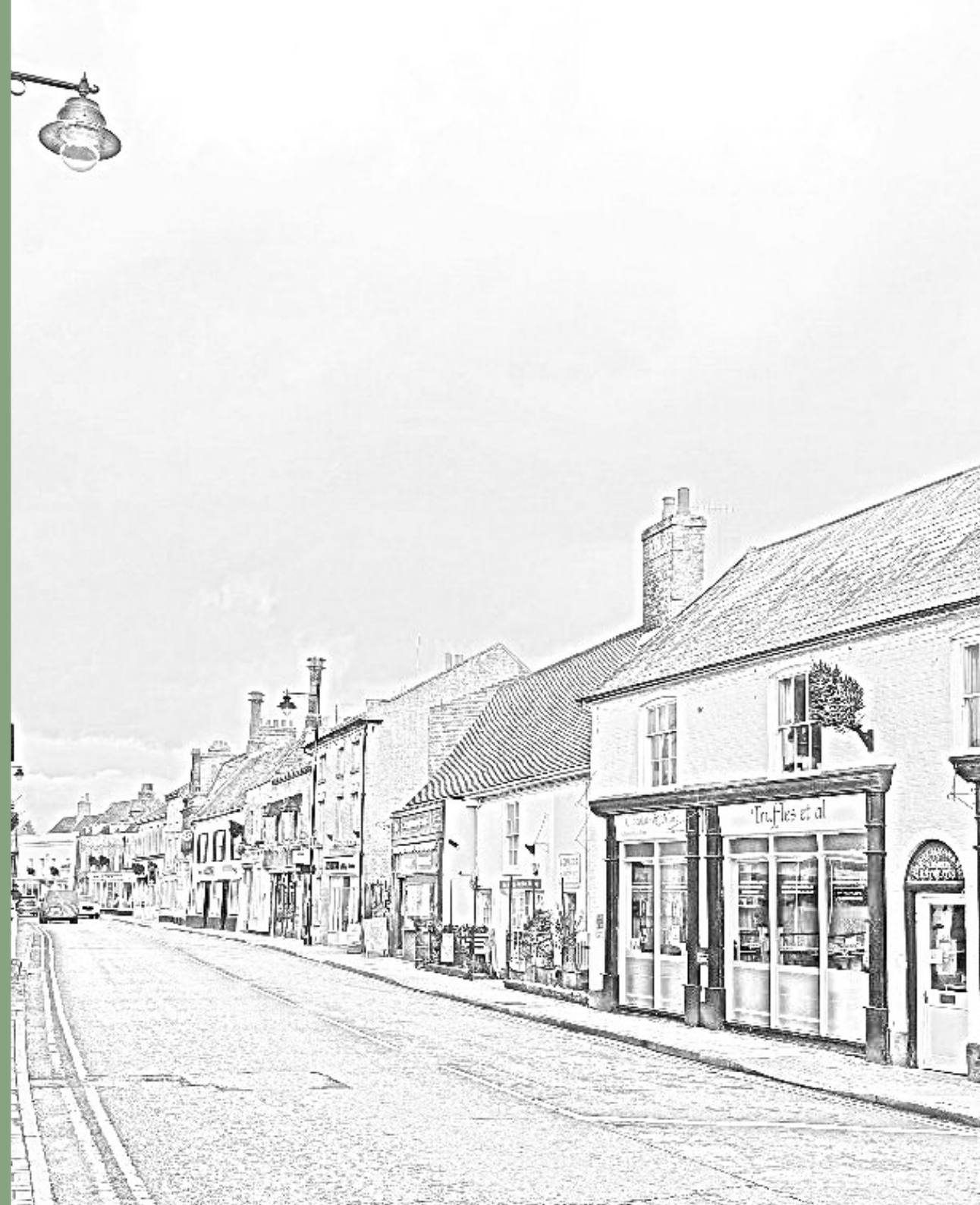


# SAXMUNDHAM

**Concept masterplan for the High Street and Garden Neighbourhood**

**Final Report**

July 2021



## Quality information

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## Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
6	100621	Review	Annabel Osborne	Locality
5	180521	Review	Jeremy Smith	Saxmundham Town Council
4	280421	Review	Ben Castell	Director
3	160421	Review	Luis Galeana Juarez	Associate Director
2	120421	Research, review	Mark Watson	Associate Transport Planner
1	120421	Research, review	Kathryn Carman	Senior Transport Consultant
0	120421	Research, site visit, drawings	Stela Kontogianni	Urban Designer

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# CONTENT

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>5</b>
1.1 Objectives	5
1.2 Process	5
1.3 Area of study	6
<b>2. High Street masterplan</b>	<b>9</b>
2.1 Introduction	9
2.2 Issues & constraints	10
2.3 Opportunities	17
2.4 Concept masterplan proposals	25
<b>3. Garden Neighbourhood Concept masterplan</b>	<b>39</b>
3.1 Introduction	39
3.2 Issues & constraints	43
3.3 Opportunities	54
3.4 High-level Concept masterplan	54
<b>4. Next Steps</b>	<b>65</b>

**Introduction**

**01**



# 1. Introduction

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**Through the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government's Neighbourhood Planning Programme, led by Locality, AECOM has been commissioned to provide Masterplanning support to Saxmundham Town Council.**

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## 1.1 Objectives

This support package analyses potential opportunities and constraints for the Garden Neighbourhood to the south west of the Town and for potential improvements to the High Street.

Based on the opportunities and constraints analysis and engagement with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, (NPSG), the objective was to develop a concept masterplan for both the Garden Neighbourhood site and the High Street.

Specific objectives for the Garden Neighbourhood site were:

- Develop a masterplan concept for c. 800 dwellings that responds to its context and is circumscribed to the site shown in the local plan.
- Develop a series of public realm improvement proposals for the High Street in order to make it more attractive. The aim to make it more pedestrian friendly, safer and address a number of transport and vehicle movement concerns.
- To link both areas of masterplanning with a network of links.

This report should be read with the separate Design Guidance and Codes report, part of a second package granted to the NP Group by Locality.

## 1.2 Process

Following an inception meeting and a virtual site visit with members of the NPSG, AECOM prepared the following project delivery agenda, which was agreed with the group:

**1**

Initial meeting between AECOM and the Saxmundham Neighbourhood Planning Group. As this was during the national Covid 19 lockdown, a joint virtual site visit was carried out via Teams and Google Streetview;

**2**

Desktop research and preparation of constraints and opportunities plans for Garden Neighbourhood site and the High Street;

**3**

First workshop meeting with the the NPSG to discuss the analysis of the sites, opportunities and constraints as well as the emerging ideas for the Garden Neighbourhood and the High Street;

**4**

Development of the design principles and preparation of the high-level masterplans for the Garden Neighbourhood site and the High Street;

**5**

Second workshop meeting with the Neighbourhood Group to discuss the high-level masterplanning proposals and get feedback;

**6**

Preparation of a draft report, subsequently revised in response to feedback provided by the Saxmundham Neighbourhood Planning Group, and

**7**

Submission of the final report (this document).

### 1.3 Area of study

Saxmundham is a market town in Suffolk, located approximately 29km north-east of Ipswich and 12km west of the coast at Sizewell.

The town is bypassed by the main A12 road between London and Lowestoft. In addition, the B-roads connect Saxmundham with neighbouring towns and settlements; some are Rendham to the west, Leiston, Thorpeness to the east and Snape to the south.

The town is also served by Saxmundham railway station on the East Suffolk line between Ipswich and Lowestoft.

The town centre is the historic heart of the town and it is located north of the junction of B1121 and B1119 roads; it includes the High Street, Market Place and parts of North and South Entrances. This is the centre of the town's economic and business activity, where a good variety of facilities are found.

In terms of educational facilities, there are primary and secondary schools, located west of the town centre, within the residential area.

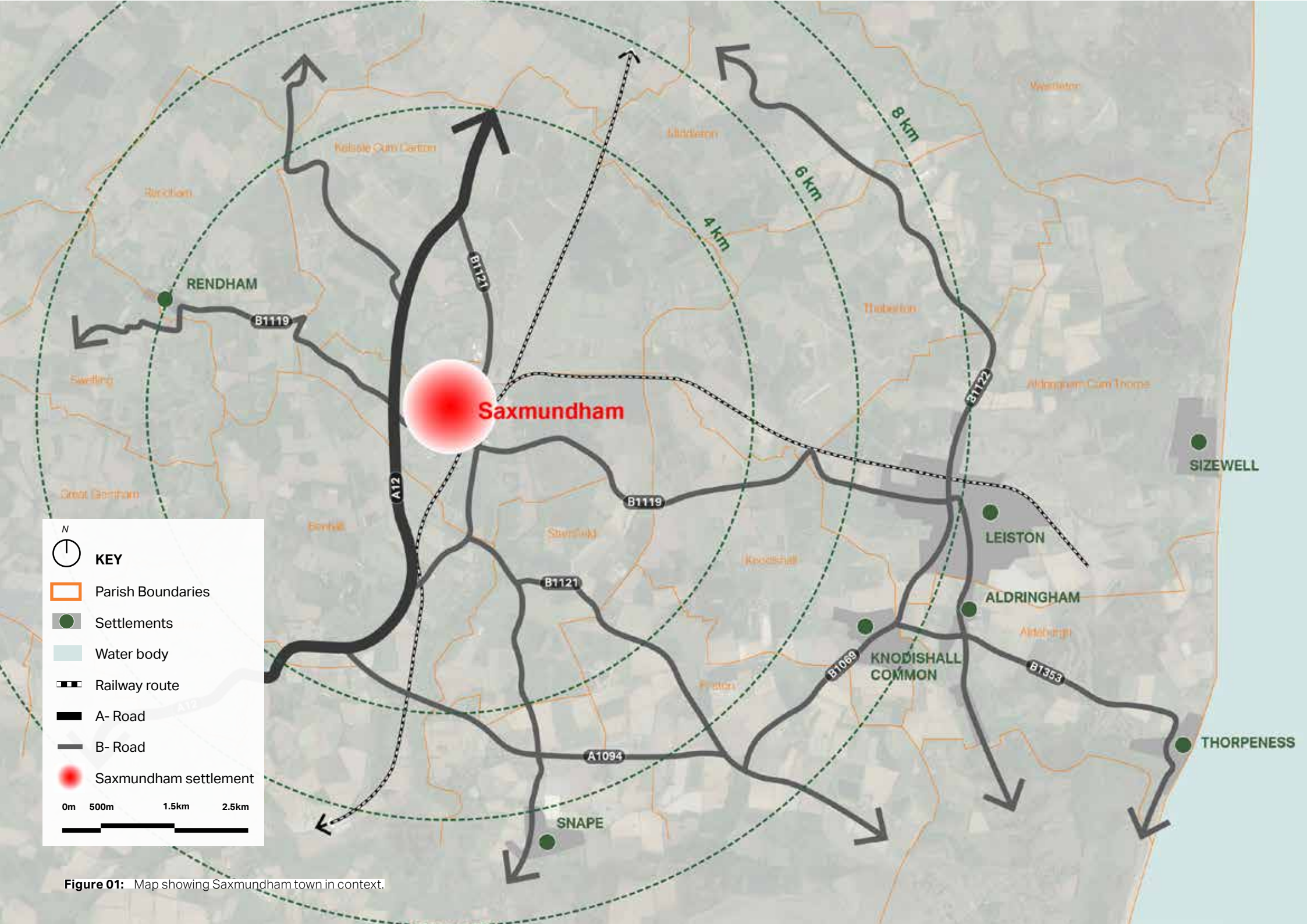


Figure 01: Map showing Saxmundham town in context.

# High Street masterplan

# 02

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## 2. High Street masterplan

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**This chapter will analyse the constraints & opportunities of the High Street and propose a series of design concepts for the High Street as well as some aspirations for other key areas in the town centre aiming to improve the existing conditions.**

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### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter will be organised in two parts:

- **Analysis** of the town centre to understand the existing constraints and opportunities;
- **Design proposals** for the High Street and Market Place as well as some ideas and aspirations for the area outside the Railway Station, Street Farm Road and Church Road. The proposals will also be accompanied by precedent examples and illustrations to provide further explanation.

The Town Centre's opportunities and constraints will be analysed under three main topics:

**1**  
— **MOVEMENT**

**2**  
— **PARKING**

**3**  
— **PUBLIC REALM**

# ISSUES & CONSTRAINTS

## Movement

- Traffic congestion along the High Street;
- Narrow carriageway creates pinch points for vehicles and an unsafe environment for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Lack of pedestrian crossings along the High Street;
- Unauthorised on-street parking along the High Street causes traffic congestion;
- Lack of signage for important landmarks and footpaths/alleys;
- Lack of connection between the High Street and surrounding open spaces, the Garden Neighbourhood site and the countryside to the south;
- Station Approach is visually uninspiring and lacks visual cohesion and connectivity with other parts of the High Street; and
- The existing bus stop to the north

of the High Street, opposite the car wash shop, creates issues of visibility for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians when the bus is parked;

South Entrance/ Church Road/ Chantry Road/ High Street junction issues:

- Critical junction/ necessary HGV route due to town centre facilities/ businesses;
- Reduced visibility and limited carriageway space due to historic buildings which limit potential junction control alterations;
- Chantry Road is narrow (min of 4.4m) and only permits one-way traffic for 30m, at eastern extent. Absence of control may lead to road safety and operational concerns; and
- Any junction amendments may impact the use of Chantry Road and result in an increased number of vehicles routing along the High Street/ less appropriate routes.



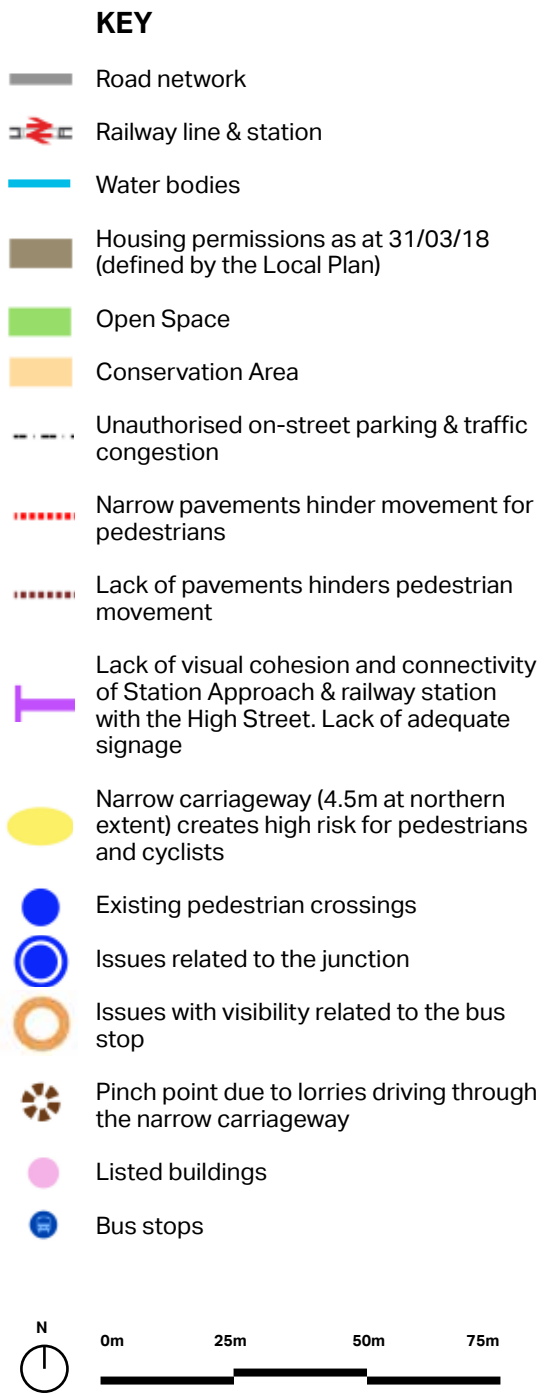
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F.3

**Figure 02:** The northern point along the High Street creates pinch points due to the narrow carriageway, approximately 4.5m, affecting the sense of safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

**Figure 03:** Unauthorised parking along the High Street causes traffic congestion and therefore, unpleasant conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.



**Figure 04:** Map showing the issues and constraints in High Street related to **movement**.

# ISSUES & CONSTRAINTS

## Parking

- Unauthorised on-street parking along the High Street causes traffic congestion;
- Existing car parking facilities fall under capacity. It is important to meet the rising parking needs of the locals;
- Existing on-street car parking opposite to the Royal Mail building reduces opportunities for wider pavements;
- Existing car parking in the railway station lacks soft landscape features creating a less pleasant public space;
- Lack of provision for parking for delivery and service vehicles leads to traffic congestion; and
- Lack of provision for bike stands discourages the use of bicycles in the town centre.



**Figure 05:**  
The existing car parking area west of Market Place needs to meet the rising parking needs and offer the possibility for increased capacity.



**Figure 06:**  
The existing on-street car parking limits opportunities for a wider public realm to facilitate pedestrian flow.

**Figure 07:**  
The existing car parking in the railway station currently lacks soft landscape features creating a car-dominated environment.





**Figure 08:** Map showing the issues and constraints in High Street related to **parking**.

# ISSUES & CONSTRAINTS

## Public Realm

- Narrow pavements along the High Street hinder pedestrian flow;
- Inconsistent use of materials on the public realm creates a fragmented scene for pedestrians;
- Narrow, uneven and inadequate pavements affect mobility, particularly for those with mobility difficulties;
- Lack of commodious spaces for informal socialising and gatherings;
- Poor outdoor conditions around the railway station and opposite to the library;
- Limited street furniture and green elements along the High Street create a less vivid scene; and
- Lack of signage to navigate to important destinations, activity nodes, landmark buildings and open spaces.



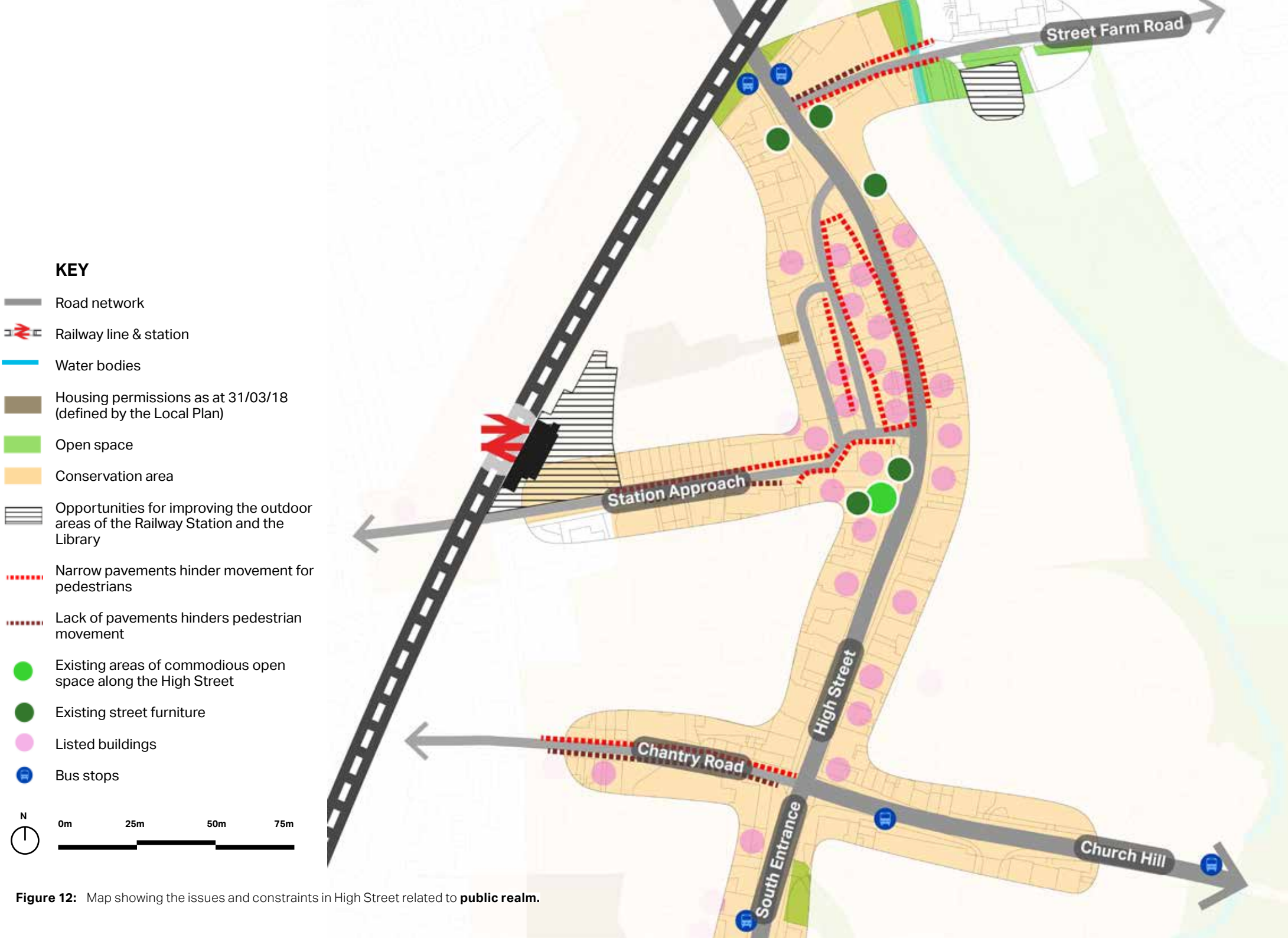
**Figure 09:**  
Narrow pavements hinder pedestrian flows and discourage people from walking.



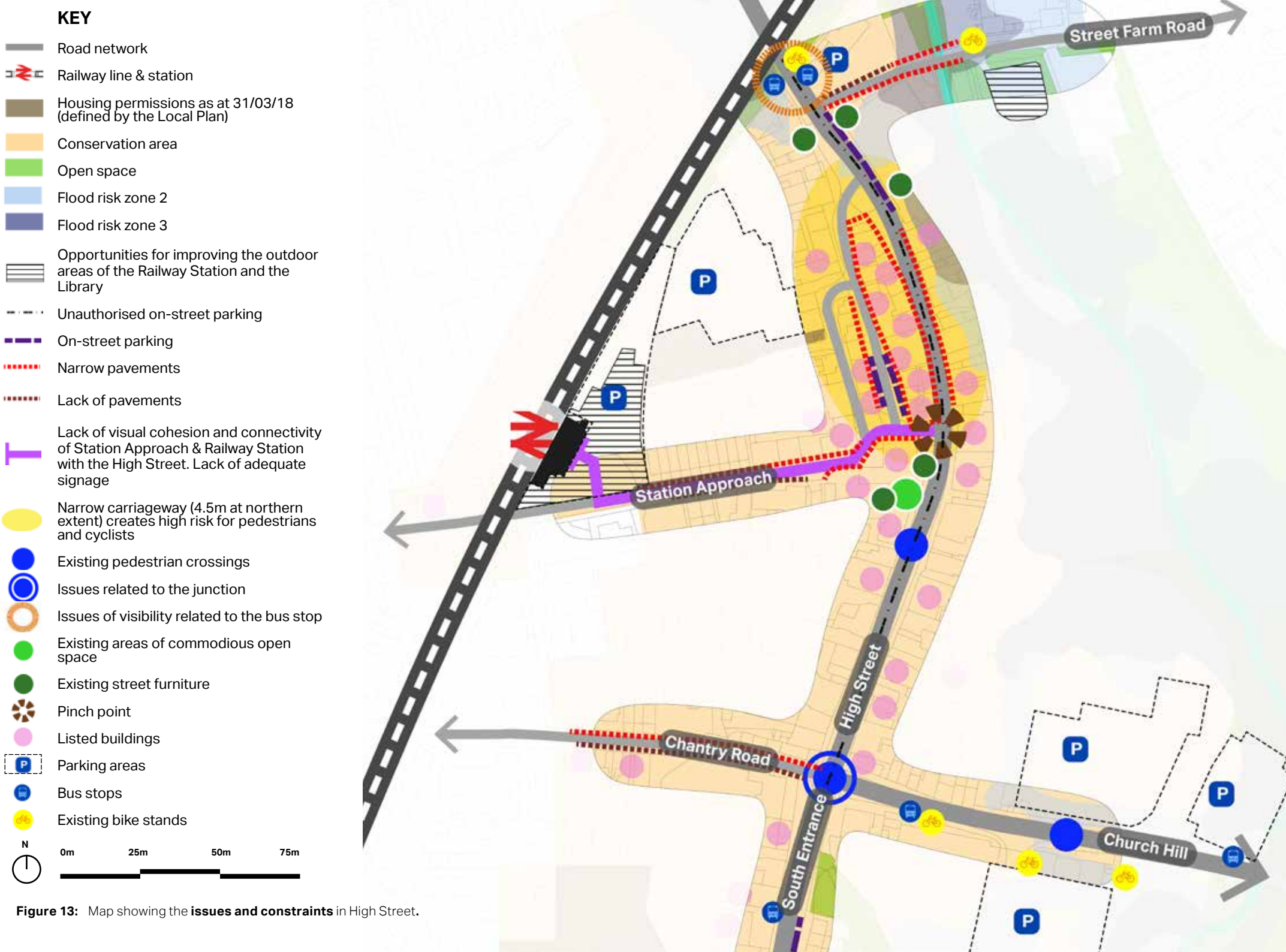
**Figure 10:**  
The materials used for the public realm should be consistent and avoid creating a fragmented scene.



**Figure 11:**  
Lack of informal open spaces and street furniture along the High Street does not offer opportunities for resting and socialising.



**Figure 12:** Map showing the issues and constraints in High Street related to **public realm**.





# OPPORTUNITIES

Saxmundham Neighbourhood Planning Group has stated a vision for the Town Centre which is based upon feedback and research undertaken as part of the Neighbourhood Plan process.

The vision for the future of the Town Centre is as follows:

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**A vibrant and bustling town centre comprising a healthy mix of retail, service sector, business and residential uses. The area has a strong welcoming and attractive character where pedestrian activity dominates the space and users have a high sense of safety & belonging. The impact of vehicular traffic is relatively low and frontage servicing is kept low key. There is good connectivity between the different areas of the town centre with a pedestrian friendly environment in a cruciform pattern focussed on the centre of the High Street, thereby linking the railway station, the High Street and Fromus Square on an east/west axis and the historic High Street on a north/south axis. The intersection of these routes close to The Bell Hotel forms a focal point and meeting place.**

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This vision along with the baseline analysis presented on the previous pages will shape the design proposals and ideas for the High Street.

# OPPORTUNITIES

## Movement

- Junction improvements (public realm/shared surface junction with or without signals) to reduce speeds and congestion;
- Mini roundabout to reduce congestions and encourage courteous driving (Copenhagen style junction);
- Opportunity for a reduced carriageway (one lane-4m) with traffic controlled by traffic lights at either end (light blue area shown in [Figure 16](#));
- Opportunity for a reduced carriageway (orange area shown in [Figure 16](#)) to the minimum requirement of 5.5m for two way traffic which would allow for wider footways;
- More pedestrian crossings along the High Street to improve pedestrian flow;
- New or enhanced pedestrian and cycling routes to connect the High Street with surrounding open spaces and areas.

- Improvements of the materials for the carriageway aiming to signalise traffic calming measures from a distance and create the sense of a shared environment rather than a strictly vehicular one;
- Pedestrianisation of Market Place to allow for informal open space, market events and potential connection with Market Hall;
- Signage will highlight the speed limits on the High Street and create awareness for the drivers;
- Provision of additional signage throughout the town to increase awareness of proximity to less-known non-motorised user routes, promote sustainable travel and reduce user confusion, journey times and reliance on cars; and
- Potential for relocation of the current bus stop at the North Entrance to a southern point opposite the Royal Mail building to resolve visibility issues.



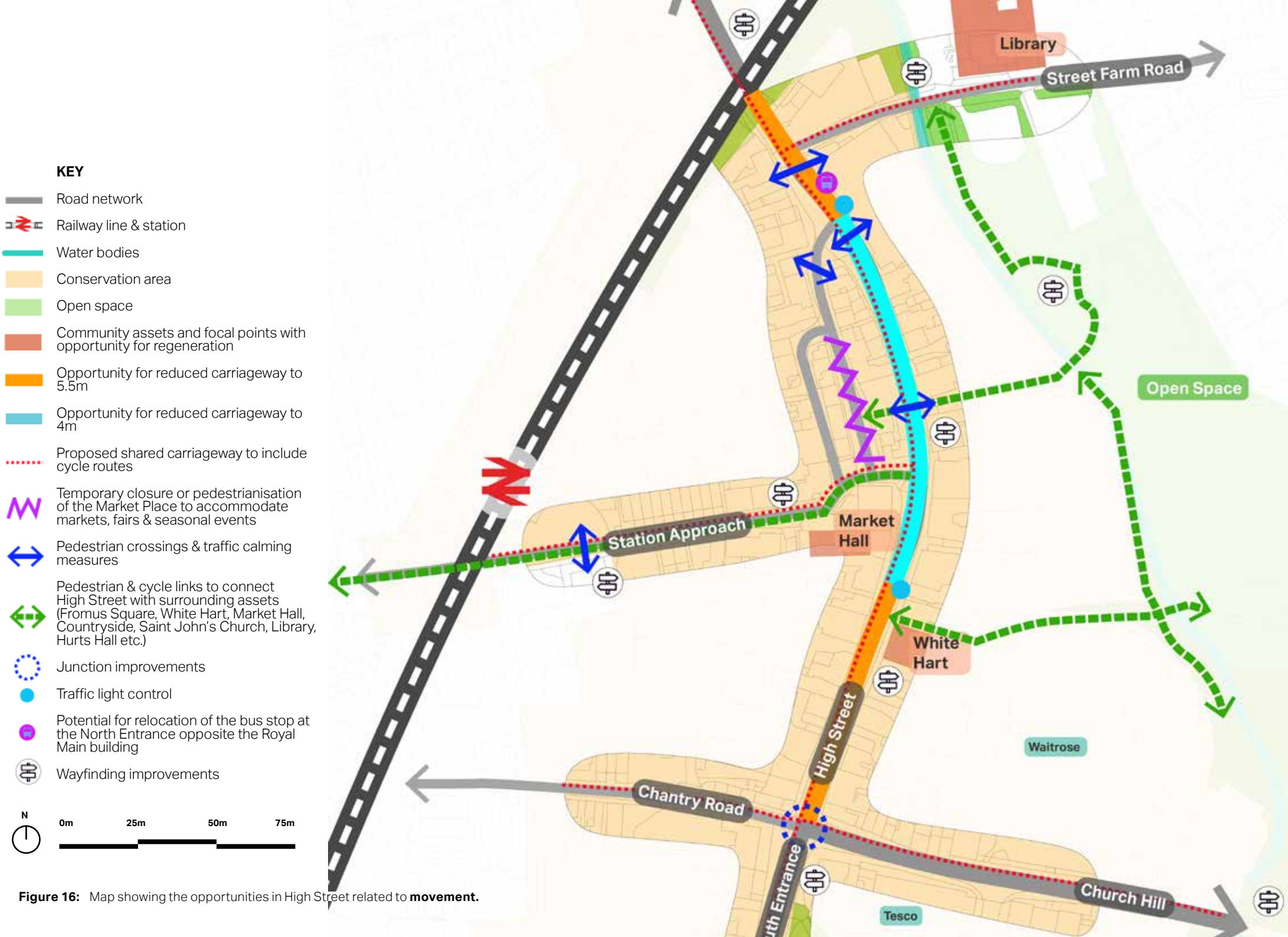
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F.15

**Figure 14:** Example of a junction improvement in Cirencester with shared space, paved areas and crossing facilities.

**Figure 15:** Example of a pedestrianised narrow street to tackle congestion and improve the environment. This intervention gave the opportunity for spill-out cafés, walking and cycling (Reference, Tunsgate: <https://www.guildford-dragon.com/2018/07/13/is-chapel-street-refurbishment-really-necessary-ask-alderman-and-residents/>).



# OPPORTUNITIES

## Parking

- Potential for increasing the capacity of the existing car parking on Market Place;
- Potential for merging the car parking on Market Place with the Railway Station car parking area;
- Potential for a new car parking space to the north of the High Street; currently operates as car wash shop;
- Potential for installing temporary car parking structures in Waitrose and Tesco car parking, if needed;
- Opportunity to remove on-street parking and resolve unauthorised parking along the High Street to allow for road and public realm improvements;
- Provision for disabled parking and parking for delivery and emergency vehicles along the High Street;
- Provision for electrical charging points in all car parking areas; and
- Provision for cycle parking in all car parking spaces, as well as cycle stands along the High Street.

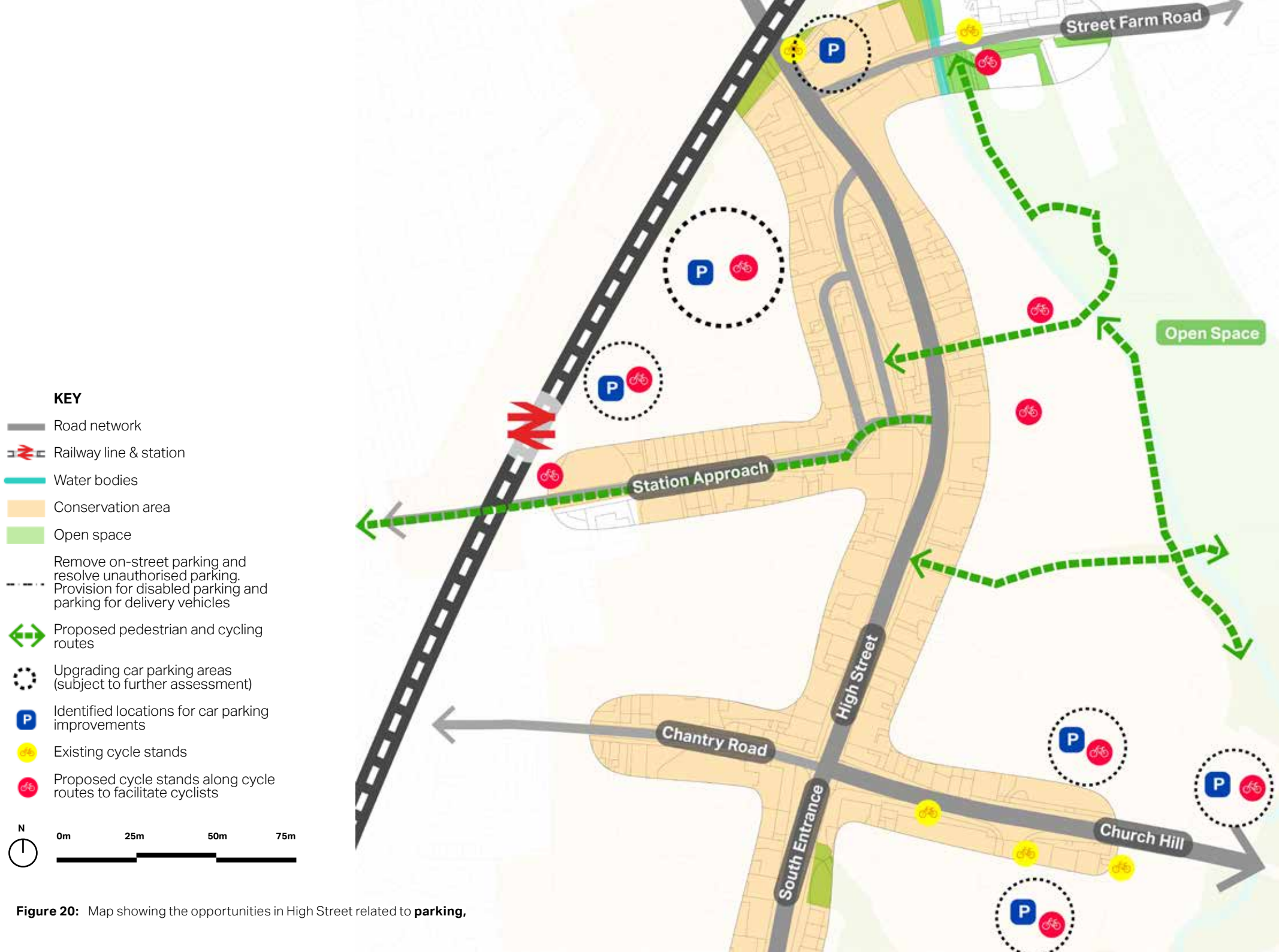


**Figure 17:** Car parking spaces as steel structures offer flexibility in the assemblage and they can quickly meet the needs for an increased capacity. (Reference: <https://www.transportxtra.com/publications/parking-review/news/55539/kettering-general-hospital-deck-completed/>).

**Figure 18:** The light street structures could also accommodate green façades to mitigate any unpleasant visual impact. (Reference: <https://www.tensile.com.au/project/westfield/>).

**Figure 19:** Cycle parking should be integrated in all car parking areas to help promote cycling in the area. (Reference: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/380413499774649551/>).





**Figure 20:** Map showing the opportunities in High Street related to **parking**,

# OPPORTUNITIES

## Public Realm

- Reduce the carriageway along the High Street and Station Approach to allow for wider pavements;
- Improvements on the paving materials to create consistency and a more welcoming environment facilitating pedestrian movement;
- Opportunity for upgrades on the existing street furniture and proposals for additional street furniture and green features along the High Street;
- Opportunity for spill-outs, where possible, to encourage social gatherings;
- Improvements in the outdoor areas opposite to the library and the Railway Station to create opportunities for community events and gatherings; and
- Provision for shops and Tourist Information Centre opposite to the Railway Station to extend movement from the High Street to Station Approach as well.



F.21

**Figure 21:** High quality of street furniture can improve the environment of the High Street and offer opportunities for resting and socialising. (Reference, Wokingham town market: <https://news.wokingham.gov.uk/news/overview-and-scrutiny-call-for-questions/>).



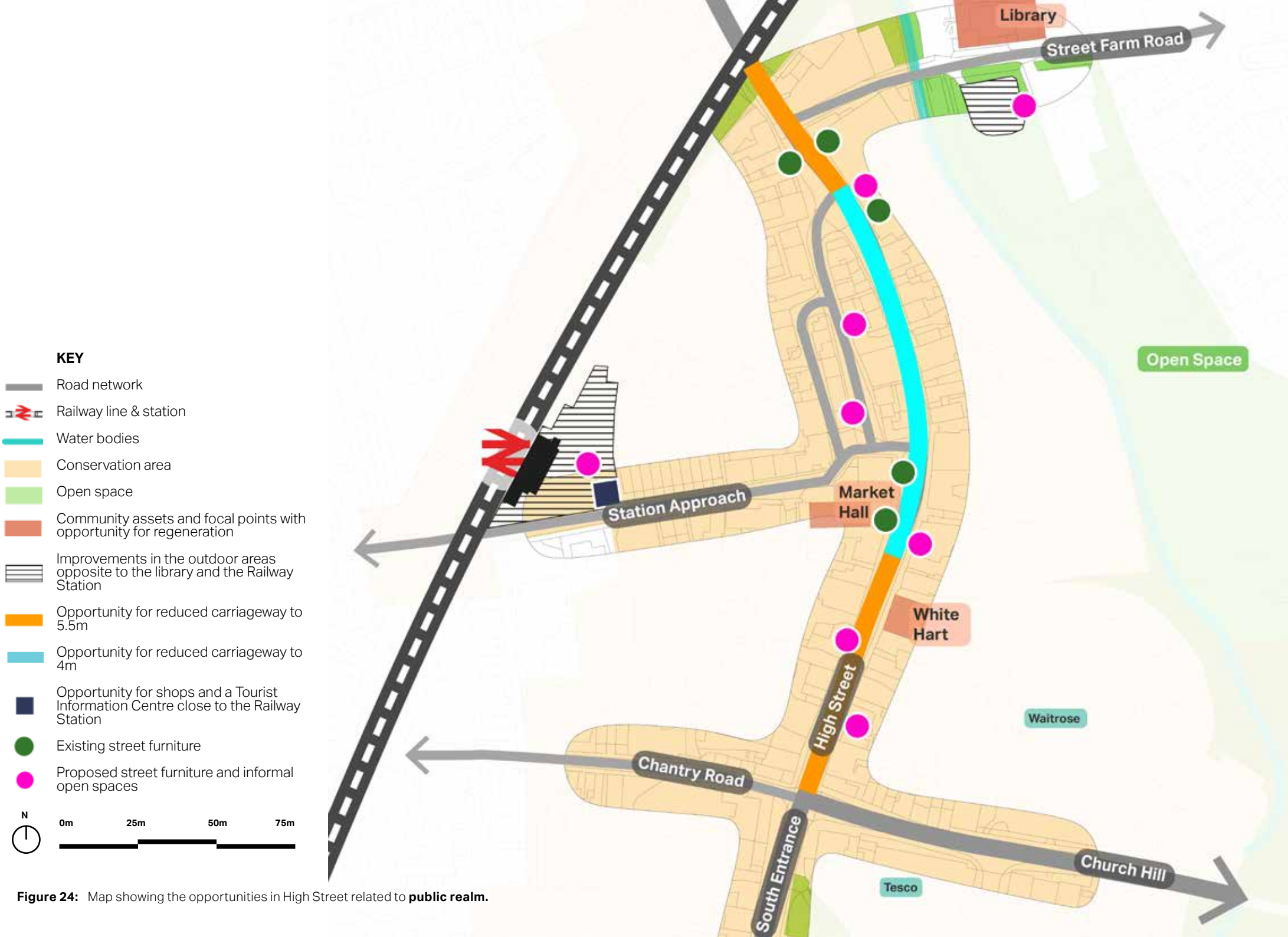
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**Figure 22:** Example of high quality paving materials that give the impression of a shared space where vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists co-exist. (Reference, Preston: <https://www.blogpreston.co.uk/2020/07/safety-action-plan-aims-to-bring-people-back-to-preston-city-centre/>).



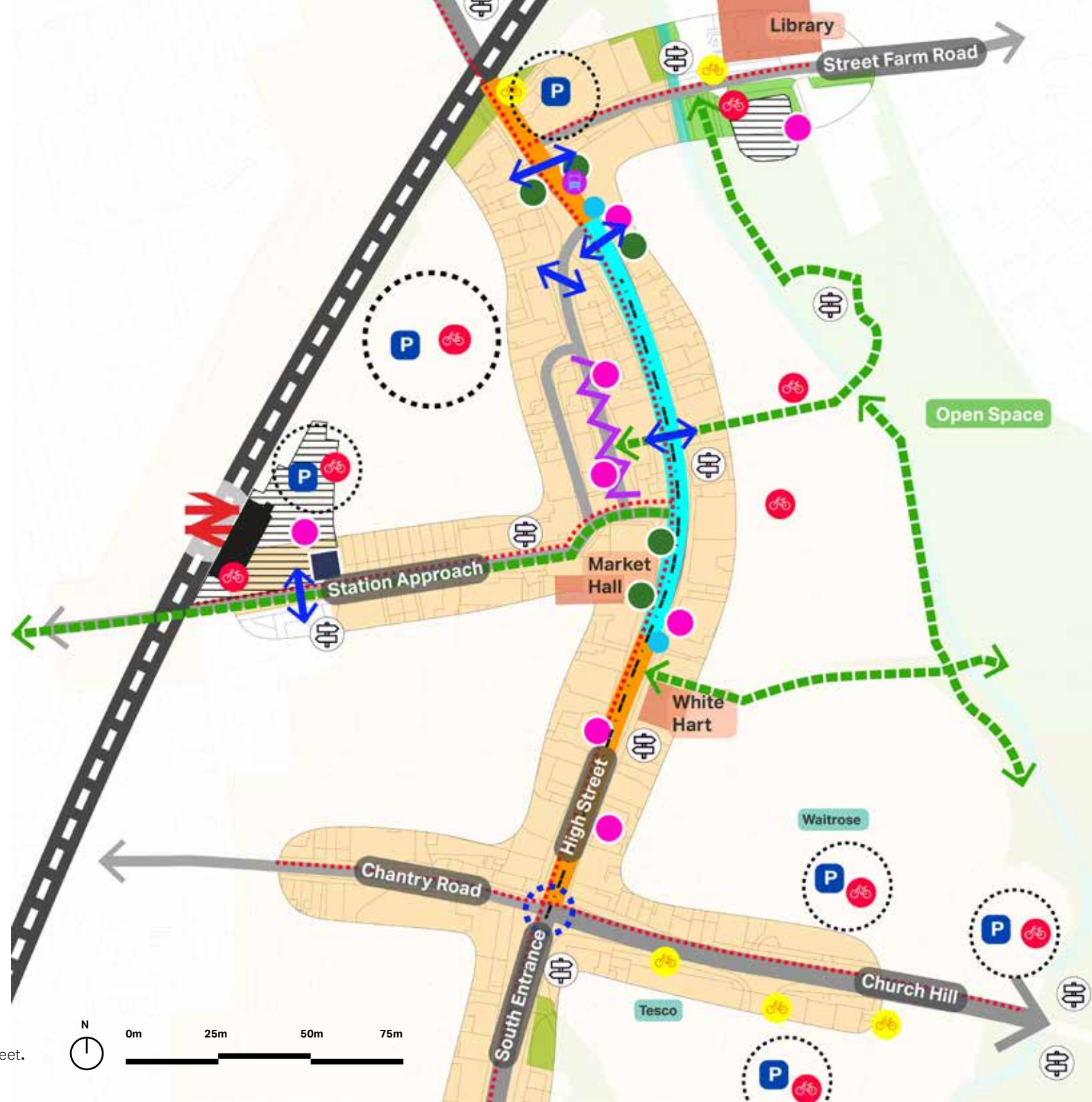
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**Figure 23:** Any element along the High Street like light columns, plants, signage, can be a form of public art to improve the quality of the environment. (Reference, Westfield Stratford City: <https://www.iotagarden.com/projects/westfield-shopping-centre-london-e20-faux-corten-planters/>).



**Figure 24:** Map showing the opportunities in High Street related to **public realm**.

- KEY**
-  Road network
  -  Railway line & station
  -  Water bodies
  -  Conservation area
  -  Open space
  -  Community assets and focal points with opportunity for regeneration
  -  Improvements in the outdoor areas opposite to the library and the Railway Station
  -  Opportunity for reduced carriageway to 5.5m
  -  Opportunity for reduced carriageway to 4m
  -  Remove on-street parking to allow for wider pavements. Provision for disabled parking and parking for delivery vehicles
  -  Proposed shared carriageway to include cycle routes
  -  Temporary closure or pedestrianisation of the Market Place
  -  Pedestrian crossings & traffic calming measures
  -  Pedestrian & cycle links
  -  Upgrading existing car parking areas (subject to further assessment)
  -  Junction improvements
  -  Traffic light control
  -  Potential for relocation of the bus stop at the North Entrance
  -  Opportunity for shops and a Tourist Information Centre close to the Railway Station
  -  Existing cycle stands
  -  Proposed cycle stands
  -  Existing street furniture
  -  Proposed street furniture
  -  Wayfinding improvements



**Figure 25:** Map showing the **opportunities** in the High Street.



# CONCEPT MASTERPLAN PROPOSALS

This section presents the concept masterplan proposals for the High Street as well as some other key areas in the Town Centre.

These proposals have taken their form based on the analysis of the constraints and opportunities for the High Street, the general vision for the Town Centre and the feedback given from the discussion with the Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group.

A variety of graphic materials will be used to illustrate these proposals ranging from maps, photos, as well as hand-drawing sketches.








# CARRIAGEWAY AND MATERIALS

Any improvements on the carriageway will aim to reduce non-essential use of the High Street by motor vehicles and prioritise pedestrian movement and safety.

- Junction improvements (public realm/shared surface junction with or without signals) to reduce speeds and congestion;
- Mini roundabout to reduce congestions and encourage courteous driving (Copenhagen style junction);
- Reduced carriageway (one lane-4m) with traffic controlled by traffic lights (as shown in [Figure 26](#), no.1,2) at either end of this section;
- Reduced carriageway for the rest of the High Street, 5.5m for two way operation or 4m for one-way operation. Subject to further investigation and transport evaluation;
- Wider footways along the High Street to improve pedestrian flow and improved paving materials; an indicative example is shown in [Figure 30](#);
- Traffic calming measures, in the form of raised tables, to encourage low vehicular speed and pedestrian movement on both sides of the High Street;
- 3 types of materials could be used along the carriageway, shown in [Figures 27-29](#), to signalise the traffic calming measures and shared lanes. This will encourage courteous driving and pedestrian safety; and
- Pedestrianisation of Market Place.



**KEY**

-  Building frontages
-  Open space
-  Carriageway (max speed 20 mph). Indicative example of this material is shown in [Figure 27](#)
-  Raised table (every 20m). Indicative example of this material is shown in [Figure 29](#)
-  Shared lane (max speed 10 mph). Indicative example of this material is shown in [Figure 28](#)
-  Public realm. Indicative example of this material is shown in [Figure 30](#)
-  Traffic light control (no.1,2 points)



**Figure 26:** Maps showing **current and proposed** condition of the carriageway and public realm.



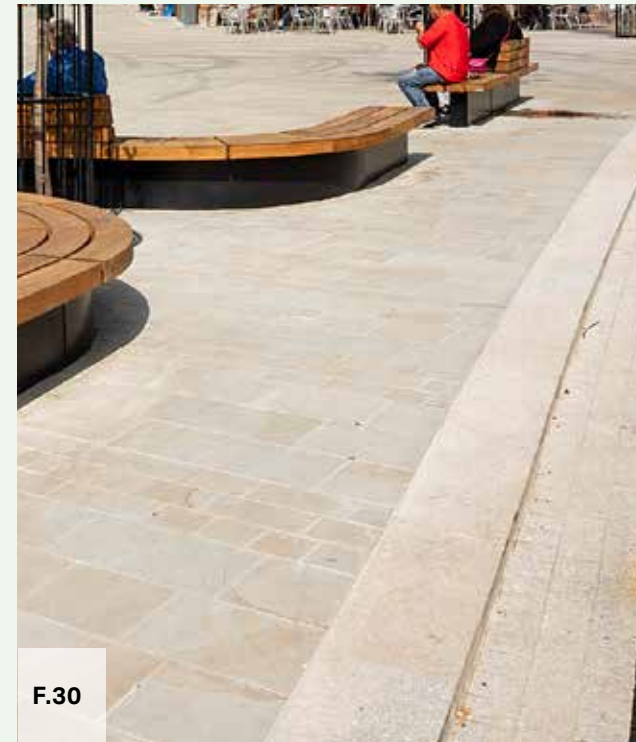
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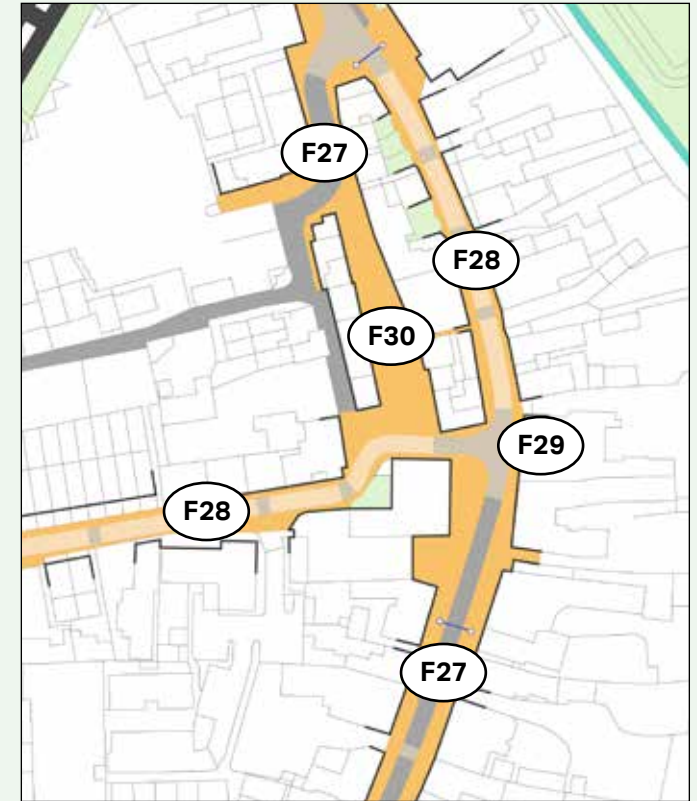
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F.29



F.30



**Figure 27:**

Example of a paving material (grey granite or concrete made to look like granite) that could be used for the carriageway. (Reference, Jermyn Street, London: <https://heartoflondonbid.london/jermyn-street-improvements/>).

**Figure 28:**

Example of a paving material (buff-coloured asphalt) that could be used on the carriageway to signalise the shared lanes. (Reference, Preston: <https://www.blogpreston.co.uk/2020/07/safety-action-plan-aims-to-bring-people-back-to-preston-city-centre/>).

**Figure 29:**

Example of a paving material (Yorkstone setts) that could be used to signalise raised tables and pedestrian crossings. (Reference, Jermyn Street, London: <https://heartoflondonbid.london/jermyn-street-improvements/>).

**Figure 30:**

Example of a paving material (Yorkstone slabs) that could be used on the pavements to create consistency and a welcoming character. (Reference, Wokingham town market: <https://news.wokingham.gov.uk/news/overview-and-scrutiny-call-for-questions/>).

# SOUTH ENTRANCE

South Entrance Road is the gateway to the High Street and therefore, its character should be welcoming.

There should be a clear indication of the entrance to the town centre and an appropriate signage system to efficiently navigate people around.

It is important to discourage vehicular movement along the High Street and encourage people to park their cars to the nearest car parking area and continue on foot. All car parking spaces should be within walking distance from the town centre to encourage walking.

## Junction improvements

- Junction improvements (public realm/shared surface junction with or without signals) to reduce speeds and congestion; and
- Mini roundabout to reduce congestions and encourage courteous driving (Copenhagen style junction). Indicative example is shown in [Figure 14](#);

## Car parking

- Waitrose and Tesco stores to offer public car parking facilities and meet the rising parking needs for the locals. Light steel structures could be introduced, as shown in [Figures 17, 18](#);
- Disabled parking and parking for delivery vehicles is proposed along the High Street; and

- Cycle stands will be added along the footpaths to encourage walking and cycling along the open space. Design should be well integrated with the natural environment. Indicative examples are shown in [Figures 32-34](#).

## Signage



- Signage along the South Entrance to indicate the gateway to the town centre, the low speed limit and other important destinations and landmarks; and
- Signage to be added along the footpaths and open space to indicate the routes towards the High Street, Railway Station, landmark buildings etc. Indicative examples are shown in [Figures 35 & 36](#).

**LOCATION MAP**















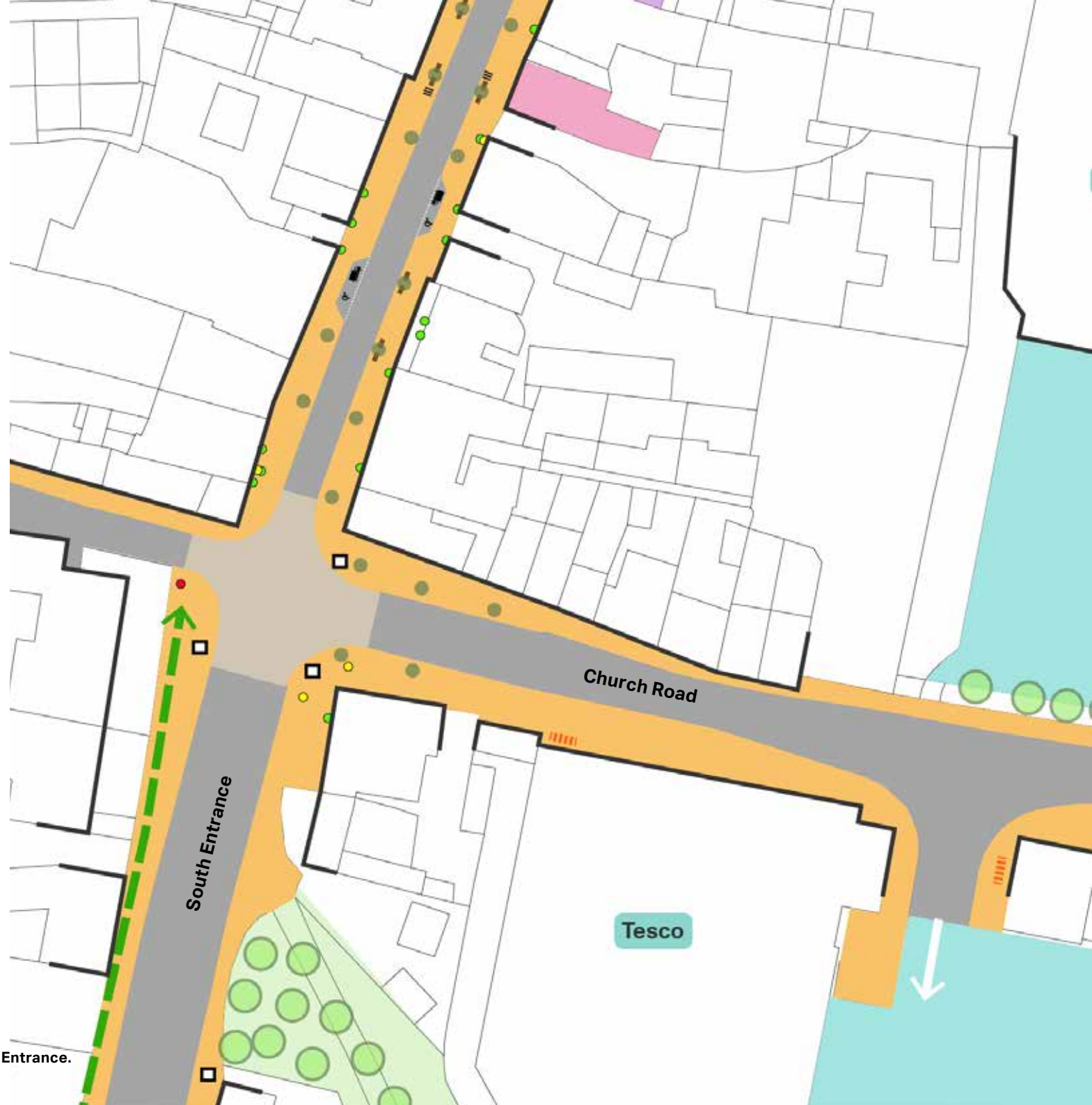
**KEY**

**Existing features**

-  Cycle stands
-  Building frontages
-  Open space
-  Cafes & restaurants
-  Trees
-  Light columns
-  Flower pots (on the wall)

**Proposed features**

-  Carriageway (Max speed 20 mph)
-  Raised table (every 20m)
-  Public realm improvements
-  Car parking improvements
-  Improved pedestrian & cycle links
-  Cycle stands
-  Benches
-  Trees
-  Light columns
-  Signage
-  Disabled parking
-  Parking for delivery vehicles



**Figure 31:** Map showing the design proposals for the **South Entrance**.



F.32



F.34



F.35



F.36



F.33

**Figure 32:**  
The cycle stands along the open space should be well integrated into the environment (Reference, Hoge National park: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bicycle\\_parking\\_rack](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bicycle_parking_rack)).

**Figure 33:**  
The cycle stands that are located within an open space should be protected from weather conditions (Reference: <https://www.latrail.org/bike-rack-bench-kiosk>).

**Figure 34:**  
Cycle stands could offer some seating areas as well as resting (Reference: <https://www.latrail.org/bike-rack-bench-kiosk>).

**Figure 35:**  
Signage totems can be made of natural materials to be better integrated into the natural environment (Reference: <https://www.pinterest.es/pin/490118371931155028/>).

**Figure 36:**  
Signage totems can offer information about the existing trails or the animal species that can be found within the open space (Reference: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/496521927643859594/>).

# CENTRE OF HIGH STREET

The next set of design proposals refers to the centre of the High Street, expanding to the Railway Station as well.

The High Street will welcome local people and visitors offering areas for resting, gathering, socialising and events. More informal open spaces will be created.

The Railway Station will be treated as another type of gateway into the Town Centre offering a pleasant and welcoming environment with appropriate signage to navigate people around.

All facilities and events will be organised in areas within walking distance from the High Street, the Railway Station and car parking areas to encourage walking and reduce the non-essential use of cars.

## Street furniture

- Benches will be added along the High Street to offer opportunities for resting and socialising. An indicative example is shown in [Figure 40](#);
- Street trees will be added along the High Street to improve the environment and offer shading;
- Cycle stands will be added in strategic locations along the High Street, footpaths and open spaces to encourage cycling along the town centre; and
- Light columns and flower pots on the walls will be added to improve the environment of the High Street without causing any obstruction in pedestrian movement along the pavements.

## Car parking

- Railway Station and car parking area to the north could be merged to increase capacity and also free up the outdoor space in front of the Railway Station building. The level difference between the two car parking areas will need to be taken into account in the design; and

- Disabled parking and parking for delivery vehicles is proposed along the High Street.

## Public Space

- Pedestrianisation of Market Place and proposals for seating areas and temporary events. An indicative example and an illustration are shown in [Figures 39 & 42](#);
- Spill-outs opposite to the Bell At Sax and an improved informal open space outside of the Market Hall. An indicative illustration is shown in [Figure 43](#); and
- Opportunity for a public square in the Railway Station with seating areas, shops and information centre.

## Signage

- Signage to indicate location for cycle stands, footpaths, car parking, market area and other landmark buildings and destinations. Indicative examples are shown in [Figures 38 & 41](#).



**LOCATION MAP**



**KEY**

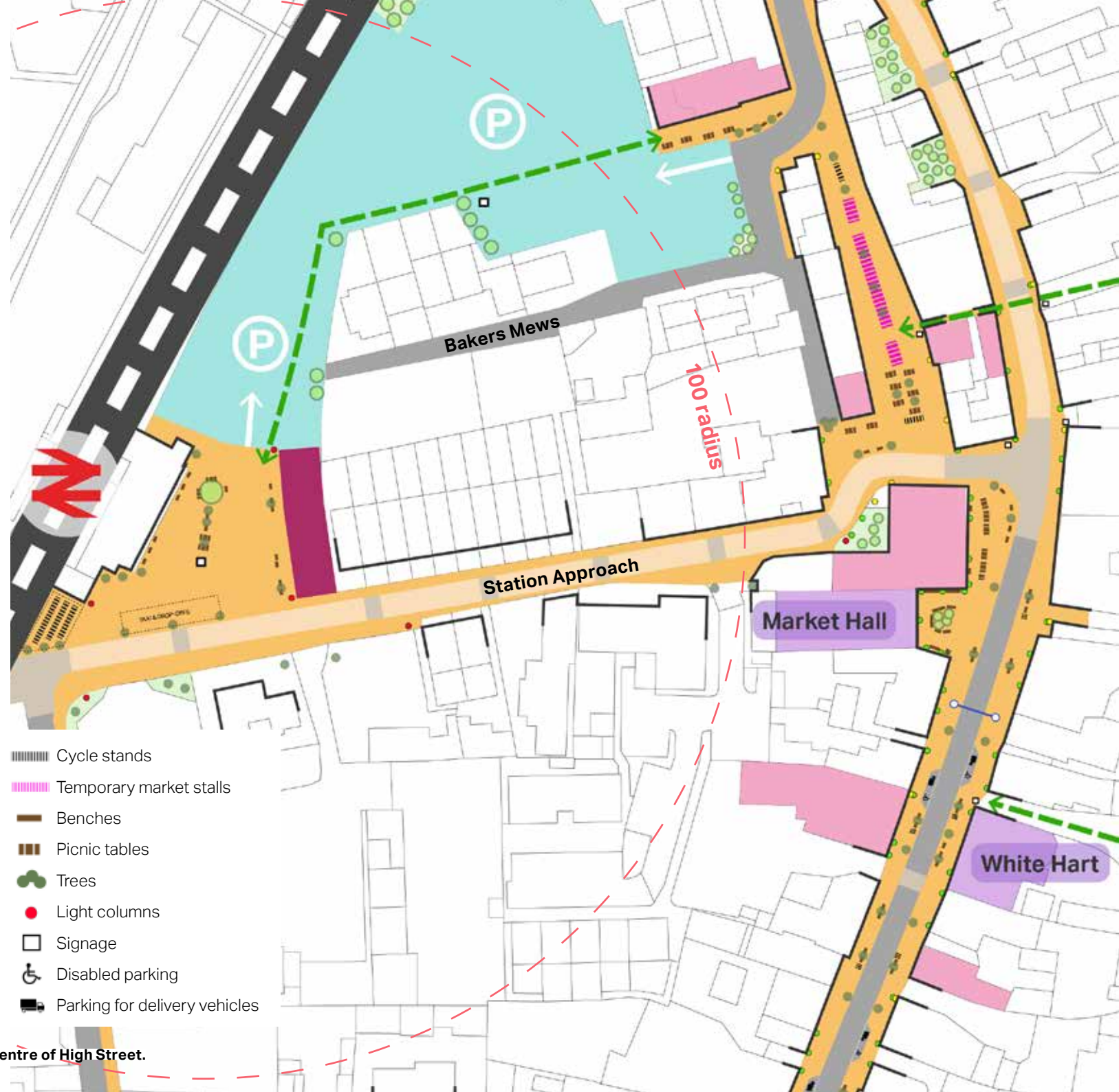
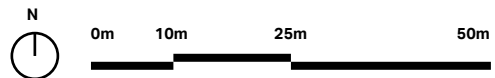
**Existing features**

- Railway line & station
- Cycle stands
- Building frontages
- Open space
- Landmark buildings
- Cafes & restaurants
- Trees
- Light columns
- Flower pots (on the wall)

**Proposed features**

- Pedestrian and cycle links
- Traffic light control
- Carriageway (max speed 20 mph)
- Raised table (every 20m)
- Shared lane (max speed 10 mph)
- Public realm improvements
- Car parking improvements
- Shops & Information centre
- Enclosed cycle parking

- Cycle stands
- Temporary market stalls
- Benches
- Picnic tables
- Trees
- Light columns
- Signage
- Disabled parking
- Parking for delivery vehicles



**Figure 37:** Map showing the design proposals for the centre of High Street.



F.38



F.39



F.40



F.41

**Figure 38:** Example of an interactive signage totem that offers information about daily and upcoming events and other destinations. (Reference, Baltic Sea resort: <https://st-digital.de/en/case-study/digital-tourist-information-in-the-baltic-sea-resort-of-binz/>).

**Figure 39:** Example of market stalls along a pedestrianised street. (Reference, Deptford market yard: <https://farrerhuxley.co.uk/deptford-market-yard/>).

**Figure 40:** Example of modern street furniture of high quality with planting. (Reference, Hornchurch high street: <https://www.externalworkindex.co.uk/entry/126090/Factory-Furniture/Street-furniture-for-Hornchurch-public-realm-improvement/>).

**Figure 41:** Example of a cost effective signage technique using QR codes that could enclose information about daily and upcoming events and other destinations. (Reference, Rödinghausen, Germany: [https://www.nw.de/lokal/kreis\\_herford/roedinghausen/22676234\\_Sightseeing-in-Roedinghausen-per-Smartphone.html](https://www.nw.de/lokal/kreis_herford/roedinghausen/22676234_Sightseeing-in-Roedinghausen-per-Smartphone.html)).



F.42

**Figure 42:** Illustration of the suggested design proposals for Market Place. Pedestrianisation of the street to allow for seating areas, market stalls as well as other seasonal events.



F.43

**Figure 43:** Illustration of the suggested design proposals for the area around the Market Hall and Bell Hotel. An improved public realm with wider pavements and areas for seating and socialising.

# NORTH ENTRANCE

North Entrance is the north gateway to the High Street and therefore, its character should be welcoming.

There should be a clear indication of the entrance to the High Street and an appropriate signage system to efficiently navigate people around.

It is important to discourage vehicular movement along the High Street and encourage people to park their cars at the nearest car parking areas and continue on foot. All car parking spaces should be within walking distance from the Town Centre to encourage walking.

## Public Space

- Opportunity for a public space opposite to the library with seating areas and a flexible use space to accommodate events. Indicative examples of those events as shown in [Figures 45-47](#); and
- Improved footpaths along the public realm to encourage walking and cycling and offer nice views to the river.

## Street furniture

- Benches will be added along the High Street to offer opportunities for resting and gatherings;
- Street trees will be added along the High Street to improve environment and offer shading;
- Cycle stands will be added in strategic locations along the High Street, footpaths and open spaces to encourage cycling along the Town Centre; and

- Light columns and flower pots on the walls will be added to improve the environment of High Street without causing any obstruction in pedestrian movement along the pavements.

## Car parking

- Opportunity to transform the existing car wash shop to the north into a car parking space.

## Signage









- Signage along the North Entrance to indicate the gateway to the High Street, the low speed limit and other important destinations and landmarks; and
- Signage to be added along the footpaths and open space to indicate the routes towards the High Street, Railway Station, landmark buildings etc.

## LOCATION MAP



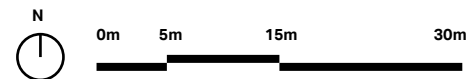
### KEY









#### Existing features

-  Railway line & station
-  Water bodies
-  Cycle stands
-  Building frontages
-  Open space
-  Landmark buildings
-  Cafes & restaurants
-  Trees
-  Light columns
-  Flower pots (on the wall)

#### Proposed features

-  Pedestrian and cycle links
-  Traffic light control
-  Carriageway (max speed 20 mph)
-  Raised table (every 20m)
-  Shared lane (max speed 10 mph)
-  Public realm improvements
-  Car parking improvements
-  Flexible use space for events
-  Cycle stands
-  Temporary market stalls



-  New location for the bus stop (previously located next to the former car wash shop)
-  Benches
-  Picnic tables
-  Trees
-  Light columns
-  Signage
-  Disabled parking
-  Parking for delivery vehicles



**Figure 44:** Map showing the design proposals for the **North Entrance**.



F.45



F.47



F.46

**Figure 45:** Book reading events could be organised by the library or the schools over the weekends attracting families and promoting community engagement. (Reference: <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/556124253957054796/>).

**Figure 46:** Drawing classes could be organised by the library or the community in general which will attract people from all ages and help them express themselves while being close to nature. (Reference: <https://texashillcountry.com/texas-hill-country-extra-curricular-activities/>).

**Figure 47:** Performance events could take place in the flexible use space attracting a good number of people from all ages and offer entertainment. (Reference: <https://www.connswatergreenway.co.uk/news/2016-09-05/love-victoria-park-a-great-day-out-for-all-the-family/>).

# LOCATION MAP



## KEY

### Existing features

- Railway line & station
- Water bodies
- Cycle stands
- Building frontages
- Open space
- Landmark buildings
- Cafes & restaurants
- Trees
- Light columns
- Flower pots (on the wall)

### Proposed features

- Pedestrian and cycle links
- Traffic light control
- Carriageway (max speed 20 mph)
- Raised table (every 20m)
- Shared lane (max speed 10 mph)
- Public realm improvements
- Car parking improvements
- Shops & Information centre
- Flexible use space for events

- New location for the bus stop (previously located next to the former car wash shop)
- Enclosed cycle parking
- Cycle stands
- Temporary market stalls
- Benches
- Picnic tables
- Trees
- Light columns
- Signage
- Disabled parking & Parking for delivery vehicles

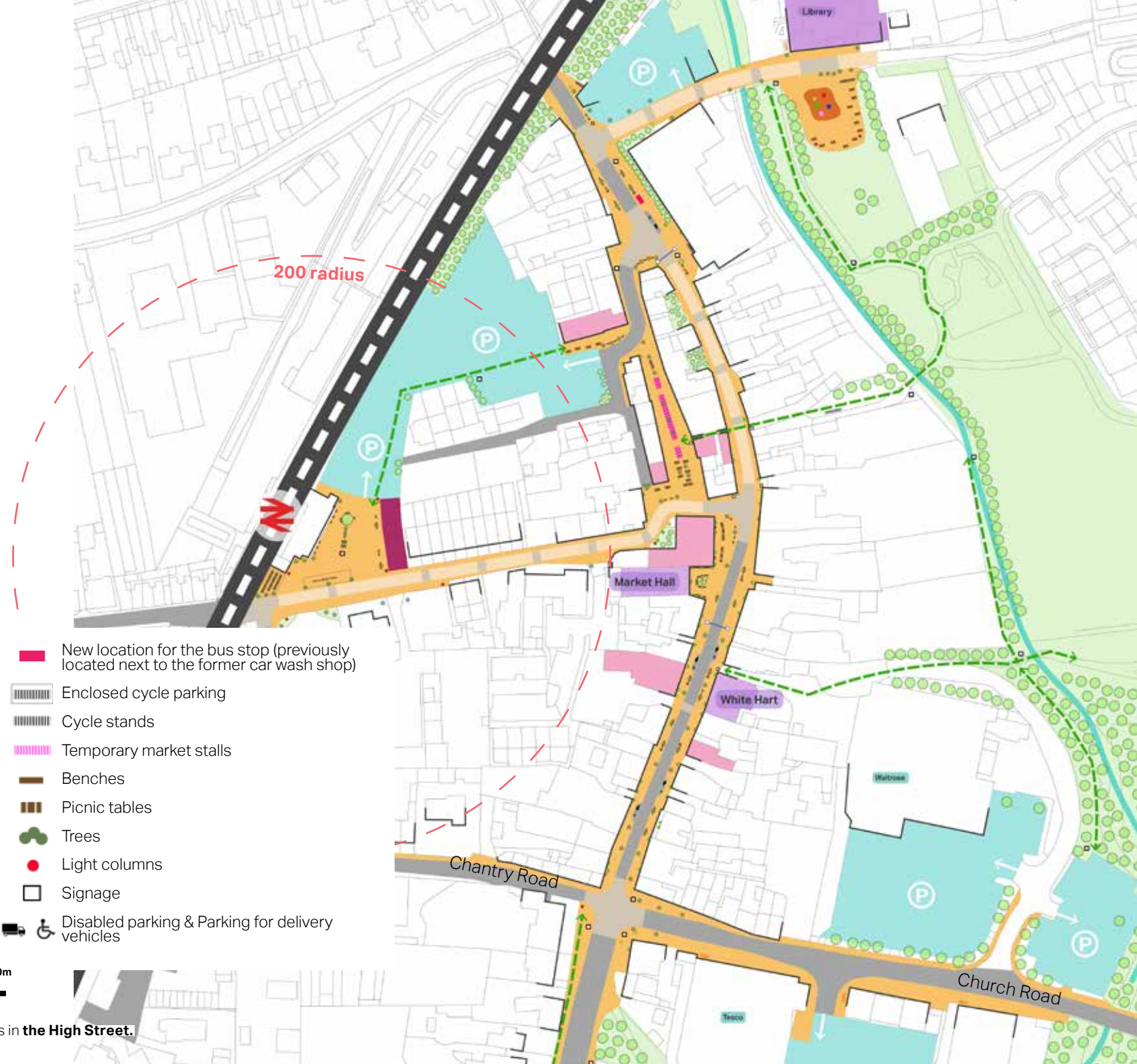
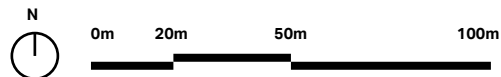


Figure 48: Map showing all the design proposals in the High Street.



**Garden  
Neighbourhood  
site**

**03**

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## 3. Garden Neighbourhood site

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**This chapter will analyse the issues, constraints & opportunities of the Garden Neighbourhood site to propose a high-level concept masterplan.**

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### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter will be organised in two parts:

- **Analysis** of the Garden Neighbourhood site to understand the existing constraints and opportunities;
- **High-level concept masterplan** based on specific urban design principles aiming to address the identified issues. The proposals will also be accompanied by precedent examples from other places with similar context.

The Garden Neighbourhood site will be analysed under three themes as shown below:

**1**  
— **MOVEMENT**

**2**  
— **ENVIR/TAL. DESIGNATIONS**

**3**  
— **LAND USES**

# ISSUES & CONSTRAINTS

## Movement

### Vehicular access

- Kiln Lane is the single vehicular access point to the site from the A12; and
- A new access point to the new development will be required.

### Pedestrian access

- There are two crossing points along the railway; a bridge crossing to the north and a level crossing point to the south. Suitability of the existing bridge needs to be determined. Liaison and approval from Network Rail may be required if alterations are needed in any of those crossings;
- Any pedestrian connection to the existing provisions to the north of the site may be difficult due to configuration of streets and block layouts;

- Existing (onward) non-motorised user provisions along B1121 are limited, narrow and substandard to encourage walking and cycling; and
- There is a good number of Public Rights of Way running across the site. These need to be well integrated into the new design to promote walking and cycling. At the moment, there are no good cycle links to the south of the town, apart from the passage along the B1121 which is substandard.

### Noise

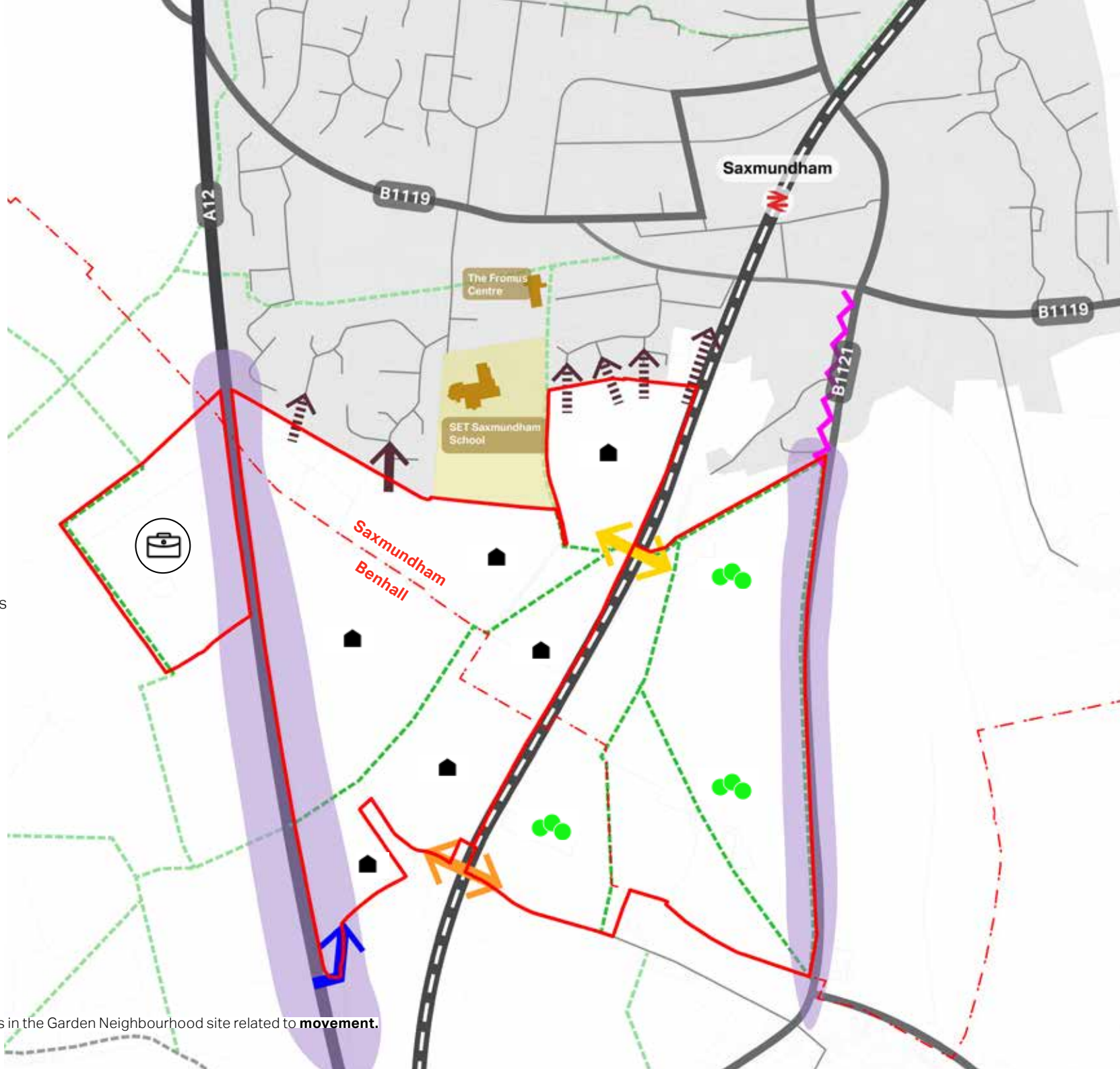
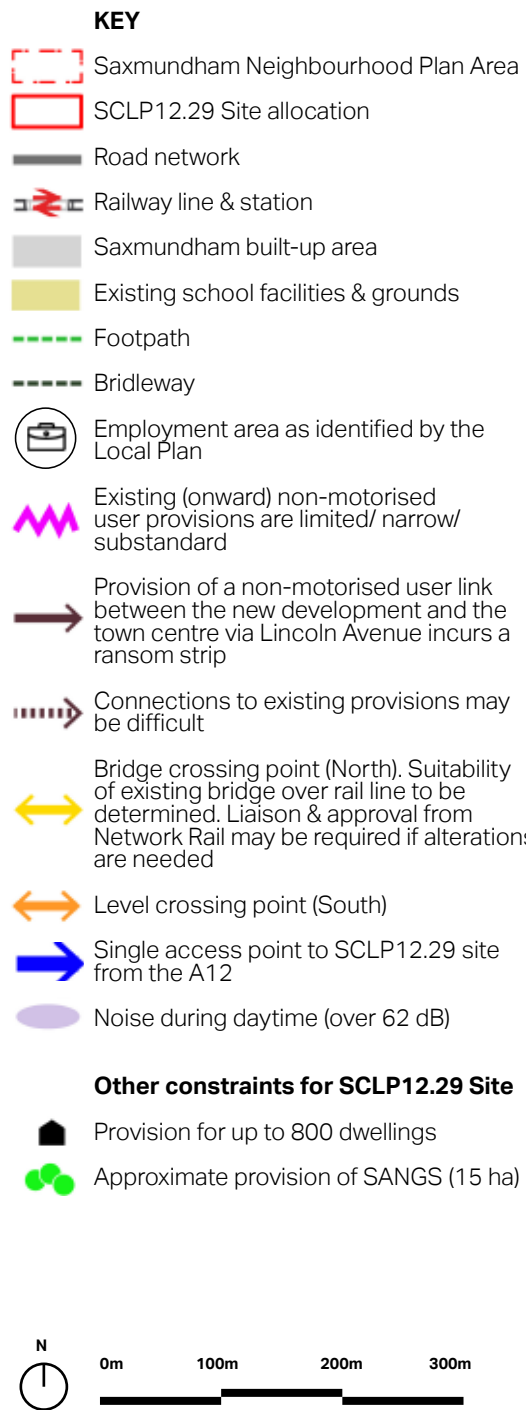
- Noise distractions have been identified along the A12 and the B1121, over 62 dB, which will require a form of attenuation barrier to mitigate the noise impact to the nearby residencies.

## Land use provision

- The land to the west of the A12 is allocated for employment use by the Local Plan.

## Parish boundaries

- The Garden Neighbourhood site straddles across two parish boundaries and therefore, any proposal will be shared with both parishes for further discussion.



**Figure 49:** Map showing the issues and constraints in the Garden Neighbourhood site related to movement.

# ISSUES & CONSTRAINTS

## Environmental designations

### Green infrastructure

- There is a number of tree lines, hedges and hedgerows that are in good condition and should be retained and preserved, where possible, in future development; and
- There are areas identified as Priority Habitat Inventories and they should be retained and preserved in future development.

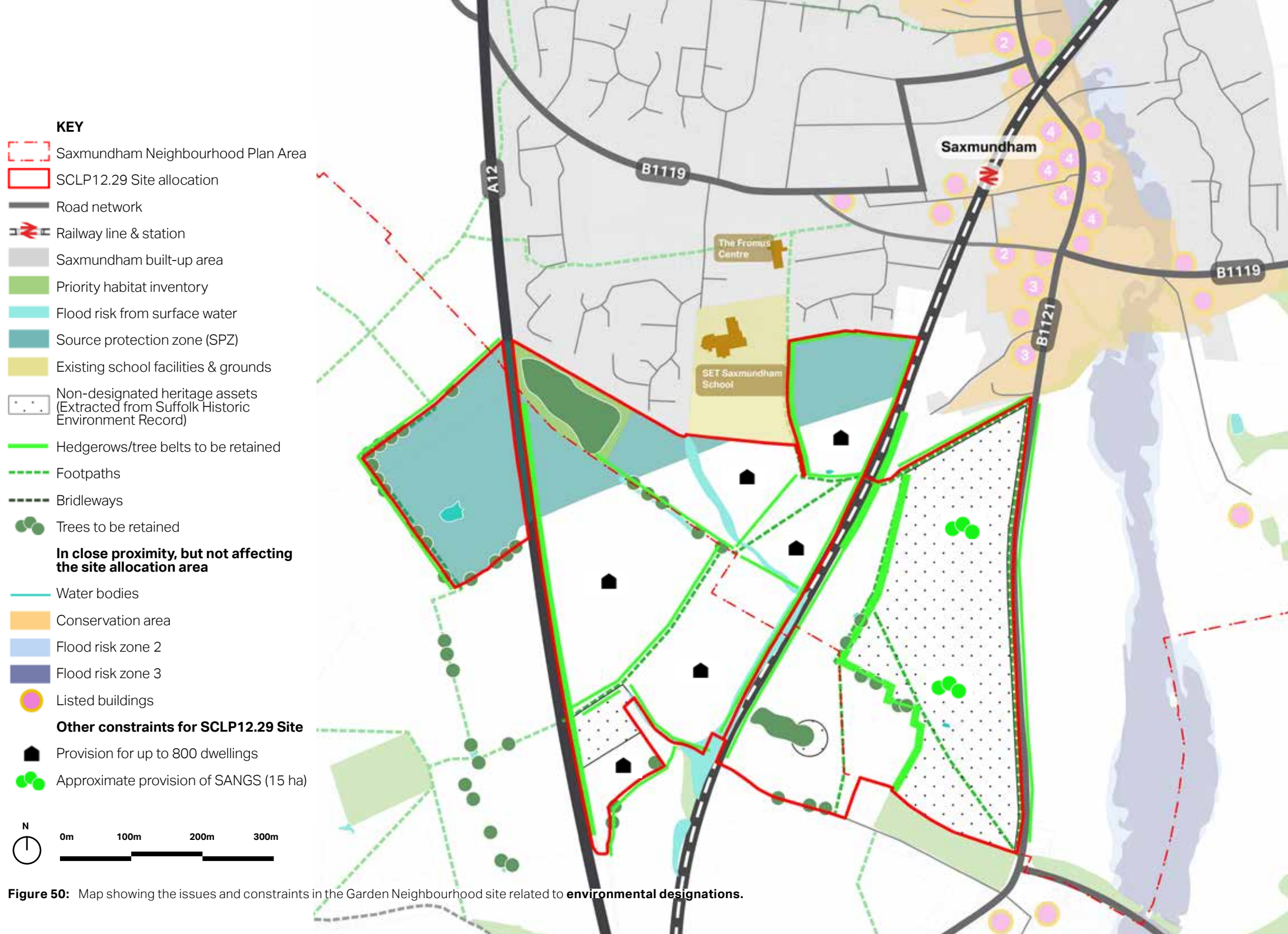
### Heritage assets

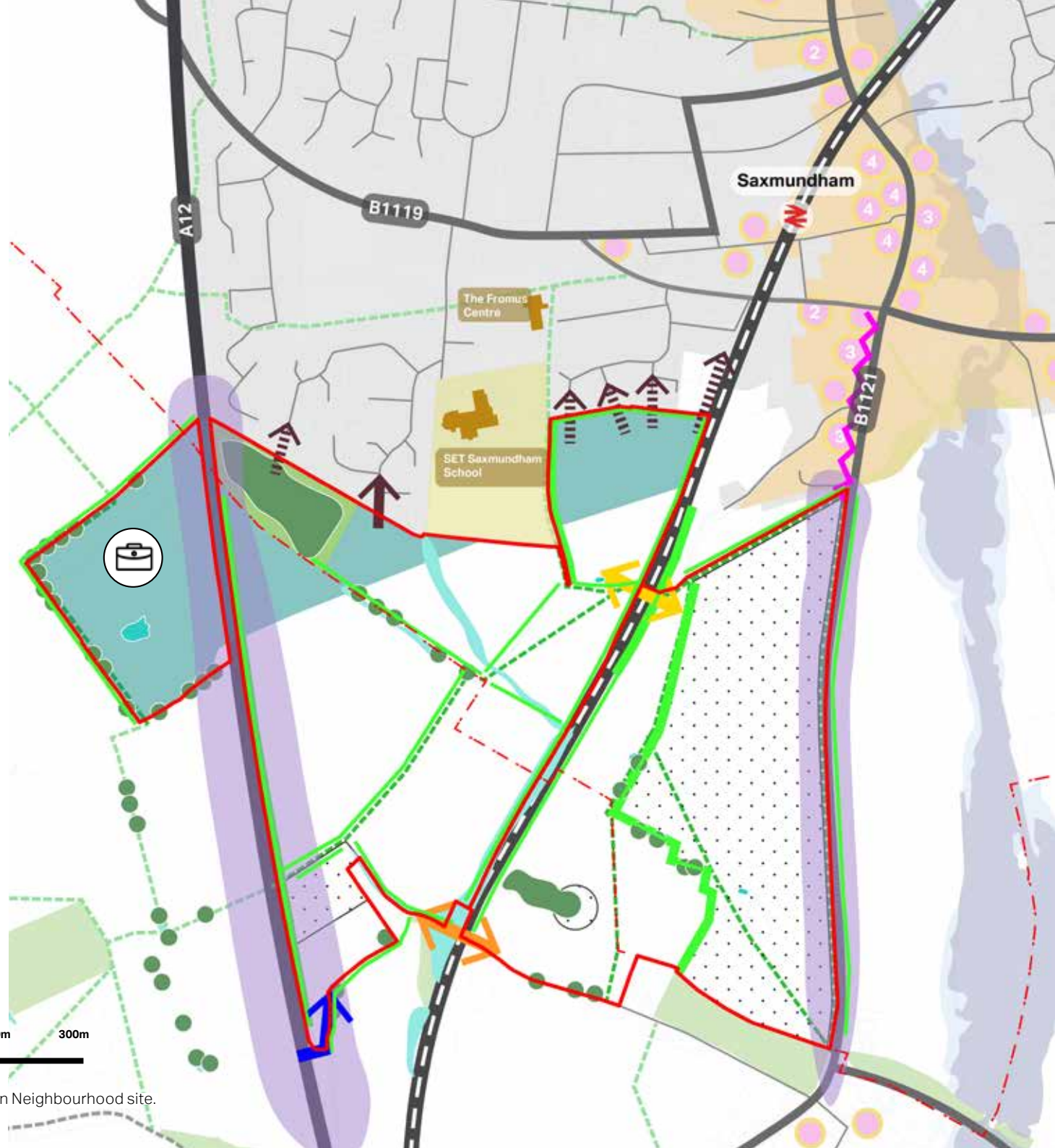
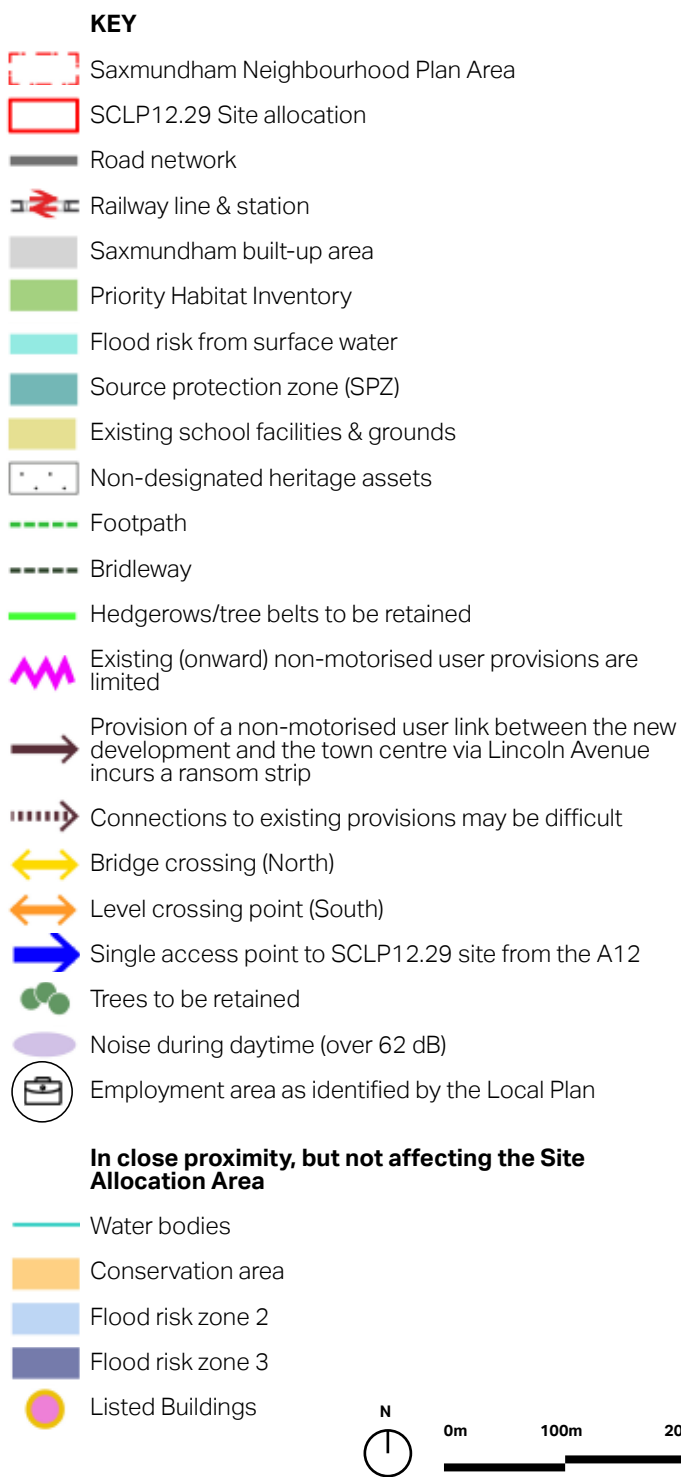
- A large part of the area east of the rail line as well as a piece of land to the south west are identified as sites with some archaeological importance (extracted from the Suffolk Historic Environment Record). These sites should not be developed and kept as open space to preserve their historic value; and

- The conservation area boundaries expand to the south and are in close proximity to the north east corner of the Garden Neighbourhood site. Thus, future development should ensure that any proposal respects the existing heritage and history of the area.

### Flood risk & contamination

- There is a level of flood risk from surface water to the north of the site as well as along the rail line; and
- A large part of the site to the north, including the site to the west, allocated from employment development, has identified as Source Protection Zone (SPZ). This shows the level of risk to the sources (wells, boreholes, springs) from contamination. Therefore, measures should be taken to ensure the risk of contamination is eliminated.





**Figure 51:** Map showing all the **issues and constraints** in the Garden Neighbourhood site.

# OPPORTUNITIES

Saxmundham Neighbourhood Planning Group believes that any future development in the Garden Neighbourhood site should take the name of the site literally and aim to create a general country feeling for the area.

Thus, the vision for the site is to create a feel of a country estate where pedestrian and cycle movement would be prioritised over cars.

The green infrastructure would contribute to this vision in the form of informal green spaces, parks, public squares, sports pitches, community gardens, large street trees, hedgerows and so on.

There will be a strong connection and interaction with the existing settlement to the north.

The opportunities and high-level concept masterplan presented on the next pages embrace this vision and bring it forward through the design plans.

More information and details on the building layouts, physical boundaries, materials can be found in the separate document of Design Guidance and Codes.



F.52

Figure 52: View to the Garden Neighbourhood site.



# OPPORTUNITIES

## Movement & Green links

### Vehicular access

- New vehicular access point from the A12 is proposed. This access will serve both the new community and the employment area to the west of A12; and
- The junction at Kiln Lane/A12 access point could be improved to serve as a secondary access to the site.

### Pedestrian access

- Opportunity for greater reliance on high-quality pedestrian and cycle routes. Some proposals include provisions for continuous safe links between the new development and the B1121, via the eastern edge of the existing cemetery, Lincoln Avenue and Seaman Avenue/ Mill Road. These links will give the sense of a walkable neighbourhood;
- The pedestrian and cycle links would

also connect the site with the town centre, the existing countryside to the west, the employment area, Benhall Green to the south and SANGS area to the east;

- The existing crossing points along the railway line will be evaluated and improved if needed; and
- Opportunity for an additional crossing point located in the middle of the two existing ones. Subject to further investigation.

### Green infrastructure

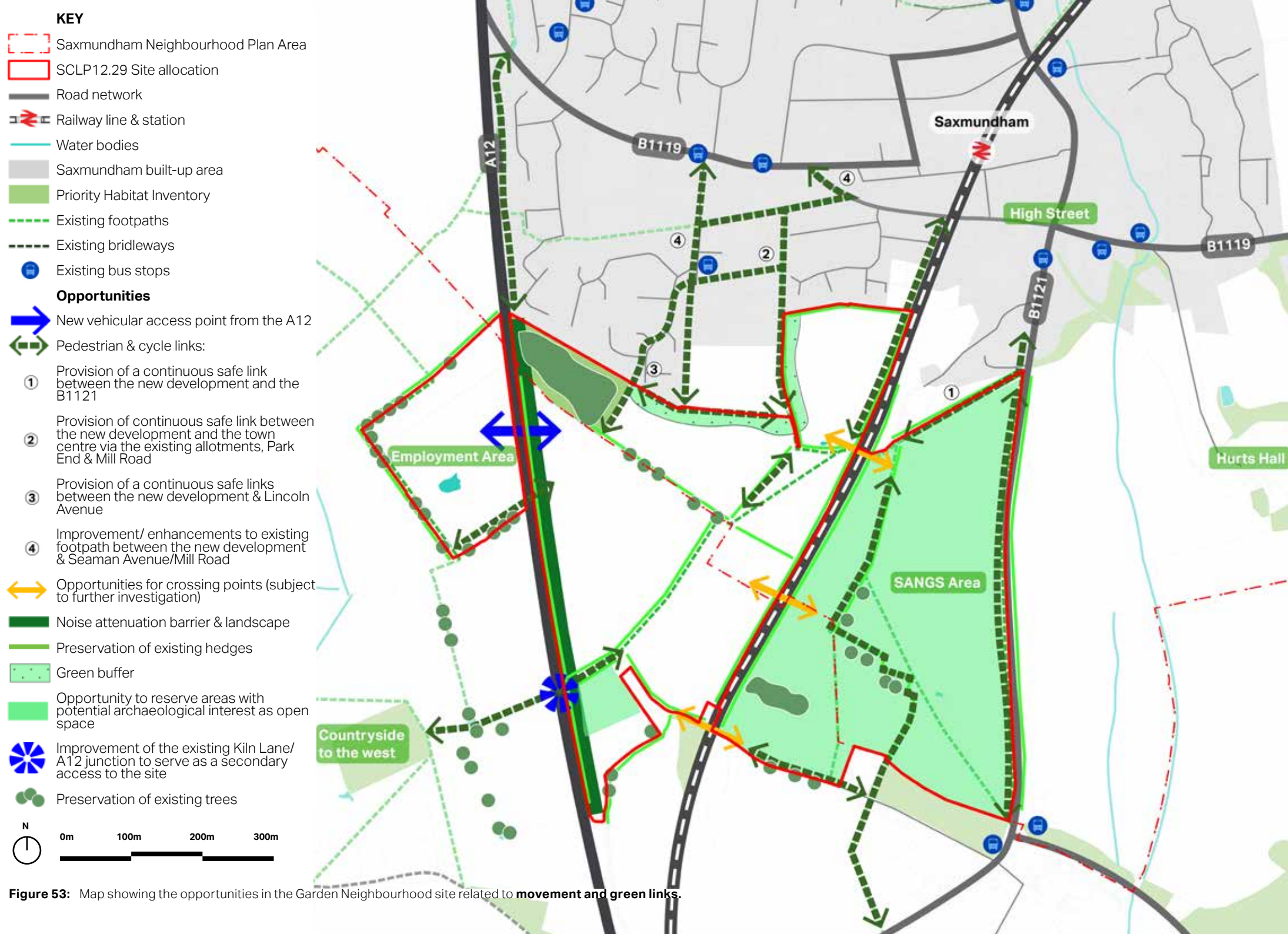
- A green zone along the northern boundary of the site could create opportunities for walking routes between the existing and new communities as well as ensuring a buffer between existing and new properties;
- The site located east of the rail line, The Layers, could be allocated as

SANGS area. The size of this site is appropriate to fully make use of SANGS' benefits for the area;

- The piece of land located to the south of the site close to the A12, also identified as a site of potential archaeological significance, could become a heritage park and be safeguarded from any future development; and
- All existing trees, hedges and hedgerows could be preserved and help shape future development proposals.

### Noise

- A noise attenuation barrier along the A12 could mitigate any noise coming from the highway. This barrier will include landscape and green features to also improve the environment and provide nice walking routes. Further investigation will confirm if a sound barrier will also be needed.



# OPPORTUNITIES

## Land uses & Facilities

### Local centre (or community hub)

There are two proposals for the location of the local centre, each one with its own merit:

- A potential location next to the A12 would create a connection with the employment area and attract people driving along the A12. This would create an activity node and a lively local centre. In addition, it would serve as a gateway to the site 'advertising' the area; and
- A potential location to the centre of the site would share the distance from all parts of the new neighbourhood. The existing and proposed green links would come through the local centre creating a well connected walking network.

### Primary school and Early years' provision

There are two proposals for the location of the educational facilities, each one with its own merit:

- A potential location to the north would create an immediate connection with the existing secondary school and the proposed local centre. In addition, this location, combined with the existing woodland and proposed green line to the north, would also enhance the green buffer between existing and new communities; and
- A potential location to the south would promote an equal distribution of educational facilities in Saxmundham, since the primary and secondary schools are already located further north. In addition, this location would offer close proximity to the SANGS and the proposed heritage park creating opportunities for outdoor learning courses.

### Employment area

- The location for the employment area has been identified by the Local Plan; the land west of the A12.

### Development parcels

- The development parcels will take

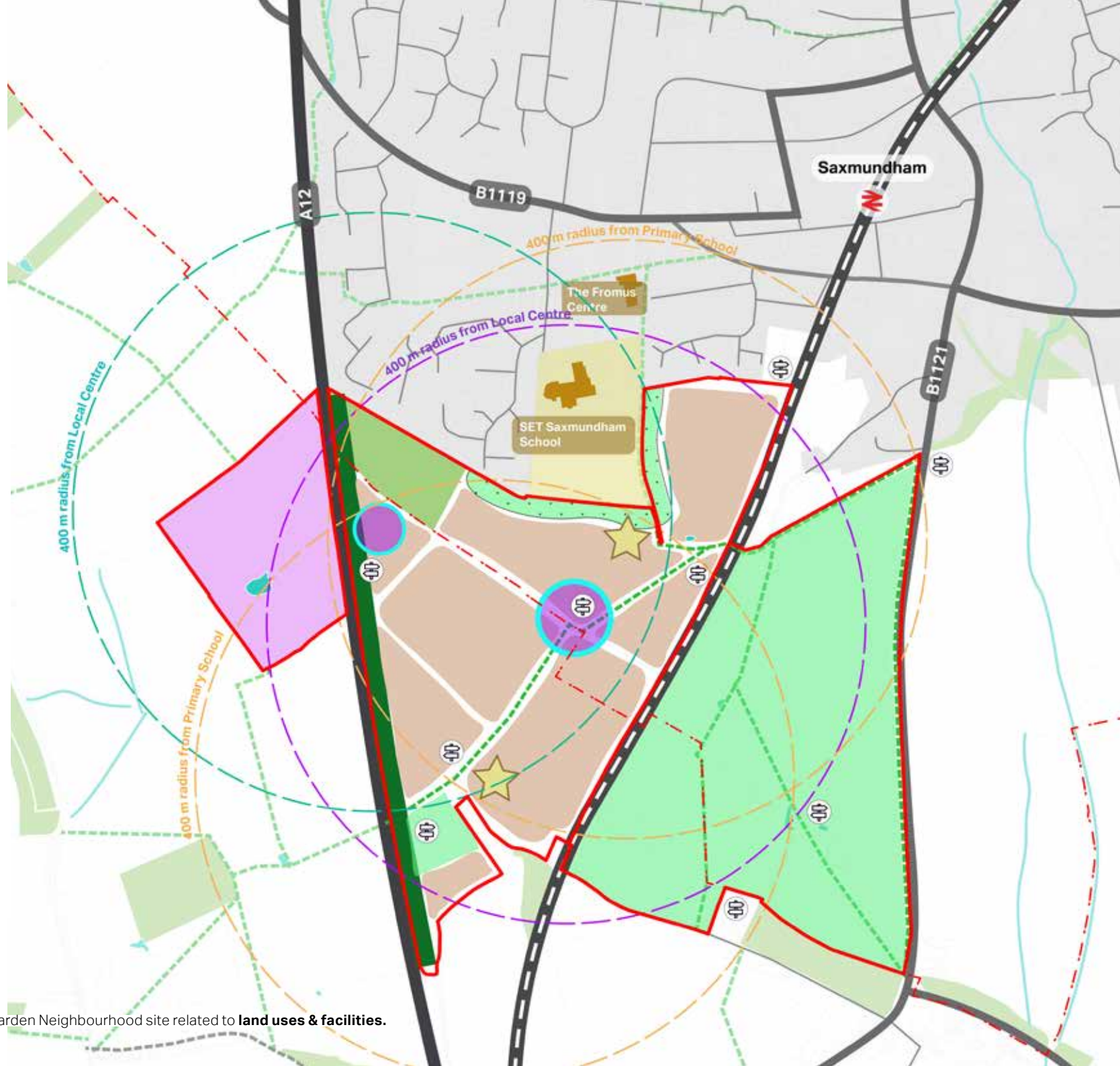
their form based on the locations of the green spaces, green links as well as school facilities and local centre. The aim is to create a well connected neighbourhood where all components are equally distributed.

## SANGS

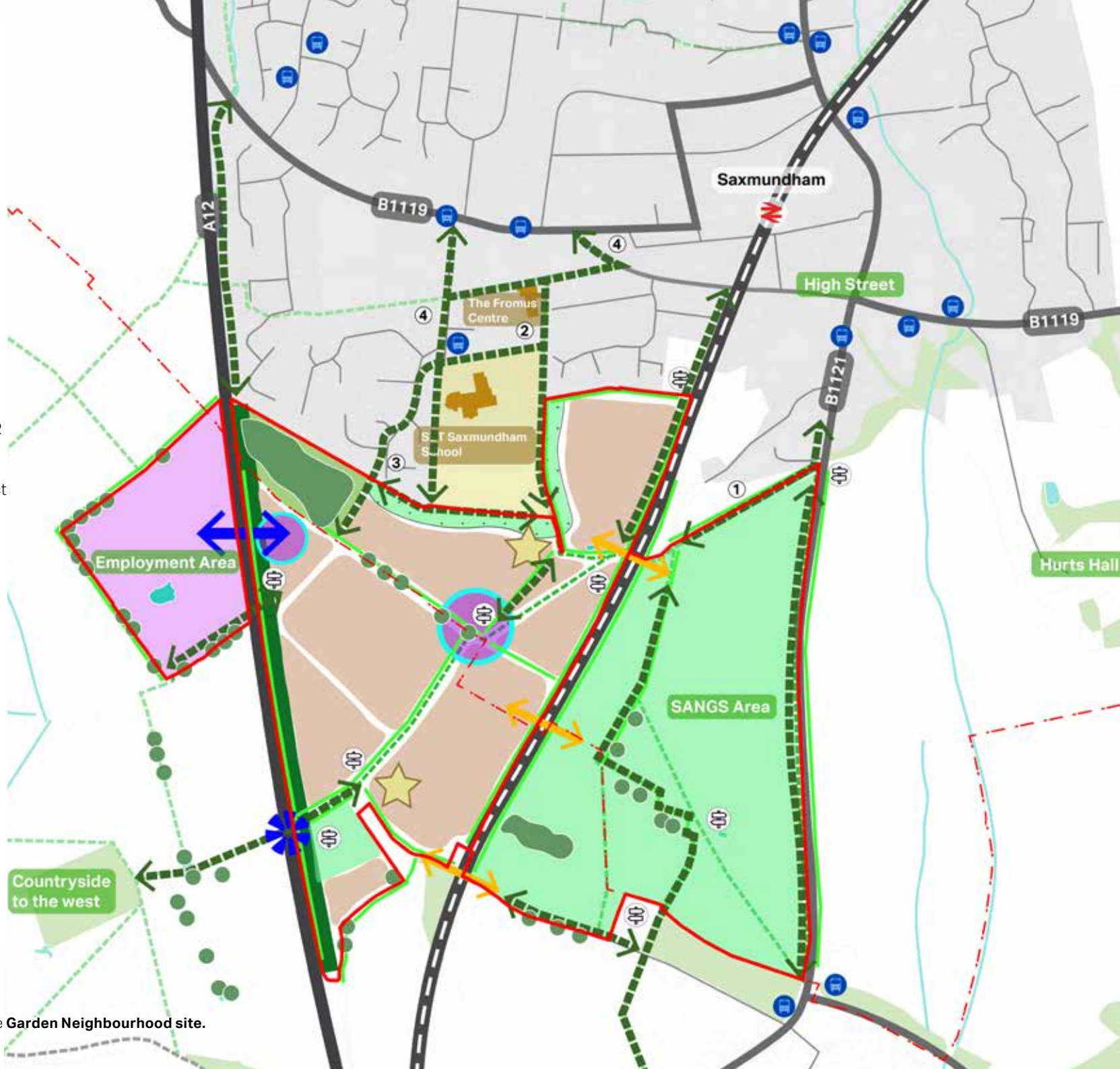
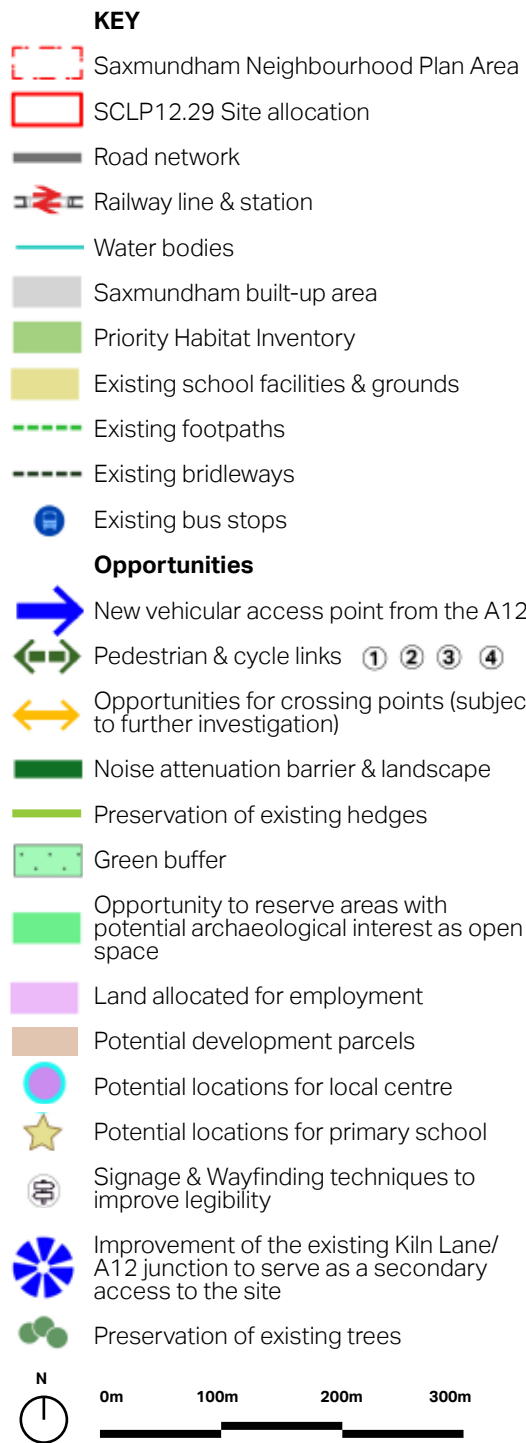
- The site located east of the rail line, including The Layers, could be allocated as SANGS area. The size of this site is appropriate to fully make use of SANGS' benefits for the area.

## Signage

- Signage and wayfinding techniques will be introduced throughout the site to improve legibility and help people navigating themselves around.



**Figure 54:** Map showing the opportunities in the Garden Neighbourhood site related to **land uses & facilities**.



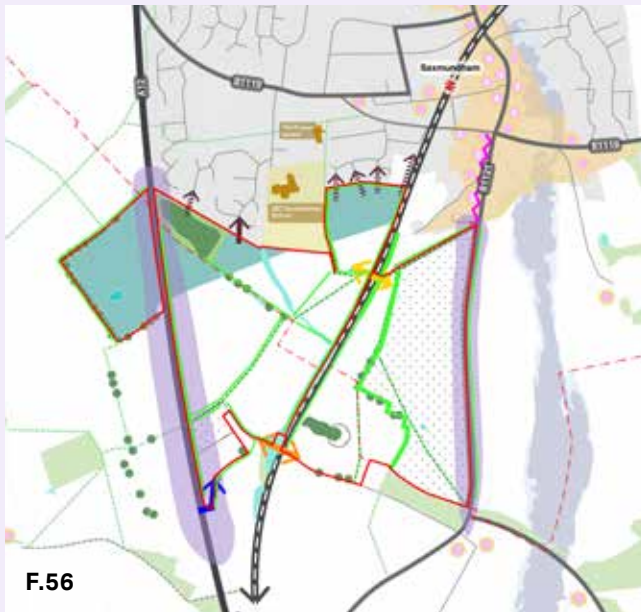
**Figure 55:** Map showing all the opportunities in the **Garden Neighbourhood site.**

# CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

The high-level concept masterplan for the Garden Neighbourhood site has been developed and informed by:

- The analysis of the issues and constraints in the site. This provided a good understanding of the elements that need to be preserved as well as other issues that need to be mitigated through design;
- The opportunities identified in the site. This provided a range of design options that could be proposed for the site and helped shape the vision for the area;
- The ongoing discussions with the Transport team that provided advice on access points, pedestrian links and road network and layout; and
- Design workshops with the Neighbourhood Planning Group to present the findings and the design proposals and to also get their feedback and inside knowledge of the area.

All the above have shaped the proposed high-level concept masterplan for the Garden Neighbourhood site, shown in [Figure 59](#).



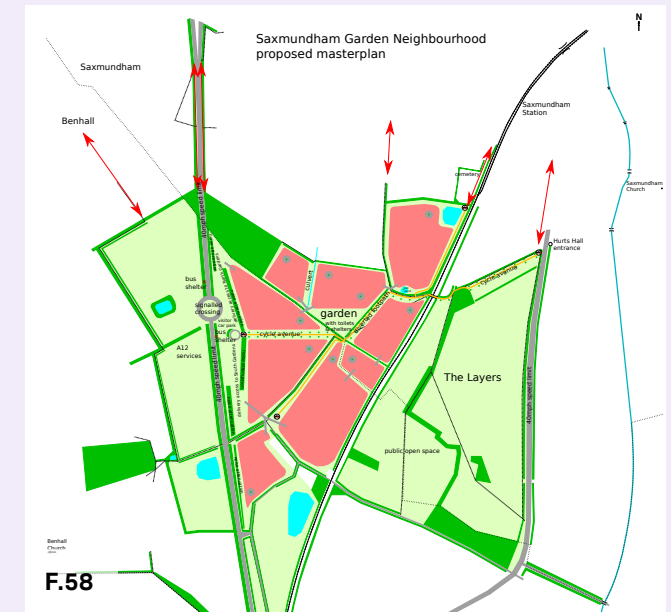
F.56

**Figure 56:** Map showing the issues and constraints identified in the Garden Neighbourhood Site.



F.57

**Figure 57:** Map showing the opportunities identified in the Garden Neighbourhood Site.



F.58

**Figure 58:** Proposals and ideas produced by a member of the Neighbourhood group, John Fisher. Those proposals informed the final masterplan as well.



**Figure 59:** Proposed masterplan for the **Garden Neighbourhood site.**

# CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

## Access to the site

- The main access to the site is located next to the south east corner of the employment area. This creates an immediate connection between the employment area and the residential development to the east;
- The proposed junction, Dutch style and design, will be pedestrian friendly encouraging walking and cycling. [Figure 62](#) shows an indicative illustration of this roundabout; and
- Appropriate signage is added on both sides to navigate people and highlight the speed limits.

## Employment area

- The industrial buildings are set back from the site border respecting the surrounding countryside;
- All existing assets like trees, hedgerows, pond and footpaths are preserved and they are integrated into the proposed layout;

- Appropriate signage is added on strategic locations within the employment area to improve legibility; and
- Bus shelter facilities are proposed along the west and east side of the A12 to provide bus services to the new community.

## Local centre

- The local centre is located next to the main entrance to the site welcoming visitors and residents;
- The local centre offers a variety of shops, open spaces and visitor's parking attracting people from the new and existing community as well as from the employment area;
- Appropriate signage is added to provide information about footpaths, SANGS area, the High Street and other important destinations; and
- The local centre can be easily seen from the main road (A12) also attracting drivers passing by.

## Educational facilities

- The proposed location of the primary school and the early year's provision is to the east of the local centre creating an activity node;
- The school grounds along with the existing woodland to the west and the secondary school to the north create a good amount of green buffer between the existing and new settlement also offering opportunities for pedestrian and cycle routes;
- The proximity of the school grounds to the woodland area also gives the opportunity for outdoor school classes during spring and summer periods; and
- The location of the primary school is within walking distance from the existing and the new community respecting the needs of both sides.





**Figure 60:** Proposed masterplan for the Garden Neighbourhood site focusing on **the employment area and local centre.**

# CONCEPT MASTERPLAN



F.61



F.62



**Figure 61:** Example of a Dutch-style roundabout that promotes cycling and walking in a safe environment. (Reference, Cambridge: <https://www.thisismoney.co.uk/money/cars/article-8580069/UKs-Dutch-style-roundabout-opens-today-Cambridge.html/>).

**Figure 62:** View from Brook Farm Road to the primary school to illustrate similar views from the residences to the new school grounds within the Garden Neighbourhood site. The views will be open and the presence of trees will be prevailing.

# CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

## Green infrastructure & footpaths

- The existing public rights of way are preserved and improved to promote walking and cycling;
- Signage will be added along those routes to help navigation;
- The existing crossing points along the railway will be improved and an additional one is proposed to the middle of the existing two. Further transport investigation will be required;
- Green links are proposed along the edges of the site to create a green buffer, mitigate any noise disturbance and connect with surrounding assets (countryside, SANGS, existing settlement, High Street);
- The entire area east of the railway is proposed as SANGS area in order to have a positive impact on the environment. Footpaths and signage within the SANGS area will facilitate movement and attract people;

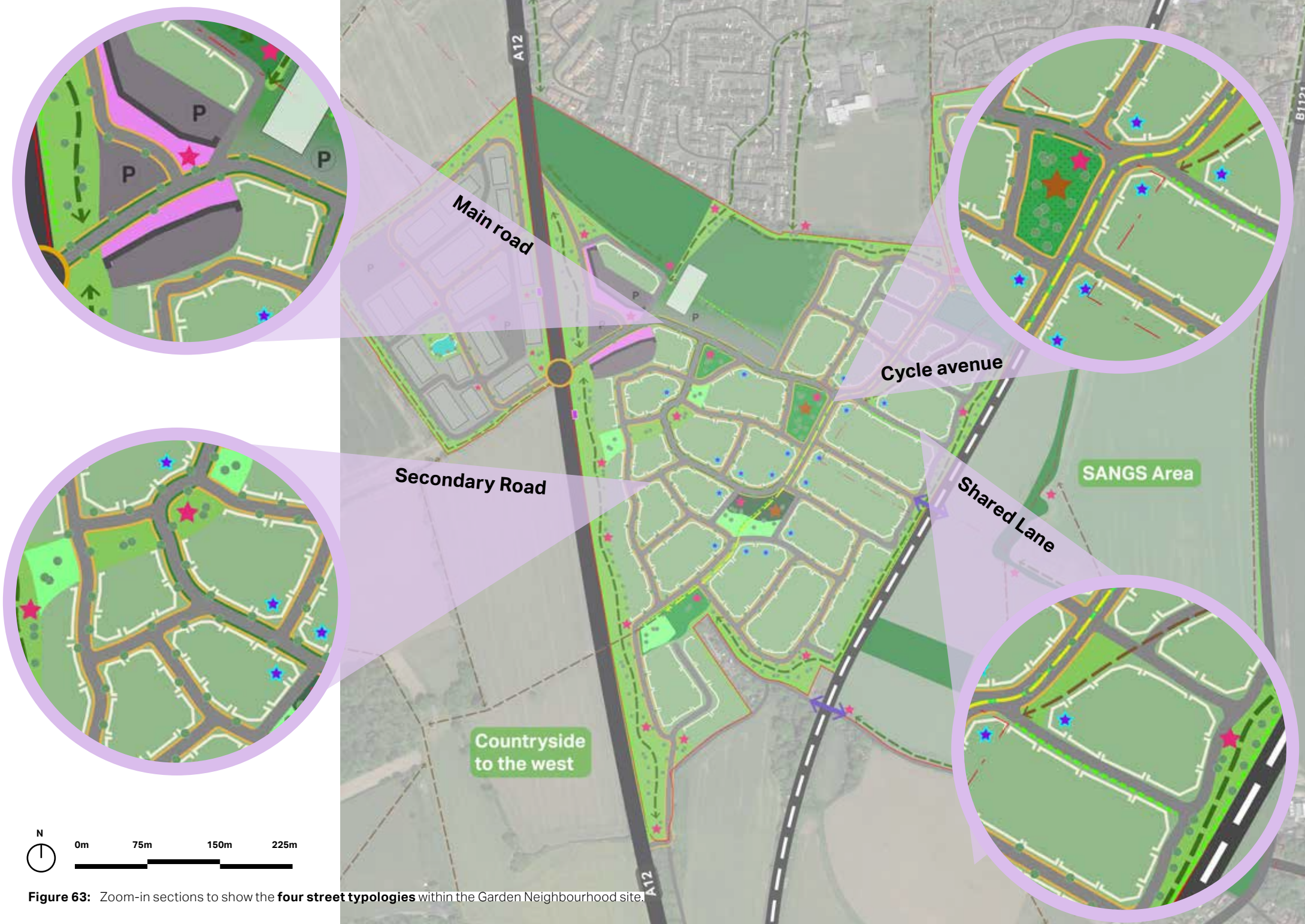
- A range of green spaces is proposed; formal parks, play areas, sports fields, public square, informal greens. All, create a system of different types of green spaces that meet the needs of a wide range of people;
- Shelters, public toilets and other facilities are proposed in some specific green spaces; and
- A circular green route around the site is created enhancing the country feeling and promoting waking and cycling.

## Signage

- Gateways, apart from signage, are placed in strategic locations to signalise the entrance/exit points to the footpaths and the site in general; and
- Corner buildings along the main road and opposite to central green spaces will act as landmarks to demonstrate the quality of environment as well as improve legibility.

## Street network

- A permeable street network is suggested to improve vehicular and pedestrian flow;
- The street network aims to integrate the existing public right of ways and desired green links to encourage walking and cycling around the area reducing the reliance on cars;
- Signage is added in strategic locations along the roads to improve legibility and highlight important buildings and places; and
- Four street typologies are proposed for the Garden Neighbourhood site to help filter traffic and vehicular movement; main roads, cycle avenue, residential roads and shared/private lanes. Those are also shown in [F.63](#) and in the separate Design Guidance and Codes report, in the relevant section, in more details.



**Figure 63:** Zoom-in sections to show the **four street typologies** within the Garden Neighbourhood site.



**Figure 64:** Proposed masterplan for the **Garden Neighbourhood site.**

**Next Steps**

**04**



## 4. Next Steps

This masterplan report should be considered in conjunction with the separate Design Guidance and Codes report where the design principles, that should be followed in future development, are outlined.

This masterplan report is an important tool to enable discussions concerning the future development in the Garden Neighbourhood site.

In addition, this section explains how to embed the masterplan for the High Street in the Neighbourhood Plan and engage with local authorities. More specifically, the various ways, in which the different parties participating in the planning process will use this masterplan (and the Design Guidance and Codes), are shown in the table below.

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>How to use this guideline (for any proposal in the High Street)</b>
Applicants, developers, landowners	As a guide to community and Local Planning Authorities expectations on design, allowing a degree of certainty – they will be expected to follow these guidelines when planning consent is sought.
Local Planning Authority	As a reference point, embedded in policy, against which planning applications can be assessed.
Town Council	As a guide when commenting on planning applications, ensuring that the aspirations of the community have been taken into account.
Community organisations	As a tool to promote community-backed development and to inform comments on planning applications.
Statutory consultees	As a reference point when commenting on planning applications.

