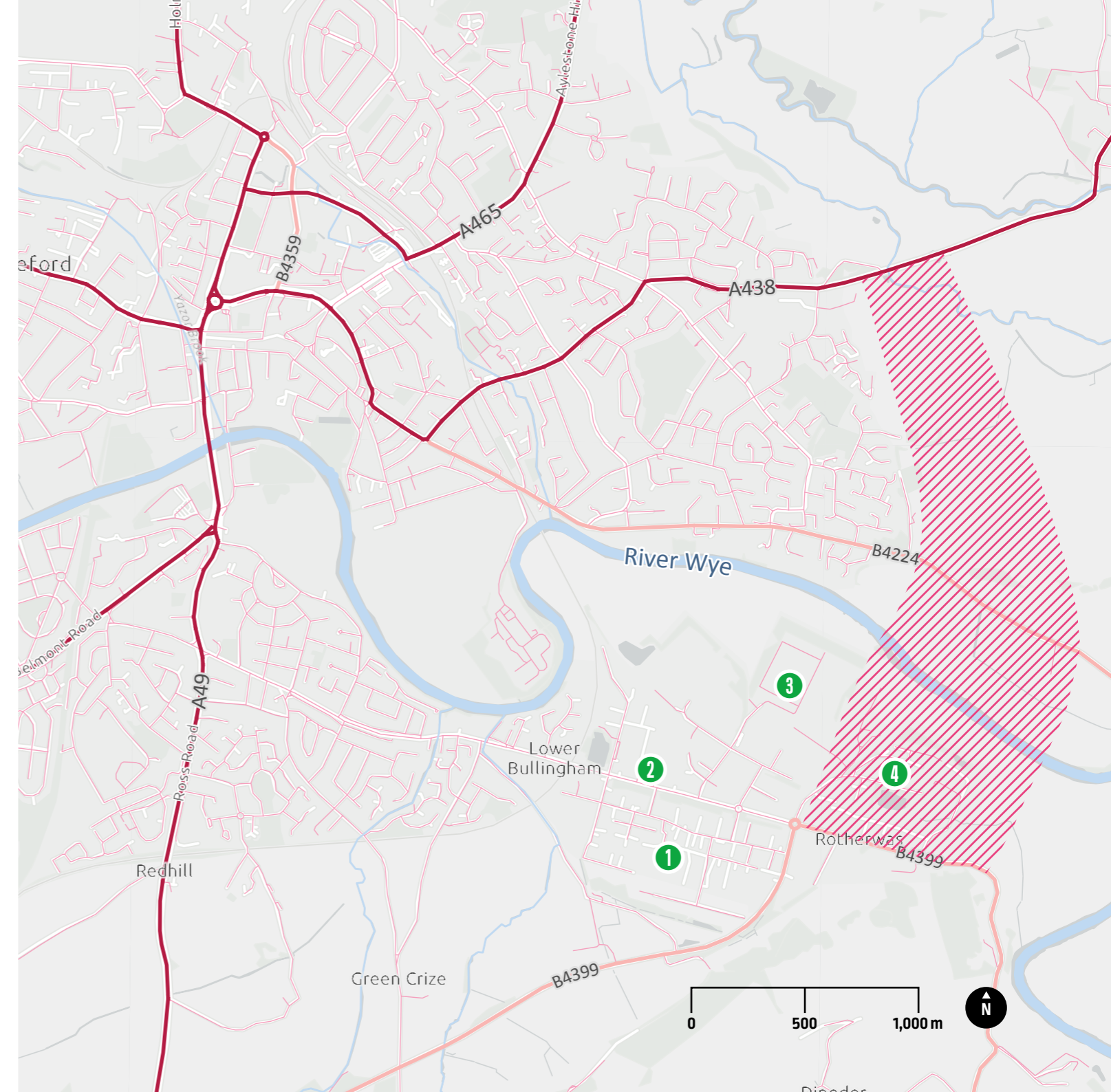


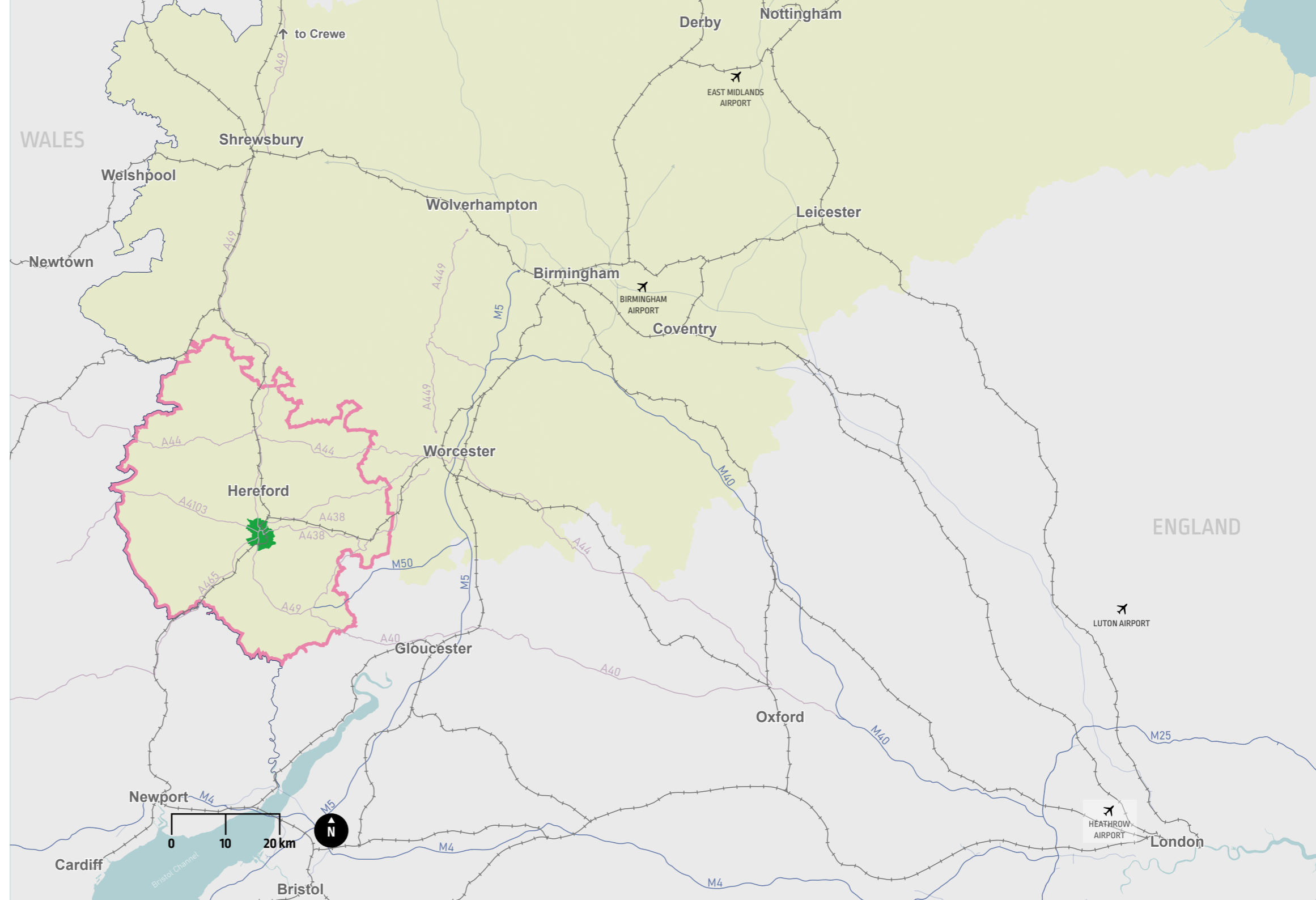
Figure 15

Regional connectivity

- Key railway lines
- Motorways
- Key A roads
- Midlands Connect area
- County of Herefordshire
- Hereford city

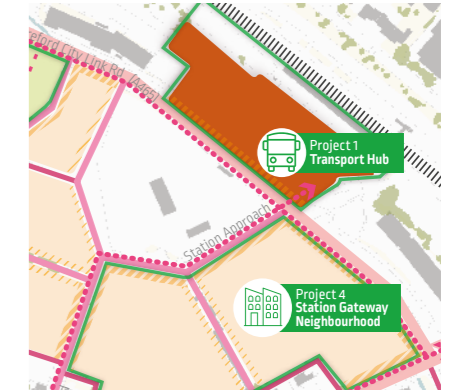
At present, rail infrastructure provides regional and national connections for residents and visitors. Rail services and infrastructure are planned at a regional and national level. Current proposals to increase the number of trains serving the city include the West Midlands Rail Executive investment strategy 2019 which targets Worcester to Hereford as a growth corridor, with a second train each hour from Hereford to Birmingham by 2031. The Welsh Government is also committed to adding a new Cardiff to Liverpool service in 2023 which should deliver three trains per hour to Hereford. Should it become economically viable, there is a long-term aspiration to explore reopening Pontrilas railway station and to investigate the viability of a Hereford Parkway station at Rotherwas.

Although only 7% of general traffic within Hereford is through-traffic, the A49 plays a role in connecting the city to the wider region. The A49 is part of the national strategic road network and is operated and maintained by National Highways. This route enables the movement of goods and services northwards to Shrewsbury and North Wales and southwards to Ross-on-Wye, providing access via the M50 eastwards to the M5, or southwards via the A40 and A449 to the M4 at Newport South Wales. The A4103 enables connections to the M5 motorway at Worcester. Cross-border links to Wales include the A438, the A465 via Abergavenny and the A44 via Kington.



THE 12 BIG IDEAS

- ▶ **Big Idea 1:** A network of neighbourhoods
- ▶ **Big Idea 2:** People-friendly streets
- ▶ **Big Idea 3:** Historic walls and gateways
- ▶ **Big Idea 4:** Revealing the historic core
- ▶ **Big Idea 5:** A vibrant historic core
- ▶ **Big Idea 6:** Hereford, university city
- ▶ **Big Idea 7:** Reconnecting to the River Wye
- ▶ **Big Idea 8:** The Station Quarter
- ▶ **Big Idea 9:** Commercial Road Corridor
- ▶ **Big Idea 10:** Reestablishing the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal
- ▶ **Big Idea 11:** Enterprise and Innovation corridor
- ▶ **Big Idea 12:** The Lugg Green Lung



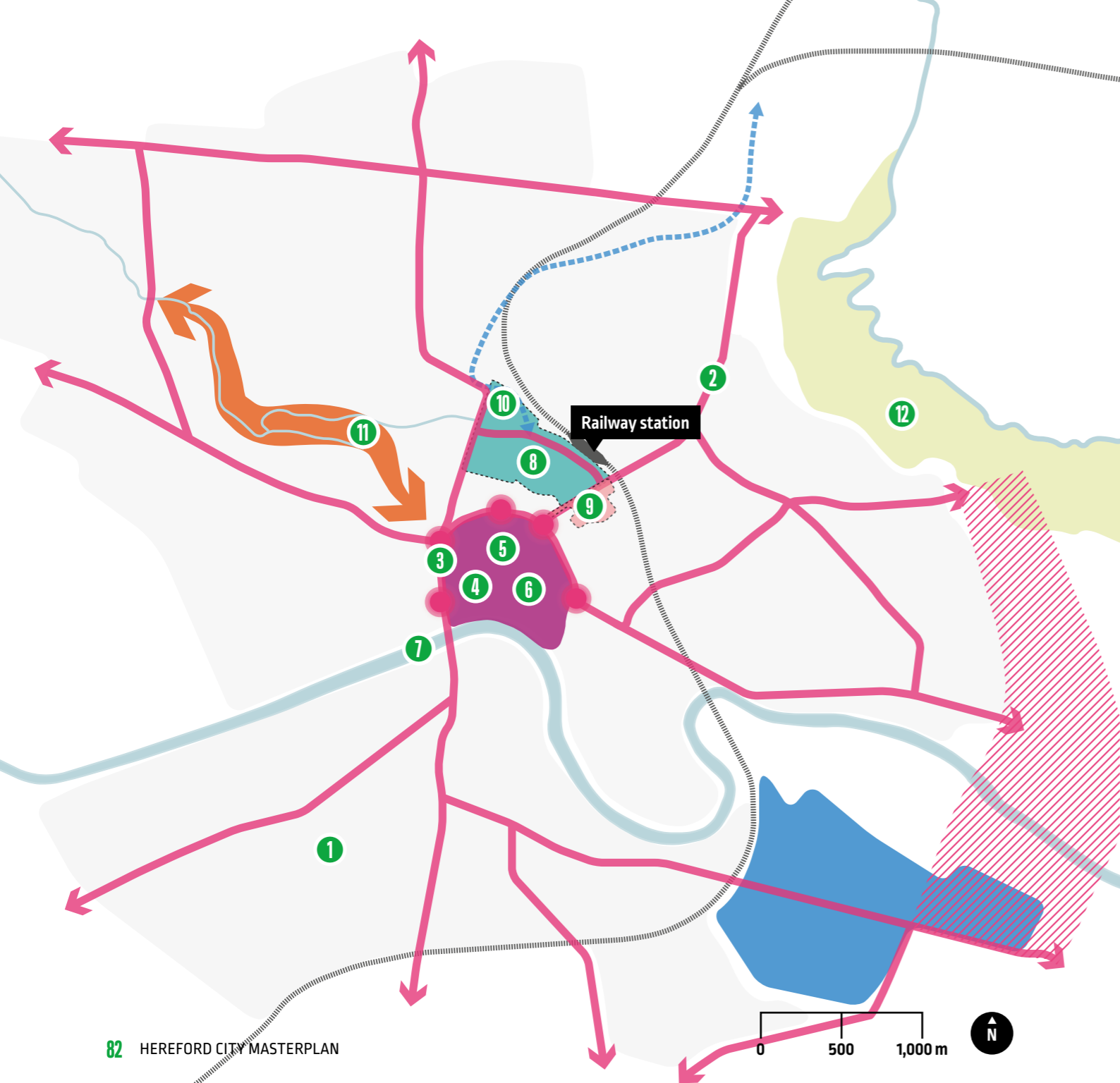


Figure 16

Overview of the 12 Big Ideas for Hereford

- Main Rivers
- Main Movement Corridors
- River Lugg Green Corridor
- Railway
- Historic Core
- Historic Walls and Gateways
- Hereford Enterprise Zone
- Enterprise and Innovation Corridor
- Station Quarter
- Commercial Road Corridor
- Proposed route of the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal
- ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing [route currently undefined]

Big ideas

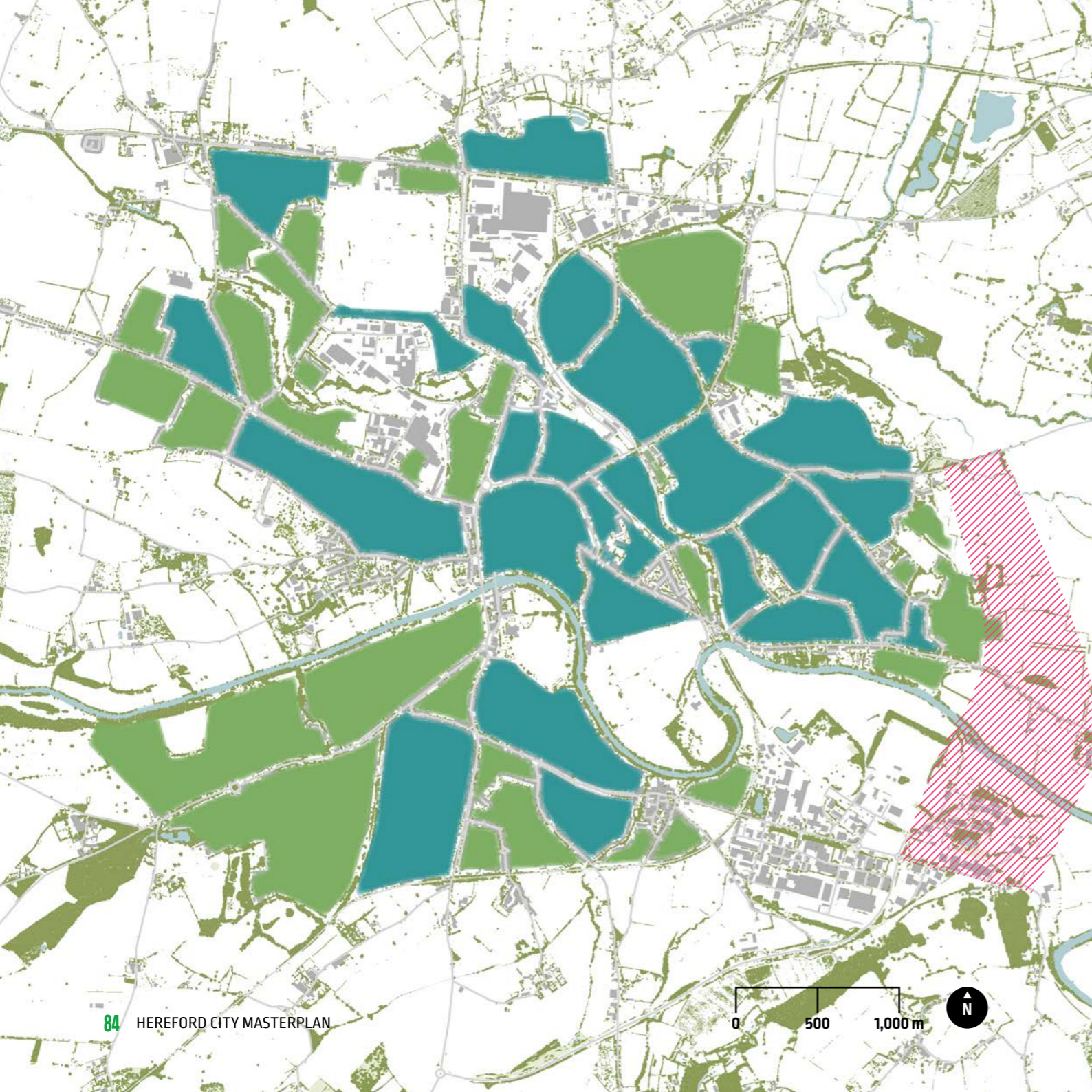
- 1 Network of Low-traffic Neighbourhood
- 2 People-friendly Streets
- 3 Historic Walls and Gateways
- 4 Revealing the Historic Core
- 5 Rejuvenating the Historic Core
- 6 Hereford University City
- 7 Reconnecting to the River Wye
- 8 Station Quarter
- 9 Commercial Road Corridor
- 10 Re-establishing the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal
- 11 Enterprise and Innovation Corridor
- 12 River Lugg Green Lung

12 BIG IDEAS FOR TRANSFORMING HEREFORD

The recommendations for the future development of Hereford in this masterplan take the form of 12 Big Ideas. These are long term and ambitious in scale.

They are designed as holistic, place-based approaches to change. They build on the overall Movement Strategy for Hereford by identifying how changes in the way we move can deliver change and opportunities across each of the Strategic Objectives set out on page 16.

Together they illustrate a vision for how a transformed Hereford might look in 2050.



BIG IDEA 1: A NETWORK OF NEIGHBOURHOODS

Summary

Streets are public spaces. Measures which restrict motorised through-traffic unlock different ways of using these public spaces.

Roads with heavy traffic are a major barrier to community cohesion. As motor traffic on a street increases, interactions between residents become less frequent. People are less likely to know their neighbours, and children are given less independence and are no longer able to play in the street.

Low-traffic neighbourhoods provide a solution to some of these challenges. They are areas in which motorised through-traffic is eliminated or dramatically restricted.

Within this Big Idea, these low-traffic neighbourhoods are supported by a programme of School Streets across the city. School Streets focus on a major generator of traffic (the 'school run') and deliver safer routes to school. They reduce road danger at the school gates and help to shape liveable neighbourhoods where more people can walk, wheel and cycle for short journeys.

Figure 17

Existing and potential future Low-traffic Neighbourhoods

- Existing historic low-traffic neighbourhood
- Potential low-traffic neighbourhood
- ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Enabling active and healthy ways of getting around, and making local trips quicker and more convenient.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Increasing opportunities to spend time on local streets, getting to know neighbours.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

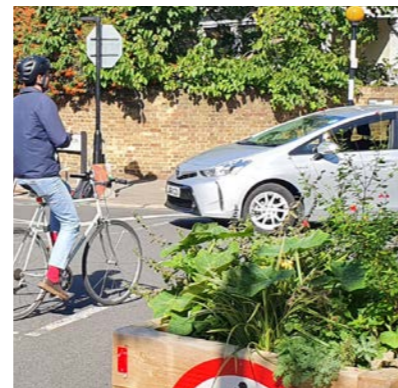
Increasing footfall to local shops and services.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Enabling opportunities for more green spaces and landscaping on streets where people live.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Enhancing access to places and spaces people want to spend time in.



▲ Illustrative images showing the kind of environment a low-traffic neighbourhood can create.

What is a low-traffic neighbourhood?

A low-traffic neighbourhood is an area in which motorised through-traffic is eliminated or dramatically reduced. This is achieved by installing physical interventions which retain motor vehicle access to properties within an area but prevent or strongly discourage motor traffic from driving through areas on their way to somewhere else.

Reducing motor traffic in Hereford's local neighbourhoods will help to deliver attractive places to live and spend time in with family, friends and neighbours.

Low-traffic neighbourhoods make local journeys to school easy, enable more walking and cycling, and increase footfall outside local shops and services.

When driving, low-traffic neighbourhoods turn minor roads into cul-de-sacs. They are a simple and cost-effective way to reduce through-traffic while maintaining vehicle access to homes and businesses.

Low-traffic neighbourhoods are not new. As the map on page 85 shows, across Hereford, there is a long history of installing measures which eliminate motorised through-traffic from streets and other public spaces.

Car traffic can disappear from areas if the infrastructure is changed. Making it harder to drive short trips incentivises people who can to walk, wheel or cycle instead of driving on some trips.

Nobody was consulted on the slow but steady increases that have been seen in motor traffic in Hereford's local areas. With sat nav tech becoming commonplace, car and van traffic has significantly increased on minor roads.

We get the traffic we design for. If we continue to build highways, we induce more car traffic. If we disincentivise driving and enable active travel, we get more pedestrian traffic and cycle traffic – and that benefits everyone.

What will low-traffic neighbourhoods mean to local people?

Eliminating or substantially reducing motorised through-traffic is achieved by 'filtering' key points on certain streets. This uses physical measures which restrict cars and vans but enable people walking, cycling, or using a mobility scooter to travel through. In some locations, where necessary, space can be left for local buses and emergency services to travel through.

Every home in a low-traffic neighbourhood can be accessed by car and can receive deliveries to its door.

Due to the installation of physical measures to restrict motorised through-traffic, some residents and businesses will have to take different routes to their destinations in a low-traffic neighbourhood area. This will generally be less convenient. By their nature, low-traffic neighbourhoods disincentivise short car trips, instead enabling more efficient modes of transport for shorter trips, including walking, cycling and wheeling.

Getting used to these changes can take time for those who currently drive, and this can be disruptive in the short term. These impacts can depend greatly on how a low-traffic neighbourhood is designed and where filters are located.

Looking elsewhere where success has been achieved, evidence suggests that low-traffic neighbourhoods should be implemented over a wide enough area to enable



Figure 18
Proposals for School Streets

- Primary school
- Secondary school
- Higher education
- Potential school street
- ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)

an overall reduction in motor traffic and meaningfully disincentivise short car trips in favour of active travel.

Low-traffic neighbourhoods should not be seen in isolation.

These interventions are one tool of many. When combined over time as part of a portfolio of measures, they can enable positive changes for people living in Hereford.

Alongside the implementation of low-traffic neighbourhoods, complementary projects will be developed. These may be delivered before, after or in parallel with the low-traffic neighbourhood and include the following:

- School Streets – permanent or timed restrictions on motorised traffic (see below).
- Controlled Parking Zones.
- Reallocation of road space on strategic routes for walking and cycling (see Big Idea 2: People-friendly streets on page 93).
- Considering workplace parking levies.
- Projects at the 'edges' of low-traffic neighbourhoods, such as controlled crossings and continuous footways.
- Attending to the quality of local centres and hubs within these neighbourhoods (see below).

School Streets: enabling safer routes to school

School Streets are a simple idea. They involve closing the streets around schools at drop-off and pick-up times to motor traffic. Such projects meet a lot

of national and local priorities: they reduce road danger, make it safer for children to walk or cycle to school, and lower air pollution outside schools.

These interventions restrict motorised through-traffic on streets with schools during pick-up and drop-off times. They stop car traffic from travelling directly outside schools, reducing road danger and emissions next to schools.

This is achieved by various kinds of vehicular traffic closure during school drop-off and pick-up periods. Only permit holders, cycle traffic and pedestrians are allowed through. Exceptions can be made to allow vehicle access to residential properties within the School Streets area.

A School Street includes a vehicular traffic closure for 30-60 minutes at morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up times.

Rolling out School Streets as business-as-usual will mean working collaboratively with schools and partners across the city.

The concept varies depending on the local context, but a preferred option is often a signed traffic restriction, enforced with automatic number plate recognition (ANPR). Alternatively, volunteers from the school community, such as parents or teachers, can steward a vehicular traffic closure – a temporary or flexible modal filter with furniture, such as barriers or planters.

School Streets encourage conversations in local communities about what traffic they want.

Such projects are a key tool (one of many) to help create a sustainable local transport system and will be a starting point of the journey towards reducing car use, rebalancing the allocation of road space and supporting active travel.



▲ Environmental improvements to the facilities on Holme Lacy Road will help to create a more inviting and accessible local centre.

School Streets have been trialled across the UK over several years, with hundreds of schemes now made permanent. There are demonstrable benefits that include lower air pollution and safer roads.

Not all schools are suitable for School Streets. For those on busier main roads, other measures may be needed to reduce motor traffic and therefore reduce pollution at the school gate and in the school.

Re-establishing local centres

Within and around these low-traffic neighbourhoods, local centres should be the focus for community activity. These are places where people can go to easily access their employment, leisure, shopping and other key services.

Hereford's historic centre will continue to be the focus for access to what are called 'higher-order services' – including theatres, museums, major employment areas and central Council services.

However, the provision of thriving local centres within Hereford's outer neighbourhoods will reduce the need to travel long distances for daily needs, such as picking up a loaf of bread or posting a letter or package. This will play a key role in reducing car trips over short journeys and achieving the Movement strategy set out in this document by 2050.

Currently, Hereford's local centres are significantly car-dominated. Future investment in public realm initiatives should focus on these local centres – to make them attractive, walkable hubs at the heart of local communities.

The transformation of future development sites in Hereford will be expected to deliver high-quality local centres at the heart of any neighbourhood, with easy access by walking and cycling.



▲ Existing local centre in Tupsley.



▲ Existing local centre on Holme Lacy Road.



BIG IDEA 2: PEOPLE-FRIENDLY STREETS

Summary

This Big Idea works together with the planned Network of Neighbourhoods. While the neighbourhoods provide new ways of moving and accessing services locally, People-friendly Streets will connect those neighbourhoods together along more major movement corridors. In doing so, they will enable all those who live, work in or visit Hereford to get to the city centre and other city neighbourhoods without requiring a car.

A new people-friendly streets approach will put people and their health at the centre of decisions about how we design, manage and use public spaces. The approach is based on ten Indicators of a Healthy Street, which focus on the experience of people using streets.

This Big Idea will consider the experiences of people using Hereford's streets and public spaces from all angles – to transform how people move around the city. Alongside transport infrastructure this will include a focus on how these streets feel to move through, considering high-quality public realm, spill-out spaces and multifunctional planting.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Creating people-friendly streets where people choose to walk, wheel and cycle, where roads are easy to cross and the air is clean.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Creating streets where everyone feels welcome and relaxed.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Providing opportunities for things to see and do, with access to local shops and services.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Opportunities for increasing green spaces, trees and landscaping.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Creating places and spaces for people to stop, rest and chat.



Figure 19
Recommended network for cycling and walking infrastructure

- Primary cycle route
- Secondary cycle route
- ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)

Our proposals for people-friendly streets

The Council's emerging local cycling and walking infrastructure plan is a detailed 10-year plan which sets out how to improve cycling, walking and wheeling in Hereford. It will provide the foundation for further long-term progress leading up to 2050.

Figure 19 shows those routes which will be the major focus for improved infrastructure and how they interact with the network of low-traffic neighbourhoods set out in **Big Idea 1: A network of neighbourhoods** on page 85.

The Council will support residents and business owners as it plans and delivers a transport network which prioritises walking and cycling. This will provide more choice in how people travel on short trips within the city. These proposals will increase the space available on the streets for people to choose to walk, wheel or cycle on short trips.

As well as cycling and walking, the infrastructure plan will include policies which change how the Council talks to local people about their streets, and how projects are delivered on the ground.

Delivering transformational infrastructure will require trials and pilots to be implemented before major decisions are taken to make changes permanent. This will allow action to be taken quickly and experimenting to get things right – as trials allow local people to see and feel the benefits of changes to their neighbourhoods and weigh them more fairly against any perceived impacts.

The Council will work with communities who are local experts in how Hereford's streets work to help identify for example where there should be additional seating for rest and relaxation, where new places are needed to cross the road, and new spaces to play and spend time in.

To help everyone the Council will work with partners to reduce motor traffic speeds and ensure there is sufficient time for pedestrians to cross the road at signalised junctions.

What infrastructure is recommended?

Streets are public spaces. A high priority will be placed on increasing walking, cycling and public transport use as part of a focused approach to enable sustainable transport.

Reducing travel demand

Transforming Hereford's local transport to support people-friendly streets will be underpinned by a range of modest policies and projects to manage traffic demand. These will include:

- Proactive management of car parking through cost and availability, including reducing the availability of on-street and off-street car parking, and restructuring car parking fees.
- Widespread adoption of residents' parking areas and controlled parking zones.
- Year-on-year removal of on-street car parking spaces.
- Area-wide 20mph limits.
- Motor vehicle restricted areas.
- Considering workplace parking levies.



The ingredients of a people-friendly street

There are a range of infrastructure options to enable active travel and public transport. As well as enabling bus and rail services, it is important to prioritise footways, pedestrian crossings, protected cycle infrastructure and the targeted use of modal filters (also known as traffic filters).

- 1 **#Junctions:** The redesign of motor vehicle dominated junctions to enable walking, wheeling and cycling will be critical to the success of the network.
- 2 **#Footways:** Most short journeys are made by walking or wheeling on footways. In the UK, the footway is more commonly referred to as the pavement. Footways are a fundamental component of our streets and public spaces, and steps will be taken to ensure they are clear and clutter-free.

Very few trips by car or public transport are completed without some walking or wheeling. However, the simple act of crossing a side road can be filled with uncertainty and fear. Kerbs will continue to be dropped where needed to help people cross the street. Crossings will be accommodated where people want to go (on their 'desire lines'). Where possible, crossings will be designed to give priority to walking, wheeling and cycling. 'Continuous footways' will be introduced where there is high footfall over side streets.

- 3 **#Pedestrianised areas:** The Council will continue to invest in high-quality public spaces, free of motor traffic, to grow footfall in the city centre.
- 4 **#Hubs:** Enabling more multi-modal trips will require investment in facilities at the railway station, bus stops and local centres to support onward journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling.



©Sheffield City Council.

Hereford's streets aren't just about moving from A to B. Designing better and greener streets can provide a huge beneficial impact on people's health and wellbeing, quality of life and general happiness.

- 5 **#Protected cycle infrastructure:** Cycles must be treated as vehicles and not as pedestrians. On urban streets, cyclists must be physically separated from pedestrians and should not share space with pedestrians.

▲ Illustrative photographs show some of the infrastructure options that can create people-friendly streets ©PJA.

What will these streets feel like? Principles for designing people-friendly streets in Hereford

Creating people-friendly streets in Hereford will mean looking not only at the infrastructure of junctions, footways, hubs and protected cycle lanes. A variety of public realm interventions will also be needed to enhance the public realm along these corridors and bring the streets back to life.

As a result, Hereford's streets will take on a more human scale, where social interaction can occur and where the 'grey infrastructure' associated with roads and car movements is reduced to create more 'green infrastructure'.

Creating healthy streets will deliver a transformative change to the look and feel of major routes through Hereford. It will also allow streets to deliver multiple functions at the same time – movement, social interaction, biodiversity, shade from hot weather and flood resilience.

Designing for different types of road in Hereford: streets, boulevards and thoroughfares

A core principle of the Hereford Design Guide SPD is to rebalance the 'movement' and 'place' functions within the city. It does this by identifying a hierarchy of three different types of street: streets, boulevards and thoroughfares.

Thoroughfares (19+ metres in width) are the widest and see the largest share of traffic, followed by boulevards (12-19 metres) and streets (6-12 metres).

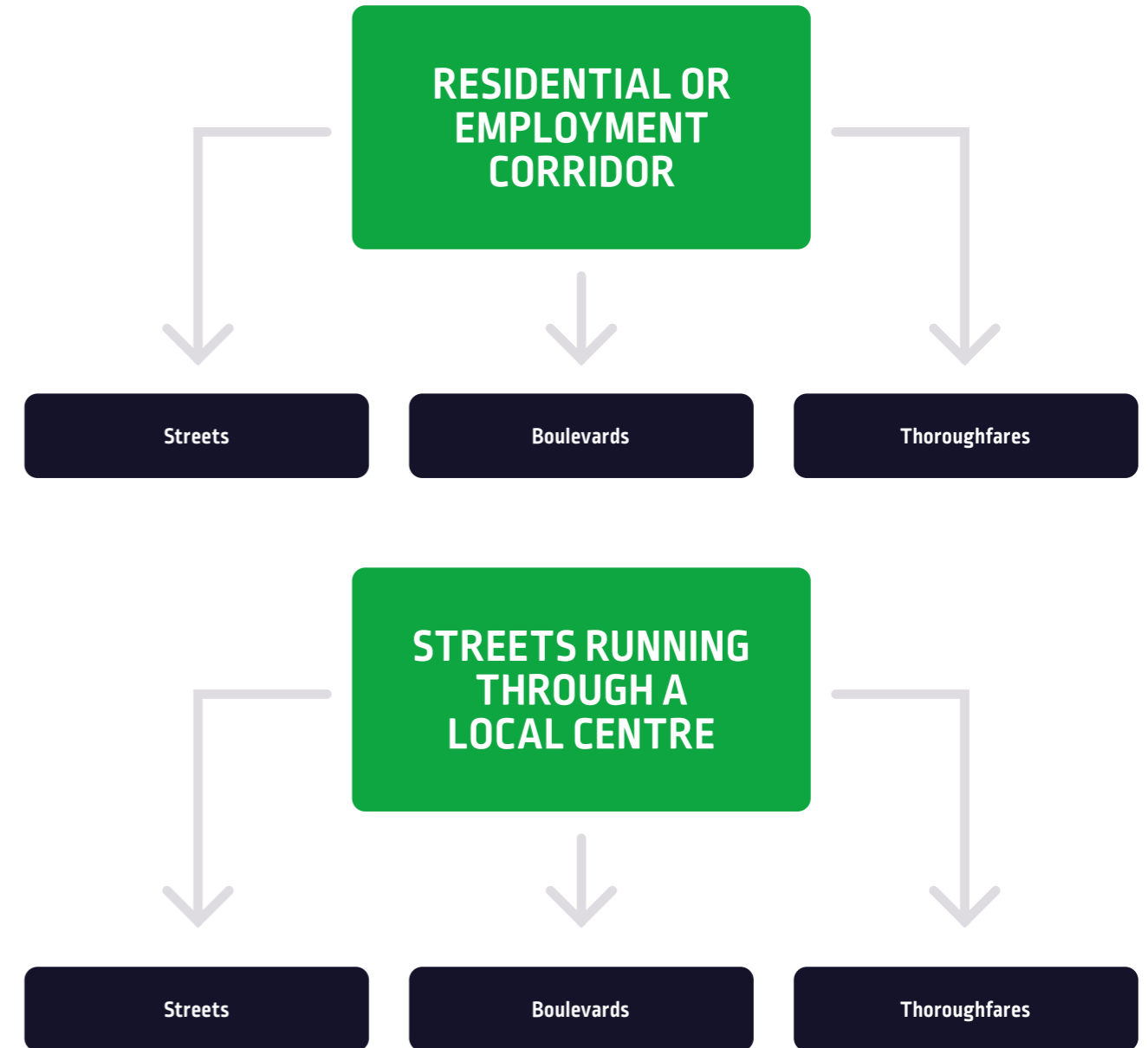
This Big Idea provides overarching guidance for the redesign of each street type. In doing so, it distinguishes between the distinctive needs of those streets which are residential or employment corridors, and those

which pass through a local centre – local high streets or other areas where people access shops and services.

It is important to acknowledge that, in practice, each street type brings constraints of road geometry and availability of space. This Big Idea does not bring detailed design, only broad guidance. Any interventions will need to balance place-specific needs with the overall movement function of the transport network.

The guidance is, however, informed by the following principles:

- 1 Accommodating all users of all abilities.
- 2 Creating safe and healthy streets.
- 3 Ensuring Hereford is greener and more climate resilient.
- 4 Promoting public spaces and streets as meeting places.
- 5 Reflecting local character and identity.
- 6 Supporting local businesses.
- 7 Creating a city that is legible and easy to navigate.



PRINCIPLES FOR RESIDENTIAL AND EMPLOYMENT CORRIDORS

Creating a people-friendly street along a residential or employment corridor will provide safe and attractive space for walking, cycling or wheeling journeys to the shop, school, work or to visit friends. Examples of this street typology in Hereford include:

- Bath Street (street)
- Ledbury Road (boulevard)
- Ross Road (thoroughfare)

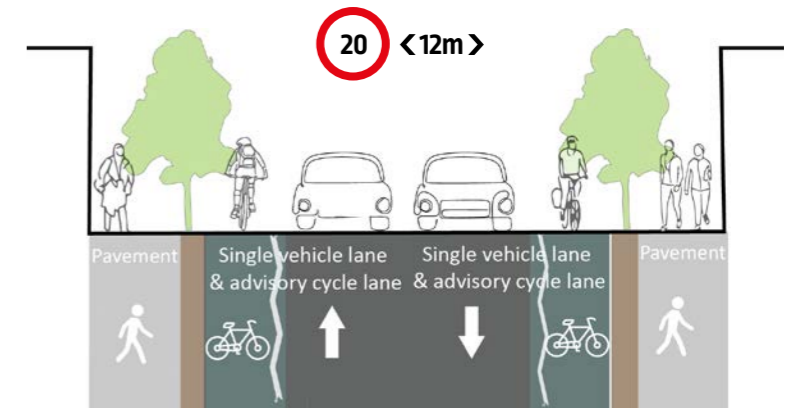


▲ Bath Street.



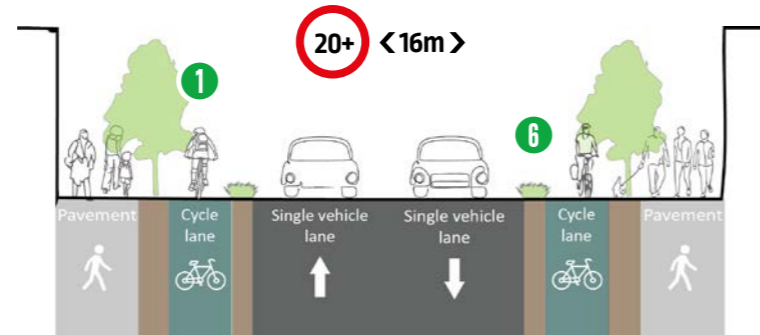
1. STREETS

- 1 20mph speed limit to make on-street cycling safe for people.
- 2 Advisory cycle lane.
- 3 Wider pedestrian zone bordered by rain gardens and street trees.
- 4 Improved crossings at street interchanges and junctions.



2. BOULEVARDS

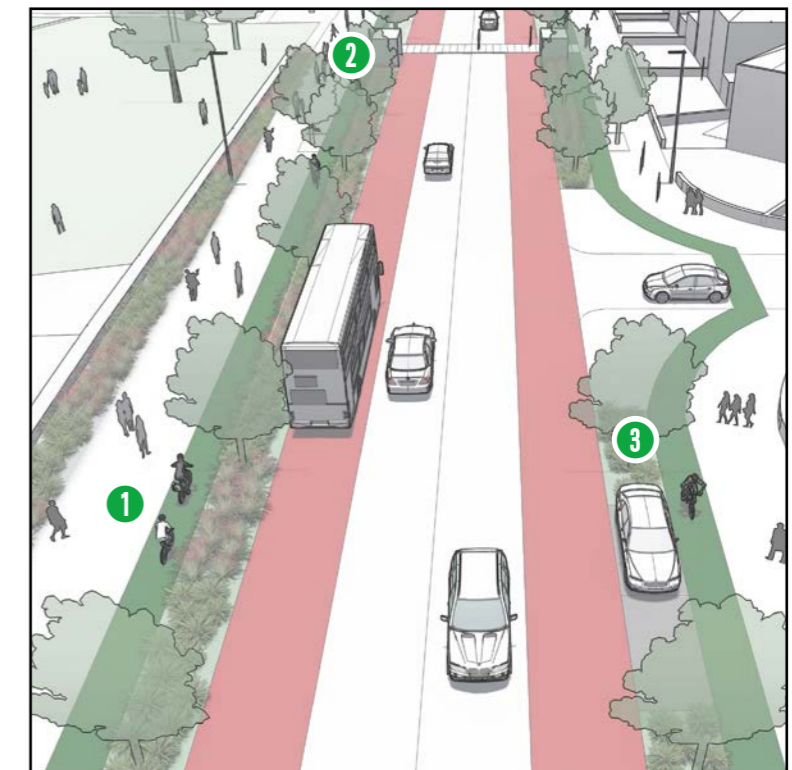
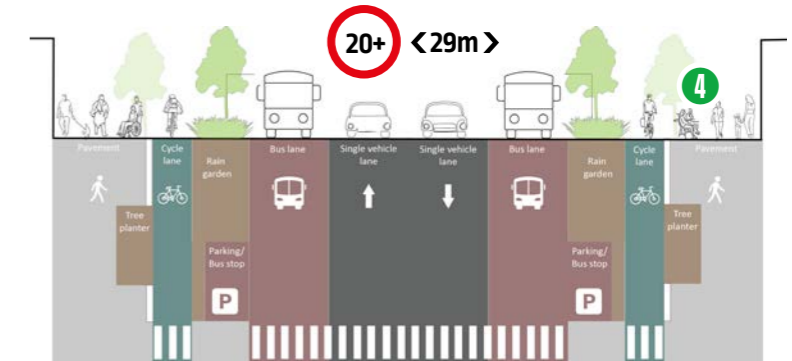
- 1 Segregated cycle lanes.
- 2 Cycle lanes crossing point at intersections.
- 3 Light segregation to create a protected space for cycling on highways.
- 4 Planting to integrate on street parking.
- 5 Increased space for street trees, wildflower planting and rain gardens to improve water management.
- 6 High quality paved walking and cycling routes set within a green landscape. Low level planting to ensure cyclists and pedestrians can be observed from the road particularly at crossings and at night.
- 7 New bus stops integrated with planting.



©Greater London Authority 2021.

3. THOROUGHFARES

- 1 Protected cycle lanes, bus stops and wider pavements distribute the space more equitably to encourage walking, cycling and transit use.
- 2 Provide island bus stops for fast, accessible boarding.
- 3 Parking spaces and bus stops, cycle-share and parking stops integrated with rain gardens and planting. Pedestrian refuges to increase permeability.
- 4 Wider pedestrian zone to allow multiple activities to take place without obstructing pedestrian movement. Street trees, street furniture, pocket parks and social spaces bring life back to the streets.



PRINCIPLES FOR STREETS RUNNING THROUGH A LOCAL CENTRE

Creating people-friendly streets where a street runs through a local centre for shopping and services means a focus on active streets which encourage people to linger and visit local services. It also means providing space for cafes and bars to spill out. These will include seating, green spaces and street trees set back from the road. Examples of this street typology in Hereford include:

- Street: Whitecross Road
- Boulevard: Eign Street (sections of)
- Thoroughfare: Holme Lacy Road



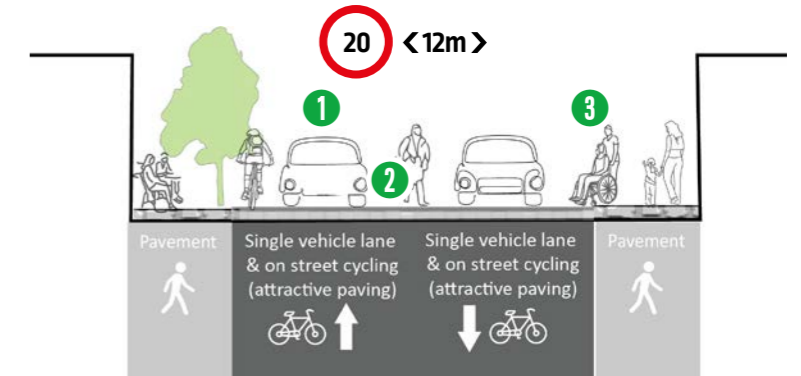
▲ Holme Lacy Road.



@SWNS

1. STREETS

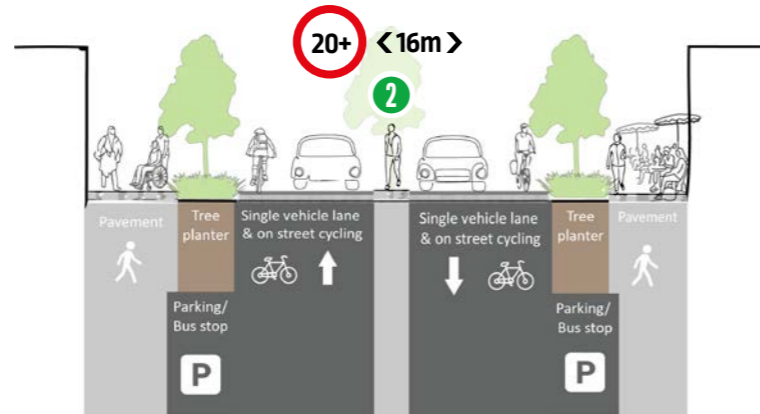
- 1 20mph speed limit to make on-street cycling safe for people.
- 2 Use of high-quality paving, at-grade crossings and shared surfaces to slow vehicle speeds and improve pedestrian safety.
- 3 Improved crossings at street interchanges and junctions.
- 4 Multifunctional pockets of roadside space. A bus stop can be a social space, a lunch stop, a community food-growing area and a transport hub.



▲ The Edible Bus Stop® is a clever design solution to transform forgotten and neglected transport stops into community growing and social spaces. @Carbon Gold.

2. BOULEVARDS

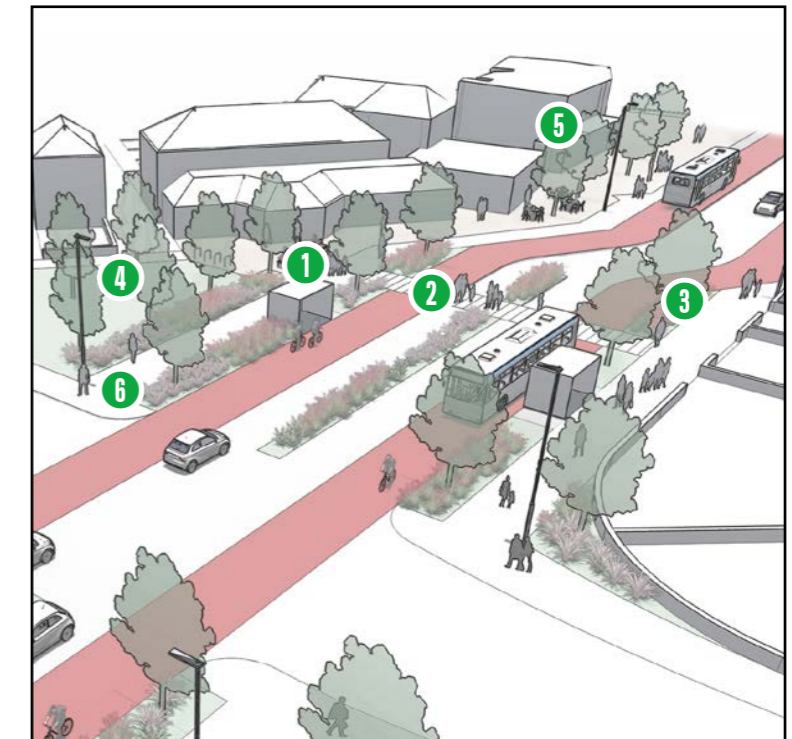
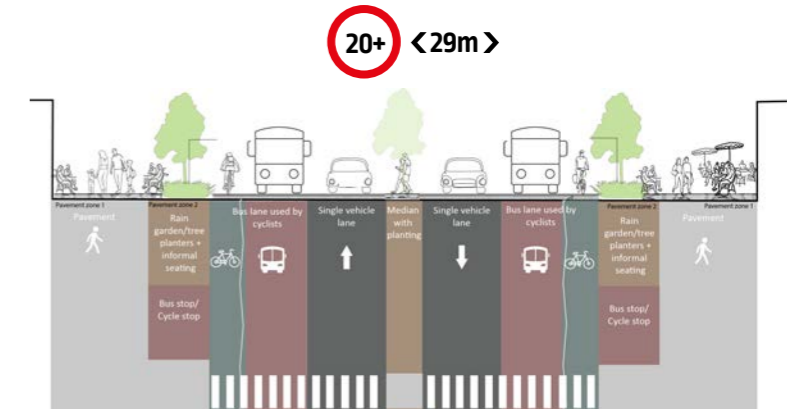
- 1 Wider pedestrian zone to create cafe culture, to provide additional public space and assist with traffic calming.
- 2 Wide central median to encourage more frequent and informal crossing movements by pedestrians.
- 3 Integrated green bus stops and cycle stops.
- 4 Combination of courtesy crossings and formal crossings (signalised or zebra).
- 5 Cycle lane crossings at intersections.
- 6 Green infrastructure, cycle parking, street furniture and rain gardens to improve water management.

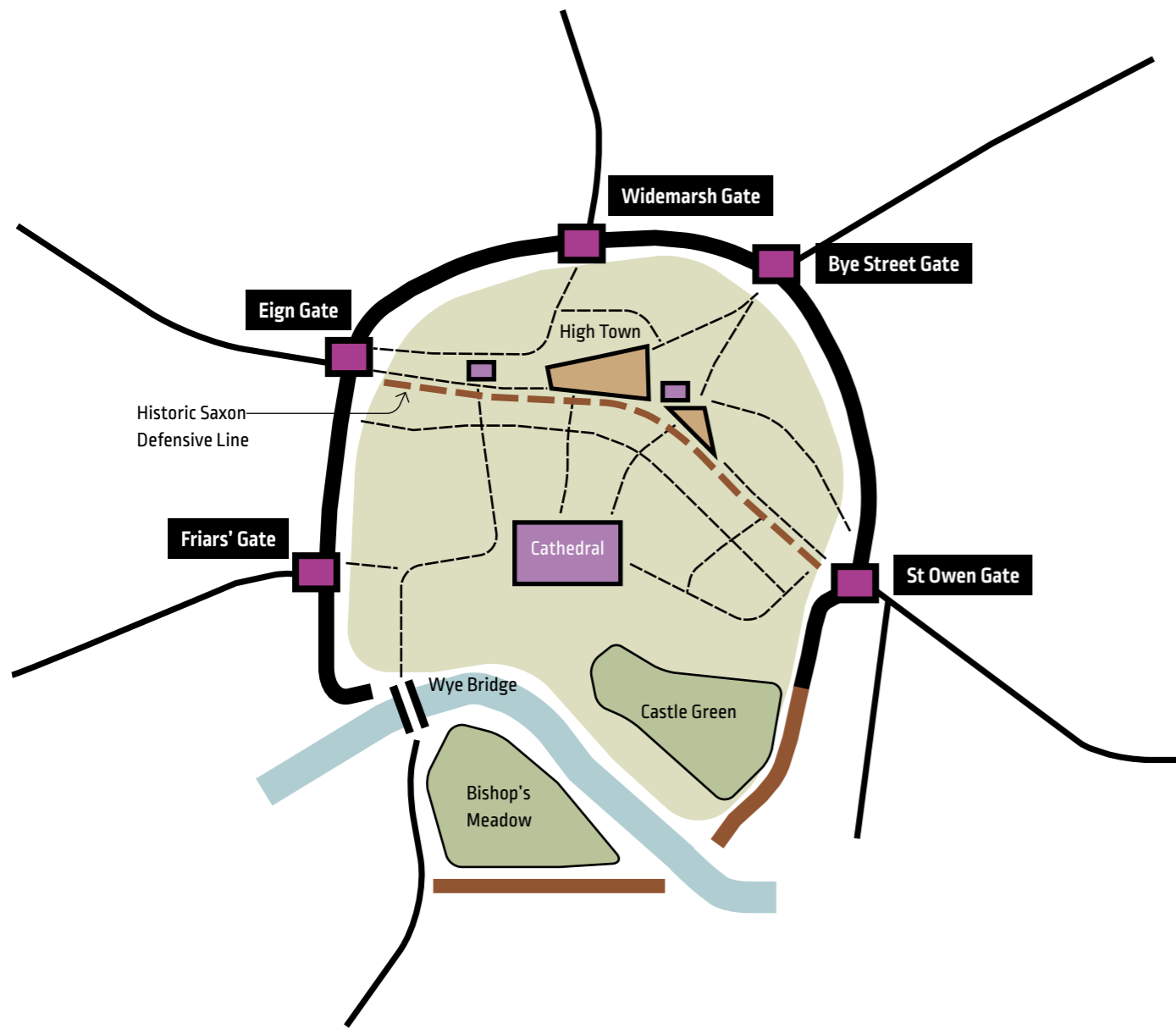


©Deansgrage, Dublin Cycling Campaign.

3. THOROUGHFARES

- 1 Bus and vehicle infrastructure integrated sensitively into green pedestrian public realm. Limited parking spaces and loading bays integrated with bus stops, cycle stops and rain gardens.
- 2 Regular pedestrian refuges along a central median to increase permeability and facilitate crossings. Street lighting in the central median to reduce street clutter.
- 3 Wider pedestrian zone with street furniture to facilitate multiple activities without obstructing pedestrian movement.
- 4 Planting to provide meaningful contact with nature.
- 5 Planting and pocket parks to create semi-enclosed green spaces for cafe culture and public seating. A variety of seating should be used around the edges of spaces. High-quality public realm for walking and cycling routes set within a green landscape.





▲ The key elements of the medieval city as interpreted from John Speed's map 1610.

BIG IDEA 3: HISTORIC WALLS AND GATEWAYS

Summary

Defensive constructions are an intrinsic part of Hereford's evolution and history. The ditches, ramparts, walls and gates that enclosed the medieval city helped to create the distinctive form seen on John Speed's map of 1610.

However, as the practical need for city defences diminished, they were increasingly neglected and removed. Today, the standing masonry of the historic walls is highly fragmented, and the five gateways are almost entirely lost.

This Big Idea seeks to bring the city defences back into the public consciousness. It proposes a series of interventions to help people connect the dots of the remaining visible fragments of the walls. In doing so, a valuable resource will be created for the city, which both helps define its authentic identity and encourages cultural, recreational and educational activities.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Creating a continuous 'Historic Walls Trail' following the line of the defences and linking with other recreation and heritage routes.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Creating a resource for all that combines culture, heritage, education and recreation.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Strengthening Hereford's appeal as a visitor destination and place to live and work.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Enhancing the setting of the historic core and creating linked green spaces.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Creating new public spaces and parks to celebrate and communicate Hereford's heritage.

Context

Despite the highly fragmented condition of the historic defences that is found today, their effect on the form of the city has left an indelible mark that is still apparent. The following six projects represent a valuable opportunity to strengthen their presence and make the historic defences an iconic feature of the city once again.

Project 1: The 'City Walls Trail'

Although Hereford's city walls are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and are highly valued and safeguarded in the planning policy framework, a key challenge to the value they hold in public perception is their present-day fragmented nature. Lengthy sections, especially to the eastern side of the historic core, are entirely lost above ground or obscured from view in private ownership, while other sections of standing masonry are currently compromised or screened entirely by vegetation or infrastructure.

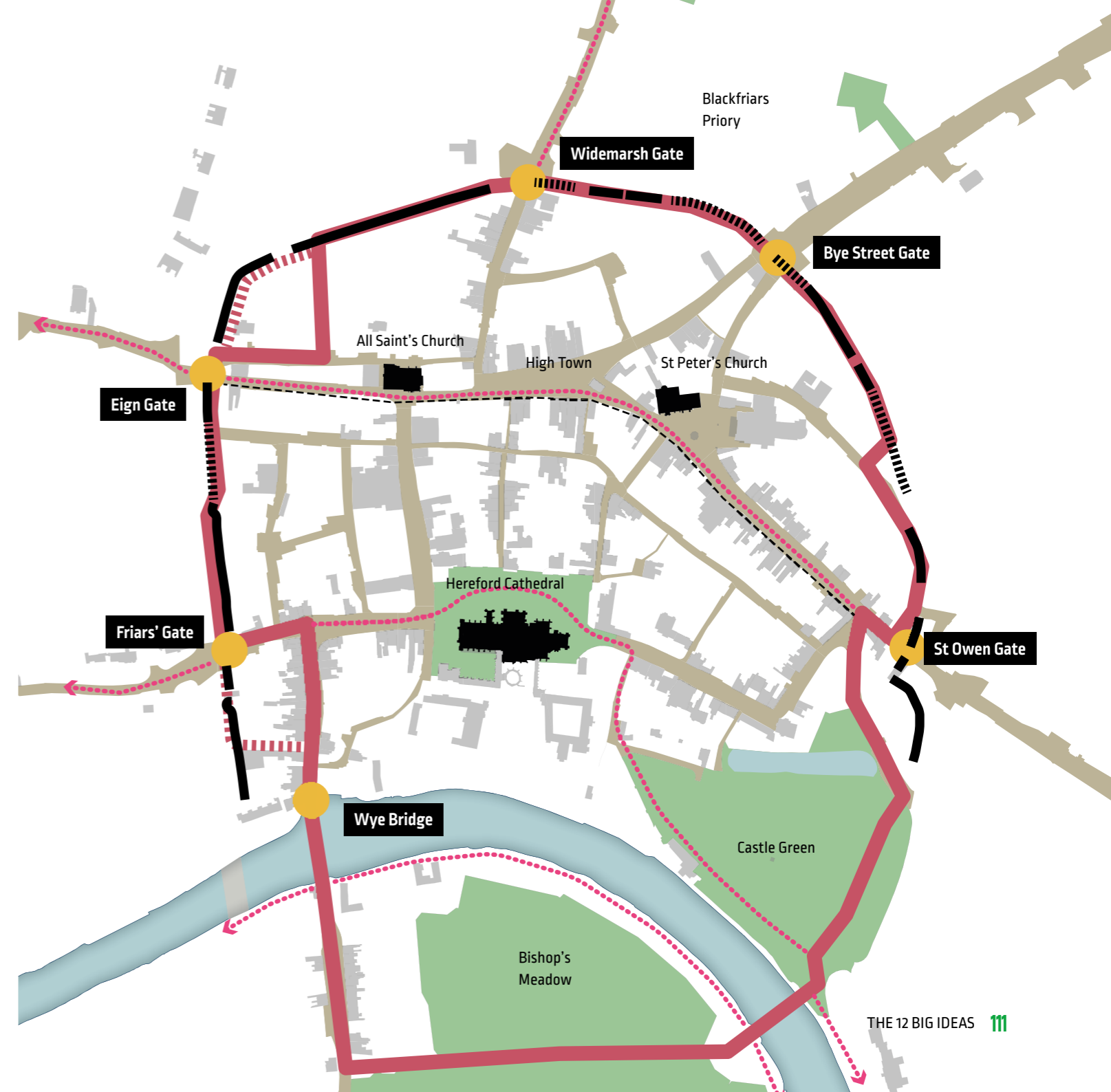
The establishment of a continuous and identifiable 2.65 kilometre (1.65 mile) 'City Walls' recreational trail, following the path of the medieval defences, would help to define the historic alignment and physically bridge the gaps where the defences are most eroded. The trail would become a valuable resource providing educational, cultural, leisure and health benefits – and would help to bring back to life an important part of Hereford's heritage and identity. The key principles for the establishment of the trail include:

- The creation of a continuous path that is accessible to all and close to the line of the historic defences, piecing together existing and publicly accessible routes with new or strengthened paths and road crossings as appropriate.
- A long-term Planning Policy ambition – to safeguard access to the inside face of the walls wherever possible.

- The trail should be legible, discrete and defined by a distinctive surface sympathetic to its setting. However, given the scale of the project and the numerous contexts through which the path would pass, other means of defining the route should be considered. These could include way-markers, public art and a City Wall signage palette.
- Use-specific street furniture or subtle branding of the standard 'Hereford' range, as defined in the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide, to help distinguish the route.
- Creation of a distinctive City Walls map which reinforces the circular path as a legible way-finding device and identifies connecting routes to other places of heritage, cultural and recreational interest. Other, shorter cross-city routes could also be identified, such as the line of the Saxon defences, thereby creating a range of circuit lengths encouraging access for all ages and abilities.
- Provision of places to rest and regular interpretation boards as way-markers along the route. This could be expanded to include braille and interactive digital interpretation to communicate with and educate users of different ages and backgrounds. Immersive and interactive, computer-generated scenes could also help bring each place's physical form and atmosphere to life.

Figure 20

- Existing Remnants/Reconstructed Wall
- Archaeological Remains of Wall
- Listed Buildings
- Suggested Route of 'City Defences Trail'
- Possible Future Realignment of Trail
- - - Examples of Possible Linked Heritage Routes
- Proposed Historic Gateway Spaces



Project 2: City Gateways

An essential element in joining the dots along the historic walls is to strongly signal the location and form of the five gateways. In most locations, their physical form is entirely lost. However, each location still functions as a main point of access between the historic core and the wider city. The City Gateways project intends to communicate the past existence of the city gates through a series of measures, including geographic marking, legible naming, historical interpretation and the provision of authentic illustrations to engage and inform. The five new gateway spaces, together with subtle and linked interventions at the Wye Bridge, should become indelibly linked with the perception of continuous defences enclosing the historic core. They should reestablish passing over a threshold as an authentic element of Hereford's identity and an intuitive means of wayfinding. The following interventions could help to define the gateway spaces:

- Demarcation of the plan area of each gateway with a specific, distinguishing paving type.
- Decluttering of the gateway space to ensure it is visually legible.
- Delineation of the approximate line and thickness of the historic wall and gateposts (possibly including the adjacent gateway buildings) with a contrasting paving material. This could also replicate the masonry coursing and jointing style used for the walls.
- Investigation of potential ways to express the approximate physical form of the gateway through above-ground structures. However, this approach should be undertaken with caution and sensitivity.
- Creative signing of the gateway's evocative names – potentially engraved into the paving or stone/timber posts.
- Provision of interpretation boards and artistic illustrations to communicate a powerful sense of the history associated with the gateways.
- Lighting effects to help demarcate the gates as distinct from the wall.
- Place-defining art installations to creatively express the essence of the gateways and life in the bygone city.



▲ Illustration of a reimagined Eign Gate gateway space.

City Gateway interventions

As the historic gateways still to this day represent the key points of connection between the medieval core and the wider city, they also represent opportunities to strengthen pedestrian and cycling movement. Considering the substantial barriers posed by the A49 and A438, the emerging transport strategy for the city includes an ambition to provide high-quality at-grade, controlled crossings for pedestrians at each gateway, and where appropriate, signalised movements for cycle traffic, reduced turning movements and modal filtering. The design of these improvements should be considered holistically with the design of the public realm to provide safe, convenient and attractive gateway spaces. The following highlights potential enhancement ideas for each gateway:

St Owen Gate

[A438 Bath Street/St Owen Street/Mill Street]



- Demarcate the location of the former gateway on St Owen Street Repair, highlighting the remnant wall, and provide naming signage, interpretation and artwork.
- Reduce turning motor traffic movements and introduce controlled crossings on all arms of the junction.
- Remove the guard rail and widen footways where possible.

Friar's Gate

[A49 Victoria Street/St Nicholas Street/Barton Road]



- Repair and reveal remnant wall, enhance the setting and provide seating, naming signage, interpretation and possible artwork.
- Reduce turning motor traffic movements and introduce controlled crossings on all arms of the junction.
- Signalised movements for east-west cycle traffic.
- Introduce space for cycle traffic on Barton Road through modal filtering.
- Introduce space for cycle traffic on the St Nicholas Street turning lane.

Eign Gate

[A49 Victoria Street/A438 Eign Street A438/Bewell Street]



- Create a celebratory gateway space – see previous illustration.
- Narrowing Victoria Street northbound to two general traffic lanes at the junction approach.
- Replace pedestrian underpass with at-grade, controlled pedestrian/cycle crossing.
- Consider a direct straight-across pedestrian crossing on Eign Street (A438).

Bye Street Gate

[A438 Blue School Street/Commercial Road/Commercial Street/Union Street]



- Create a substantial new gateway space including seating, naming signage, interpretation and artwork.
- Reduce turning motor traffic movements and introduce controlled crossings on all arms of the junction.
- Modal filtering on Commercial Road north of this junction.
- Protected movements for two-way cycle traffic between Commercial Street and Commercial Road.
- Consider bus lanes/cycle lanes in both directions along the A438.
- Enable cycle traffic between the city centre and railway station on Commercial Road [See Big Idea 9: Commercial Road Corridor on page 188].

Widemarsh Gate

[A438 Blue School Street/B4359 Widemarsh Street]



- Provide naming signage, interpretation and possible artwork.
- Reduce turning motor traffic movements where feasible.
- Protect signalised movements for cycle traffic prioritising north-south movements.
- Introduce space for cycle traffic on Widemarsh Street (north) through modal filtering.
- Garrick Street car park accessed and egressed from the north only.
- Remove the right-turn slip lane; introduce controlled crossing for pedestrians.
- Consider bus lanes/cycle lanes in both directions along the A438.

Project 3: Localised Public Realm & Landscape Interventions to Improve the Setting & Interpretation of the Defences

In addition to the strategies identified above, there are numerous opportunities for enhancing people's experience and understanding of the defences through localised public realm and landscape improvements along the route. The following is not an exhaustive list, but describes several key project opportunities:

- **Police Station entrance, Bath Street:** Improvement to the setting of the city wall through a transforming of the area in front of the police station from a cluttered seating and vehicular pull-in area to one which solely enhances the setting of the wall. Removal of the public vehicular access to the police station and realignment of the roadside footpath to run alongside the city wall, along with the creation of a unified grass/meadow area extending to the highway kerb. In addition, the potential for ground reprofiling within the grassed area could be explored to aid the interpretation of the city ditch.
- **Police Station car park:** Strengthen the visual prominence of the city wall. This will involve the removal of the adjoining brick wall, commercial bins and parking spaces and their replacement with the City Wall Trail.
- **Bath Street car park/Gaol Street:** As one of the longest non-visible sections of the city defences, there is a compelling case for reinscribing the wall as it runs along the boundary of Bath Street car park. The interpretation could provide detail on the wall and the raised rampart which now forms Gaol Street.

- **The Castle Grounds:** Castle Green currently signifies a formal Victorian recreational space with little reference to the site's historical and archaeological significance. Subtle improvements could be made to strengthen awareness of the castle rampart structure through interpretation and by downplaying the formality of the promenade along the top of the rampart. A less formal path surface, and the removal or replacement of bow-top railings and Victorian-style seating and lampposts, will help to reinforce the area's medieval and earlier origins. There also remains the possibility of more substantial interventions to investigate, reimagine and interpret the castle and other features, such as St Guthlac's Priory and environmental improvements to Castle Pool to improve the public value and accessibility of this amenity. Wider improvements should also support Hereford's 'Town Investment Plan' proposals for the refurbishment of the Castle Green Pavilion for use as a multifunctional and flexible community space.



- ▲ Potential for braille interpretation developed in consultation with the Royal National College for the Blind [example from Shrewsbury].

- **Bishop's Meadow/Row Ditch:** This section of Hereford's defences offers a unique and privileged opportunity to appreciate the imposing Cathedral from what is probably the southern extent of the fortified city. Given that the construction of the Cathedral began in the 11th century, these views are remarkable for the relatively unchanged floodplain context within which they are framed, and the sense of scale that they provide in imagining the early city. Reinstatement of a wildflower meadow could further enhance this experience, along with the decluttering of street furniture, railings and lighting along the route of the earthworks. Interpretation at the Row Ditch site is well placed to provide details about the defences, the Cathedral and more recent discoveries as set out within the City Defences Conservation Management Plan, 2011.
- **Wye Street car park:** Opportunity to create a small park or square, together with interpretation, on the site of the original St Martin's church – see **Big Idea 5: A vibrant historic core** on page 141.
- **A49/Victoria Street:** Improvement to the setting of the wall with the replacement of the existing exotic/ornamental planting with a grassed/wildflower meadow embankment to simplify the visual context of the wall. This should be carried out in conjunction with vegetation removal from the wall itself.



- ▲ Opportunity to enhance structural integrity and appearance of remnant walls and clearly name gateways.

- **West Street car park:** Potential reorganisation of parking spaces to facilitate a rerouted City Wall Trail around the base of the bastion and 'inside' the city wall alignment. This would allow closer appreciation of the bastion and provide a more direct crossing to the standing section of the city wall at West Street. There also remains potential to investigate, restore and allow access to both surviving bastions.
- **Supermarket site:** Safeguarding of a pedestrian route along the inside of the city wall within any redevelopment proposals.
- **West of Widemarsh:** Consider the possible extension of the recreated wall to the supermarket boundary to fill an extended gap in the defences in a highly visible location. This would also significantly improve the character of the area through screening modern development and reinscribing the line of the wall.
- **Maylord Orchards:** Decluttering and vegetation removal from around the wall to substantially improve its setting. Consideration of a simple, shared space which would complement the wall – as part of the Maylord redevelopment.



▲ Potential for more substantial reimagining of the setting of the remaining bastions.

Project 4: Visual Prominence & Lighting

Even the most extensive sections of standing masonry are often visually subservient within their modern, highway-dominated setting. The following interventions are proposed to help maximise the visual prominence of the existing walls.

- **A sensitive and high-quality lighting scheme to showcase and highlight the walls, remaining bastions and incorporated sections of gate houses.**
- **General reduction of visual clutter adjacent to all sections of the wall and earthworks, including signage, lighting columns, unconnected public art, brick planters, commercial signage on gable ends, etc.**
- **Sensitive screening of adjacent structures and activities where they impact the appreciation of the historic wall, such as the bus interchange adjacent to the A49 roundabout.**
- **Investigation into the relocation of the electricity substation at Friars Gate to reveal the wall and a gateway at this key entrance point to the city centre.**
- **Sensitive replacement of the brick parapet wall on the A49 bridge adjacent to a remaining bastion, with railings. The remaining bastions are perhaps the most dramatic standing remnants of the city wall, the most striking of which is almost entirely hidden from view.**
- **A review of tree planting in proximity to the standing sections of the wall and targeted tree thinning and crown lifting, to rebalance the visual dominance of the wall, while retaining greening.**

Project 5: Maintenance & Repair

A priority should be the establishment of an ongoing programme of repair and maintenance to ensure existing standing masonry and other features are safeguarded against decline. This should include removal and continued management of invasive vegetation either attached to the walls or obscuring views. Management of trees adjacent to the walls should include crown lifting and removal of overhanging branches. The above should be undertaken for all defences, both in public and private ownership, and with prior agreement with Historic England and private owners.

Project 6: Tree Planting Strategy to Strengthen the Perception of the Wall

To further strengthen the perception of Hereford's defensive structures, sensitive planting of tree groups could be undertaken at intervals along the wall, avoiding archaeological constraints. Coniferous tree groupings are already a characteristic across Hereford's skyline and Scots Pine, in particular, have a historic association as landmark trees – specifically, as way-markers for drivers' roads across the Welsh border.



▲ Potential for large specimen trees, including Scots Pine to help define Hereford's skyline.



BIG IDEA 4: REVEALING THE HISTORIC CORE

Summary

Hereford benefits from a distinctive identity. This is powerfully defined by its Cathedral, its setting on the River Wye, many notable historic buildings and its medieval street pattern, which is considered to be among the best preserved of any in England.

However, despite these qualities, Hereford's public realm is often compromised by vehicle priority, poor-quality layout and inconsistent use of paving materials and street furniture.

The ambition of this Big Idea is to raise the quality of Hereford's public realm through a series of priority projects that will help restore neglected areas within the city's historic core. This complements the proposed movement interventions for the historic core set out the masterplan's Movement Strategy and reinforces ongoing projects such as the Cathedral and River Wye Quarter and the Town Investment Plan's 'The Marches Experience' museum.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Prioritising pedestrians, cyclists and access-for-all to create a safe, attractive and convenient city environment.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Protecting, enhancing and celebrating Hereford's built heritage for all to enjoy.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Enhancing the identity of the city and creating a high-quality environment to attract visitors and facilitate business.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Prioritising the establishment of long-term urban greening and large species trees.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Renovating existing streets and spaces and creating a variety of new places in a network of public realm.

Context

The character of Hereford's historic core and medieval street pattern is one of its strongest assets, both as a foundation for the visitor economy and as a draw for locals.

However, the key public spaces of High Town and St Peter's Square are lacklustre. Many of the streets within the core are dominated by the highway and offer a hostile environment for pedestrians, cyclists and business use.

The following principles guide the 14 projects outlined here to revive the historic core:

- **Protect, restore, reinforce & celebrate historic integrity.**
- **Encourage walking, wheeling & cycling.**
- **Create new & improved existing public spaces.**
- **Enhance the character through greening.**
- **Establish coherence & quality in the external environment.**

Please read this section in conjunction with the ideas set out in **Figure 12, Managing motor traffic accessing the city centre** on page 70.

Figure 21

- Rejuvenated Civic Spaces
- New/Enhanced Public Spaces
- Proposed Historic Gateway Spaces [See **Big Idea 3: Historic walls and gateways** on page 109]
- Enhanced Streetscape
- Potential New Green Space [See **Big Idea 5: A vibrant historic core** on page 141]
- Existing Green Space
- Existing Remnants/Reconstructed Wall
- Archaeological Remains of Wall
- ① Project Number

Key to Project Numbers

- ① Hereford Streetscape Design Guide
- ② High Town, St Peter's Street & Commercial Street
- ③ St Peter's Square
- ④ St Owen Street
- ⑤ Broad Street, King Street & Bridge Street
- ⑥ Eign Gate
- ⑦ West Street, Berrington Street & Aubrey Street
- ⑧ East Street
- ⑨ Trinity Square, Maylord Street & Gormond Street
- ⑩ Brewers Passage
- ⑪ Gaol Street
- ⑫ Harrison Street Link
- ⑬ Cantilupe & St Ethelbert Square
- ⑭ City Passageways
- ⑮ Future Spaces



Project 1: Hereford Streetscape Design Guide

A prevalent feature of central Hereford's public realm is the lack of consistency in paving, furniture and lighting, together with a predominance of low-quality materials, often in a poor state of repair. In contrast, the recent Old Market and Widemarsh Street projects have delivered a high-quality public realm and could provide precedents for a coherent palette of street elements to strengthen the identity of the city centre and help delineate character areas such as those inside and outside the historic city walls.

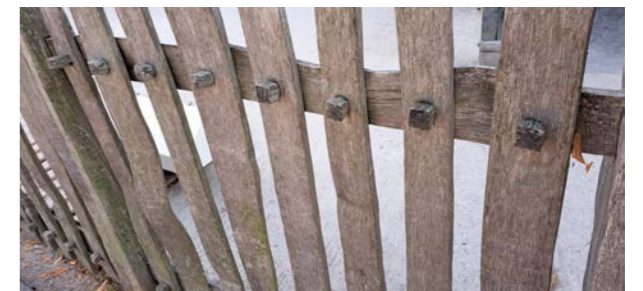
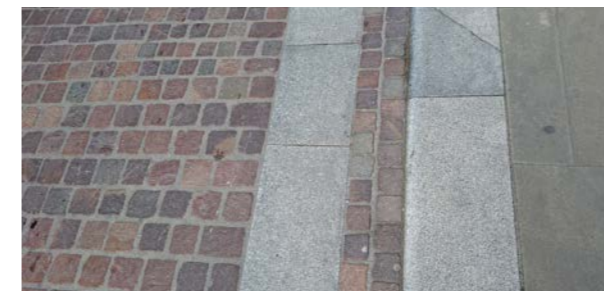
As a priority, a Hereford Streetscape Design Guide should be commissioned to provide a succinct, practical and definitive guide for all future public realm works in central Hereford. This should be based on the 2009 'Hereford Streetscape Design Strategy' but should also provide a specific palette of materials, design parameters and street furniture to establish a consistent 'Hereford' look and feel and to strengthen the sense of place both 'inside' and 'outside' the city wall. The design guide will act as a reference for the planning, design, implementation and maintenance of the public realm, and provide the Local Authority with a checklist of clear quality standards for future applications.

The key principles include:

- Acknowledgement of the quality and style of materials implemented in Widemarsh Street and generally in the vicinity of the Cathedral as the precedent for most areas within the central core and 'inside' the city wall.
- Use of Historic England's guidance to help inform all future designs, including the avoidance of complex 'pattern making', and the promotion of simplified modern paving design as a neutral foil for built form and heritage assets.
- Elevation in the detailing and quality of materials at key sites, such as the locations of the historic city gates, and helping to 'join the dots' of the historic city wall route.

- Setting out the scope for the use of more cost-effective materials in less prominent or sensitive areas and a separate palette of materials for use 'outside' the city wall and within the key arterial routes.
- Potential to subtly reinforce the 'look and feel' of key character areas including the 'Saxon Core', designating the original defensive line of the settlement during Saxon times, the 'Medieval Extension', designating the area within the realigned defences, and the 'Historic Radial Routes'.
- Undertaking an audit of all heritage assets including post boxes, telephone boxes, railings, signage etc., to safeguard their retention.
- All materials and components specified should be cost-effective, durable, easy to maintain and replace, allow access for all, be suited to a range of local characters and be from sustainable sources.
- A review of existing street lighting in terms of safety, sustainability and ambience should be undertaken. A 'warm white' LED specification within the historic core would further strengthen townscape character and ambience.
- The possibility of designing bespoke 'Hereford' street furniture should be explored along with a consistent range of 'Hereford' columns and the location of luminaires to wall mountings.
- The distribution of street furniture should be reviewed to ensure all furniture is situated in natural meeting/stopping points, complements the historic setting, takes advantage of views of architectural assets and does not create visual clutter.

- All elements associated with cycling infrastructure surfacing, signage and storage should be consistent with the wider city masterplan proposals but also elevated to reinforce the 'inside the city wall' character.
- Restriction of freestanding planters and use of A-boards through planning control and the creation of guidelines for use of pavement space for business use, al fresco dining, etc.



▲ Establishment of a limited palette of materials to create a consistent 'Hereford' look and feel.

Project 2: High Town, St Peter's Street & Commercial Street

At the confluence of the historic radial routes, High Town is Hereford's main public space and is regarded as the 'heart' of the city. The space remains a lively focus for commercial activity and has retained its form and function since medieval times. Its organic shape is bounded by an almost unbroken frontage which includes many Georgian and Victorian buildings with notable highlights such as Hereford Butter Market and the iconic black-and-white Tudor building, 'The Old House', which is the surviving building from 'Butchers Row'. The space is bookended by the spires of All Saints and St Peter's churches and was the site of the former Town Hall which has since been removed.

Despite these qualities, the overall appearance of High Town is jaded, with dated paving and street furniture and haphazard temporary commercial activity. As a pivotal space for movement and activity in the centre, High Town should be a priority for substantial improvement. The key objectives should include:

- **Renewal of paving materials in an uncomplicated design consistent with the historic core materials palette, as set out in the Streetscape Design Guide. Given the scale of the space, the design approach should seek to balance the inclusion of natural stone elements with complementary and cost-effective materials.**
- **As the primary functions of the space are to allow informal and unconstrained movement of pedestrians and the possibility of events, activities and commercial stalls, the design should prioritise the retention of level, paved areas with few physical interventions.**
- **The paving design could reference the historic arrangement of movement channels and built form in High Town which would bring design integrity, as well as subtly influencing cyclist desire lines and formally influencing the locations of market stalls etc.**



► Illustration of a reimagined High Town using the medieval street pattern to organise activity space and movement routes.

- Subtle design measures should be included to direct cyclists through the centre of the space without the need to dismount. Ample and convenient cycle parking should be widely distributed.
- Paving design should retain and strengthen the contrast paving currently implemented to delineate the site of the former Town Hall building. Other historic features could also be referenced including the former kerb lines.
- Street furniture should be rationalised to minimise clutter.
- Commercial use of the space by temporary kiosks and pop-up stalls is welcomed in principle; however, their disorganised arrangement detracts from the use, appearance and open nature of High Town. A more clearly

defined arrangement should be set out to emphasise key assets and retain significant areas of open, informal space.

- Further opportunities to communicate the historic places and activities in the design of the space could be realised by sensitively referencing the alignment of 'The Butchery', 'Cooken Row' and the 'Tolsey'.
- Semi-permanent mobile vehicle stalls to be replaced to provide secure, demountable units which are better positioned to recapture the 'openness' of the High Town public space. The new units should be of an appropriate scale and have clear limits to the extent of external seating and canopies. Their design should reference the identity of Hereford – potentially using traditional timber-framing techniques,

such as those installed at Old Market – possibly in collaboration with NMITE as a training project.

- As a long-term strategy to eventually replace the moveable planters in the city centre, opportunities for a small number of large-stature trees should be pursued. These could be incorporated into raised beds to provide appropriate soil volume without compromising archaeological constraints and provide integrated seating. Stature trees would provide significant aesthetic and environmental benefits and represent a sustainable and permanent replacement for planters which could be redeployed to achieve rapid, interim or temporary improvements elsewhere. Careful and 'grouped' tree placement would ensure that views of key architectural assets are retained.

- Appropriate tree species selection and high crown form should ensure that CCTV coverage is not compromised.
- St Peter's Street and Commercial Street would benefit from the removal of both temporary and brick planters and replacement with in-ground planting beds to accommodate trees.
- The incorporation of Hostile Vehicle Mitigation measures should, where possible, be incorporated into the design of the space using public realm elements rather than added on.



▲ A more organised arrangement of active uses will improve perception of the space.



▲ Decluttering will provide usable space for movement and activities and reveal the historic townscape.



▲ Improved organisation of active uses will allow more space for activities and movement.

Project 3: St Peter's Square

As with High Town, St Peter's Square is a public space that has endured since the Middle Ages. However, in sharp contrast to High Town, its function is unclear and severely compromised by roads, railings and public transport infrastructure. Despite these detractions, St Peter's Square retains a powerful sense of place, with its distinctive triangular form defined by St Peter's Church, Shirehall and an immaculate row of Georgian shops/townhouses, embodying a strong civic identity. The Edwardian Town Hall just south of the square further defines the area as a place of public service.

The ambition for the square is clear: a return to simplicity and the restoration of a 'sense of place' created by the relationship of buildings and space, unencumbered by unnecessary infrastructure and features. The key objectives include:

- A substantial redesign of the space to diminish the highway and public transport functions in favour of reestablishing a formal civic square for pedestrian activity and events.
- Rationalisation and relocation of the bus stops to St Owen Street coupled with a narrowing of the highway passing through the square.
- A rationalisation of vehicle movements between Union Street and Offa Street to minimise severance of the pedestrian space and the relocation of loading bays and disabled parking spaces to St Owen Street.
- Resurfacing with natural stone in accordance with the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide and befitting the dignified civic nature of the space. The carriageway should be raised and finished with robust, small-unit natural stone to help slow traffic.

- The redesign should be coordinated with the forecourt of Shirehall to ensure continuity of materials and space with the removal of the current boundary railings.
- The space should otherwise be free from obstacles and temporary planters, with minimal furniture, including benches, relocated to the outer edges of the square.
- The planting and railings surrounding the listed war memorial should be removed to allow greater appreciation of the centrepiece of the square.
- In-ground planting beds, planters, lawns and Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) swales are considered inappropriate for this space.
- Mass tree planting is not considered appropriate. However, a carefully sited, single-specimen trees could be incorporated as a marker of renewal.
- Space should be safeguarded for the businesses fronting the square, to allow for tables and chairs and the display of goods.



▲ St Peter's Square should be reestablished as a formal civic space.

Project 4: St Owen Street

The generous proportions and elegant, predominantly Georgian brick buildings of St Owen Street distinguish it from Hereford's other main thoroughfares. St Peter's Church, Shirehall and the Town Hall also provide a sense of civic importance. Uses fronting the street include an eclectic mix of independent retail and professional services. However, footfall is generally low considering its proximity to the centre and its role as a main arterial route from the residential and wider county areas to the south-east. Despite its many qualities and the relatively low traffic volumes, the streetscape is significantly compromised by the highway-dominated environment, parking bays and narrow footways surfaced with dated concrete paving. The site of St Owen Gate is marked only by a wall plate and the visible remnants of medieval stonework, which now forms a gable end.

The city masterplan sets out a vision for an intensification of city living. As part of this aspiration, the ambition for St Owen Street is for it to become a bustling and vibrant local centre which supports active travel and further diversification of its economy.

The key objectives include:

- Enhancement of the public realm to support the establishment of St Owen Street as a local centre providing a mixture of shops and facilities for the growing residential population and a high-quality environment for businesses.
- Reduction of the carriageway width and non-blue-badge parking to allow a substantial increase in pavement space.
- Accommodation of bus stops, loading bays and blue-badge parking relocated from St Peter's Square.

- Sensitively designed, localised build-outs to create space adjacent to key locations such as the Town Hall and the Gaol Street car park link.
- New natural stone paving materials and furniture in accordance with the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide and a decluttering of the footways. The pavement should accommodate occasional seating and regular cycle parking, and be free from planters.
- A review of pavement licence policies to enable active use of the pavement by businesses.
- Consideration of localised tree planting and SuDS, albeit with respect to archaeological constraints and avoiding a regular placement typology.
- Provision of junction improvements at Mill Street and Bath Street to create a more attractive entrance to the historic core and a safer, more convenient pedestrian crossing.



▲ A reduction in highway space will help St Owen Street to become an accessible local centre.

Project 5: Broad Street, King Street & Bridge Street

As these streets are included in the 'Cathedral & River Wye Quarter' project which runs concurrently with the city masterplan, there has been an opportunity for collaboration across projects. As three of the most historically significant and prominent streets in Hereford, their treatment is essential to the idea of 'Revealing the historic core'. As the masterplan establishes a holistic vision for the city, the principles set out below should be incorporated into emerging proposals.

The principles are as follows:

- **Redesign of the street space to create a strong delineation between pedestrian and vehicular (including cycling) areas adopting a traditional, but traffic-calmed, central carriageway (one-way for motorised vehicles and two-way for cyclists) and clearly defined footways on either side. This will allow generous space for pedestrian activity and areas immediately adjacent to the buildings for business use, including outdoor dining areas and the display of goods. A review of pavement licences should encourage businesses to use the street positively and bring essential animation to the street scene.**
- **The redesign should be consistent with and supported by the proposed strategic changes to the transport network in the city centre including a 'cellular' approach to accessing the historic core and the provision of off-street disabled parking.**
- **Retention of the 'grand' sense of space defined by the street's generous proportions and openness, and the complementary scale of the buildings.**

- **Reduction of 'visual clutter' to protect the traditional, irregular and organic character of the streets. New streetscape elements should be minimised and sensitively incorporated where necessary and Historic England's advice against 'pattern-making' in paving surfaces should be noted.**
- **Appreciation of the irregular street dimensions, building line and historic kerb line (which could be subtly retained). Longitudinal arrangement of the streets should be defer to the historic spatial character rather than reinforcing the highway.**



▲ Potential at Broad Street for simple, high-quality public realm to encourage walking and cycling and to support businesses.

- **Avoidance of overly geometric traffic calming and a preference for pinch-points and raised tables. Establishment of continuous pavements along the length of the streets with footways extended to traverse side-street junctions.**
- **Retention of open space immediately adjacent to the most notable buildings, free from structures and imposing furniture and paved as a neutral visual foil to allow buildings to be appreciated.**
- **Appreciation of the special significance of the Cathedral, All Saints Church and the site of the original St Nicholas Church on King Street through the creation of simple, high-quality and traffic-calmed spaces, and avoidance of the reinforcement of highway infrastructure through kerb lines. Consideration of the opportunity to communicate the location of the original St Nicholas site through subtle design and interpretation.**
- **Coordination with the proposals for the Town Investment Plan proposals for the 'Marches Experience Museum' to create a simple, decluttered space to allow visitors to comfortably circulate and appreciate the architecture.**
- **Bridge Street also provides opportunities to reinforce the connections with the river, leisure facilities and parking at St Martin's, as well as the enhanced facilities proposed by the Town Investment Plan 'River Wye Infrastructure' project and Big Idea 7: Reconnecting to the River Wye on page 167.**
- **Removal and avoidance of obstacles to the free, informal movement of people across the street (especially continuous linear barriers) to facilitate permeability and use of the street for events.**

- **Incorporation of considered tree planting while avoiding the typology of formal, equally spaced trees. Tree placement should prevent potential conflicts with archaeological constraints and consider views of important buildings.**
- **Planting beds are generally considered incongruous. Any limited application should avoid narrow, linear strips. Avoidance of lawned areas.**
- **SuDS infrastructure should be appropriate for the historic setting with visually dominant linear swales avoided and underground storage features considered, where feasible within archaeological constraints.**



▲ Potential at King's Street, St Nicholas Street for improved public realm and interpretation and setting of historic features.

Project 6: Eign Gate

Eign Gate is also included in the 'Cathedral & River Wye Quarter' project running concurrently with the city masterplan. As a key pedestrianised link connecting High Town with residential areas to the west via Whitecross Road, Eign Gate provides a more intimate street space with generally two- to three-storey buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries and an almost continuous frontage of shops.

The street is historically significant as a route, with the impressive All Saints Church standing at its eastern extent. At its western limit, the medieval gateway was removed during Victorian times. However, it is identified in the 'City Wall & Gateways' section as an opportunity for new public space in association with an improved A49 crossing. The current streetscape is somewhat lacklustre, with stunted trees, plastic planters, highly ornamented furniture and concrete unit paving. Eign Gate has also become a focus for antisocial behaviour which perpetuates the negative image of the street.

A significant new development at 37 Eign Gate is due to be completed in 2023, which reuses the former Woolworths building to provide student accommodation and facilities for NMITE.

The ambition for Eign Gate to become an attractive and accessible movement route and shopping street is vitally important in encouraging people to walk and cycle between the centre of the city and the western residential communities.

Key objectives are as follows:

- **Provision of unrestricted pedestrian movement and shared cycle access through the removal of all temporary structures and the careful siting and pared-down design of street furniture. New seating should be focused at natural meeting points and where key architectural assets can be appreciated.**
- **Retention of open space directly alongside buildings for the limited and approved use of space by businesses for tables and chairs and the display of goods to help animate the street.**
- **Retention of the existing simple, pedestrianised layout, and compliance with the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide for all future works.**
- **A clear route should be retained through the centre of the street to allow safe and unobstructed cyclist movement, although the street is not promoted as a cycle route.**
- **Improvement to the setting of All Saints Church through the extension of the high-quality natural stone treatment implemented on High Street, to the entire curtilage of the building.**
- **Subtle demarcation of the entrance to the new NMITE building through the safeguarding of space to allow cyclists to dismount, informal gathering, etc.**
- **Review of existing tree planting along the street with selected removal of specimens and for those retained, removal of guards and pruning to improve form. Avoidance of in-ground planting beds to maximise pedestrian space.**
- **Note: the site of the former historic gateway is covered in the 'City Wall & Gateways' section.**



▲ Opportunity to simplify and declutter Eign Gate to encourage pedestrian movement and business uses.



▲ Potential to improve walking and wheeling access and enhance and define the character of the emerging 'quarter'.

Project 7: West Street, Berrington Street & Aubrey Street

West Street and the adjoining Berrington and Aubrey Streets comprise a discrete urban block within the historic core, bounded by the city wall to the west. Their rectilinear arrangement and the predominance of brick warehouses and yards establish a character quite different from that found elsewhere in the historic core. The haphazard arrangement of car parks and various modern buildings evoke a backstreet quality, and it is these characteristics, together with the opportunities afforded by lower rents, which have encouraged creative businesses and restaurants to locate there. This evolution should be supported by improvements to accessibility and the public realm. Key objectives should include:

- **Retention of the warehouse and yard character of the area, including the traditional arrangement of roads and footways, with the provision of comfortable access for all, with footways widened or shared surfaces developed if appropriate.**
- **Compliance with the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide for the character area. As this is a less prominent and sensitive area, cost-effective paving options for footways and vehicle routes are deemed appropriate.**
- **Consideration of the creation of a new public square in the central part of the area, if the idea of a creative quarter gains momentum. This should be intimate in scale and capture the informal 'yard' aesthetic, creating a focus for cafes, creative businesses and pop-up enterprises.**
- **Consider a subtle strengthening of its identity through branding, signage and lighting.**
- **Safeguarding a publicly accessible route adjacent to the historic city wall in all future planning applications.**

Project 8: East Street

Formerly known as 'Behind-the-Walls Street' due to its alignment running parallel to the original Saxon defences, East Street has retained a backstreet function and character.

Although considered an alternative pedestrian route and heavily constrained by its narrowness and use as a vehicle and delivery route, its central section between Church Street and Booth Hall Passage also provides access to several business frontages. There is also a pressing need to create a safer crossing at Church Street, which is the primary pedestrian route between High Town and the Cathedral. Improvements should include:

- Consideration of raised table crossing together with signage and other traffic calming, to slow vehicles and warn pedestrians at the junction of Church Street.
- Potential for a cobbled road surface to help slow vehicles and provide auditory warning of their approach.
- Consideration of a shared surface or extended traffic-calmed area between Church Street and Booth Hall Passage.
- Improved surface materials to pedestrian areas using natural stone in accordance with the Streetscape Design Guide.



▲ Potential for improved pedestrian safety and streetscape.

Project 9: Trinity Square, Maylord Street & Gormond Street

Trinity Square marks the junction of Maylord and Gormond streets and the entrance to the Maylord Orchards. The space currently functions as a through-route, although integrated seating/planters provide some opportunity to rest. Overall, the space is lacklustre and defined by dated architecture and lower-quality surface materials.

However, adaptive reuse proposals are being developed through a £3.5 million Town Investment Plan project, to transform the Maylord Orchards into a library and learning resource centre. This will include improvements to the building's atrium and facade, and public realm improvement to Trinity Square.

This project will provide an opportunity to redefine how this part of the city is used, and a catalyst for wider investment and change.



▲ Potential for a reimagined Trinity Square to support the Maylord redevelopment.

Key principles for the public realm improvements include:

- Coordination of a redesigned space as an integral part of the Maylord Orchards redevelopment proposals.
- Informal space and active uses fronting onto Maylord Square and the adjacent passageways.
- Introduction of formal planting beds, possibly incorporating SuDS and medium-sized ornamental trees within suitable in-ground crate infrastructure.
- General compliance with the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide for all public realm components, potentially incorporating artwork or lighting elements to signify the new cultural uses of the Maylord Orchards.
- Continuation of public realm improvements along Maylord Street and Gormond Street, retaining a simple pedestrianised arrangement together with a general decluttering of the space.

Project 10: Brewers Passage

The numerous alleyways in the historic core of Hereford are a distinctive feature of the city's form. Brewers Passage connects Maylord Square with Commercial Street, but in contrast to other passageways its winding nature has been partly formed by modern buildings with some active frontage to the passageway. The central part of the route widens out to accommodate a mature birch tree, cycle parking and lighting, and although the buildings to its edge are less characterful than other passageways, Brewers Passage has the potential to become more appealing as a shortcut and distinctive destination by exploiting the intimate nature of the enclosed space and increasing the active frontage as part of the Maylord Orchards development.



▲ Potential for the creation of a new incidental space at Brewers Passage.

Key principles include:

- **Repaving the route and space with appropriate materials in accordance with the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide, removing the soft areas and existing furniture, including cycle parking and the dated lighting column.**
- **Exploration of opportunities for murals or tensile steel trellis and climbing plants on the south-west-facing blank wall – potentially communicating the historic usage and creating a pocket garden.**
- **Encouragement of the potential use for tables and chairs associated with a cafe.**
- **Development of a high-quality wall and floor-mounted lighting scheme and consideration of safety and antisocial behaviour.**
- **Introduction of a 'Brewers Passage' nameplate.**

Project 11: Gaol Street

The numerous publicly owned car parks in the St Owen Street area have been identified in the city masterplan as an opportunity to increase residential development in the city centre. While St Owen Street will become an important community focus for the local population, Gaol Street should retain its historic function as a connecting route, albeit improved for pedestrians and cyclists. Improvements should include a widening of footways and a corresponding reduction of the carriageway. Footways should be repaved with appropriate materials and in accordance with the Hereford Streetscape Design Guide. The opportunity to signify the location of the historic city wall could be achieved through the creation of new public space and improved pedestrian connections adjacent to the remnants of the city wall. This element of the project is included in the 'City Wall & Gateways' section.

Project 12: Harrison Street Link

To help direct pedestrians and cyclists towards the southern end of St Owen Street, the southern tip of Bath Street car park together with the adjacent excess space on Harrison Street could be combined to create a wider, more inviting link to Bath Street, replacing the existing narrow footway. New paving, possibly associated with trees and planting, would create an attractive incidental linking space connecting St Owen Street with the residential areas to the east.

Project 13: Cantilupe & St Ethelbert Square

The existing pavement build-out on St Owen Street at the junction of Cantilupe and St Ethelbert Street could be extended into the joining streets to help reduce the dominance of the broad expanse of road and provide seating and space for appropriate street trees within an attractive setting. Given the significance of Thomas de Cantilupe and St Ethelbert to Hereford's history, there is also an opportunity to communicate this heritage through interpretation.

Project 14: City Passageways

Characterful lanes and passageways are a key feature of Hereford's historic core, and they provide evocative routes to explore the city and come into close contact with hidden architectural features including medieval timber construction. Most are well maintained; however, to increase their appeal as a routine means of navigating the city, a scheme to clean, repair, resurface, light and signpost these routes is proposed. In addition, opportunities to increase active frontage should be supported.

Project 15: Future Spaces

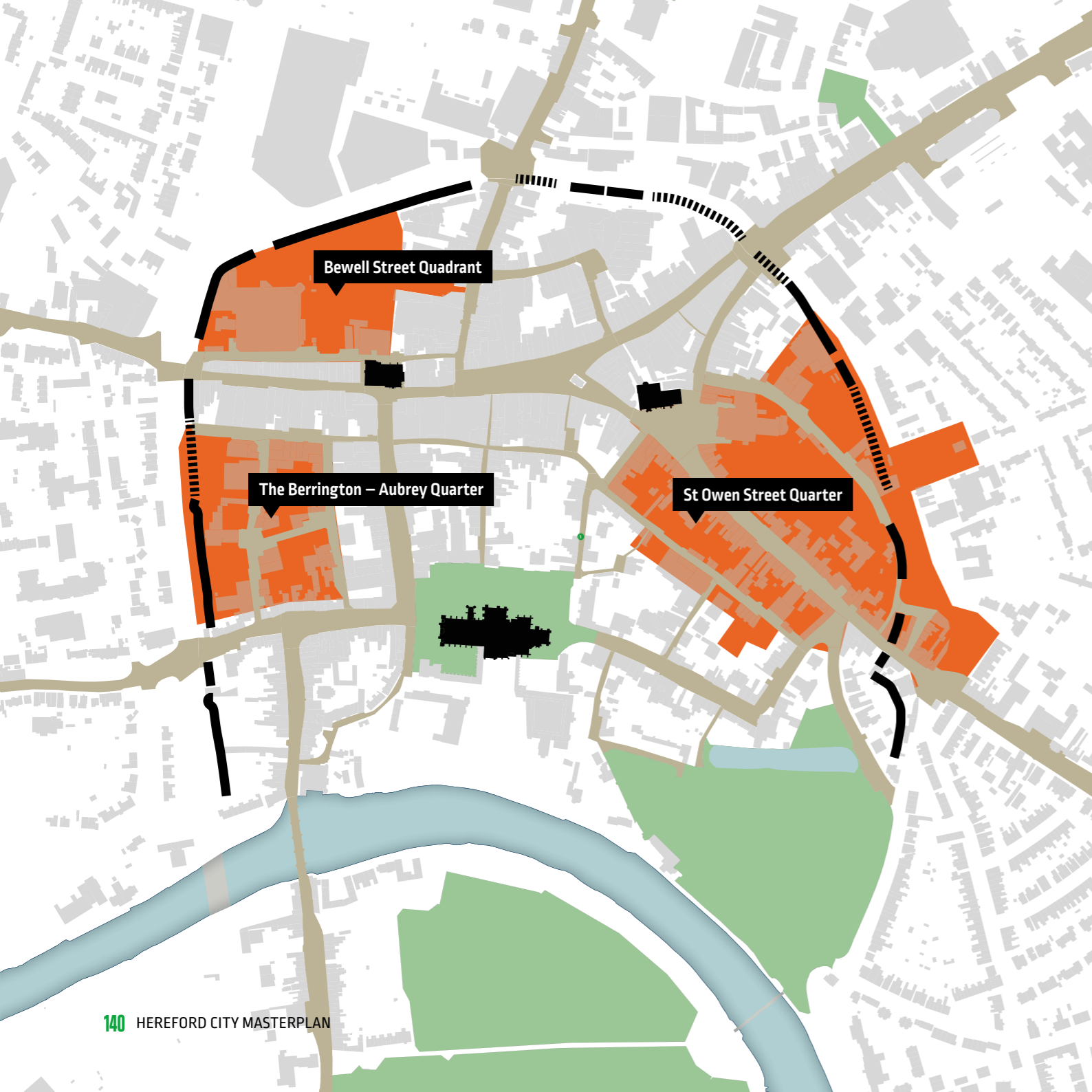
The masterplan also identifies areas in the historic core that, although not in public ownership, could provide future benefits to the evolving city as new public spaces.

A new public space in the Aubrey Street/Berrington Street area could provide a dynamic and inviting focus to an emerging creative quarter.

The car parks at the junction of East Street, Offa Street and St John Street provide an opportunity for a second new public space in an area linking the Cathedral Close with Boothall Passage and High Town and benefitting from mature trees and views of the Cathedral and spires. This public space could potentially be delivered in association with new, high-quality development to Hereford's history. There is also an opportunity to communicate this heritage through interpretation.



▲ Potential to enhance the character and communicate the history of Hereford's passageways – possibly incorporating public art/interpretation.



BIG IDEA 5: A VIBRANT HISTORIC CORE

Summary

Much of the urban form and built development within Hereford's historic core is protected and its uses are well established. Consequently, there are limited opportunities to instigate regeneration projects at scale. However, areas that offer prospects for transformation include those surrounding St Owen Street to the east of the core and the areas north and south of Eign Gate to the west.

These sites offer opportunities to bring life back to the historic core through a rich mix of uses – to bring a residential community back into the heart of the city, provide opportunities for cultural and leisure uses, minimise through-traffic and transform the public realm.

This Big Idea provides a sense of direction for these areas, bringing together opportunities for development, renovation, reuse and public-realm enhancements.

The projects set out here are organised into three Urban Frameworks that focus on areas with the potential for major change: the St Owen Street Quarter, the Bewell Street Quadrant and the Berrington-Aubrey Quarter.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

The reuse of public car parks to promote city-living and create safe and attractive walking and cycling environments.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Creating a sense of community with local centres, social spaces, cultural activities and the reuse of celebrated buildings.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Increasing the urban population to support local businesses; attracting new visitors; and the appeal of Hereford as a place to live.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Transforming streets through planting and trees and creating new pocket parks.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Repairing the urban form, reusing iconic buildings, enhancing streets and creating spaces.

Urban Framework 1: St Owen Street Quarter

Abundant historic buildings, characterful streets, passageways and spaces, together with the possibility of new development on numerous publicly owned car parks, present a compelling opportunity to define a new urban quarter centred on St Owen Street.

St Owen Street is one of Hereford's key historic routes, linking St Owen Gate with St Peter's Church and High Town. It has been described as 'the most consistent Georgian Street in Hereford' and is graced with numerous notable buildings including St Peter's Church, the Town Hall and Shirehall and a significant historic civic space, St Peter's Square. The area also benefits from a well-established residential population and a diverse range of businesses, including independent retailers.

However, despite these numerous assets, the area is also characterised by an excessively broad roadway, on-street parking, poor-quality public realm and low pedestrian numbers.

The vision for the St Owen Street Quarter is to provide new housing, enhanced streets and new-and-improved public spaces, as well as to promote a diversified cultural offer through the adaptive reuse of buildings such as Shirehall. A growing population, together with a focus on walking and cycling, will bring increased vitality to the area, strengthening its independent culture and sense of community.



▲ St Peter's Square represents an important opportunity to celebrate Hereford's history and culture and reestablish it as a significant civic space.

Figure 22

- Potential Development of Existing Car Park
- Potential Long-term Development Opportunity
- New/Improved Public Space
- Enhanced Streetscape
- Potential New Green Space
- New/Strengthened Pedestrian & Cycling Connections
- Primary Active Frontage
- Secondary Frontage
- ➡ Potential Vehicular Access
- Archaeological Remains of Wall
- ① Project number



Project 1: Gaol Street Car Park Redevelopment

This project highlights the exciting opportunity to define a new urban quarter centred on St Owen Street. This part of the historic core benefits from abundant historic buildings, characterful streets, lanes and spaces, and the possibility of transforming numerous publicly owned car parks as part of a 'car-light' city centre.

Gaol Street car park represents a significant opportunity to host a new residential community in the heart of the city. The introduction of medium-density living accommodation uses would help to increase the area's residential population. Close to the city centre and only a 12-minute walk from the train station, this would enhance the vitality of the emerging St Owen Street Quarter. It would also support the viability of its businesses and services.

Key considerations for its development include:

- The retention of the pedestrian route between Gaol Street and 'The Mews' passageway on St Owen Street. Ideally, this should align with the historic plot pattern and create an accessible and inviting public footway to the central section of St Owen Street.
- The avoidance of retail uses to help focus commercial activity on St Owen Street.
- A flexible design approach that could allow a limited amount of ground-floor space for community or civic space if required.
- Careful navigation of heritage constraints, including the Conservation Area, the Zone of Archaeological Importance, and the proximity to Listed buildings.

- A requirement for sensitive massing with a potential for three to five storeys, possibly with setbacks from St Owen Street and consideration of views towards the Cathedral, Town Hall and church spires.
- Accommodating existing rights of access to adjacent properties where required.
- Respecting the proximity of existing neighbouring uses in terms of privacy, overlooking and daylight and sunlight considerations.
- Recently built public conveniences within the site.
- Opportunity for green space and trees.

The adjacent site to the south is currently occupied by Gaol Street Health Centre. Should this site become available for redevelopment, then a development proposal that combines both sites would allow more efficient use of the space and a coordinated approach to vehicle and pedestrian access.



- ▲ Gaol Street car park represents an opportunity to strengthen the residential community and repair the urban form.



Project 2: Venn Close Car Park Redevelopment

Venn Close car park is located on the eastern side of Bath Street in a predominantly residential area. This corner site presents an attractive opportunity to expand the residential community and provide comfortable city living just a two-minute walk from St Owen Street. The site could potentially be combined with adjacent plots, which are held under the same title but occupied under lease for community and educational use. Key considerations for the site's development include:

- Suitability for medium-density living accommodation.
- Any combination with adjacent sites would be subject to the incorporation of community/educational uses in the development or their relocation elsewhere.
- Massing of four storeys to the west of the site fronting Bath Street, reducing to two to three storeys to the east of the site.
- Maintain a right of way to access a private garage.
- Sensitive treatment, considering location within Conservation Area.



Project 3: East Street Car Parks Redevelopment

Though modest in scale, the two publicly owned car parks on East Street (East Street 1 and East Street 2) present further opportunities for the provision of residential or other uses within the quarter.

Pending more detailed analysis, the larger site could likely accommodate a small number of two-storey terrace or mews-type properties. If residential use is deemed unfeasible, then an alternative use could include a secure green space such as allotments or a community garden. A publicly accessible space is not considered appropriate because of possible security and privacy issues.

The smaller site, opposite the rear of the Town Hall, could likely accommodate two-storey terrace dwellings or a small-scale workshop/employment space-type use.

Owing to their small size, these opportunities are not considered a priority. However, their positive reuse would contribute to the overall vitality of the evolving St Owen Street area.



Project 4: Bath Street Car Park Green Space & City Defences Interpretation

The Bath Street car park occupies a sizeable urban block in a convenient location near St Owen Street. However, its suitability for any built development is significantly limited owing to its designation as a Scheduled Monument and as a Hereford Zone of Archaeological Importance. The historic value of the Bath Street site is especially significant as it features the longest stretch of surviving wall within the eastern section of the city defences and one of the longest continuous sections of in-filled ditch in the entire monument. On this basis, this project proposes to transform the Bath Street site into a high-quality green space that will provide informal recreation and play opportunities

for the local community and environmental enhancement to both Bath Road and Gaol Street. The special historic value of this site should be fully realised by revealing its story through archaeology, design and interpretation. The site is identified as a key opportunity and destination in creating a 'City Wall Trail' as discussed in **Big Idea 3: Historic walls and gateways** on page 109. Interventions could incorporate some degree of reinstatement of historic features, such as strengthening the physical presence of the wall or reinstating the ditch or the tree-lined 'Sally Walk' and creative interpretation through public art.

The detailed design of any such scheme would need to be developed and agreed upon through ongoing liaison with the county archaeologist and Historic England.



▲ Bath Street car park reimagined as a new green space with a reinterpretation of the historic 'Sally Walk'.

Project 5: Shirehall

Since its completion in 1817, the imposing neoclassical form of Hereford's Shirehall has, alongside the medieval St Peter's Church, imparted a formidable presence overlooking St Peter's Square. The original function of the hall as a Court of Justice has been retained to this day. However, due to structural and maintenance issues, this legal role has diminished or been temporarily relocated.

There is widespread agreement that this much-admired building should be brought back into use. However, the cost of repairs (estimated at more than £7 million) presents a considerable challenge. Further investigations are required regarding potential future uses of the building in the context of a Corporate Asset Review by the Council.

The city masterplan envisages a dynamic and flexible role for the future of Shirehall. The precedents set by other successful adaptive reuses of historic public buildings in the UK support the creation of a multifaceted space that can accommodate a wide range of events and activities for a diverse range of users. This should include both the local community and visitors – potentially through partnerships with local organisations. Models exist where the facilities are in regular daily use, with multiple sources of income that are fed back into running costs.

The creation of a performance space within the building that can attract touring acts would be of considerable benefit to the cultural life of the city and the attractiveness of Hereford as a place to live, visit and study (see **Big Idea 6: Hereford, university city** on page 157). Together with the nearby Town Hall and St Peter's Church, Shirehall could help redefine the area as a cultural focus for the city.

Shirehall Gardens

The future use of the publicly owned car park associated with Shirehall should also be considered given the aspiration to consolidate and relocate parking to the edges of the city centre. However, this exercise should be integral to and in support of the reimagining of future long-term uses of Shirehall.

In any circumstances, there is a definite requirement to strengthen the walking and cycling connections between St Peter's Square and Gaol Street. This route should also be made more appealing and safer through landscape and public-realm improvements.

Taking into account any retained requirement for parking, deliveries and loading, there is also the potential to implement a more extensive placemaking scheme such as lawns, gardens and tree planting to create an alternative tranquil space destination within the city.

More substantial physical developments in this space are limited owing to heritage constraints, although lightweight and demountable structures may be considered if appropriate.



The adaptive reuse of the impressive and much-loved Shirehall could help to regenerate the wider area and provide another cultural focus for Hereford.

Inspiration for the transformation of Shirehall

The following precedents demonstrate the successful and creative reimagining of other listed public buildings in the UK:

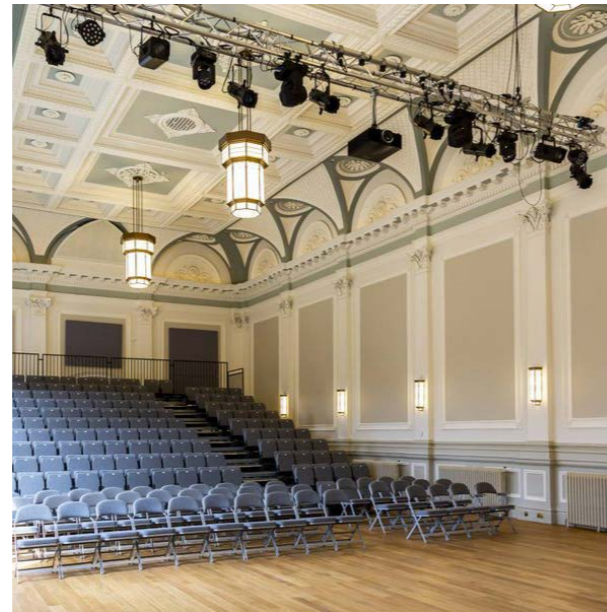
Case Study: Skipton Town Hall

Completed in 2021, the £4.7 million restoration and refurbishment of the Grade II listed, classical-style public building was undertaken with support from its owners, Craven District Council, and grants from various funding bodies. The work included the removal of modern extensions, the restoration of its concert hall and ornate ceiling and the installation of modern, accessible visitor facilities. The fixed stage was replaced with a flexible and demountable system to cater for a wide range of performance and event requirements.

Skipton Town Hall is now a multi-arts and heritage space, working with partners across the district to develop and deliver opportunities for the community and visitors to engage with culture. The flexible space accommodates a museum, exhibition gallery, visitor centre, shop, and a range of venues for hire as well as providing educational programmes, arts development and supporting festivals and an orchestra.



▲ The transformation of Skipton Town Hall, Yorkshire. Photo used with kind permission from Skipton Town Hall.



Case Study: Stretford Public Hall

Stretford Public Hall is a community-owned, multi-purpose building. The Grade II listed hall was originally completed in 1879 and was designed as a public hall and library in a mixed Gothic Revival style. Since 2015, the building has been operated by Friends of Stretford Public Hall, a charitable Community Benefit Society, following its transfer to their ownership from Trafford Council via a community asset transfer.

The hall is managed as a cooperative with over 800 members, a board of directors, a small team of staff and numerous volunteers. All income and donations are reinvested into the maintenance and operation of the hall and the delivery of community activities and events. The multi-purpose facility accommodates a range of event spaces, including a ballroom, a workspace and an accessible community space. It delivers a diverse programme of events and activities, including arts-based activities, live music nights, community cinema and health and wellbeing activities.



▲ Community-led asset Stretford Public Hall, Greater Manchester.



Urban Framework 2: Bewell Street Quadrant

Although in private ownership, the Tesco supermarket site on Bewell Street represents a longer-term ambition to repair the urban grain and introduce a mixture of land uses.

The supermarket occupies a site of approximately 1.45 hectares in the north-west quadrant of Hereford's historic core. It comprises a 1980s, large-footprint building, characterised by long, inactive facades, and extensive areas of surface parking. As a result, it does not provide legible, pedestrian-friendly movement routes or contribute positively to the urban character of the area.

The historic gateway of Eign Gate and the adjoining Bewell Street are compromised by the entrance to the supermarket's underground car park. This also isolates the 18th-century, listed Bewell House from the streetscape.

Another place of significance and interest adjacent to the supermarket is the bowling green and pavilion of Hereford Bowling Club, which was founded in 1484 and claims to be the world's oldest. However, the green and its associated trees, which are positioned in the middle of the urban block, are largely hidden from view. The Bowling Club's entrance is via a characterful Tudor-style building fronting Bewell Street and next door to a similarly styled public house. However, these buildings are also in a fragmented streetscape, dominated by the blank walls of the supermarket and the backs of properties facing Eign Gate.

The city masterplan supports the advice provided in Herefordshire Council's 'Historic Townscape of Central Hereford' (2010). It states that 'the north-south boundaries that survive here are likely to be of considerable antiquity and should be retained and reused as a framework in any redesign of this area'.

Should the existing supermarket decide to relocate, a long-term opportunity could include the redesign of the site to establish a more sympathetic townscape in this part of the historic core. It could enable the reconstitution of the northern frontage, bringing the fine, 18th-century, listed Bewell House back into the built-up area, from which it currently stands isolated.

A granular arrangement of buildings would allow more intuitive and legible pedestrian movement routes and help to repair the urban form. The mix of uses should ideally include a significant proportion of residential accommodation to help bring vitality to the city centre and potentially a metro-scale food store. Medium-density apartments, potentially incorporating student housing, could be considered appropriate for the city centre location (see **Big Idea 6: Hereford, university city** on page 157).

The adjacent plan sets out general principles that could inform a future urban design framework for the area.

Figure 23

- Potential Long-term Development Opportunity
- New/Improved Public Space
- Enhanced Streetscape
- Potential New Green Space
- Car Park
- - - New/Strengthened Pedestrian & Cycling Connections
- ▬▬▬ Primary Active Frontage
- ▬▬▬ Secondary Frontage
- ▬▬▬ Potential Vehicular Access
- - - - Archaeological Remains of Wall
- At-grade Road Crossing





▲ Opportunity to reintegrate Bewell House back into the surrounding urban form.



▲ The Berrington Street/Aubrey Street area has numerous surface car parks which detract from its character.



▲ Bewell Street could become the focus for a diverse mix of uses, including residential, within the historic core.

Urban Framework 3: The Berrington-Aubrey Quarter

The variety of buildings, plots and car parks clustered on Berrington Street and Aubrey Street offer an emergent city quarter characterised by the adaptive reuse of buildings and creative independent businesses.

The parallel and north/south aligned Berrington Street and Aubrey Street form a distinct urban block, contrasting in character to much of the historic core. Although close to the centre of the city, the area retains a backstreet feel as it is bounded by the longest stretch of historic wall and the A49 to the west and by the tall backs of buildings that front Broad Street to the east. The built form comprises largely modern, flat-roofed and often poor-quality buildings, with only a few historic buildings, notably including the Victorian commercial buildings on Aubrey Street and the timber-framed Aubrey's Almshouses on Berrington Street. The area is also characterised by numerous, haphazard, surface-level car parks and yards which add to the backstreet quality of the area and lack of visual appeal.

However, this unremarkable, modern townscape belies the area's historic significance, providing little indication that this is one of the oldest continuously built-up areas in Britain has been occupied for approximately 1,200 years.

Today, the already diverse mixture of land uses and more affordable accommodation has resulted in an emergent and dynamic area within the city. The possibilities afforded by the potential for adaptive reuse of existing buildings and new development occupying underused spaces and car parks create an opportunity to continue this trajectory and establish a distinct 'creative quarter'. Although most of the property in this area is privately owned, there are opportunities to subtly nurture the continuation of this process and encourage start-up and independent businesses and a unique identity, reinforced through townscape and public-realm improvements.

The adjacent plan sets out general principles that could inform a future urban design framework for the area.



▲ The Berrington Street/Aubrey Street area is home to a dynamic mix of businesses, close to the city centre.



BIG IDEA 6: HEREFORD, UNIVERSITY CITY

Summary

One of the most significant drivers shaping the future of Hereford is the city's future as a dynamic 'university city'.

The arrival of the New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE) in Hereford in 2021 gave the city an important new higher education institution. This Big Idea explores how the city can support the ambitions of NMITE and the city's other learning institutions up to 2050.

Rather than establishing a campus on the edge of the city, NMITE is seeking to embed itself in its heart, occupying vacant sites and underused buildings.

The direction of growth will ultimately be determined by detailed operational needs and the availability of appropriate sites. However, this masterplan provides strategic direction and identifies potential sites and buildings which could be repurposed for university and further education facilities.

Hereford's new embedded campus and 'Knowledge Arc' will be supported by active travel linkages that will transform how people move. It will also be supported by an enhanced cultural, community and leisure offer to attract and retain young graduates in the city.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Building active travel networks that make walking and cycling between home, teaching facilities and 'third places' the natural way to travel for students and staff.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Addressing the skills gap and rebalancing the city's demographics by attracting and retaining young people.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Addressing Hereford's human capital needs by attracting and retaining young people to help build a high-value, high-tech local economy.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

The 'embedded' university campus will be delivered alongside high-quality, biodiverse green spaces and public realm.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Helping NMITE expand to form a flagship city campus, delivering a dynamic 'university city' that in turn shapes Hereford's very identity.



Figure 24

- Existing teaching facility
- ▨ Potential teaching facility site
- Existing student accommodation
- ▨ Potential student accommodation site
- Transport hub
- - - Walking and Cycle route

Existing sites

- 1 NMITE Blackfriars
- 2 Wye Valley Trust
- 3 Herefordshire and Ludlow College, Hereford Sixth Form and Hereford College of Arts
- 4 NMITE at Skylon campus
- 5 Station Approach
- 6 West Street

Potential new sites

- 7 Maylord Orchards
- 8 Franklin Barnes building
- 9 Former cinema on Commercial Road
- 10 Country bus station
- 11 New education centre at hospital site
- 12 Long term development opportunity at Station Quarter
- 13 Land adjacent to station medical centre
- 14 Former Job Centre
- 15 Long-term opportunity at Bewell Street Quadrant site
- 16 Potential expansion to existing NMITE campus

Context

Hereford has a strong and growing educational and skills offer. This includes Herefordshire and Ludlow College, Hereford Sixth Form, Hereford College of Arts and NMITE – the city's newest learning institution.

The various teaching centres based at Hereford County Hospital form another important focus of learning. The Wye Valley NHS Trust has a vision to become a destination for students and staff for high-quality education and a lasting positive experience to support the recruitment and retention of staff.

The significance of the role of these institutions will only increase. Human Capital is one of the 'six capitals' set out in Hereford's Big Economic Plan. The growth of these institutions will bring valuable opportunities for further renewal and investment into Hereford. Their growth as key players in the city also offers the prospect of rebalancing the demographics of the city by attracting and retaining young people, another key priority of the Big Economic Plan. However, a recognised shortage of accommodation for students is currently holding back growth.

NMITE launched in Hereford in 2021 as a new institution seeking to disrupt and break the mould of higher education. It intends to educate the next generation of passionate, curious and agile engineers using a model based on experimentation and project-based learning in place of traditional lectures.

NMITE's initial growth was held back by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the university is now ready to expand over the long-term beyond its current facilities. This will lead to a much more expansive institution by 2050, reaching right into the city. That will mean finding a new home for teaching facilities – or, more likely, a series of 'homes' distributed across the city.

Shaping a 'Knowledge Arc' for Hereford

Many new learning institutions seek to establish themselves on a freestanding campus, isolated from the city centre. However, NMITE's plans see the city itself becoming its campus. NMITE seeks to embed itself within the very fabric and communities of the city, much as historic universities such as those in Durham and St Andrews did hundreds of years ago. In doing so, those institutions helped to shape the very identity of their cities.

This masterplan does not allocate land for a new campus for NMITE. Instead, it envisages the growth of NMITE as focused within a loose Knowledge Arc stretching around the north-east of the historic core. Both teaching facilities and accommodation for students will be largely clustered around this Arc, benefitting from strong walking and cycling links to shape a highly accessible urban campus.

NMITE has already made a name for itself as an institution at the centre of building differently through its Centre for Advanced Timber Technology at its Skylon Park Campus in Rotherwas. The strategy outlined here also takes a 'circular' approach to building fabric. It explores opportunities to imaginatively adapt existing buildings to fit the needs of the university – working with the existing fabric and material of the city to create something boldly new.

This way of looking at the city also helps to tackle climate change. It values both the embodied history of existing buildings and the 'embodied carbon' involved in constructing them. This stands in stark contrast to the more 'linear' approach of demolition and rebuilding.



'Recycling' the city: where could teaching facilities be embedded?

As NMITE and other learning institutions continue to grow, they will need new sites to accommodate that growth. NMITE will need a flagship main campus within the city itself, which reflects its scale of ambition, as it outgrows its current home at Blackfriars.

The following list of opportunities for NMITE and others to 'embed' themselves within the city is not exhaustive. Yet, it indicates the number of ways their growth ambitions can be supported by the 'recycling' of empty sites, car parks or buildings, whether disused or with the potential for future adaptive reuse.

These are highlighted in **Figure 24**.

Expansion of existing Blackfriars campus ①: If adjacent land becomes available, there is an opportunity for the university's existing campus to be expanded to allow for a flagship campus, including a new-build element. This would fit within the framework of the new intergenerational neighbourhood taking shape at the Station Quarter (see **Big Idea 8: The Station Quarter** on page 174).

NMITE 'offers enormous potential to address many of Hereford's troubles'.

Historic England Urban Panel (2017)

Maylord Orchards ⑦: The Council purchased this 140,000 square foot shopping centre in 2020. Since then, Towns Fund financing has been secured to turn part of the building into a library and learning centre. However, looking toward 2050, the Council is still seeking a viable, long-term use for the asset. This should align with the wider agenda of diversification of the historic core beyond retail and bringing life back to the city centre (see **Big Idea 5: A vibrant historic core** on page 141).

In exploring options for the long-term future use of the site, NMITE should be explored as a potential future occupant – giving the university a home in the very heart of the city. Within such an expansive building, learning facilities could be co-located with other uses – including public libraries, public services and coworking spaces.

Any redevelopment of Maylord Orchards should seek to open up the existing site to the north to create an active frontage onto Blueschool Street. It should also be accompanied by high-quality public realm.



▲ NMITE's existing campus in a former school on Blackfriars Street **1**



▲ NMITE's new facility at Skylon campus, celebrating timber as a construction material **4**



▲ Existing student accommodation at Station Approach **5**



▲ Maylord Orchards shopping centre, bought by the Council in 2020 **7**



▲ Redevelopment of Commercial Road Corridor **9**



▲ The iconic Franklin Barnes building at the gateway to the city centre **8**



▲ Country Bus Station site and adjoining car park **10**



▲ Long-term redevelopment potential of Bewell Street Quadrant site **15**



▲ Former Job Centre building and adjacent car park on Berrington Street – in the 'Makers Quarter' **14**

Franklin Barnes building 8 : This 'gateway' building at the Bye Street gate to the historic core is already used as a teaching facility by the Wye Valley NHS Trust. However, there is a recognition that their current facilities are fragmented and not all fit for purpose. The building as a whole is in need of a new life. There is an opportunity to retrofit and reinvigorate this icon of 1960s modernist architecture (which was originally used as a garden centre) as a multifunctional teaching facility for one of the learning institutions at a pivotal location within the Commercial Road Corridor (see **Big Idea 9: Commercial Road Corridor** on page 188).

Commercial Road Corridor 9 : Big Idea 9 [Commercial Road Corridor] outlines a key opportunity area for the city along a transformed Commercial Road 'spine'. This cluster of potential development sites, including the former Country Bus Station, offers the potential for a teaching facility to be co-located with student and key worker accommodation. This should be explored as part of detailed masterplanning of the corridor where feasible and aligned with NMITE's strategy and other proposed land uses.

New integrated education centre at Hereford County Hospital campus 11 : The Wye Valley NHS Trust already aims to establish a new dedicated training facility within the existing Hereford County Hospital campus. This would be an exemplar facility shared with partners and supporting learning far beyond traditional healthcare education. Its presence would support wider ambitions within the Commercial Road Corridor opportunity area (see **Big Idea 9: Commercial Road Corridor** on page 188).

In the longer term, there is also an opportunity for NMITE and other learning institutions to embed themselves in an emerging 'Enterprise and Innovation Corridor' – helping to forge links with actors in Hereford's high-tech and innovation sector (see **Big Idea 11: Enterprise and Innovation corridor** on page 207 for more details).

Addressing Hereford's shortage of student accommodation

The delivery of additional sites for dedicated student accommodation will also be key to supporting the growth ambitions of Hereford's learning institutions. Opportunities for delivering this include:

The Country Bus Station site 10 : As bus services are transferred to the new, multi-modal transport hub, the site will become available for repurposing (see **Big Idea 9: Commercial Road Corridor** on page 188 for more details).

Long-term redevelopment of the Bewell Street Quadrant site 15 : In the longer term, this site may provide opportunities to integrate further student accommodation within a highly accessible location for accessing a range of facilities (see **Big Idea 5: A vibrant historic core** on page 141 for further detail).

Former Job Centre building, 18 St Nicholas Street 14 : Given the location within the Berrington-Aubrey Quarter, future plans for this site should explore the potential to retrofit an underused building and provide both accommodation and a hub or coworking space aimed at young entrepreneurs and creative minds.

Site adjacent to station medical centre 13 : There are existing plans to deliver student accommodation alongside a new marina, which would sit within the wider context of the emerging Station Quarter (see **Big Idea 8: The Station Quarter** on page 174).

Beyond home and learning: 'third places'

A 'university city' cannot be built on teaching facilities and accommodation alone. Young professionals will not relocate to Hereford for high-value jobs in the high-tech sector (see **Big Idea 11: Enterprise and Innovation corridor** on page 207) without access to cultural, community and leisure services.

Currently, businesses find it difficult to recruit in Hereford, particularly higher-skilled staff. The whole of Hereford needs to work hard to appeal to a new demographic, attracting and retaining students, young professionals and young families.

'Third places' are locations where people spend time between home ('first' place) and work/study ('second' place). They are places to exchange ideas, have a good time and build relationships.

In physical form, third places can be anywhere that people easily and routinely connect with each other, from churches, parks and community centres to hairdressers, gyms, pubs, cafes and music venues.

This masterplan seeks to build on Hereford's strengths – its arts and cultural offer, its historic environment and its access to the natural environment. Plans to enhance this offer are set out in Big Ideas 5 and 7, with a focus on diversifying and reinvigorating the historic core.

The success of Hereford as a 'university city' will also rely on active travel interventions that make the historic core a walkable heart of the city. The bold active travel strategy will, over time, make it easy and safe to walk and cycle between lectures, home and 'third places' (see **Overview of movement strategy for 2050** on page 64).

Key delivery partners

NMITE, Hereford Colleges, Wye Valley NHS Trust, Herefordshire Place Board



▲ Opportunities for supporting more watersports on the Rivers Wye and Lugg.



▲ Church Street, in Hereford's historic core.



▲ Green and blue spaces act as valuable 'third places' in their own right (see Big Ideas 4, 10 and 12).



▲ Heritage assets like the Shirehall offer opportunities for imaginative reuse as community and cultural hubs (see **Big Idea 5: A vibrant historic core** on page 141).



▲ The Berrington-Aubrey Quarter is home to an emerging independent food and drink scene, and proposals to create a Creative and Makers Hub.



▲ Independent cafes emerging in the city centre are helping to build a more vibrant core.



The River Wye, The Old Bridge and Hereford Cathedral.

BIG IDEA 7: RECONNECTING TO THE RIVER WYE

Summary

The River Wye forms a key strategic green and blue corridor through Hereford and supports nationally and internationally recognised species and habitats.

As part of the city masterplan, the recovery of the Wye's ecological value within Hereford will be anchored by a new flagship nature reserve within the floodplains at Bartonsham Meadows, providing access to wilderness and nature right on people's doorsteps. The space will also play a multifunctional role in addressing flood risk and water quality challenges in Hereford as a nature-based solution.

The recreational potential of the Wye will be boosted as part of the River Wye Infrastructure project, building on the delivery of the #StrongerHereford investment plan. The focus of leisure and hospitality interventions around St Martin's Street will form part of the city centre offer and reinforce Hereford as an 'outdoor city' – providing a further boost to the visitor economy.

Further improvements to provide a continuous accessible walking and cycling route along the river will also support opportunities for sustainable commuting and access to nature for local residents.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Enhancing the Wye as a movement corridor and reinforcing active travel connections between Hereford's city centre and the Hereford Enterprise Zone.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Supporting Hereford's health and wellbeing agenda by providing space for outdoor exercise, interactions with nature and 'social prescribing'.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

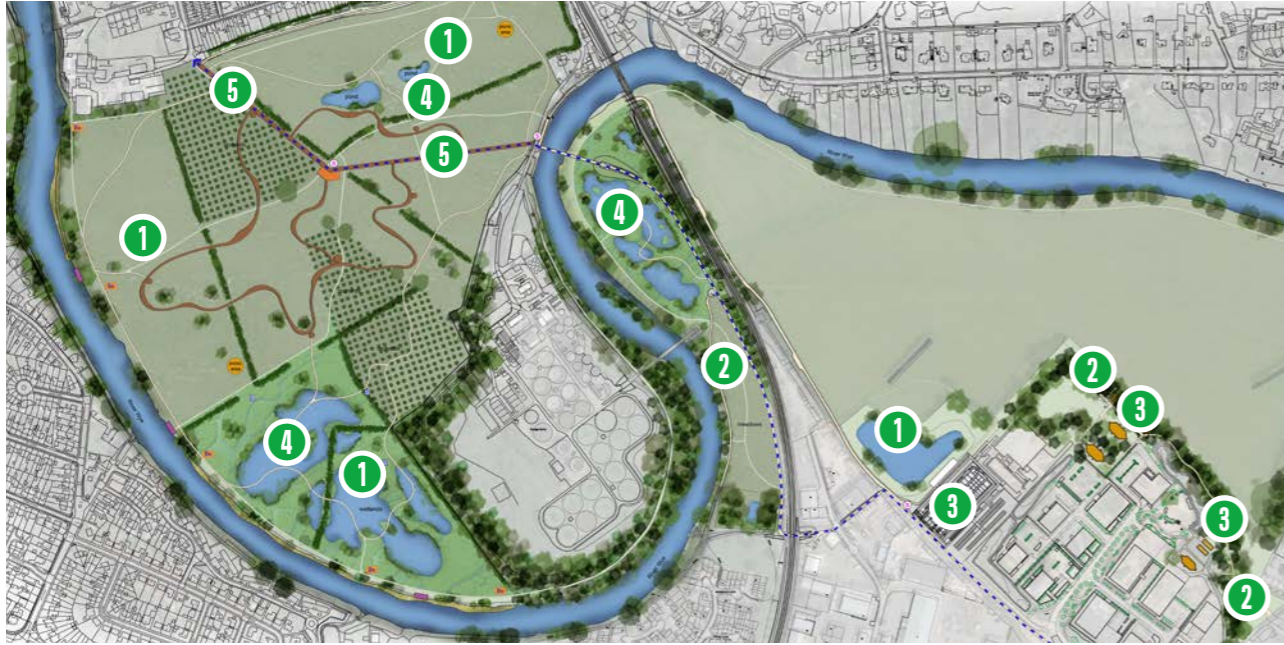
Enhancing the appeal of the Hereford Enterprise Zone as an economic hub and reestablishing the city centre's riverside economy.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Providing a new haven for nature within the heart of the city, while delivering nature-based solutions to flooding, carbon and water quality.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Restoring the River Wye's status as a key cultural and landscape asset within Hereford and celebrating the setting it provides to heritage assets.



▲ The long-term vision for Bartonsham Meadows and the surrounding area, as part of the Rotherwas Nature Park and Heritage Trail (Rotherwas Nature Park and Heritage Trail Vision Document, October 2022).

1 Wildlife enhancements

Restoration and creation of wetland meadow pasture, hedgerows, orchards, ponds, wetlands and reedbeds. Features such as information boards, bird hides and hibernacula.

2 Areas of rewilding

Areas to be managed to achieve natural successional planting.

3 Heritage Trail

Protect the heritage and provide public paths, installations and signage with information about the history of the site as ROF Rotherwas.

4 Public access and recreation

A network of way-marked paths, including raised walkways and ground-level circular walking routes. Seating, natural play, viewpoints, picnic areas and a learning hub.

5 A safe pedestrian and cycle route from Hereford city centre to Sylon Park

A route across the Bartonsham Meadows floodplain on a raised boardwalk.

Bartonsham Meadows will provide a haven for nature just a stone's throw from Hereford's City Walls.

Context

The River Wye and its adjoining green spaces form an important strategic green and blue infrastructure (GBI) corridor running through the heart of the city. This is a key feature of Hereford's sense of place and draws people into the historic core. However, the city currently 'turns its back on' the river and work is needed to reconnect communities to the Wye in a variety of ways.

Continued degradation of water quality and fragmentation of riverside habitats means the ecological status of the Wye is threatened. The Herefordshire Big Economic Plan notes that phosphate limits are exceeded at 31 points within the River Wye catchment, reinforcing the need for continued investment into riparian habitats for both biodiversity and water quality.

Access to nature within the heart of Hereford should be fully explored for its contributions towards good levels of physical health and mental wellbeing, helping to reduce pressures on NHS services and support healthy ageing.

By enriching local biodiversity between the new nature reserve at Bartonsham Meadows and the Great Western Way, a more functional ecological corridor will be provided for the movement of wildlife.

Project 1: Bartonsham Meadows

Bartonsham Meadows has a rich agricultural history and for many years has provided space for grazing by a milking herd just a stone's throw from the City Walls.¹ In recent years, following the removal of the cattle at Bartonsham Farm, this historic landscape has fallen into a state of

poor management and does not fulfil the multifunctional suite of benefits that it has the potential to deliver.

Remnants of the Meadows' archaeological legacy survive today, with the Row Ditch, a scheduled monument, marking the boundary between the low-lying floodplain and 19th-century residential growth. Predominantly located within Flood Zone 3, Bartonsham Meadows is susceptible to periodic flooding, making alternative land uses, such as development or large-scale arable production, impractical.

In recent years, the potential of Bartonsham Meadows to deliver nature-based solutions to issues such as flooding, water quality and carbon capture has been realised. Looking ahead, the potential of the site to deliver a rich mosaic of floodplain habitats, alongside sensitive access to nature right on the edge of the city centre, should be explored.

The masterplan continues to support the emerging plans and vision for the establishment of Bartonsham Meadows as a new Herefordshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserve, as part of the Rotherwas Nature Park and Heritage Trail Vision.² The signing of a lease and stewardship agreement between the Trust and the Church Commissioners, who own the land, should secure the ongoing positive management of the site for at least the next 25 years. The ecological enhancement of the ~40 hectare site will seek to restore hedgerows, create new areas of wetlands, reedbeds and orchards, as well as provide space for small-scale food production. Reedbeds and wetlands along the Wye will deliver much-needed nature-based solutions to flooding and water quality. The masterplan also supports the emerging plans for enhanced active travel links, a heritage trail and recreation provisions, including natural play, viewpoints and a learning hub, across the Nature Park and Rotherwas.

¹ Bartonsham History Group
² Rotherwas Nature Park and Heritage Trail, Hereford – Vision Document (2022) commissioned by Bill Jackson

Enhancing sensitive access to the Meadows, including guided walking routes, will allow meaningful interactions with nature for Hereford's residents and visitors. The value of spending time in nature is widely recognised for its physical and mental health benefits. In addition, the site hosts a key strategic active travel link between the city centre and the Hereford Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas, enhancing opportunities for sustainable commuting.

Long-term aspirations for the Meadows include the establishment of a learning hub. This will provide an opportunity for residents and visitors to discover and understand the ecological significance of the River Wye and River Lugg, and the day-to-day ecosystem services that these watercourses deliver both for Hereford and the wider county.

³ Stronger Hereford Towns Fund Board (2021). Town Investment Plan

Project 2: River Wye Infrastructure

The masterplan aligns with Project 14: River Wye Infrastructure within the Stronger Hereford Town Investment Plan.³ The suggested infrastructure improvements offer the opportunity to activate the Wye frontage as it passes through the city, strengthening the corridor as a key strategic recreation and biodiversity asset.

At present, Hereford 'turns its back on' the Wye, with many residents having minimal interaction with the river or its walking and cycling routes. Additional infrastructure along the course of the Wye, including pontoons, camping spaces, digital signage, seating, lighting and power for community events, should be implemented using the funding secured through the Towns Fund. Improved walking and cycling links along both sides of the river will encourage active travel

and passive recreation. The area around St Martin's Street will be a key focus for leisure and hospitality as part of the city centre offer, reinforcing Hereford as an 'outdoor city'.

Enhanced active travel links with the Great Western Way and National Cycle Network Route 46 will better connect the Wye with the Stronger Hereford Town Investment Plan Southside project. This will see a vibrant, inspiring and inclusive community sports, food-growing and skills hub for the people of South Wye. The Southside project will be a collaboration between already established community organisations, including Growing Local Community Interest Company (CIC), Belmont Wanderers CIC and NMITE. These highly energised organisations all share a common goal to improve the future health, wellbeing, life chances and employment skills of the people of South Wye and Hereford. Active travel linkages from this area also connect southwards with the proposed Hereford Community Farm CIC on Grafton Lane and north-westerly to Belmont Country Park, providing additional passive recreation opportunities.

The delivery of these projects must be conducted in consultation with Natural England and must not compromise the sensitive habitats and species which form the designation of the Wye as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Proposals that lead to the damage or disturbance of habitats or species should not be permitted. In conjunction with the above, additional opportunities for habitat enhancement along the corridor, including reed bed creation, tree planting and naturalising banks, should be delivered, creating a greater ecological link between Bartonsham Meadows and the Great Western Way.

Subject to the delivery of the Eastern River Crossing, opportunities should be explored to reroute parts of the Wye Valley Walk and the Three Choirs Way to take in more of the River Wye and the newly developed nature reserve at Bartonsham Meadows, as well as avoiding the unappealing route diversion along the B4224.

By providing a continuous walking and cycling network along the Wye, neighbourhoods will be linked with nearby green spaces and the city centre via a pleasant, accessible and traffic-free route. It will also support an increase in short-distance commuting, for example to work, schools and higher education institutions. The growth in the use of cargo bikes could also see the route used for shopping trips to the ASDA superstore located adjacent to the river.

Key delivery partners

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and Wilder Hereford, Natural England, Friends of Bartonsham Meadows, Bartonsham History Group, #StrongerHereford Board, Herefordshire Food Alliance.



River Wye at St Martin's Street.

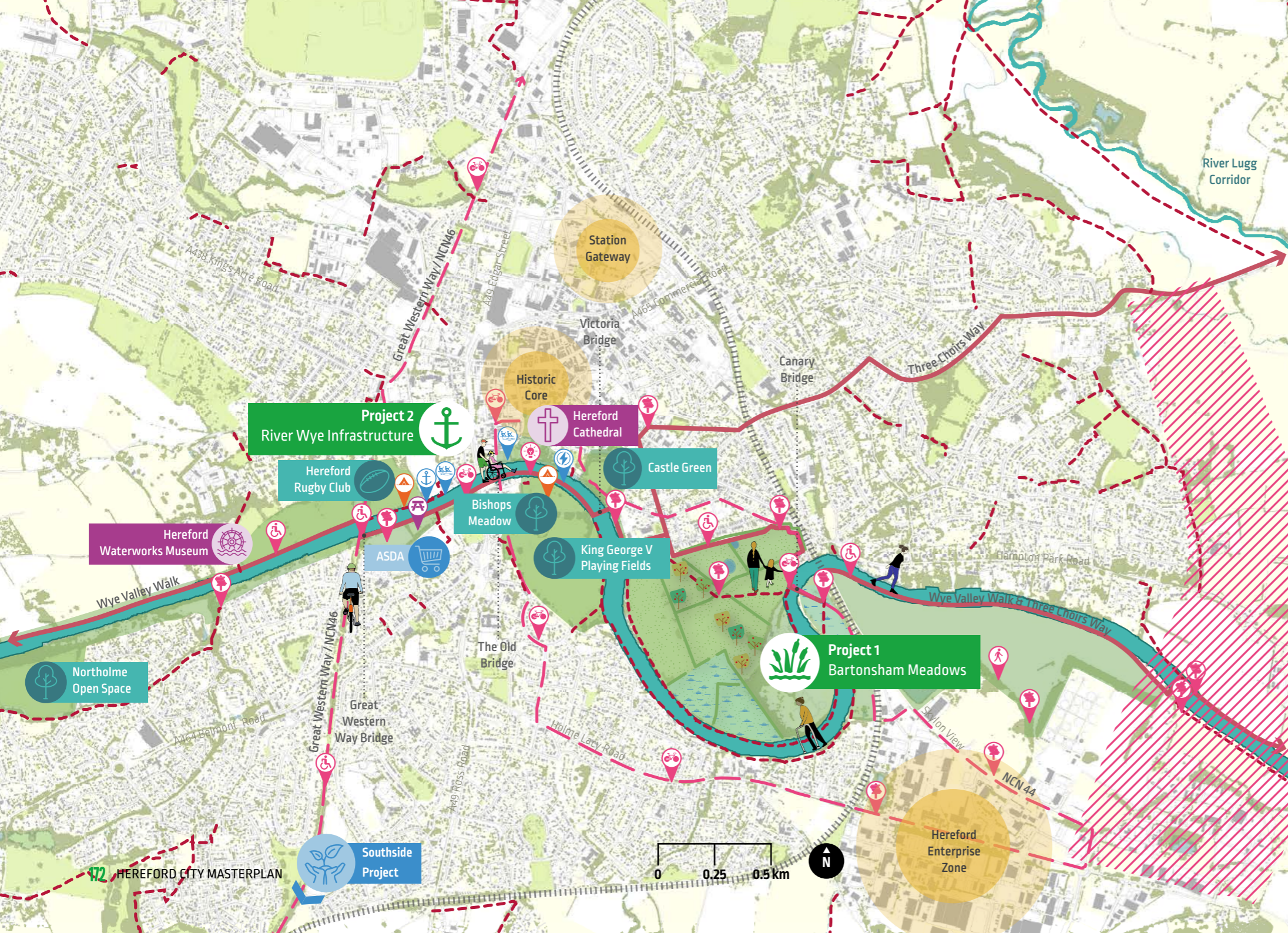


Figure 25
Reconnecting the Wye

- | | |
|---|---|
| Themes | Proposed interventions |
| ● Project | ● Proposed grazing/grassland |
| ● Movement | ● Proposed reedbeds/wetland |
| ● Communities & Culture | ● Restored hedgerow |
| ● Economy & Opportunities | ● Proposed orchard |
| ● Landscape & Wildlife | ▨ Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined) |
| ● Places & Spaces | ♿ Enhanced disabled access |
| | ♿ Enhanced walking access |
| | 🌊 Enhanced access to the river |
| | 📍 Enhanced signage and wayfinding |
| | 🚲 Enhanced cycle provisions |
| | 🚌 Additional bus stops |
| | 💡 Enhanced lighting |
| | ⚡ Power for community events |
| | 🏕️ Camping facilities |
| | 🏖️ Enhanced picnic facilities |
| | ⚓ Mooring |
| Existing assets | |
| ● Chain of green spaces | |
| ● River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) | |
| — Promoted walking route existing & proposed reroutes | |
| - - - Public footpath & bridleway | |
| - - - National Cycle Network (NCN) existing & proposed extensions | |
| ⋯⋯ Railway | |

BIG IDEA 8: THE STATION QUARTER

Summary

The Station Quarter will be a new, residential-led quarter on the northern edge of the historic core. It will connect key parts of the city with the new multi-modal transport hub at Hereford Station. Over time, the Quarter will become a benchmark of sustainable design and green living, with a high-quality of design expected for all new development.

The new, intergenerational urban village will bring a diverse community into the heart of the city. A transformed public realm will create a pedestrian-friendly neighbourhood where walking and cycling form part of everyone's daily routine. Car use will be catered for but not encouraged.

High-quality design will deliver a range of contemporary building types that take design cues from Hereford's medieval, Georgian and Victorian architecture. An urban wetland and new Canal Terminus will create a destination public space for the city and provide access to nature on the doorstep of this new community.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Creating a permeable City Quarter that links walking and cycling routes to key destinations in the wider city.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Bringing a new, intergenerational community into the heart of the city, with accessibility for all and opportunities to get to know neighbours.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Providing opportunities for businesses and workspaces as part of mixed-use development. Providing a local population on the doorstep of the city centre.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Putting nature-based solutions at the heart of alleviating flood risk and improving wildlife connectivity.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Creating an attractive and distinct arrival into Hereford that showcases the city's unique offer and heritage assets.

Context

Until the railway arrived, the open space in this part of the city was used by drovers to drive cattle on foot into Hereford. Widemarsh Street is the oldest route through the area and historically was a focus for development and activity outside of the city defences. It is still lined with heritage assets today, including the Blackfriars Monastery and Coningsby Hospital. In the east, Tan Brook was the location of medieval, water-powered mills, which led to the opening of the Hereford and Gloucester Canal.

Today, the Grade II listed station building immediately establishes the historic character of the city. But the station's poor surrounding environment diminishes what could be an impressive arrival into Hereford. Walking out of the station you are immediately confronted by grey infrastructure and moving cars. The wider Station Quarter is also dominated by surface parking and lacks a strong identity or role, despite its high-profile location with easy access to major sustainable transport links and the city centre.



▲ The current arrival experience at Hereford's listed station.



▲ Existing surface car parking at Merton Meadows.



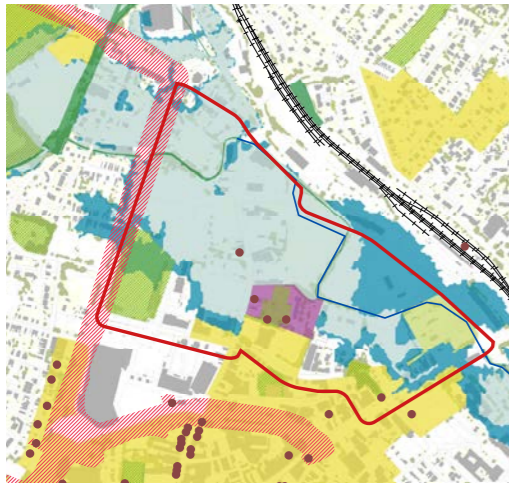
▲ The existing Link Road is unsafe and unfriendly for walking and cycling.



▲ The existing walking and cycling 'cut-through' from the station to the centre, not overlooked.



▲ The Station Quarter area between 1892 and 1914. ©OS 25 Inch, 1892-1914.



▲ Key constraints to development within the Station Quarter today.

Redeveloping this quarter in phases over time would provide a valuable opportunity to help meet Hereford's housing need within a sustainable urban neighbourhood. Simultaneously, it would activate the arrival space into the city and knit together walking and cycling routes between Hereford city centre, the station and wider neighbourhoods.

New housing in Hereford needs to address the shifting demographics of the city and the wider county. This includes the broad trend of an ageing population and the social challenge that can bring. This will provide the dual opportunity of high-quality living suitable for elderly residents and 'downsizers', as well as attracting a younger community to the city, in line with wider economic goals.

Figure 26

Existing constraints within the Station Quarter

- Listed building
- Watercourse – Widemarsh Brook
- ⋯⋯⋯ Railway
- ▨ Greenspace and outdoor sport facility
- ▨ Air quality management area
- Conservation area
- Heritage at risk – Blackfriars Monastery
- Local wildlife site
- Tree preservation order
- Floodzone 2
- Floodzone 3

As a result, the regeneration of the Station Quarter offers an opportunity for Hereford to pioneer mixed-use, intergenerational living in an accessible location on the edge of the city.

Key constraints to development

- An air quality management area along Edgar Street runs immediately to the west of the Station Quarter. Transport infrastructure, landscaping or other design features should be carefully developed to tackle pollution in this area.
- Landscaping of the entire Station Quarter should be led by best practice sustainable and natural drainage solutions to proactively mitigate flood risk, and all new development should be carefully sited to minimise risk.
- New development should be sensitively sited to conserve, reveal and enhance the setting of heritage assets such as Blackfriars Friary.
- Widemarsh Brook, designated for its nature value, should be protected and integrated into a network of green spaces to improve wildlife connectivity throughout the Station Quarter.

A framework for future development

The Urban Framework on the next page illustrates the different roles and potential of each part of this area of the city. Some of the projects (including the multi-modal transport hub) are already in the latter stages of development. Others are at an earlier stage in their evolution.

The framework identifies a number of Key Development Sites, which are focused on land currently in Council ownership. High-quality development brought forward on these sites (accompanied by an assessment of viability) will allow them to act as a catalyst for the future regeneration of the Station Quarter.

Surrounding these Key Development Sites are a number of areas where existing ownership is mixed and there is no immediate development opportunity. In these areas, the Framework identifies potential opportunities in the long-term as the Quarter evolves to meet wider masterplan objectives.

The Framework is accompanied by a series of broad design principles. Together, they will guide the strategic redevelopment and reinvigoration over time of an underused and neglected area of the city, helping it fulfil its significant potential.

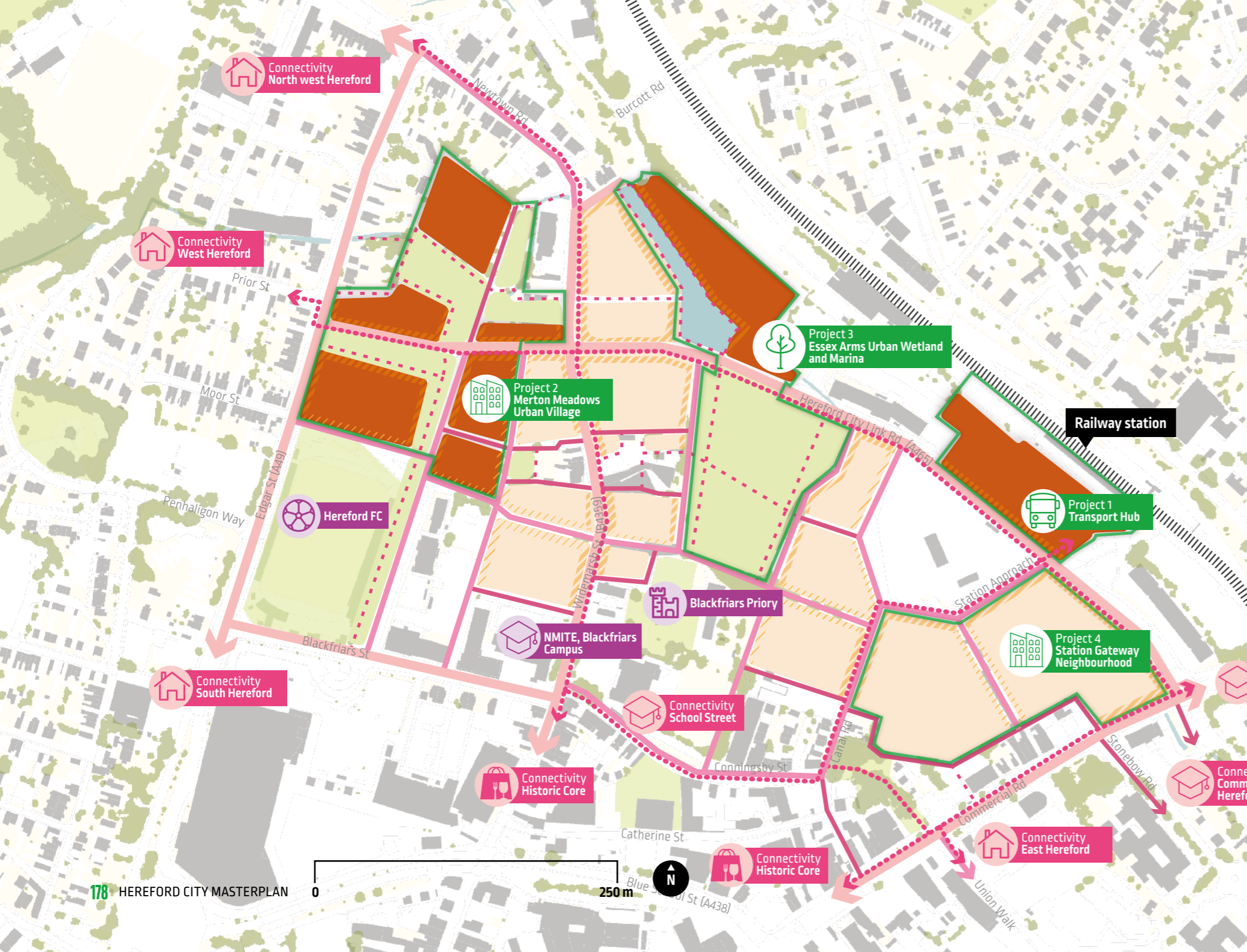


Figure 27

Station Quarter Urban Framework

- Project
 - Movement
 - Communities & Culture
 - Economy & Opportunities
 - Landscape & Wildlife
 - Places & Spaces
 - Project area
 - Development site
 - Long-term redevelopment or repurpose opportunity
 - Thoroughfare or Boulevard enhanced people-friendly routes (**Big Idea 2: People-friendly streets** on page 93)
 - Street enhanced people-friendly routes (**Big Idea 2: People-friendly streets** on page 93)
 - Lane enhanced existing and proposed routes
 - Promoted walking route enhanced existing and proposed routes
 - Other walking route enhanced existing and proposed routes
 - ▨ Primary active frontage
 - ▨ Secondary active frontage
- Existing assets**
- Tree cover
 - Built development
 - Watercourse
 - Railway
- Proposed interventions**
- New or enhanced green space
 - Canal terminus (**Big Idea 10: Reestablishing the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal** on page 201)



KEY PROJECTS WITHIN THE STATION QUARTER

Project 1: Transport hub at Hereford Station

As part of ongoing plans for transforming bus and rail infrastructure in Hereford, the forecourt of the Grade II listed railway station will become a landmark arrival point into Hereford – where you can switch easily between bus, rail, bicycle and taxi.



▲ Trains at Hereford railway station.

The planned scheme incorporates a nature-rich planted public realm and a landmark shelter to provide cover and waiting areas, as well as facilities including a Beryl bike exchange, free Wi-Fi and real-time transport information.

The bus interchange will be relocated from the existing Country Bus Station on Commercial Road to the new transport hub. High-quality routes will link the hub to key destinations within the city, making Hereford Station the heart of movement in and out of the city centre.

As the Quarter develops and drives footfall, the new transport hub could be a catalyst for future investment in the appearance and function of the station building and wider area. Former waiting rooms could be reopened for food and drink uses, or as Tourist Information facilities.



▲ Public realm and landmark shelter plans are underway for Hereford's multi-modal transport hub. Image source: Weston Williamson + Partners.

As part of the development of the new Transport Hub, and the wider Station Quarter, it is important that those arriving in the city are offered a choice of high-quality pedestrian and cycling routes to reach both the historic core and the Urban Village. The choice of high-quality routes should include:

1 A station-Cathedral heritage walk

Travelling past Blackfriars Monastery and down historic Widemarsh Street as part of a heritage trail from the station into the heart of the city (route connections to be opened up as part of redevelopment).

2 Commercial Road Corridor

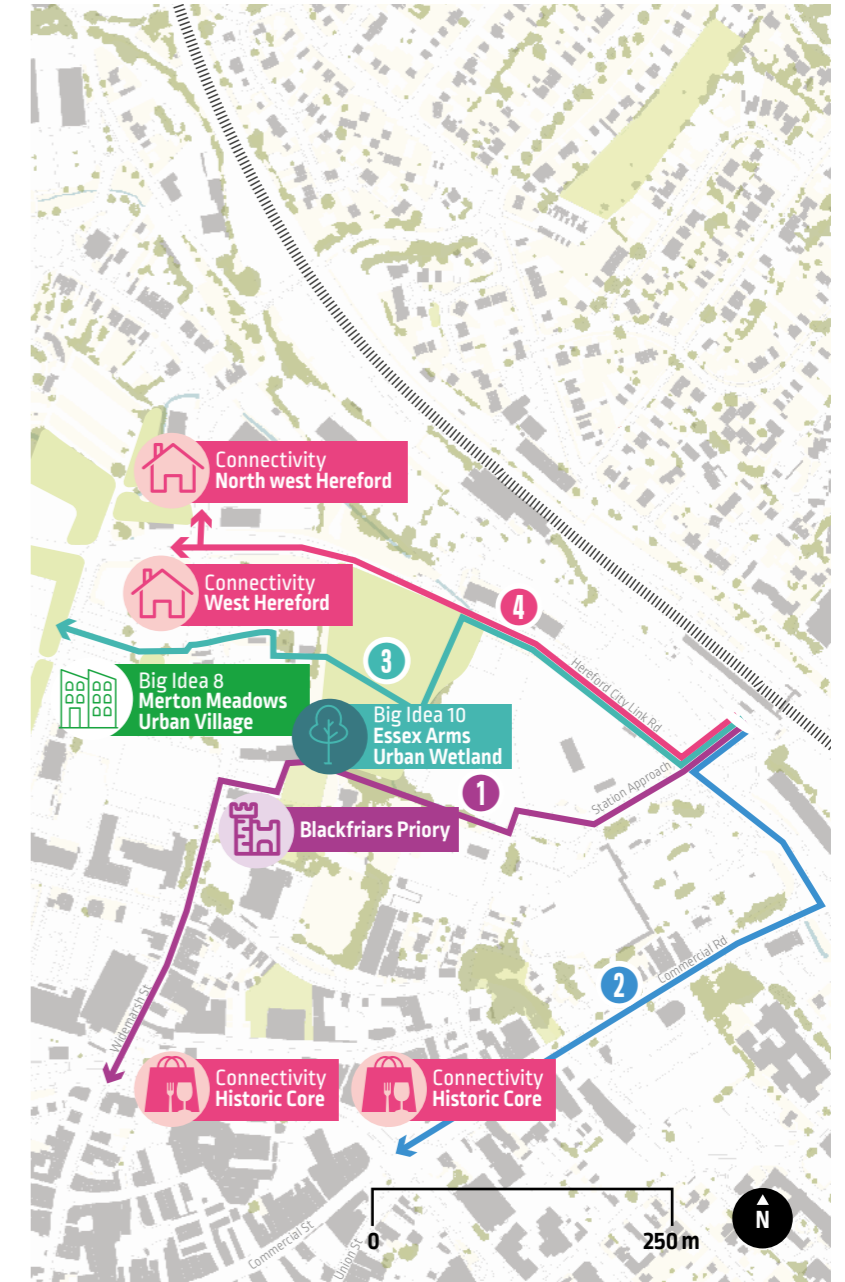
The quickest and safest route into the heart of the city and Hereford's 'Knowledge Arc' (see **Big Idea 9: Commercial Road Corridor** on page 188).

3 'Green link' to Urban Village

A nature trail via the Essex Arms wetland.

4 Improvements to the link road

To provide a convenient and safe route to the north and west of Hereford (see **Big Idea 2: People-friendly streets** on page 93).



Project 2: Merton Meadows Intergenerational Urban Village

A sustainably designed residential development will transform a flood-prone car park into an intergenerational urban village. The village will grow around major new green spaces and urban wetlands that mitigate flood risk and provide access to nature for both locals and residents.

In the years leading up to 2050, this part of the city to the north of Hereford's historic core will be transformed into a vibrant, mixed-use, intergenerational urban village. Nature-based solutions to flood risk will be used to navigate flood challenges, so that the site can be sustainably developed for new housing and community buildings. The whole community will be within easy walking and cycling distance of the city centre and the city's new multi-modal transport hub. Green walking routes will provide access to a destination urban wetland and space to explore and relax by the new Canal terminus, as well as creating links to new recreational walking and cycling routes.

At the core of the site will be the development of a new intergenerational community. These properties will be designed and sited to share community green spaces, minimise their energy use and achieve the highest levels of comfort and sustainable living.

The Station Quarter will be delivered in phases. A surface-level or potentially decked car park solution will be delivered on this site as capacity dictates and in line with the wider Parking Strategy for Hereford. Early phases of work will concentrate on delivering a mixture of affordable homes, market homes, retirement living, student living and commercial space on Council-owned land, including the car park at Merton Meadows.

This development could act as a catalyst for future development sites over a longer timeframe (2030-2050) as sites become available. Initial phases of the village (on Council-owned development sites) will focus on apartments and retirement living. However, future phases (within adjacent, long-term development opportunities) should seek to incorporate town houses to attract families to the village.



▲ Design quality expectations for the Urban Village.



▼ The Council-owned sites could accommodate an estimated 60-70 retirement apartments and 100-110 other apartments. Building height to vary between four and five storeys.

Project 3: Essex Arms Urban Wetland and Marina

New green spaces in the Station Quarter will provide a benchmark for greener urban neighbourhoods, providing opportunities for people to live with nature on their doorstep. This will include a destination urban wetland, space to explore and relax by the new Canal terminus (as part of Big Idea 10: Reestablishing the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal on page 201) and links to new walking and cycling routes.

The design of the Station Quarter must provide an appropriate and thoughtful response to significant flood risk in this part of the city. An urban wetland public space and flood alleviation scheme on the Essex Arms site will provide part of a strategic, nature-based solution to flood risk.

Raised boardwalks, viewing platforms and seating areas will support sensitive interactions with nature and create an informal, green, active travel route through to the urban village from the station, with interpretation boards to help develop an understanding of the local species that are being supported.

In the longer term, development within the 'Station Gateway' neighbourhood (see **Project 4: Station Gateway neighbourhood** on page 185) offers the potential for strong natural surveillance of the site by surrounding properties. Emerging plans to deliver student and young person's accommodation alongside the new marina will also help to activate the space with night-time uses and events.

The Link Road currently creates significant severance between the planned canal terminus and the Essex

Arms wetland. As part of interventions to create a more pedestrian-friendly corridor along the Link Road (see **Overview of movement strategy for 2050** on page 64), a high-quality, at-grade pedestrian crossing will be required. A wildlife connection should also be explored where Widemarsh Brook passes under the Link Road.

The space surrounding the Canal and linking to the Essex Arms site should be activated with planting, playful space and heritage interpretation to create a destination space for the city.



▲ The Essex Arms wetland today, with the Station Medical Centre and Link Road in the background.



▲ An urban wetland in London, providing an oasis of birdsong, green space and access to nature and water. ©Bench Cherry, WWT.

Project 4: Station Gateway neighbourhood

In the longer term, future redevelopment of this area offers the opportunity to shape a high-quality, mixed-use 'gateway' between the Urban Village and the station.

The Station Gateway neighbourhood is on land which is currently occupied, with no immediate potential for development. However, longer-term opportunities should be explored to better connect this site to other parts of the city, as Hereford's city centre evolves to become a greener, cleaner and walking-friendly environment.

The existing urban form within this part of the wider Station Quarter is a legacy of postwar patterns of development, which saw low-value areas adjacent to railway stations accommodating 'big box' retail parks and industries served by freight and car. As the retail landscape and movement patterns within Hereford shift up to 2050, this area too is likely to change.

Strategic redevelopment in this area should reinstate historic street patterns, build a new community on a more human scale and create safe, overlooked pathways through the site, giving pedestrians and cyclists a choice of low-traffic routes to and from the station.

By 2050, mixed-use development on these sites should provide a greener, lower-carbon and more attractive concentration of places to live, work, socialise and play. Future development should aim to gently densify the area with a richer mix of uses – including retail, commercial, residential and leisure. Buildings of four to seven storeys will be targeted in order to maximise the use of land in one of the city's most sustainable locations. Frontages directly onto the new urban wetland will provide high-quality accommodation for a range of occupiers.

The Station Gateway neighbourhood should be developed at a minimum of 60 dwellings per hectare (dph) and at heights of 4-7 storeys.

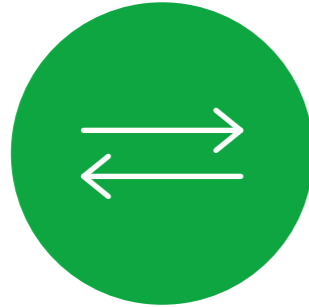


▲ Inspiration from elsewhere: Devonshire Gardens in Cambridge is undergoing a transformation from an old depot site into a 'green haven' just a five-minute walk from Cambridge railway station. Image source: Socius and Railpen.

KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR THE STATION QUARTER

1 Connectivity and Permeability

Hereford's historic core is comprised of an irregular medieval street pattern and fine-grain block form. New development in the Station Quarter should seek to reflect these characteristics in order to maintain and strengthen Hereford's identity and reestablish the fine-grain block form that becomes lost and more fragmented beyond the historic core.



The street pattern identified in the Station Quarter Urban Framework reestablishes Widemarsh Street as the primary north-south link. This will be the focus for traffic calming and public realm improvements, which will make it a logical continuation of the pedestrian-friendly route south of the A453. New streets and lanes should be designed as 'shared streets' where pedestrians and cyclists have the same priority as vehicles.

2 Streets, Civic Spaces and Public Realm

Street hierarchy

New routes should reflect the historic street geometry of Hereford and support a modal shift away from the car. Establishing a strong street hierarchy of primary and secondary streets will create a legible new city quarter, allowing people to easily navigate their way around.

Junctions and corners

Junctions should be defined by corner-facing buildings and public-realm materials that strengthen and highlight these nodes and changes of direction. They should also frame views along streets.



Small civic spaces

High-quality civic spaces should form an integral part of the development. These should include small gathering spaces such as squares and rain gardens but also pocket parks.

Parking

If on-street parking is required, this should facilitate pedestrian crossing and avoid dominating the street scene. The use of street trees and planting should also further integrate on-street parking.

Active frontages

Primary active frontages should overlook routes through the quarter, as well as public open space. They should have activity or habitable rooms at ground-floor level and high-quality architectural treatment along these frontages to reinforce the prominence of the key route.

3 Form of Development

Density

The Station Quarter should reflect the higher-density building patterns of the historic core. Across the Quarter, density should be a minimum of 60 dwellings per hectare (dph) with higher densities concentrated closest to the transport hub within the Station Gateway.



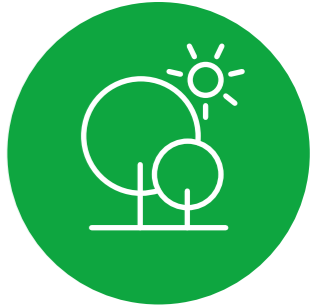
Building heights

To achieve a quantum and scale of development that sets high standards of sustainability, building heights should generally target a range of three to seven storeys, depending on the specific context of the building within the Quarter. Development should create an interesting and varied skyline and roofscape. Building heights should be carefully designed to minimise any impact on views towards the city's three landmark spires – All Saints Church, St Peter's Church and Hereford Cathedral.

4 Green and Open Spaces

A high-quality network of nature-rich green spaces of all scales will be crucial to design quality in the Station Quarter. A hierarchy of green spaces will be required to build that network.

- Transforming the Essex Arms site into an urban wetland will provide an 'anchor' and destination green space for the neighbourhood.
- Linear green parks will provide key walking and cycling connections.
- Pocket parks scattered throughout the neighbourhood will provide green space at a more intimate scale. Opportunities for community-led growing spaces and micro orchards should be encouraged to foster a sense of community and to continue the Hereford tradition of orchard growing and cider production.



Key delivery partners

Hereford Council, private developers, NMITE, local businesses and existing landowners, Historic England, Wildlife Trust, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

BIG IDEA 9: COMMERCIAL ROAD CORRIDOR

Summary

Commercial Road is the key corridor for rail and bus users accessing the city centre from Hereford's new multi-modal transport hub.

As a corridor, it should be attractive and easy to navigate, as well as creating a positive first impression of Hereford as a city. A transformed Commercial Road Corridor will become a green, tree-lined boulevard. It will result in cleaner air and be easy to navigate on foot, by bike, etc. and be accessible to older and disabled people.

As a key gateway into Hereford and route from Hereford railway station, the redevelopment of strategic sites along the corridor will also make it a bustling city quarter that is safe both day and night.

The Commercial Road Corridor will be a focus for a growing student population, anchoring existing and new student accommodation and education facilities with high-quality public realm. This will create the ability for life to 'spill out' onto the boulevard and create leisure and retail opportunities.

The newly vacant Bus Station site will be repurposed as homes for key workers and students, and will explore the potential to incorporate teaching facilities and social spaces. This will form a key part of Hereford's emerging Knowledge Arc (see **Big Idea 6: Hereford, university city** on page 157).

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Establishing a safe, attractive and accessible key route between Hereford Station and the city centre for walkers and cyclists.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Bringing a critical mass of people to live, work and learn in the area to support a vibrant street scene.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Supporting businesses on Commercial Road and opportunities for education facilities to expand.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Redesigning Commercial Road around green spaces, tree planting and pockets of public green spaces.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Creating a landmark gateway into Hereford, with public-realm improvements along the length of the corridor. Helping to shape the identity of the emerging Knowledge Arc.

Context

Between the 12th century and 1538, this area was the site of St Guthlac's Priory, which may have been active in Hereford since Saxon times. Commercial Street itself is an ancient route and developed as one of a small number of suburbs outside of the city defences. This was joined by a new city gaol in the late 18th century and the city's workhouse in 1837. Exactly 100 years later a new hospital opened on the site of the Priory and incorporated some of the former workhouse buildings as it became established.

Today, Commercial Road is a key route linking Hereford Station to the city centre. Heritage assets are still dotted along this route, including the Governor's House, the old Gaol Wall and the former cinema building. However, it is currently dominated by car use and provides a noisy and hostile environment for pedestrians and cyclists. It lacks the high-quality public space and critical mass of people and economic activity needed to bring life to the street.

Economically, Commercial Road is located close to the only purpose-built student accommodation in Hereford, to NMITE's Blackfriars Campus and to the Hereford County Hospital and teaching facilities. It currently hosts a selection of retail, fast food, bars and services. As a wide, long street, and given its location between key areas of activity, Commercial Road is an untapped resource for the city. It could provide a hub of activity and meeting spaces.

Areas of land lying adjacent to the corridor are low-density in nature and dominated by surface car parking. These parcels of land and newly vacant sites present significant potential long-term opportunities to shape a new life for the corridor.



▲ Cluttered footways on Commercial Road today.



▲ Existing frontages along Commercial Road.



▲ Venn's Arch – local heritage asset. ©Britain Express.



▲ Commercial Road between 1892 and 1914. ©OS 25 Inch, 1892-1914.

Key constraints to development

- Land to the north of Commercial Road and Stonebow Road is located in Flood Zones 2 and 3. Therefore, land uses that are less vulnerable to flooding will be, and new development should be carefully sited to minimise flood risk. Sustainable urban drainage and water management will form a key component of all proposals to mitigate flood risk on the site and further downstream.
- Parts of the corridor are located within the 'Central Area' Conservation Area. There are also a number of listed and non-listed heritage assets, including the Governor's House, the old Gaol Wall, the former cinema and Venn's Arch. New development should be sensitively sited to conserve, reveal and enhance the setting of heritage assets.
- Eign Brook, which runs through the north of the site, is a Local Wildlife Site. There are small areas of woodland along the brook and adjacent to the Bus Station site. These natural assets should be protected and integrated into a network of green and blue spaces.

The following pages set out two key projects that together will reanimate the Commercial Road Corridor.

Figure 28

Existing constraints within the Commercial Road Corridor

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| ● Listed building | ● Conservation area |
| — Watercourse – Eign Brook | ● Heritage at risk |
| ⋯ Railway | ● Local wildlife site |
| ▨ Greenspace and outdoor sport facility | ● Tree preservation order |
| ▨ Air quality management area | ● Floodzone 2 |
| | ● Floodzone 3 |



▲ Key constraints to development within the Commercial Road Corridor today.



▲ The Governor's House. Source: British Listed Buildings.



▲ Frontage of former Odeon cinema on Commercial Road.



▲ Commercial Road c.1950. ©The Francis Frith Collection.



▲ Surface parking at Country Bus Station site.

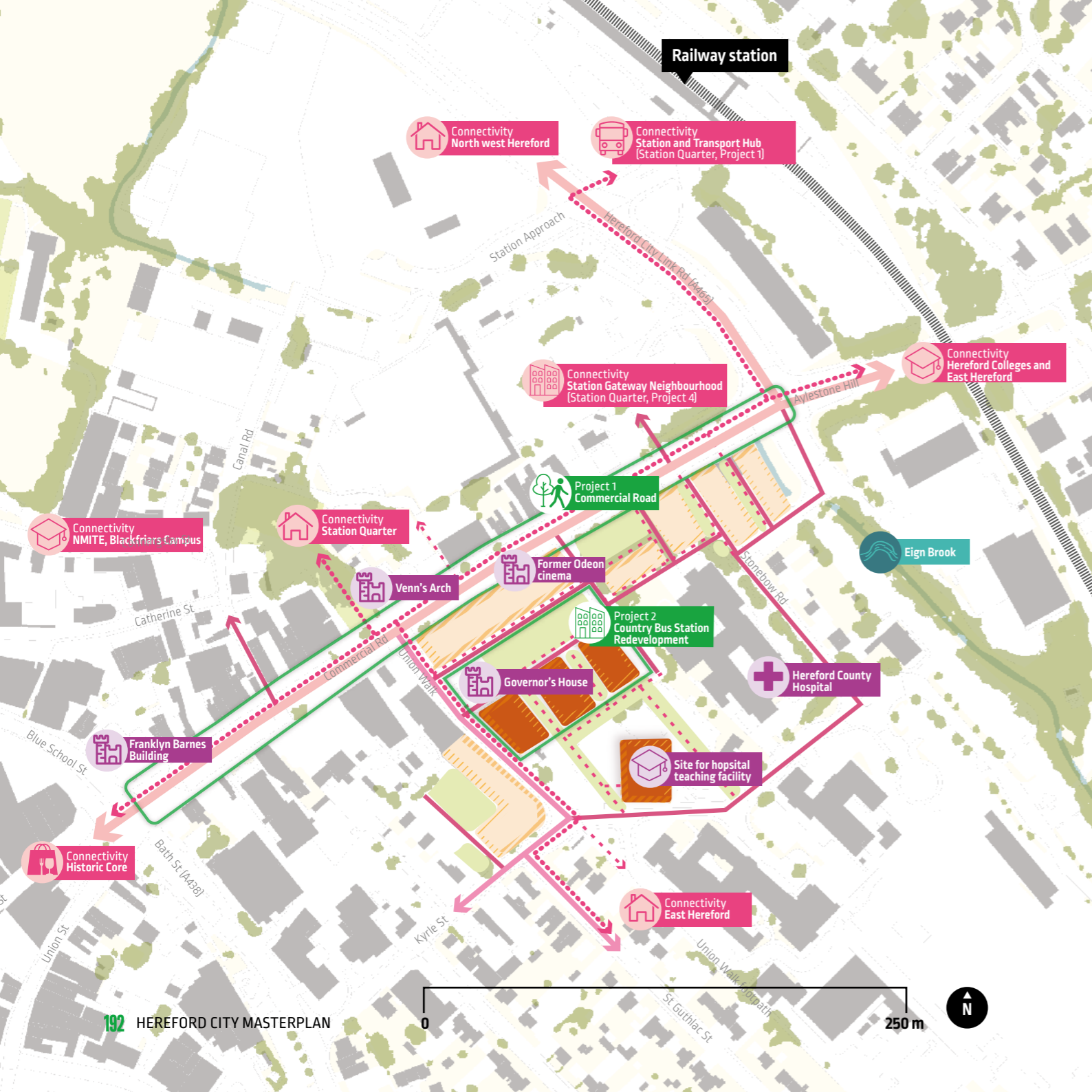


Figure 29

Commercial Road Corridor Urban Framework

- Project
 - Movement
 - Communities & Culture
 - Economy & Opportunities
 - Landscape & Wildlife
 - Places & Spaces
- Existing assets**
- Tree cover
 - Built development
 - Watercourse
 - ▬ Railway
- Proposed interventions**
- New or enhanced green space
 - Project area
 - Development site
 - Long-term redevelopment or repurpose opportunity
 - Thoroughfare or Boulevard
enhanced people-friendly routes (**Big Idea 2: People-friendly streets** on page 93)
 - Street
enhanced people-friendly routes (**Big Idea 2: People-friendly streets** on page 93)
 - Lane
enhanced existing and proposed routes
 - Promoted walking route
enhanced existing and proposed routes
 - Other walking route
enhanced existing and proposed routes
 - ▨ Primary active frontage
 - ▨ Secondary active frontage

A framework for future development

This Urban Framework illustrates the different roles and potential of each part of the Commercial Road Corridor.

It identifies a number of Key Development Sites, which are focused on land in Council ownership – notably the former Country Bus Station. High-quality development brought forward on these sites, accompanied by an assessment of viability, will allow them to act as a catalyst for future regeneration of the whole Corridor.

Surrounding these key development sites are a number of areas where existing ownership is mixed and there is no immediate development opportunity, but where the Framework identifies potential in the long-term for these sites to evolve and meet wider masterplan objectives.

The Framework is accompanied by a series of broad design principles. Together, they will guide the strategic redevelopment of the Commercial Road Corridor.

Project 1: Transformation of the Commercial Road 'spine'

As part of Hereford's programme of People-friendly Streets (see Big Idea 2: People-friendly streets on page 93), Commercial Road will be transformed into a flagship tree-lined boulevard that will act as a 'green spine' at the heart of the regeneration of this historic neighbourhood.

By rebalancing space for cars with more space for people, cycling and walking, people will be encouraged to linger and visit local businesses. Cafes and other businesses will benefit from high-quality 'spill out' space. This will support the growth of a student night-time economy, creating a bustling social life for the street. Enhancing the public space around local heritage assets will improve the corridor's historic setting.

Interventions which will be key to transforming Commercial Road will include: at-grade crossings, wider, clutter-free pavements and high-quality public-realm materials and street furniture. Alongside transport interventions, green and blue infrastructure features will be central – including rain gardens and 'SuDS trees'. This will create long-term benefits for Hereford, including reduced air pollution, access to nature, improved flood resilience and biodiversity benefits.

Street and feature lighting should illuminate heritage assets and key destinations, such as Venn's Arch. Carefully designed lighting will also improve safety at night and encourage round-the-clock use.

Consistent, clear and attractive wayfinding should highlight key routes to the station, the historic core, the new Station Gateway neighbourhood (see Big Idea 8: The Station Quarter on page 174) and new facilities that form part of the Knowledge Arc (see Big Idea 6: Hereford, university city on page 157).



▲ Inspiration from elsewhere: Glasgow Avenues saw a major busy thoroughfare transformed, with space for cycling, buses and pedestrians. @GreenBlue Urban.

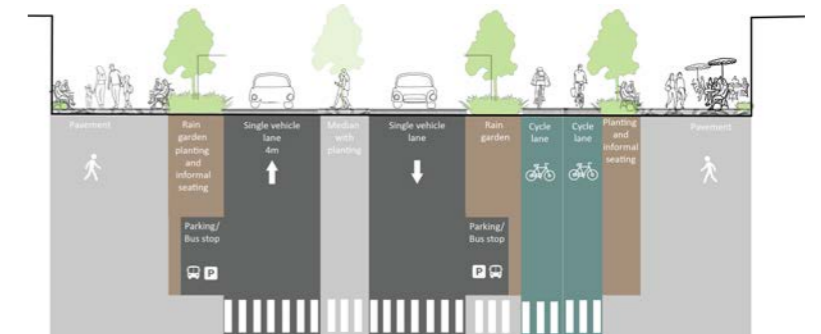


▲ High-quality wayfinding along Commercial Road will help visitors navigate – and should be consistent with signage used elsewhere in the city.



▲ An illustration of how a transformed Commercial Road may succeed in balancing space for cars with more space for cycling and walking and spill-out space for local businesses.

▶ A cross-section indicating how the reallocation of road space along Commercial Road could accommodate a 2-way cycle lane alongside green infrastructure features.



Project 2: Redevelopment of the former Country Bus Station

The delivery of Hereford's new multi-modal transport hub (see Big Idea 8: The Station Quarter on page 174) will see the bus interchange moved to the railway station. This will open up a key strategic site for redevelopment at this central location.

This site and the surrounding area – adjacent to Hereford County Hospital – offers a valuable opportunity for the provision of accommodation for both key workers and students. The site is located at the heart of the city's emerging Knowledge Arc (see Big Idea 6: Hereford, university city on page 157) and will help to address an identified shortage of student accommodation in Hereford up to 2050.

The development of this site should be carefully integrated with emerging plans for a new teaching facility for the hospital on the adjacent car park, which will further strengthen this cluster of learning facilities within the Knowledge Arc.

The Commercial Road Corridor will be delivered in phases. The initial phase (2022-2030) will focus on Council-owned assets, repurposing the existing Country Bus Station and car park for a mix of mid-rise apartments for key workers and students alongside learning facilities.

The Governor's House should form a key integrated part of the wider development – with long-term opportunities explored for reuse as social/community space related to adjacent uses, including outdoor spill-out space.

The delivery of this flagship site will act as a catalyst for future phases of development (2030-2050) as other sites

become available in the immediate area. As a collection of sites, it will help the Commercial Road Corridor to fulfil its potential, in line with the Design Principles set out below.

The redevelopment of the Country Bus Station can accommodate an estimated 50-60 apartments at three to seven storeys, as the first phase in the development of the wider area.



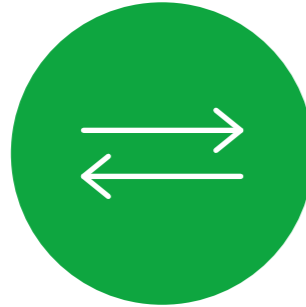
▲ An indication of the levels of design quality expected of both built development and public realm at the former Country Bus Station site. ©The University of Sheffield.



KEY DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR THE COMMERCIAL ROAD CORRIDOR

1 Connectivity and Permeability

New development with the Commercial Road Corridor should seek to reestablish the block structure that has become lost and fragmented with the dominance of surface car parking.



Permeability through the Hereford County Hospital site and existing residential developments should be improved by creating additional pedestrian prioritised streets created perpendicular to Union Walk.

New residential development should include semi-private gardens to break up the existing blocks and allow for new pedestrian links through to the hospital campus.

Development of any longer-term development opportunities to the eastern end of Commercial Road should explore the potential to create access to the hospital by car directly from the Link Road, avoiding the need for motorised vehicles to use Commercial Road.

2 Streets, Civic Spaces and Public Realm

Street hierarchy

Commercial Road (the primary route) is one of the widest streets in Hereford. Secondary routes, such as Union Walk, are generally narrower streets and lanes which will be contained by building blocks that face directly onto the street, creating a strong building line and active street frontages. There is also opportunity to reestablish a stronger building line along Commercial Road through the redevelopment of the site.

Junctions and corners

The introduction of strong, corner-facing buildings at key locations will provide greater definition of the street and a much-needed sense of enclosure. It will also help frame views along key routes and mark the main entrance into Hereford County Hospital.



Small civic spaces

High-quality civic spaces should form a key feature of any development. These will include small gathering spaces, such as the new civic space between existing buildings and new accommodation blocks.

Parking: Where on-street parking is required, this should facilitate pedestrian crossing and avoid dominating the street scene. The use of street trees and planting should also further integrate on-street parking.

3 Form of Development

Density

Development here should reflect the higher density of the historic core. Higher density of development should be sensitively and thoughtfully achieved by introducing mid-rise apartments.



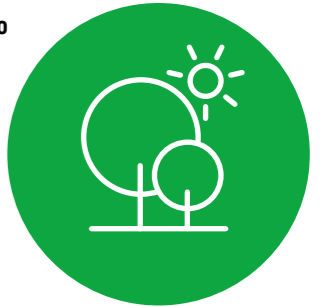
Building heights

Building heights should broadly be consistent with the Station Quarter – between three and seven storeys depending on key views and neighbouring built form. High-quality building blocks of different heights will create an interesting and varied roofscape. Corner blocks should help define street junctions and anchor the development to the plot. Building heights should be respectful of neighbouring residential buildings and heritage features including the Governor's House, the Franklin Barnes site, Venn's Arch, the old Gaol Wall and the cinema.

4 Green and Open Spaces

A network of green spaces within the Commercial Road Corridor will include:

- Commercial Road as a 'green spine' through the corridor – lined by rain gardens to alleviate flood risk, wildflower planting, street trees and pocket parks.
- Where feasible, the opening up to the public of the small area of woodland between Stonebow Road and the Bus Station site.
- Enhancing the old graveyard as a gateway from Commercial Road and calm 'oasis' in the city.
- Seating areas that incorporate nature-rich planting and connectivity for pollinators and wildlife, including spill-out space from any future uses of the Governor's House.
- Exploring the delivery of a sensory garden or wellbeing space for students, residents and NHS teaching staff.
- Distinctive 'pollinator-friendly bus stops' with green roofs to support local biodiversity.



Key delivery partners

Hereford Council, private developers, Wye Valley NHS Trust, NMITE/other learning institutions, local businesses, Historic England.



The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal as it passes through Aylestone Park following reed removal. Source: Ralph Barber, Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

BIG IDEA 10: REESTABLISHING THE HEREFORDSHIRE & GLOUCESTERSHIRE CANAL

Summary

The route of the former Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal provides an important ecological and historical asset for both Hereford and the wider county. Ongoing plans to restore the canal should be brought right into the city centre with the creation of a new Hereford Terminus. Additional water-based recreation and community facilities should be provided within Aylestone Park, providing access to the water and interactions with nature for all.

The historic route of the canal, which is protected under Core Strategy Policy E4 of Hereford's existing Local Plan, should be safeguarded through Hereford and reinstated as a blue-green active travel corridor along its towpath as a priority. Once the route is secured, aspirations for future rewetting, recreation and biodiversity enhancements can be delivered in partnership with the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Enhancing active travel links between north Hereford and the city centre by securing a new green corridor along the former towpath.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Creating safe access to water-based recreation for people of all ages and abilities through the delivery of a new community basin.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Supporting the visitor economy and sustainable day trips into the city.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Providing a continuous green and blue corridor connecting Hereford's city centre with Herefordshire's wider countryside.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Reviving one of Hereford's lost heritage assets and providing a distinctive setting to new development within the Station Quarter.

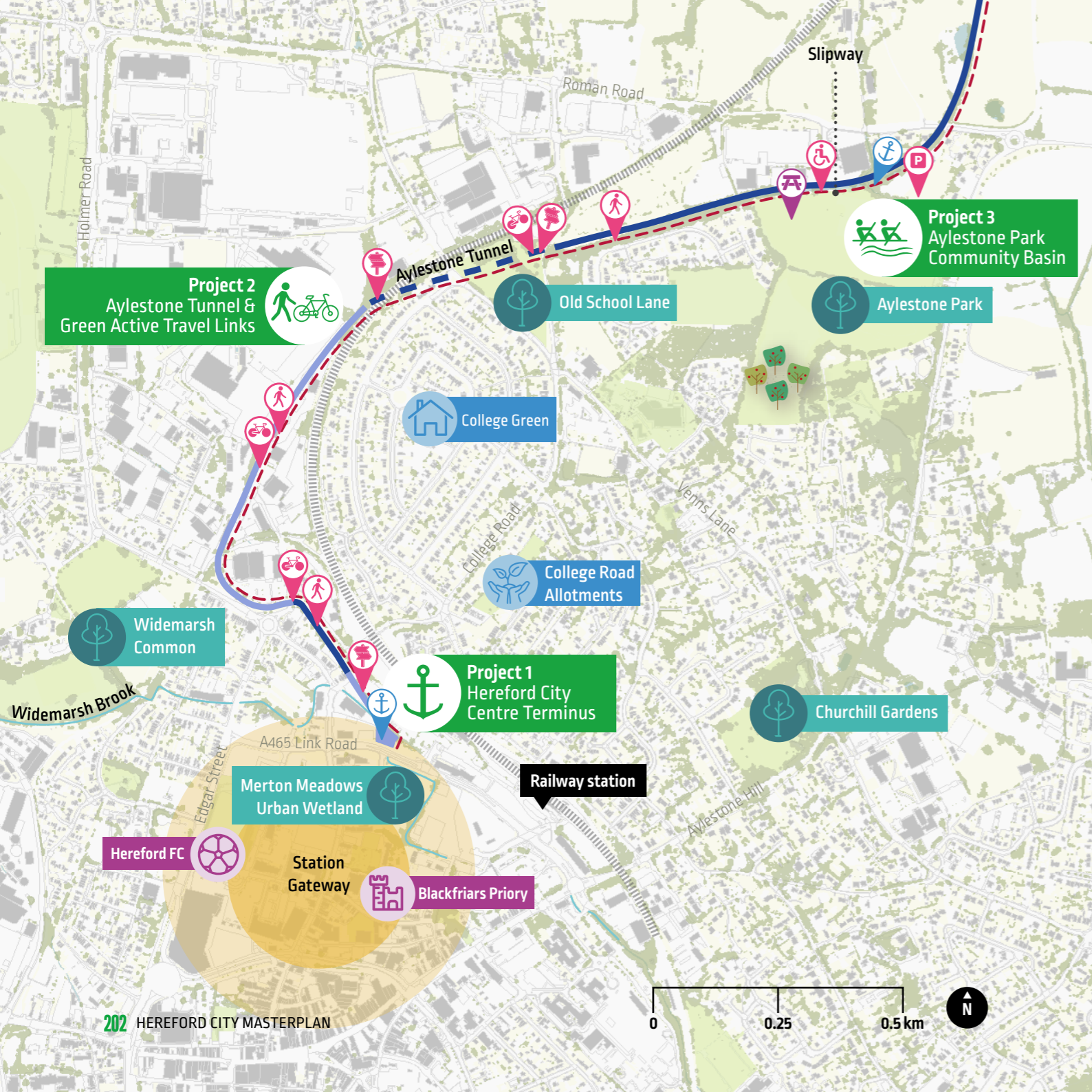


Figure 30

Re-establishing the Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal

Themes

- Project
- Movement
- Communities & Culture
- Economy & Opportunities
- Landscape & Wildlife
- Places & Spaces

Existing assets

- Historical canal alignment
- - Tunnel
- |||| Railway
- 🌳 Orchard
- P Parking provisions
- 🍷 Picnic facilities

Proposed interventions

- Proposed canal alignment
- - Proposed towpath for walking & cycling
- 🚶 Enhanced walking provisions
- 🚴 Enhanced cycling provisions
- ♿ Enhanced disabled access
- 📍 Enhanced signage & wayfinding
- 🏄 Watersports
- ⚓ Moorings

Context

The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal first opened in 1798 and connected Hereford with the city of Gloucester. Following the arrival of the railways, traffic on the canal began to decline, leading to its eventual closure in 1881. Within Hereford, the canal terminated at a basin located adjacent to the current railway station.

Today, remnants of the canal's route are still present within the wider landscape in the shape of wooded corridors and seasonally wet ditches. Since 1992, the Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust have been striving for the complete restoration of the canal, with roughly 10% of the 34-mile route currently restored or under restoration, and a further 10% under active negotiation.¹

¹ Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust



▲ The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal within Aylestone Park, including car parking, playground and slipway access. Source: Ralph Barber, Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust.

The restoration of historic waterways provides a significant range of health, economic, wildlife and community benefits to the neighbourhoods they serve. It can also play an integral role in the regeneration of areas, providing distinctive design cues and helping to reestablish a sense of place. It is thought that for every £1 invested in the canal towpath network, £7 is returned in health benefits.²

Project 1: Hereford City Centre Terminus

The masterplan supports plans for the creation of a new canal terminus near to the site of the original basin, just north of the Link Road. Under Policy E4 within the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy, the historic route of the canal must be safeguarded and plans for its restoration incorporated within designs for any adjoining development proposals. Therefore, revival of the canal must be secured prior to permission being granted.

The new terminus will form an important placemaking element within the Station Quarter Urban Framework and will create an attractive setting for future development within the area. Revival of the area's night-time economy should be explored through the creation of moorings, activated waterfronts, student accommodation and attractive public realm.

The location of the terminus adjacent to the Essex Arms Urban Wetland identified within **Big Idea 8: The Station Quarter** on page 174, means a green, blue and active travel link can be made right into the city centre. The canal could also form part of a wider network of nature-based solutions to flooding within the area, subject to further hydrological survey work.

Project 2: Aylestone Tunnel and Green Active Travel Links

To the north-west of the terminus site, a stretch of Canal Trust-owned land and safeguarded land to the south of Currys should also be explored for rewetting, with some bridges and signage already in place to support interpretation of the canal. Efforts to extend the Great Western Way northwards would provide a direct link to this stretch of the reestablished canal and towpaths.

To further expand the active travel connections which the former canal's towpath presents, the opening up of the Aylestone Tunnel could be explored. The tunnel, which connects the canal at Aylestone Park with the industrial estate around Burcott Road, could provide a link between north-east Hereford and the city centre. This would be subject to sediment removal and structural investigations. The tunnel would also require 'brightening' through the use of lighting and painting to enhance perceptions of safety.

Between Currys and the Aylestone Tunnel, landowner engagement and buy-in will be required to create a link between the new terminus and Aylestone Park. Ideally, this safeguarding of the canal's towpath as a green active travel corridor should be carried out as a priority, with the rewetting of the canal as a future aspiration.

Project 3: Aylestone Park Community Basin

Aylestone Park is a strategically significant piece of public green space in the north-east of Hereford. The Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust has made significant progress in reviving the stretch of the canal which passes through the park, including undergrowth clearance, silt removal, slipway construction, overflow weir construction, organising boating days and continued

reed removal. This has resulted in a permanently wet stretch of canal that hosts an important mosaic of riparian habitats and supports species such as kingfishers.

At present, this stretch of the canal is little known and underused. The creation of a new Aylestone Park Community Basin could help to reinforce this stretch of the canal as a recreation asset for the whole of Hereford to enjoy. There is a desire for more water-based recreation within Hereford. However, access and safety issues continue to persist along the Wye and the Lugg.

The canal could offer a safe location for children and adults to take part in water-based activities such as kayaking and paddle boarding. The existence of a slipway will allow for disability groups (such as Sailing4Disabled) to gain access to the water. Space for moorings could also be provided, bolstering the basin and Hereford as a tourism destination.

Subject to the delivery of a new active travel link through the Aylestone Tunnel, the community basin could provide an opportunity for sustainable daytime access into the city centre, avoiding the often congested Roman Road and A49. This could be reinforced through the provision of parking and bike hire. The course of the canal restoration could then stretch northward beneath the Roman Road and create active travel links towards Withington Marsh along the canal's towpath.

Key delivery partners

Herefordshire & Gloucestershire Canal Trust, developers & landowners, Sustrans, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust and Wilder Hereford, Herefordshire Food Alliance.



▲ The Aylestone Community Basin would present an opportunity for water sports.



▲ Restoration of the Stroudwater Navigation at Ebley Wharf, Stroud.

² Water Adds Value – Highlighting the impact of the restoration of our waterways. Canal & River Trust and The Inland Waterways Association 2015.



BIG IDEA 11: ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION CORRIDOR

Summary

This Big Idea seeks to support the long-term ambitions set out in Herefordshire's Big Economic Plan by taking a proactive approach to employment land. It builds on the success of Hereford's thriving Enterprise Zone at Rotherwas and helps Hereford continue to lead the way in green technology up to 2050.

It does so by identifying a broad corridor of land for employment-led development. The corridor will evolve incrementally toward 2050 to provide much-needed employment land and to cluster those high-value, high-tech jobs that Hereford needs in order to reach its potential. The corridor will grow along a spine of high-quality active travel routes and green and blue infrastructure.

The Enterprise and Innovation Corridor is by nature a long-term ambition. Existing commercial land uses within this corridor limit immediate opportunities for development. However, this masterplan provides a vision to be taken forward in future detailed masterplanning, as land uses and technology evolve and existing businesses seek to consolidate their sites as industry changes.

Further planning should be carried out in close collaboration with existing employers to ascertain which land plots might become available and when.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Development will evolve along a 'spine' of walking, cycling and dedicated public transport routes.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Providing the high-value jobs, education and support opportunities needed to build and retain skills in Hereford.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Addressing the deficit in employment land to help to continue building Hereford's high-value sector base.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Enhancements to the Yazor Brook blue-green corridor will sit at the heart of future detailed masterplanning.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Opportunities to create greater permeability for walking and cycling as part of redevelopment, interspersed with areas of high-quality public realm as hubs of energy and activity.



▲ The Shell Store, within Hereford's existing Enterprise Zone.



Figure 32
An aerial view of the Enterprise and Innovation Corridor today

- Three Elms Estate (approximate location)
- Yazor Brook
- Flood Zone
- Existing local cycle network
- Historic core
- - Great Western Way

Context

A remarkable shift is taking place in the spatial geography of innovation – away from isolated corporate campuses accessible only by car toward areas where leading-edge anchor institutions and companies cluster and connect start-ups and incubators. These areas are more physically compact, accessible by sustainable transport and often offer a mix of housing, office and retail alongside small business premises.

As set out in the county's Big Economic Plan, Herefordshire has the opportunity to become an exemplar 21st-century rural county – with the city of Hereford sitting at its heart. The proposals here build on Hereford's strategic location within the 'Cyber Corridor', which stretches from Malvern to Bristol.

The Big Economic Plan's Vision for 2050 includes a focus on innovative, growing businesses, including green construction, utility and energy management, agriculture, defence, cyber and technology. Hereford needs to build on these strengths – supporting the supply of skilled engineers to the city's local businesses.

The existing Hereford Enterprise Zone (HEZ) at Rotherwas is thriving. However, once all plots are occupied, Hereford's Employment Land Requirements study (2022) still identifies a deficit in employment land in the city. The identification of land for employment in highly accessible parts of the city should be part and parcel of a new approach to inward investment and place marketing for Hereford.

This Big Idea is by nature a longer-term opportunity, given the presence of existing tenants and important local employers in this area. However, as the economy develops toward 2050 and land uses consolidate and shift, it is likely that sites will become available within this corridor.

The existing Three Elms Trading Estate currently lies along the western end of this corridor and is in Council ownership (see **Figure 32**). Options for redeveloping this site in line with the vision set out here should be explored – including the potential to use this site to 'kickstart' the evolution of the corridor as a whole.

As greater clarity emerges over changing land uses, further detailed masterplanning will be required to provide further direction.

Retaining the 'engineers of the future'

The Enterprise and Innovation Corridor forms part of an agenda of transformational change for the county, as set out in the Big Economic Plan.

Along with the existing Hereford Enterprise Zone, this corridor will help to provide jobs which can serve as the logical next step for engineer graduates from NMITE, without having to leave the city for opportunities elsewhere.

It will be crucial that the corridor has strong links to NMITE and other learning institutions – including high-quality public transport and active travel links between the two sites. The Vision in the Plan also seeks to explore partnerships with local healthcare actors (Wye Valley NHS Trust) to develop, invest in and deliver health solutions and skills to service our communities, including older communities.

The corridor is surrounded by existing residential areas and has the potential to become highly accessible as part of wider movement plans. As part of detailed masterplanning, where feasible, mixed uses (including commercial, retail, research and high-quality residential) should be considered.

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR THE CORRIDOR

The five principles below set out the key elements which should guide the development of the Enterprise and Innovation Corridor at each phase of its development.

1 Yazor Brook green-blue spine

The Big Economic Plan promotes investment in businesses but also crucially in green and blue infrastructure – seeing them as central to Hereford’s success.

Enhancements along the Yazor Brook floodplain should sit at the heart of this corridor, using nature-based solutions to flooding by increasing habitats. Built development too can contribute to this as a wildlife corridor – through green roofs, soft landscaping and street trees – to create an exemplar of employment-led development.



2 Partnerships

Partnerships with key anchor institutions in the city will be crucial to success – including with major employers and learning institutions such as NMITE and the Wye Valley NHS Trust.

The potential to host learning and research facilities within the corridor, alongside commercial units, should be explored – in line with the principles set out in **Big Idea 6: Hereford, university city** on page 157.



3 Supporting all stages of the business cycle

In line with the recommendations of the Big Economic Plan, the Corridor should support local businesses to scale and start-ups and existing businesses to diversify and grow. This will be crucial for attracting inward investment.

In order to provide a 'bridge' between research and established businesses, the corridor should explore the provision of 'business hubs' for new entrepreneurs and incubators for start-ups.



4 Movement

A green-blue walking and cycling corridor along the Yazor Brook floodplain will act as a 'spine' for development plots coming forward. As the corridor evolves, potential routes for dedicated, protected busways should also be explored. New development should create and strengthen high-quality links to the Great Western Way. The future evolution of the site should focus on opening up sites to make them more 'permeable' for walking and cycling, and to improve connectivity to surrounding areas. This should include a focus on better connecting the corridor to the historic core by transforming the junction between the A438 and A49 (see **Big Idea 3: Historic walls and gateways** on page 109).



5 High-quality public realm

It is crucial that the Enterprise and Innovation corridor should incorporate areas of high-quality public realm so that life can flood into the space between buildings.

New spaces created within the public realm should support the corridor’s aims in stimulating innovation in new and creative ways. Parks, plazas and streets can become hubs of energy and activity.

In the longer term as the corridor evolves, streets could even be transformed into 'living labs' to flexibly test innovations, such as street lighting, waste collection and new digital technologies.



Key delivery partners

Hereford Place Board, The Marches LEP, educational institutions (NMITE, colleges, hospital), Wye Valley NHS Trust, key land owners, major local employers



The River Lugg ©Sophie Bourton.

BIG IDEA 12: THE LUGG GREEN LUNG

Summary

The River Lugg and its floodplain hug the eastern side of Hereford and act as a vital green lung for a growing population. This mosaic of agricultural land, woodland, species-rich grassland and riverbank habitats provides an opportunity to address identified deficits in access to strategic-scale natural green space for residents of the city.

A network of high-quality walking and cycling routes would provide an important escape from the city and the opportunity to interact with nature without use of a private car. Moreover, increasing recreation need not be detrimental to wildlife and can in fact work to enhance space for wildlife by designating areas specifically for active access, exploring nature and undisturbed areas. This should be delivered through an ecological masterplan and management plan covering the Lugg corridor.

THEME 1 MOVEMENT

Enhancing the route and setting of promoted walking routes and encouraging active travel for recreation, not just commuting.

THEME 2 COMMUNITIES AND CULTURE

Providing access to good-quality natural green space for meaningful interactions with nature to support mental and physical wellbeing.

THEME 3 THE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Delivering nature-based solutions to flooding and water quality, providing benefits for the wider Wye catchment.

THEME 4 LANDSCAPE AND WILDLIFE

Managing recreation pressures to ensure sensitive habitats and species are protected, and encouraging widespread changes in attitudes to wildlife.

THEME 5 PLACES AND SPACES

Restoring the Lugg's floodplain to better represent its natural state which supports a mosaic of habitats and holds floodwater.



▲ The Lugg's wet meadow grassland supports wetland birds such as the curlew.



▲ Complex marginal vegetation along the banks of the river provides undisturbed habitat for species such as otters.

Context

The River Lugg forms part of the River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and is also recognised under the River Lugg Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI. Broadlands Nature Reserve and Lugg Meadows Nature Reserve are also situated between the River Lugg and the urban extents of Hereford.

A significant portion of the Lugg's floodplain is designated as open access land. This provides an excellent opportunity for access to natural green space, something which can be lacking in Hereford. However, without sensitive land management and control of recreational pressures, such as dog walking, access can be detrimental to local wildlife. The Lugg and Hampton Meadows have experienced significant declines in pairs of breeding curlew, which is at least in part due to the impacts of recreational pressures within the SSSI.

The Lugg corridor also provides a suite of additional ecosystem services which contribute towards the economic prosperity of the county, including flood alleviation, regulating water quality and providing space

for carbon storage. This 'Natural Capital' is identified as playing a key role in the Herefordshire Big Economic Plan. The current restrictions on planning consent linked to nutrient issues apply within the River Lugg, reinforcing the need for greater action for nature recovery and the restoration of nutrient-filtering wetlands.

Project 1: Lugg Ecological Masterplan and Management Plan

The development of an ecological masterplan and management plan would support the Lugg corridor to provide undisturbed habitat for wildlife, while also encouraging enjoyment of nature by visitors and local residents of Hereford and the surrounding villages.

Although much of the Lugg is designated as open access land (which allows people to roam freely), accessibility to the River Lugg and parts of Lugg and Hampton Meadows SSSI is limited in order to protect sensitive habitats, including riverbanks and species-rich grasslands, and species such as otters and breeding curlew.

An ecological masterplan and management plan for the surrounding landscape would provide an important 'buffer' to enhance the resilience of habitats within the SSSI, contributing to the national Nature Recovery Network (NRN). This would also offer an opportunity to dilute recreational pressure through the creation of new destination natural greenspace, and addressing underlying causes of poor water quality through the creation and restoration of riparian buffer strips and reedbeds.

To carefully balance the requirements for recreation, interactions with nature, and providing space for undisturbed habitat, the masterplan should identify areas of 'active access', 'exploring nature' and 'undisturbed areas', reflecting local pressures and needs.

Extensive ecological surveys will be required to inform the masterplan and management plan and should identify priorities for 'undisturbed areas'. These will range from open habitat within productive farmland to structurally complex habitats along river banks and within woodland and scrub. Recreation and visitor surveys should be undertaken to support proposals.

Active Access – for bicycles, pushchairs, wheelchairs and walkers of all abilities on even surface routes

Creating wayfinding routes for different user groups to provide active transport options for residents travelling between Hereford and the surrounding villages, as well as offering opportunities for recreational access to support mental and physical wellbeing. Providing facilities such as trails, bins and picnic benches at distinct locations in least sensitive habitats and distant from the SSSI.

Exploring Nature – uneven chipping, dead wood stepping stones, etc., creating a sense of 'wild' and play, tying into health and wellbeing.

Creating opportunities for interactions with nature, for example forest schools, nature trails, informal play and information boards.

Undisturbed Areas – structurally complex areas for birds to nest and mammals to burrow. Speaks to the 'messiness' of habitats described in Natural England's Nature Network guidance.¹

These areas should have no public access. This could be seasonally, for example during the bird breeding season, or all year round. These will be in the most sensitive areas and habitats.

¹ Natural England (2011) Lugg Meadows Vegetation Study (NECR071)



▲ Multi-user paths can be integrated into the surrounding landscape and provide opportunities for education and interaction with nature.

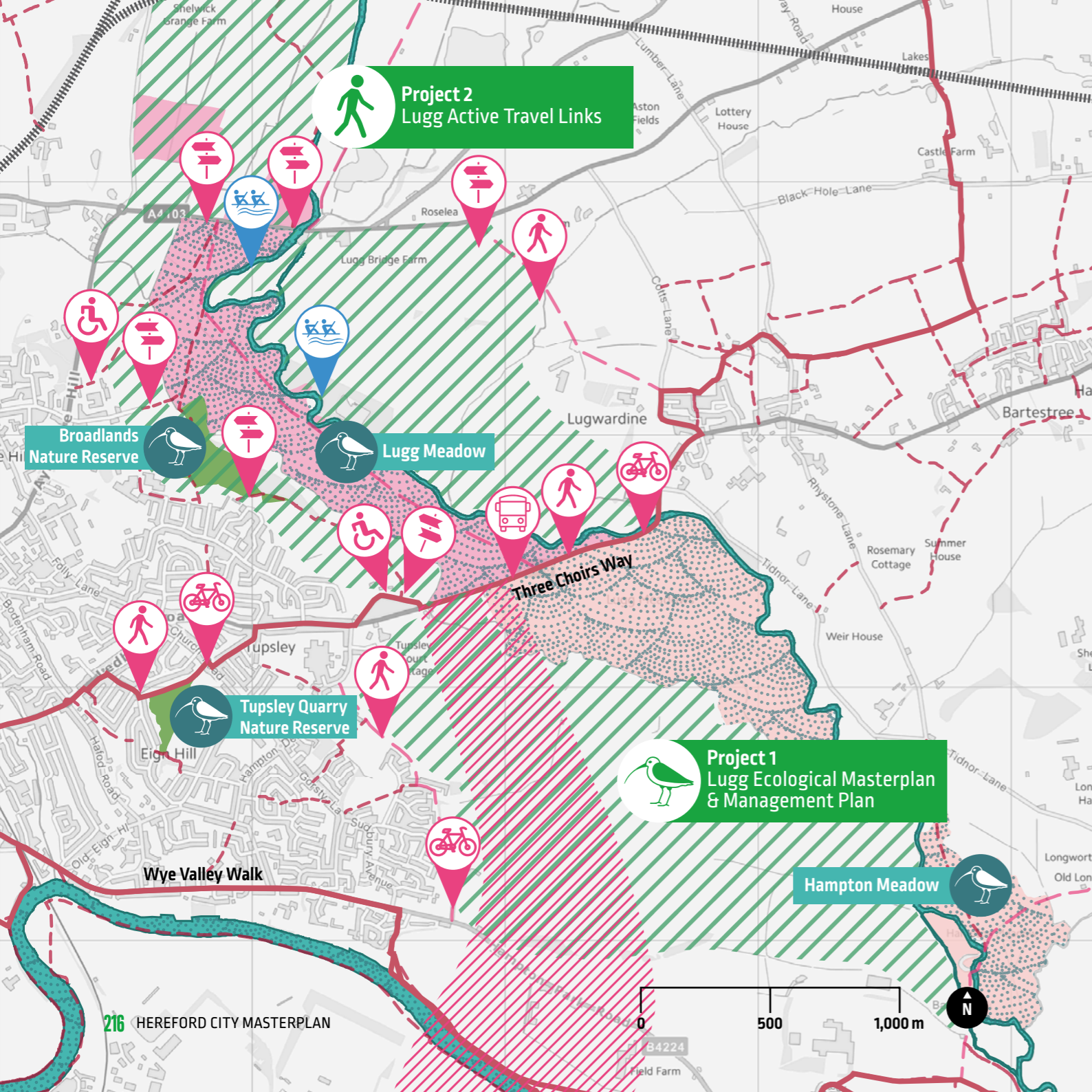


Figure 33
Lugg Green Lung

Themes

- Project
- Movement
- Communities & Culture
- Economy & Opportunities
- Landscape & Wildlife
- Places & Spaces

Existing assets

- Open Access Land
- Open Access Land with access excluded 1st March to 31st July each year
- River Wye Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- Promoted walking route
- - - Public footpath
- - - Public bridleway
- | | | | Railway
- Nature site

Proposed interventions

- / / / 'Buffer' area for the Lugg Ecological Masterplan and Management Plan
- / / / Proposed Eastern River Crossing (route currently undefined)
- ♿ Enhanced disabled access
- ♿ Enhanced walking access
- ♫ Enhanced access to the river
- ♻ Enhanced signage and wayfinding
- 🚲 Enhanced cycle provisions
- 🚌 Additional bus stops

The results of the Lugg Meadows Vegetation Study¹ should also be used to inform the Ecological Masterplan and Management Plan. This will ensure that important species-rich grasslands, which may lie outside the boundary of the SSSI, are also protected from disturbance. Close collaboration with Natural England (who are responsible for the ongoing management of the SSSI) and Herefordshire Wildlife Trust (who currently undertake extensive work in the Lugg corridor) will be essential.

Consideration should be given to the alignment of the proposed Eastern River Crossing, as well as any future growth to the east of Hereford. Should this new infrastructure come forward, the need for the Plan would increase, therefore providing a catalyst and potential funding source for the project.

Project 2: Lugg Active Travel Links

The surveys which inform the Ecological Masterplan and Management Plan should also identify opportunities for sections of the Lugg corridor to serve as an active travel corridor, which should be sensitively planned to ensure important habitats and species are not impacted by recreational pressures.

The River Lugg has previously been a popular canoeing corridor and was made navigable under the 1696 River Wye and Lugg Navigation Act. However, in recent years the banks have become overgrown with vegetation, including invasive non-native species, preventing paddling. Opportunities for sensitive management of bankside vegetation and the control/eradication of invasive non-native species should be informed by an ecological survey of the river corridor

and conducted in consultation with Natural England. Additional interventions to secure the Lugg as an active travel corridor could involve the redirecting of the Three Choirs Way to take in more of the Lugg corridor within the surrounding landscape of the Ecological Masterplan, as opposed to the narrow footpath adjoining the A438.

Other active travel links could be sought through formalising the 'Slow Ways'² network by improving routes and public footpaths between Hereford and the surrounding towns and villages. A possible route from Hereford to Leominster crosses the River Lugg near Sutton St Nicholas and continues north towards Bodenham, creating an opportunity for a connected route between Hereford, the Lugg Corridor and the newly enhanced wetlands at Bodenham Lake Nature Reserve.³

An additional wetland which is under development at Oak Tree Farm,⁴ together with Bodenham Lake and the Lugg Meadows, forms part of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust's flagship Lugg Valley Nature Reserves. Opportunities to provide active travel links between these sites should be sought as part of any active travel route improvements connecting with Hereford.

Key delivery partners

Herefordshire Wildlife Trust, Natural England, Plantlife, Wilder Hereford, developers, landowners.

1 Crick et al. (2020) Nature Networks Evidence Handbook, Natural England NERR081

2 <https://beta.slowways.org/Place/hereford>

3 <https://www.herefordshirewt.org/luggwetlandgem>

4 <https://www.herefordshirewt.org/nature-reserves/oak-tree-farm>

DATA SOURCES

Location	Title	Source information
Figure 1 on page 15	Strategic Allocations in Hereford's Adopted Plan	©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council ©Crown copyright and database rights 2022 licensed under DEFRA's Public Sector Mapping Agreement with Ordnance Survey (licence No. 100022861). Source: DEFRA
Figure 2 on page 25	Overview of current transport network	©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right 2021 Source: Ordnance survey
Figure 3 on page 26	Walking and cycling access in Hereford	Source: PJA
Figure 4 on page 29	Car journeys in Hereford	Source: PJA
Figure 5 on page 34	Socio-economic Deprivation Patterns in Hereford	MHCLG, 2019. Contains National Statistics data ©Crown copyright and database right 2019 Source: MHCLG
Figure 7 on page 49	Hereford's Green and Blue Infrastructure Network	Sustrans National Cycle Network data contains Ordnance Survey data (©Crown copyright and database rights (2021). Source: Sustrans ©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council N/A Source: Herefordshire and Gloucestershire Canal Trust Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right 2021 Source: Ordnance survey
Figure 8 on page 51	Access to Hereford's Green and Blue Infrastructure Network	Sustrans National Cycle Network data contains Ordnance Survey data (©Crown copyright and database rights (2021). Source: Sustrans ©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council ©Natural England copyright 2022. Contains Ordnance Survey data ©Crown copyright and database right 2022 Source: Natural England and Ordnance Survey ©Natural England 2021, reproduced with the permission of Natural England. Contains, or is derived from, information supplied by Ordnance Survey. ©Crown copyright and database rights 2021. Ordnance Survey 100022021. Source: Natural England and Ordnance Survey
Figure 9 on page 57	The distribution of car parks within the historic core	©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council
Figure 10 on page 67	Proposal for managing strategic motor traffic through Hereford	Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right 2022 Source: Ordnance survey

DATA SOURCES (CONT.)

Location	Title	Source information
Figure 11 on page 69	Proposal for reducing the level of motor traffic accessing Hereford	©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council
Figure 12 on page 70	Potential future network for bus services	Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right 2022 Source: Ordnance survey
Figure 14 on page 76	Potential Eastern Link Corridor	Esri UK, Esri, HERE, Garmin, Foursquare, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS
Figure 15 on page 78	Regional connectivity	Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right 2021 Source: Ordnance survey ©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council
Figure 17 on page 85	Existing and potential future Low-traffic Neighbourhoods	Source: PJA
Figure 18 on page 88	Proposals for School Streets	©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council
Figure 19 on page 94	Recommended network for cycling and walking infrastructure	Source: PJA
Figure 26 on page 176	Existing constraints within the Station Quarter	Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right 2021 Source: Ordnance survey ©Crown copyright and database rights 2022 licensed under DEFRA's Public Sector Mapping Agreement with Ordnance Survey (licence No. 100022861). Source: DEFRA ©Historic England (2022). ©Crown Copyright and database right 2022. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900 Source: Historic England ©Environment Agency copyright and database rights (2022). ©Ordnance Survey Crown copyright Source: Environment Agency
Figure 28 on page 190	Existing constraints within the Commercial Road Corridor	©Historic England (2022). ©Crown Copyright and database right 2022. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900 Source: Historic England Contains OS data ©Crown copyright and database right 2021 Source: Ordnance survey ©Crown copyright and database rights 2022 licensed under DEFRA's Public Sector Mapping Agreement with Ordnance Survey (licence No. 100022861). Source: DEFRA ©Crown copyright and database rights (2022) Ordnance Survey (100024168) Source: Hereford City Council ©Environment Agency copyright and database rights (2022). ©Ordnance Survey Crown copyright Source: Environment Agency

DELIVERY

The challenges and opportunities in Hereford are significant. This draft masterplan provides a vision as to how the challenges can be addressed and opportunities realised so that, by 2050, Hereford is an even better city – a greener, healthier and safer place to live for all. Significant leadership, investment and partnership working will be needed to deliver the changes required to support this vision.

Each of the 12 Big Ideas are significant endeavours in their own right, which will most likely be delivered as a series of smaller sub projects over time. A staged approach will allow the most easily achieved elements of the Big Ideas to come forward sooner, while the more complex elements will require more time and investigation to bring forward.

In the case of several of the Big Ideas set out in this masterplan, the proposals are supported by further, more detailed work. This is particularly the case for detailed proposals for transport interventions and a business case analysis for the use of Council-owned sites to 'kickstart' areas of strategic future development. This detailed work should inform Stages 1 and 2 of the process shown in this diagram.

1 Big Idea

2 Identify delivery team and partners

3 Individual projects identified (for example changes to highway infrastructure in a specific location or development site)

4 Funding identified

5 Development and refinement, including inputs from public consultation

6 Approvals gained (e.g. planning permission)

7 Delivery

NEXT STEPS

This masterplan is published as a draft for consultation.

Comprehensive consultation will be undertaken to seek the views of residents, businesses and wider stakeholders in and around Hereford.

The feedback gained through this consultation will inform the development of the final masterplan. Within this we will include further detail on the delivery of each of the Big Ideas.