



*Basingstoke  
and Deane*



# Top of the town

**Framework for Action**  
**January 2002**

**Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council**  
Planning, Environment and Transport Department

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## foreward

This framework document revises and updates the Top of the Town Framework for Action that was approved by the Planning and Transportation Committee in 1999. It takes into account completed and on-going

initiatives, and the challenges facing the area due to the Festival Place development. It was approved by the Cabinet Member for Environmental Sustainability on the 15 January 2002.

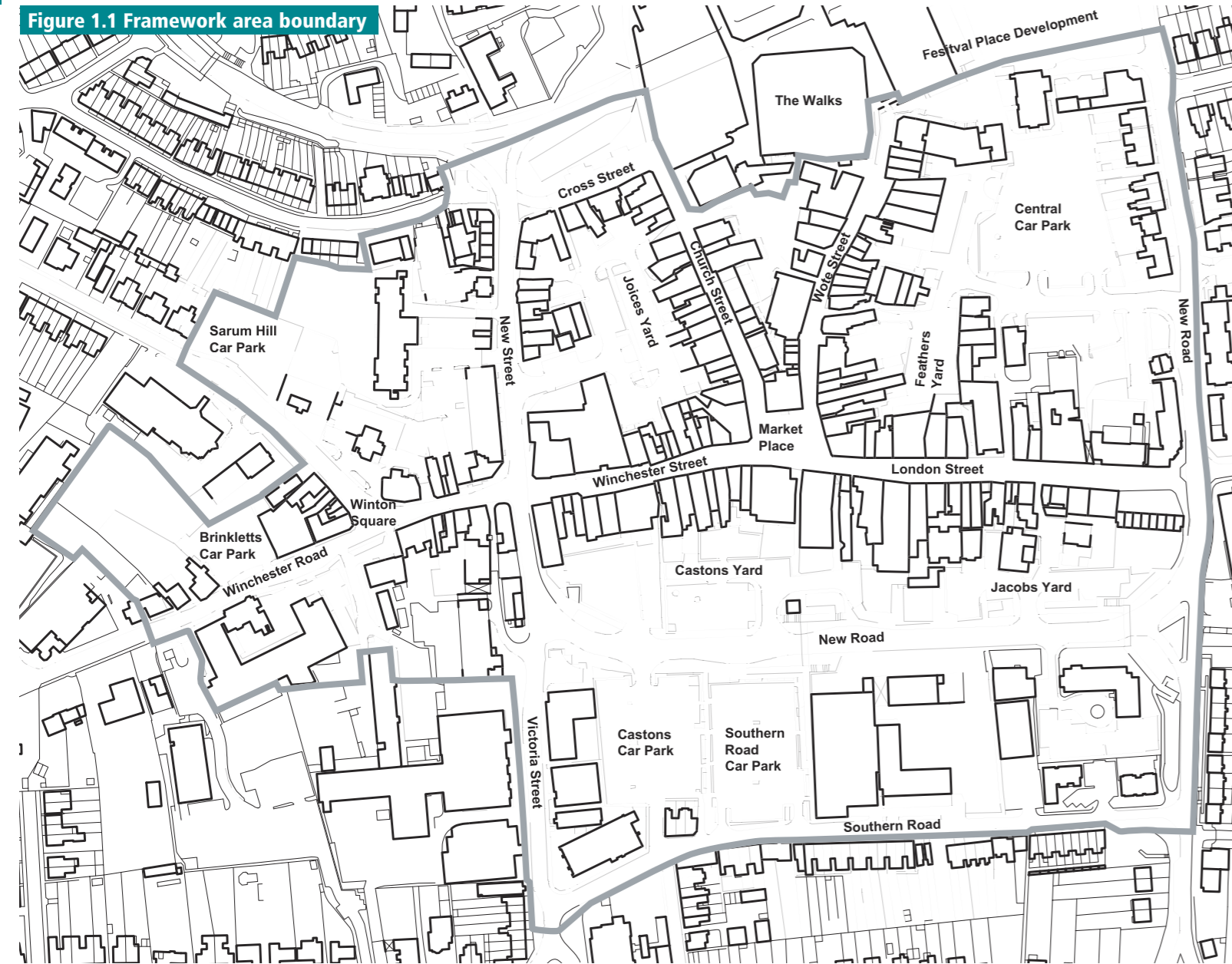
## introduction

The area of Basingstoke town centre known as the Top of the Town is a major resource for the town as a whole, both for the businesses and services which it accommodates, and as a reminder of Basingstoke's heritage. The framework area is indicated in figure 1.1 (over).

the town centre such as the Festival Place development have raised awareness of the importance of maintaining and enhancing the special character of the Top of the Town. Future changes such as expanding the range of travel choices and reducing the need to travel by car, access for all, town centre living and development of the evening economy will have implications for the Top of the Town. This framework sets out a vision and strategy for the area, which builds on the strengths, whilst complementing the modern shopping areas. These are developed into an action plan of practical proposals.

The Top of the Town has a well-established character, which distinguishes it from the rest of the town centre. Recent changes and ongoing investment will help ensure that the area remains an attractive, accessible and safe area in which to live, shop, work and spend leisure time. Major changes within

Figure 1.1 Framework area boundary



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Top of the Town framework area

Not to Scale

## 2.1 History and character

The Top of the Town is the historic commercial centre of Basingstoke, still recognisable by its medieval street pattern and narrow plots, which give a vertical emphasis to the street scene. In the late 1960s the major redevelopment of the town centre swept away half of the original medieval town to accommodate new shops and offices. Many shops relocated to the new shopping centre, but the Top of the Town has retained its special character, and still provides an attractive foil to the modern shopping malls.



The Old Town Hall and Market Place are the heart of the Top of the Town

The focus of the area, Market Place, is thought to be the location of the 11th century market, mentioned in the Domesday Book. The twice weekly Charter Market adds to the vitality of the Top of the Town and to its special appeal.

The Top of the Town contains many listed buildings on the main streets of London Street, Wote Street, Cross Street and Church Street. A few medieval buildings survive, but most of the listed buildings date from the 17th to 19th centuries. The historic development of the area is still evident in the variety of building styles and materials, ranging from timber frame with infill, now usually rendered, to 19th century brick or stucco facades. The Basingstoke Town Centre Conservation Area was designated in 1977. At this time the redevelopment was coming to an end and it was recognised that the remaining areas had a character and a value which should be conserved.

## 2.2 Recent changes

Over the last decade various changes have taken place in the Top of the Town. Some of these have been deliberate actions to improve the appearance of the area, to attract more shoppers, and to preserve the special character of the area. Others have been a result of market forces, or economic and lifestyle trends. These changes and initiatives have included:

- Pedestrianisation of London Street, Wote Street, Church Street, Winchester Street, Cross Street and Market Place.
- Improvements to many of the rear service yards.
- Provision of additional lighting to the alleyways to improve safety and security for users.
- Development of short stay car parks.
- Strengthening of the evening economy with an increase in the number of eating and drinking establishments along London Street and Winchester Street.
- Under-usage of space above shops and offices.
- Introduction of a Town Centre Manager.
- Establishment of a Shopmobility scheme.
- Establishment of a 'Pubwatch' scheme and 'no alcohol' bylaws to improve evening safety in the Top of the Town.

- Production of a Conservation Area appraisal.
- Publication of a Streetscape Manual which analyses the character of the Top of the Town and sets out broad street furniture and materials guidelines.
- Relaying the paving in the Market Place which had become worn and uneven.
- Enhancement of the Castons Yard and Southern Road pedestrian routes to improve accessibility, safety and environmental quality.



Environmental Improvements to Castons Car Park

- Hanging baskets scheme managed by the Town Centre Initiative.
- Use of outdoor spaces such as Market Place for events and street performances.
- Production of a design and development brief for mixed use proposals in Central Car Park.

## 3.1 Local Plan

The adopted Local Plan covers the period up to 2001 and work has commenced on the review, which will extend the Plan to 2011. It is envisaged that this framework will feed into the review. The review will need to take into account any implications arising from the Festival Place development which is due to open in late 2002.

### 3.1.1 Conservation Area

The 1991-2001 Local Plan designates much of the Top of the Town as part of the Town Centre Conservation Area within which the distinctive character is protected and should be enhanced (policies CD13, CD16, CD17, CD19, CD20, CD22, CD121, CD109 & CD110). There are specific policies controlling shopfronts and advertisements in the Conservation Area (CD19, CD20 & CD22). In 1998 an appraisal was carried out to reassess the Conservation Area, and to identify its special character. The appraisal noted the contribution made to the area by listed buildings, but also by the many visually attractive unlisted buildings from the 19th and 20th centuries. There was concern at the loss of character resulting from the introduction of unsympathetic and unattractive modern shopfronts and signs.

### 3.1.2 Secondary retail area

The main streets of the Top of the Town are designated by the Local Plan as a secondary retail area, within which the retail frontages are protected (policy SH2) and change of Class A1, A2 & A3 uses (retail, service and hot food) to Class B1 (office) uses is not permitted (SH100).

### 3.2 Supplementary Planning Guidance

The adopted Shopfront and Advertisement Design Guide has recently been revised. This contains advice and guidance on the design of shopfronts in traditional retail areas such as the Top of the Town.

## 4.1 Townscape Appraisal

A Townscape Appraisal (1996) highlighted the Top of the Town's distinctive character and also identified 'problem' areas such as New Road, Castons / Southern Road car park and Central car park. In these areas the appraisal recommended the production of development and design briefs.

### 4.2 Retail Study

In 2000 the Council commissioned a Retail / Leisure study to inform the Local Plan review. The study highlighted that the majority of A2 (financial / service) and A3 (hot food / drink) uses are located in the Top of the Town which is outside the primary retail area. The importance of the Top of the Town's specialist and independent retailers was acknowledged as was their contribution to the overall retail character. It seems that these specialist and independent retailers are attracted to the area due to rentals being a quarter to a half less than the core area and the units being more varied in size. The study predicted that the Top of the Town might become less attractive to Class A1 (retail) uses when the new Festival Place development is open. Instead the study supported the introduction of further A3 uses alongside the specialist and independent retailers.

## 4.3 Parking Strategy

The Council has undertaken an appraisal of the current usage of the town centre car parks and considered the implications for these car parks following the completion of the Festival Place development. The appraisal indicated that following the completion of the Festival Place development there will be 6,851 public off street spaces, an overall increase of 1032 short stay spaces. The appraisal considered the potential for redeveloping some of the Council owned car parks in the future. It examined parking management to maintain the economic competitiveness of the town centre, whilst discouraging car bound commuting by reducing the number of long stay spaces. The quality of Council owned car parks, (most of which are within the Top of the Town) was also considered. Environmental improvements, CCTV and a new ticketing system were suggested.

### 4.4 Living over the shop study

In 2001 the Council carried out a survey of the potential for 'living over the shop' (LOTS). The survey revealed that some buildings that are underused have the possibility for residential use given the presence of separate side or rear access stairways. It was suggested that where access was limited, properties could be linked at the upper floor level independent of the ground floor units.

Consultation on the earlier version of this framework was carried out in the autumn of 1999. This included:

- consultation with business groups and users of the area;
- distribution of a summary leaflet to all businesses and residential properties; and
- public exhibition.

Stakeholders and users were asked to comment on, and prioritise the proposals contained within the framework. It was clear from the responses that the objectives of the framework were supported, and there was a public concern for the character and quality of the area. No significant changes were required following the consultation. The three aspects of the framework which respondents thought should be given the highest priority are:

- Carry out an appraisal of the character and use of the area to establish a vision for the future. This has been achieved by this revised framework and the Streetscape Manual.
- To take a consistent approach to the control of advertisements and shopfront design. The Shopfront and Advertisement Design Guide has recently been revised and adopted as supplementary planning guidance. Enforcement action is being considered against inappropriate shopfronts / advertisements.

- Devise a framework to co-ordinate street furniture, lighting and materials. This has been achieved by the Streetscape Manual.

The other priorities identified were all longer term and dependent on the availability of funding:

- Improve the general standard of maintenance.
- Carry out environmental improvements in the following areas:
  - Repave London and Winchester Street;
  - Improve the New Street area;
  - Improve the remaining Yard areas;
  - Reducing clutter through out the Top of the Town.
- Promote 'Living Over the Shop' (known as LOTS).
- Improve access into the area for all mobility groups.
- Investigate development opportunities.

Other public comments included:

- Avoid imitation 'Victoriana' street furniture.
- Sympathetically restore old buildings.
- Encourage good contemporary design.
- Reduce traffic speed in New Road.
- Allow more pavement cafes.
- Encourage small businesses/specialist shops.

## 6.0 Vision

Changes in society are changing the way in which town centres are perceived and used. There is:

- an increasing interest in 'city living' from specific groups of society;
- a desire to promote sustainable transport methods and a corresponding desire to encourage reduced dependence on, and use of private cars ;
- an emphasis on access for all; and
- a perception of shopping as a leisure activity in its own right and the combination of 'shopping' with leisure activities.

The Top of the Town must respond to these broader changes, complement the modern shopping malls whilst building on its strengths. The area has many strengths that distinguish it as an area with its own historic and cultural identity. The historic buildings, the pedestrianised streets, the alleyways and yards, and the broad range of uses generate this identity. The vision of this document for the Top of the Town is that the:

**“ ...special appeal as an attractive, lively and accessible area with specialist and independent retailers, cultural facilities, a strong evening economy and a distinctive character, should be developed ”**

It is important to consider how the Top of the Town interfaces with The Walks and the new Festival Place development. It is also important that these areas are perceived to have their own character and qualities but are still seen as key parts of the overall town centre. The Borough Council can support and facilitate the vision through:

- Improved standards of maintenance of the public realm;
- Implementing and providing grants for physical and environmental improvements;
- Producing development and design guidance for key sites;
- Building greater flexibility into the revised Local Plan, so that a greater mix of uses can be encouraged; and
- Setting up partnerships with other public and private bodies such as the Town Centre Initiative.

In the immediate future attention must be paid to maintenance, and the co-ordination of environmental improvements to ensure that appropriate and quality materials are used. In the medium term changes of use should be controlled to ensure that an appropriate mix is achieved and in the longer term the quality and design of new development will need to be carefully controlled to preserve or enhance the area's historic character.

## 7.0 Strategy to achieve the Vision

### 7.1 Maintain and reinforce the Top of the Town's separate and distinctive character

The distinctive character is a key asset, which should be protected, improved and properly maintained. Environmental improvements in the Top of the Town should reduce street clutter and recognise the area's special character, rather than create a pastiche 'Victoriana'. It should be noted that modern development adhering to traditional principles and scales can sit comfortably alongside older development.



Brick planters are out of scale with contents and obstruct movement

### 7.2 Sustain the economic vitality

There are a greater number of independent traders in the Top of the Town than in the rest of the town. Part of the area's special appeal is due to these independent traders and the twice weekly Charter Market. Any changes should aim to support existing businesses. Independent traders should be encouraged to locate in the Top of the Town to create a specialist, quality shopping area that complements the modern shopping malls. The older properties have inherently lower rents and it is vital that these are retained to provide accommodation for the small retailers that are an important element of mixed uses.



Charter Market

### 7.3 Expand the range of uses

Expanding the range of uses in a balanced and mixed manner will reinforce the distinctive character and strengthen the area's appeal. A retail magnet such as a small foodstore may help draw extra custom into the area and new specialist / cultural uses may help to increase the time spent in the area. Care must be taken that (office-type) service uses do not dominate, as these dilute the retail character and can reduce the opportunities for 'living above the shop'. The evening economy must be managed as, although it contributes to the area's character, economy and draw, it has implications for perceived safety in the evening.



The Top of the Town includes a number of independent specialist businesses

### 7.4 Reintroduce residential accommodation

The character of the area changes significantly after dark, due in part to the limited number of residential units. The reintroduction of some residential accommodation above business premises would help provide informal surveillance and could help to make the Top of the Town a more attractive place after dark.

### 7.5 Reinforce safety and security

Improved lighting, CCTV and the reintroduction of residential accommodation would enhance the night-time character, improve personal safety and encourage positive evening use of the area.

### 7.6 Make better use of town centre sites

Central Government guidance emphasises the re-use of brownfield sites as part of the 'urban renaissance'. The surface car parks and yard areas are centrally located, easily accessible and offer a good opportunity to provide new mixed-use development and create new public spaces. They are at present well used, therefore, it may be appropriate to consolidate car parking in key locations with multi-deck structures and to develop mixed uses in other locations. There are other development opportunities such as

the north side of Cross Street which could be developed without effecting the parking provision and the result would be the recreation of the 'street' defined by buildings on both sides.



Cross street – possible development opportunity on the northern side to re-create the 'street'

### 7.7 Improve the pedestrian environment and linkages

The pedestrian environment has a significant influence on the retail experience. Well



Poor quality reinstatement and chewing gum deposits

maintained, safe, direct and pleasant internal and external links will benefit all mobility groups, as well as making the area more attractive.

At present New Road and New Street physically and perceptually confine the Top of the Town. The environmental quality of these streets is poor. This deters pedestrians, which affects through movement and businesses in the area. Changes in priority and road design would help reduce the vehicular dominance and make the area more accessible to all mobility groups.



Poor quality pedestrian environment –the pavements could be repaired and widened

Improved provision for other transport modes such as cycling and public transport would help expand the range of choices available, so that the need to travel by car is reduced.

This section reviews and up-dates the 'Objectives and Proposals' contained in the earlier Framework for Action. In the period since the previous Framework was produced, the majority of the survey work identified has been accomplished and some of the Short Term Actions have also been realised. The remaining proposals from the previous framework have been rolled forward, up-dated and supplemented with additional proposals.

## 8.1 Achievements

8.1.1 Proposal	How addressed?
Appraisal of uses in external areas	Addressed by this revised document and the Streetscape Manual
Public space appraisal and character assessment	Addressed by the Streetscape Manual. Underpinned by the Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal
Framework for co-ordinated street furniture	The Streetscape Manual sets out broad guidance for street furniture
Framework for materials	The Streetscape Manual sets out a broad palette
Survey of advertisement consents	A survey has been carried out and compliance action is being taken where necessary by the Enforcement Team
Living over the shop (LOTS) potential survey	The Conservation Team has undertaken an initial study
Prepare a grants strategy for commercial buildings in the town centre	Grant aid is available to repair historic properties / shopfronts within the Top of the Town
Prepare guidance notes on shopfronts and advertisements	The revised design guide has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance
Improved street lighting which can support Christmas decorations and banners	New lighting columns installed on Winchester Street, London Street, Church Street, Wote Street and Cross Street
8.1.2 Work to be carried out 2002/03	Date Due
Remodelling of Winton Square	2002

## 8.2 Initiatives and guidance

### 8.2.1 Building a flexible approach to land uses in the local plan review

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Enable a flexible response to mixed uses, whilst ensuring that the vitality of the area is maintained and that residential and pedestrian amenity is protected.	Ensure that the Local Plan policies allow for flexibility in response to the results of monitoring. Require mixed uses on key sites to maintain vitality.	Short / medium term	

### 8.2.2 Health Check on vitality and viability

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Monitor the impact of investment in the Top of the Town	Prepare qualitative and quantitative measures of vitality and viability	Short / medium term	Will help to quantify the impact of the Festival Place development on the whole of the town centre.

### 8.2.3 Public Spaces

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Encourage the use of public spaces for street theatre, specialist markets and revenue generating promotions.	Set out guidelines for outdoor activities and events occurring in the Top of the Town.	Short / medium term	

### 8.2.4 Living over the shop (LOTS)

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Promote and encourage residential use of accommodation above business premises.	Investigate the possibility of a policy in the local plan addressing LOTS .	Medium term	
	Set up pilot scheme	Medium term	

### 8.2.5 Conservation Area enhancement

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Ensure that the character of the Conservation Area is preserved.	Prepare a Conservation Area management plan.	Medium term	Place emphasis on sympathetic restoration of older and listed buildings and good contemporary design for new buildings.

### 8.2.6 Short and medium stay parking

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Maximise the availability of short/medium stay spaces.	Investigate ways to free up short/medium stay parking spaces.	Medium term	Workers could be encouraged to use the proposed Park and Ride service from the Leisure Park to free up parking spaces.

### 8.3 Public realm works

#### 8.3.1 Framework for access / movement

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Promote easy and convenient access to and around the Top of the Town for all.	Expansion of the Shopmobility scheme	Short term	
	Accessibility appraisal	Medium term	Survey accessibility of key routes and public transport facilities for all mobility groups Define 'themed' routes
	Identify proposals to reduce traffic speed	Medium term	New Road especially
	Set out proposals for cycle routes and parking	Medium term	This should relate to shops not car parks
	Set out proposals for improved / additional car / taxi drop off and collection points. This could include a facility for taxi drivers.	Medium term	
	Assess quality / quantity of disabled parking spaces and, if necessary	Medium Term	

#### 8.3.2 Improvements to safety and security

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Improve CCTV provision	Improve the coverage on London Street, Winchester Street, Church Street and Wote Street.	Medium term	Linked to proposals for a new Borough-wide CCTV control room.

#### 8.3.3 Environmental improvements

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Improve the general standard of maintenance of the public realm.	Examine scope for increasing resources. Identify problems, issues and look at likely costs.	Short term	Maintain the public realm to a better standard before investing in further improvements.
Establish a street furniture range and materials palette to be used for environmental improvement schemes.		Short term	Will allow co-ordinated changes over a number of years. Must take into account practical issues of cleaning and maintenance.
Identify and prioritise areas such as yards, car parks, New Road and New Street for improvement.	Carry out feasibility studies for environmental improvements to key areas	Short / medium term	
Re-paving of Winchester Street, London Street and alleyways.		Medium / long term	Use plain and durable materials to place emphasis on the buildings.
Undertake gradual replacement of street furniture.		Medium / long term	Renew street furniture after re-paving. Should co-ordinate with street lighting. Reduce clutter. Avoid commonly used 'Heritage' styles. Replacement should be phased over several years, as and when budgets become available. Consider providing cigarette/gum bins and official poster sites.

### 8.4 Development opportunities

Objective	Proposal(s)	Timescales	Comments
Produce development and design briefs for key areas / sites.	Draw up briefs for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Yards / car parks.</li> <li>■ North side of Cross Street.</li> </ul>	Studies: short / medium term. Development: Long term.	Must acknowledge importance of retaining the stock of old buildings

This framework identifies work to be carried out to the following programme. Although the short term policy-based work can be progressed independent of the availability of capital funding, any environmental improvements and improved standards of maintenance will have to be carried out as and when funds become available.

Monitoring and review of the progress on the projects included within the framework will be required in order to ensure that it is proceeding as planned and achieving its goals. Officer working groups will be used to progress the projects and it is planned to review progress and identify future work on an annual basis.

## 1 – 2 years (short term)

- General improved standard of maintenance, dependent on funding availability
- Agree a materials palette
- Identify further opportunities for environmental / accessibility improvements
- Select design for new street furniture
- Local Plan review – Identify the Top of the Town as a policy area:
- Mixed uses
- Living over the shop (LOTS) policy
- Set up an initiative to encourage living over the shop (LOTS)
- Produce development and design briefs for key sites

## 2 – 3 years (short / medium term)

- Produce a Conservation Area management plan
- Implement environmental and accessibility improvements
- Expand CCTV coverage

## 3 – 5 years (medium term)

- Repave Winchester Street, London Street and alleyways
- Ongoing replacement of street furniture

## 5 –10 years (medium to long term)

- Implement redevelopment opportunities

# Appendix: Area Appraisal

The previous framework identified a range of survey work to be carried out. The Streetscape Manual and this revised framework have accomplished the majority of this work. This appendix sets out a summary of the strategic survey work, which adds weight to the vision, strategy and proposals.

## A.1 Land use appraisal

### A.1.1 Retail and service uses

The Top of the Town complements the modern town centre as a secondary retail area with a distinctive character. The physical and historic focus of this area is the Market Place, all pedestrian routes link to this area. High footfalls are indicated by the presence of a McDonalds restaurant. The Top of the Town area offers a range of smaller units at lower rents, which are attractive to independent retailers. The area also accommodates significant service uses such as estate agents and employment agencies, these reflect the buoyant nature of the local economy but dilute the retail provision.

### A.1.2 Leisure uses

The Top of the Town (especially Winchester and London Street) has recently undergone a shift towards A3 food and drink uses. These uses contribute to the summer-time character of the area with seating 'spilling' out into the street. The night-time character is also more vibrant but there can be public order problems. The possible reintroduction of residential accommodation above shops could provide a 24-hour presence in the Top of the Town.



There has been an increase in A3 (hot food and drink) uses in recent years

### A.1.3 Cultural Uses

As the historical centre of the town, the area contains cultural 'magnets' such as the Willis Museum, Tourist Information Centre and the Haymarket Theatre which contribute to the day and evening economy / character.



The Top of the Town is a cultural destination

### A.1.3 Residential Uses

There is a noticeable lack of residential accommodation in the Top of the Town. Many of the upperfloors are vacant or underused as storage, which has an adverse impact on activity and safety in the evening. It is estimated that there is potential for 20 units above the business units, especially for single people. Only a small number of upper floor areas are suitable for residential accommodation, therefore the majority of new residential accommodation is likely to be provided on sites adjacent to the main pedestrianised streets.

### A.1.4 Offices

Offices occupy the majority of upper floors and significant sites. During the day office workers support local services and retailers, and generate significant pedestrian flows, but after dark the office areas are 'dead'. Ground floor offices dilute the retail character and upper floor offices reduce the opportunity to provide residential accommodation.

### A.1.5 Businesses

The businesses in the Top of the Town such as car show rooms and tyre / exhaust centres are 'edge of town uses'. They add little to the character of the area and occupy key sites, therefore consideration should be given to encouraging their relocation and the re-use of the sites.



Some uses do not complement the character and many of the buildings housing them detract from the character

## A.2 Urban design appraisal (see fig A.1)

### A.2.1 Urban structure

The core area has a clear urban structure where building frontages define the pedestrianised streets. The yard areas are poorly defined by backs of buildings and service areas, traditionally these areas would have been private but they have been opened up for parking, servicing, and provide direct pedestrian routes through the Top of the Town.



Well enclosed attractive streets

The southern leg of New Road cuts through much of the old urban fabric. This is most apparent to the rear of Winchester Street and London Street. This area, Central Car Park and the Yards have a poor environmental quality due to the exposed backs of buildings and the domination by parked and moving vehicles. As the first impression for many Top of the Town visitors and shoppers, these areas clearly require environmental improvements in the short term. In the longer term development opportunities should be investigated to make better use of the land

and to improve the physical environment.

### A.2.2 Visual structure



Private backs of buildings and service areas are now exposed to public areas

The topography of the area offers excellent views to the north. These are best appreciated from Church Street and Wote Street and from the highest points of the yards behind London Street and Winchester Street. There are also a number of internal vistas along streets and to landmark buildings. Any environmental improvements should respect these. The Top of the Town has some attractive traditional shopfronts but in some cases inappropriate modern shopfronts detract from the overall character and from buildings that are attractive from the first floor upwards.

The area contains a number of historic buildings, which are made more distinctive in comparison with the modern shopping centre. These are complemented by street sculptures. There are a number of buildings as shown in figure A.1, which detract

from the visual quality and character of the area. In the longer term they could be redeveloped.



Public art adds to the character and distinctiveness of the Top of the Town

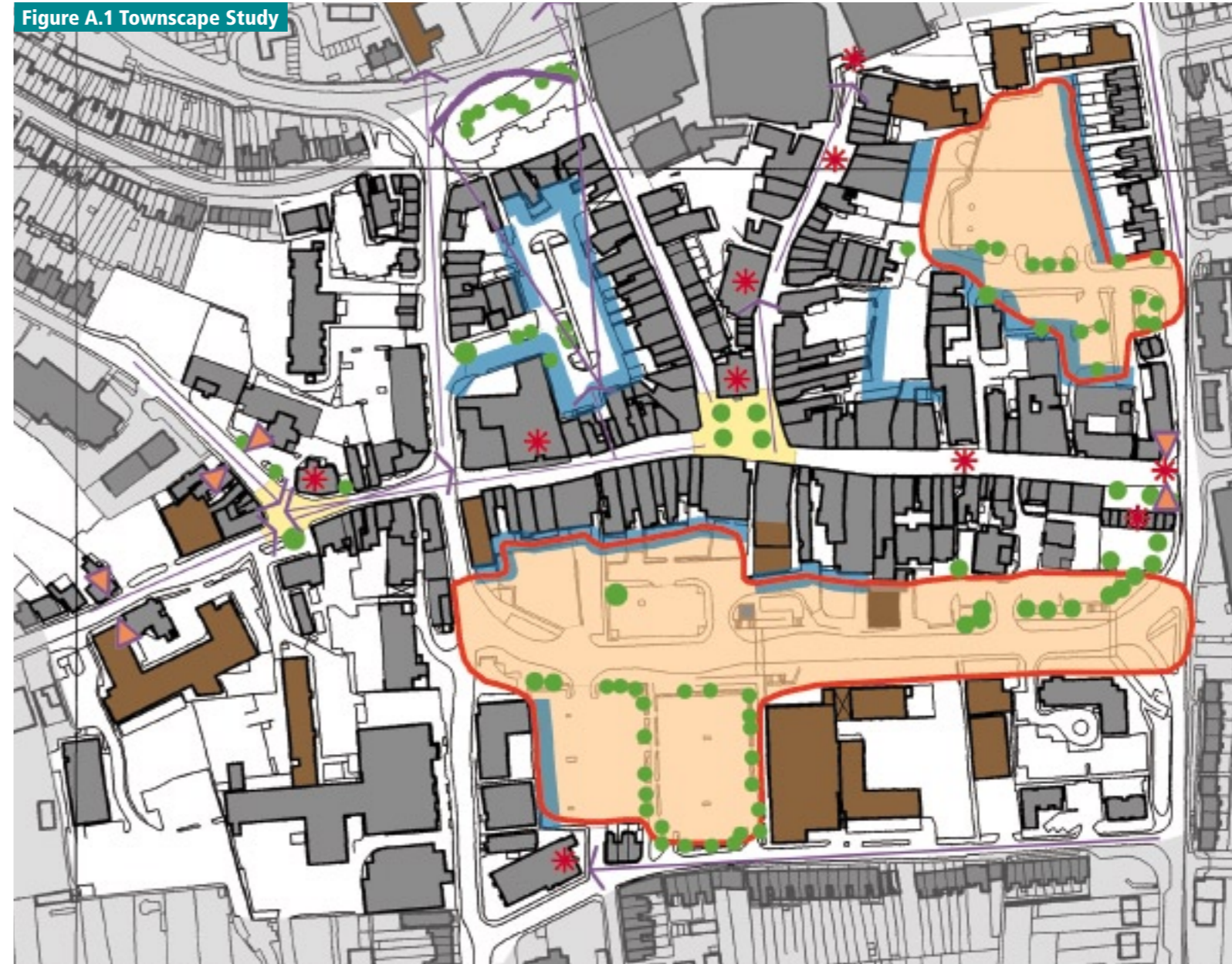
The approaches to the Top of the Town from the east and west have good views down the main streets. Gateway features / buildings create a sense of arrival. The approach from the north and south is poor due to a lack of gateways and no visual connections to the main streets. There are two key spaces in the Top of the Town. Market Place is the physical and symbolic focus for the Top of the Town. It is the meeting point for the old roads to London and Winchester. It is defined by imposing buildings such as the Old Town Hall and various banks. Winton Square is a second focus for the Top of the Town. It is a distinctive place at the meeting point of the roads to Salisbury and Winchester. There are significant pedestrian flows in this area but it is dominated by vehicles and severed from the core area by New Road. There are also attractive incidental spaces such as the lower

end of Wote Street, Cross Street and the area outside the United Reform Church.



London Road 'Gateway' from the east

Figure A.1 Townscape Study



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- Landmark
- View
- Vista
- Key space
- Gateway
- Tree planting (indicative)
- Exposed back
- Poorly enclosed area
- Buildings detracting from character

Not to Scale

### A.3 Access, servicing, movement and parking (see figure A.2)

#### A.3.1 Pedestrian provision

The Top of the Town pedestrian area is a safe and pleasant environment in which to shop and spend leisure time. The alleys and yards combine with the main streets to provide a wide choice of direct routes. Movement beyond the core is difficult due to New Road and New Street, where a significant volume of fast one-way traffic creates a barrier to pedestrian movement. The pedestrian environment along these streets is also poor. Pedestrians are therefore confined to designated crossing points, which restricts movement and reduces the choice of routes. This severance is especially noticeable in Winton Square.



In recent years a Shopmobility scheme has been successfully introduced



New Road is dominated by vehicles. The hatched areas indicate that not all the space is required and the barriers hinder pedestrian movement.

#### A.3.2 Vehicular provision

The one-way, two-lane nature and design of New Road encourages speeds in excess of 30mph and allows vehicular traffic to restrict pedestrian movement.

Although the environmental quality of the surface car parks can be poor, they generate significant pedestrian flows that pass through the Top of the Town. The Festival Place Development will provide an extra 1000 parking spaces, but it is clear that the car parking provision in the Top of the Town is of a different type to the new provision in Festival Place. To support the economy and vitality of the Top of the Town, parking provision in the area must be maintained. In the short term all car parks would benefit from environmental improvements and in the longer term some could be re-organised (possibly as multi-deck structures) to consolidate parking in key locations and others could provide development opportunities.

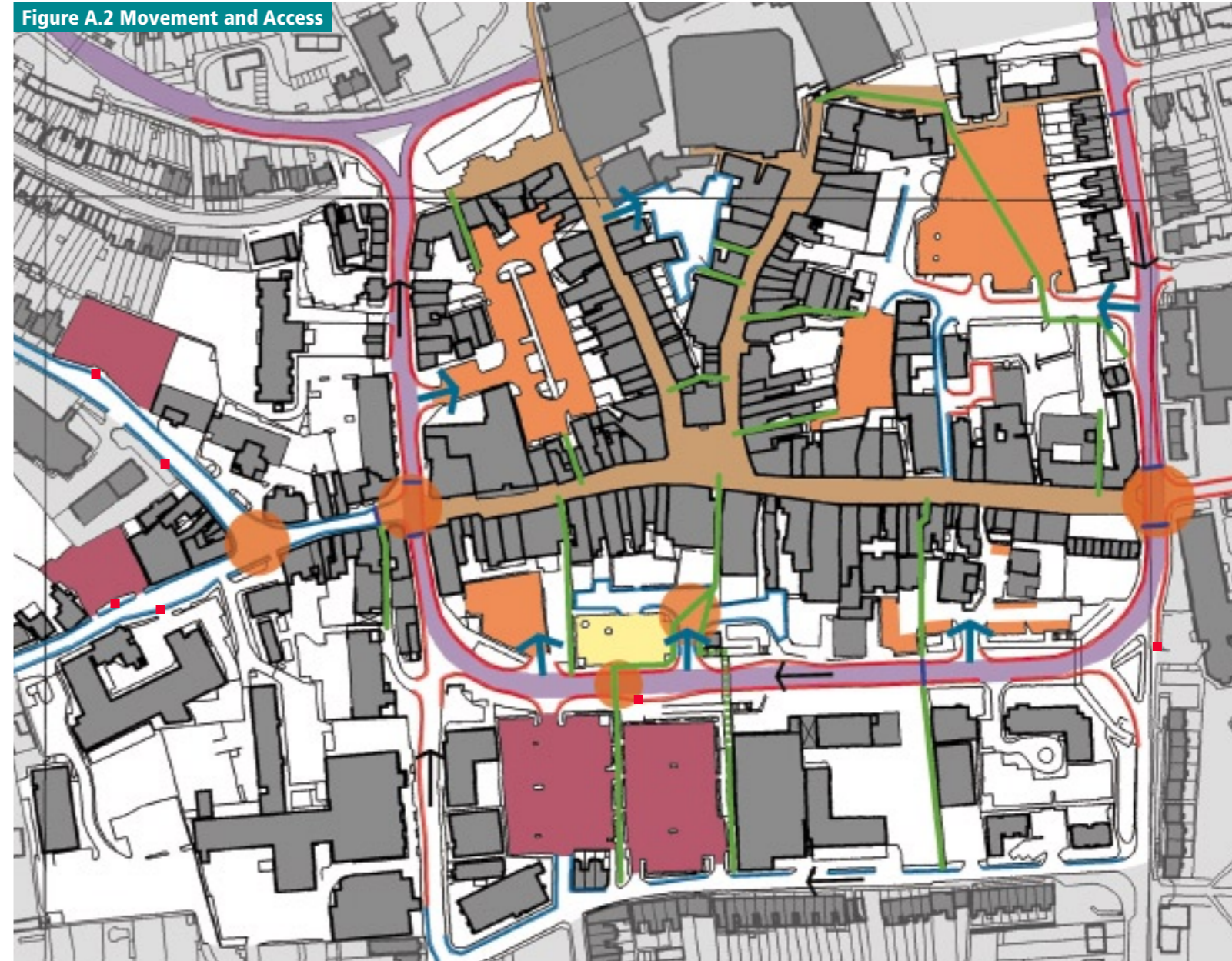
#### A.3.3 Public transport provision

The town centre, including the Top of the Town is the most accessible part of the Borough by public transport as all bus routes pass through. The location of the stops on the periphery of the area means that they are not easily accessible, but their location does ensure significant pedestrian flows through Winton Square, and through Castons Yard to Market Place. The pedestrian links to the bus stops would benefit from improvements to make them accessible to all. The provision of a new taxi rank in the Top of the Town should be a priority - New Road and/or Castons Yard are the obvious locations for a new rank.

#### A.3.4 Cycling

There is an opportunity to improve the cycling facilities within the Top of the Town. Access to the area is via busy roads, movement through the area by cycle is difficult due to the one way system and there are limited convenient and secure cycle parking areas. It may be possible to allow cyclists to use the pedestrianised streets outside of peak hours. As part of the A30 Winchester Road Strategy a cycle route is proposed along New Road. Any cycle parking facilities must be conveniently located in relation to destinations, not car parks.

Figure A.2 Movement and Access



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- Pedestrian Area
- Light controlled crossing
- Subway
- Barrier to movement
- Pedestrian / vehicle conflict area
- Very short stay parking
- Short stay parking
- Long stay parking
- No waiting 8am - 7pm
- No waiting
- Service access
- Bus stop

Not to Scale



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