GLOUCESTER
PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY
2017

Gloucester
City Council
Transforming Your City

Contents

Executive Summary

The public realm belongs to everyone, it is part of our everyday lives and it is where we move and meet on a daily basis. It is the places we pass through on our journeys and the spaces we use for outdoor activities and social interaction.

Public realm shapes the image of the places we inhabit, it creates identity and distinctiveness and influences how others see us. Public realm comprises the streets, squares, parks, green spaces and other outdoor places that require no key to access them and are available, without charge for everyone to use.

The Gloucester Public Realm Strategy sets out a number of guiding principles which should be used to improve the public realm within the City Centre. The strategy should be used not just when designing major redevelopment sites, but also in the day-to-day maintenance of the existing public realm within the City Centre.

The fundamental structure of the historic core of Gloucester has remained almost intact since the original Roman settlement was established around 90AD (over 1900 years ago). The principal routes within the core of the city, including the Gate Streets and connected streets, provide much of the historic character found in the centre. The Cathedral and the areas surrounding it provide some of the highest quality architecture in the city. The later addition of the Docks and Quays, which was made possible by the opening of the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal in 1827, provides another focus for tourism and identity for the city.
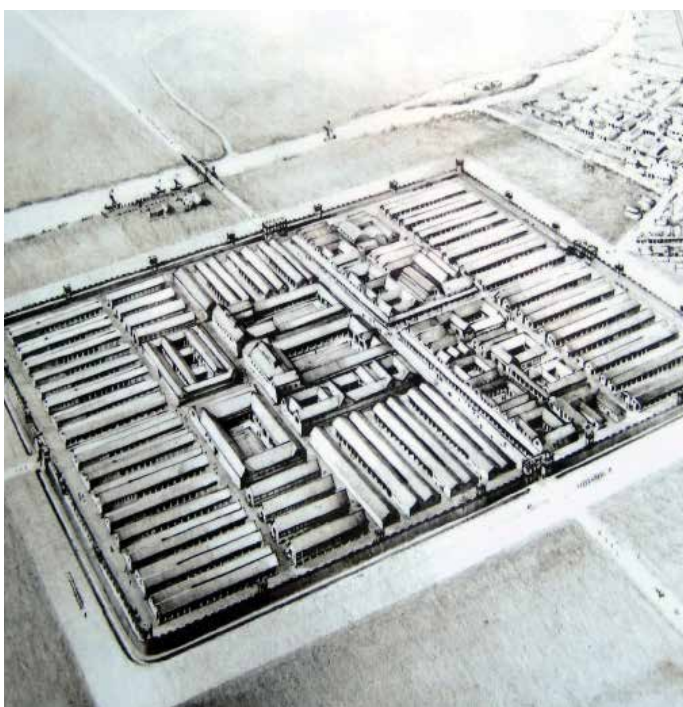
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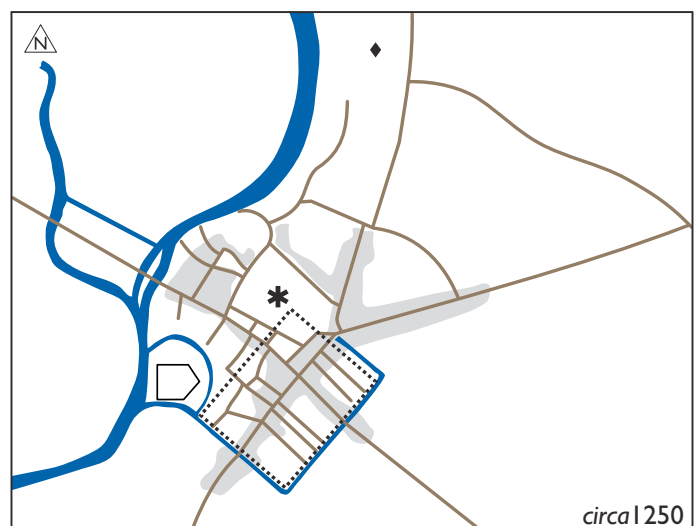
circa 1250

	Known occupied areas		Aquaduct
....	Roman Colonia	◆	Priory
✱	Cathedral	◆	Manor

Category of spaces

The Cathedral and it's precincts, the Gate Streets and the Docks and Quays areas, combine to form the most important focus for the highest quality public realm. A series of secondary streets and spaces surround these primary areas and make up the rest of the historic core of the City. These streets and spaces are important in their own right and all are considered important as part of the character of the City.

- 🟨 Lanes
- 🟥 Primary streets and spaces
- 🟧 Secondary streets and spaces
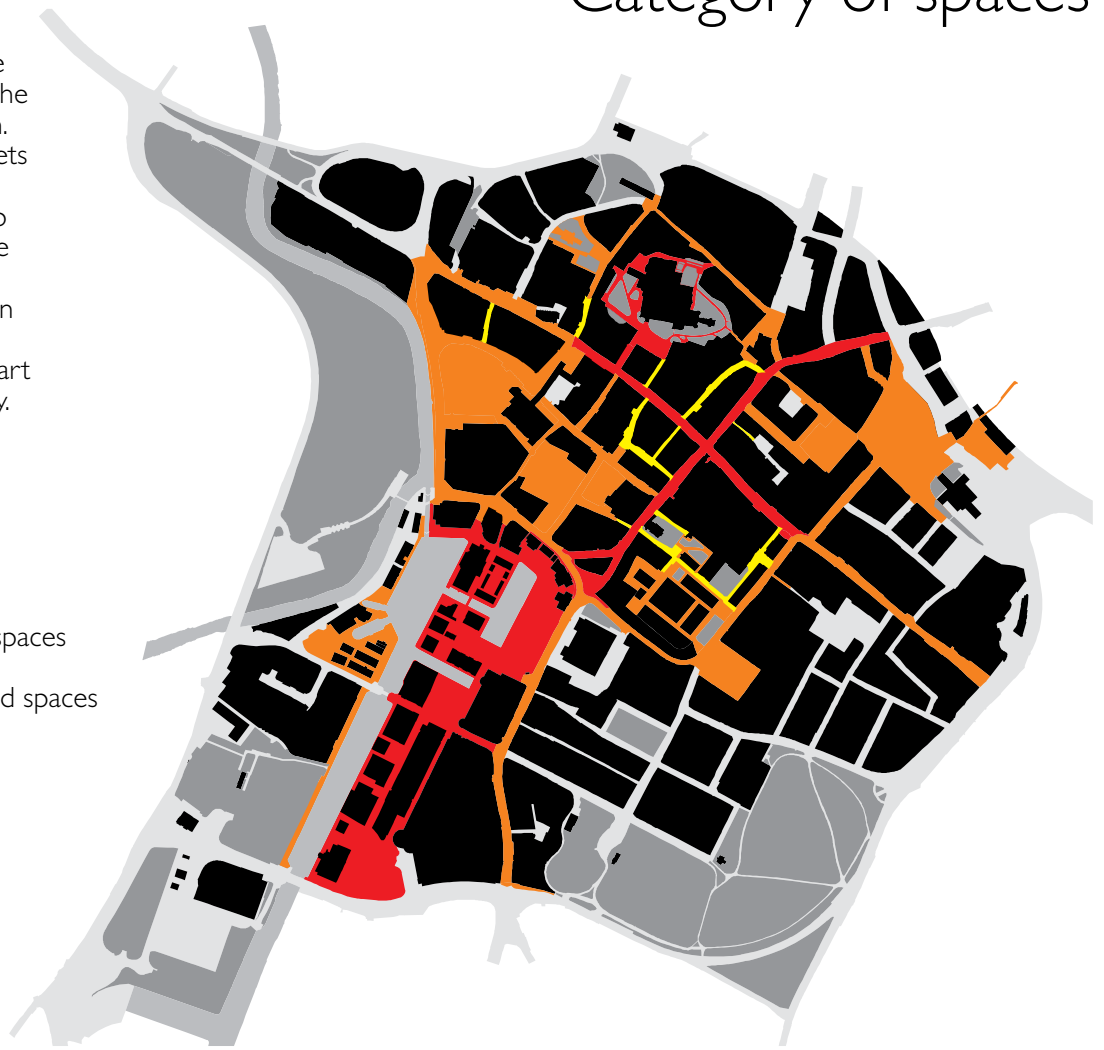
High quality materials are required to create areas which people want to live in and experience every day, and which visitors to Gloucester will appreciate and which will help to support the city's economy and prosperity.

Public realm examples

1. Introduction

The public realm belongs to everyone, it is part of our everyday lives and it is where we move and meet on a daily basis. It is the places we pass through on our journeys and the spaces we use for outdoor activities and social interaction.

Public realm shapes the image of the places we inhabit, it creates identity and distinctiveness and influences how others see us. Public realm comprises the streets, squares, parks, green spaces and other outdoor places that require no key to access them and are available, without charge for everyone to use.

1.1 High quality public realm should not be considered a 'desirable' element of regeneration: it must be an essential ingredient. The quality of our public realm is vital if we are to be successful in creating environments that people want to live and work in.

1.2 Good quality public realm is not just an aesthetic issue concerned with making places look good. There are fundamental financial, crime, health and civic pride elements involved, all of which contribute to the quality of life experienced by residents and visitors to Gloucester.

'Places and streets that have stood the test of time are those where traffic and other activities have been integrated successfully, and where buildings and spaces, and the needs of people, not just of their vehicles, shape the area.' (Manual for Streets, Department for Transport, 2007)

1.3 The Council supports innovative and attractive development within Gloucestershire. The NPPF states that developments should establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit. (Para 2.5, p.16)

1.4 In recent years, Gloucester has begun to regenerate, with high-quality new developments including the Gloucester Quays, Docks public realm improvements, new developments within the Docks area, the Linkages project which transformed the Southgate Street and Kimbrose Triangle areas, the Greyfriars housing development and numerous smaller projects.

1.5 Regeneration is continuing and redevelopments including the Kings Quarter, the former Gloucester Prison site and the Greater Blackfriars area all have the potential to make significant contributions to the quality of the City Centre. The public realm within and surrounding these major development sites will play a key role in creating high-quality areas which improve the lives of residents and visitors to Gloucester.

1.6 This Public Realm Strategy ('the strategy') sets out a number of guiding principles which should be used to improve the public realm within the City Centre. The strategy should be used not just when designing major redevelopment sites, but also in the day-to-day maintenance of the existing public realm within the City Centre.

1.7 The Public Realm Strategy is not a land use planning document and does not seek to redefine any 'private' areas of land within the strategy area as 'public'. The aim is to set out a broad range of design principles to enhance the quality of Gloucester's public realm and to provide additional guidance to supplement the emerging Joint Core Strategy and Gloucester City Plan.

1.8 The Gloucester Public Realm Strategy has been developed in consultation with local stakeholders, and following a 6 week period of public consultation, has been adopted as Supplementary Planning Document.

1.9 It is intended that further detailed design work will be carried out in areas identified by the strategy as needing improvement and that the design principles identified in this strategy guide this future work.

1.10 There are already many positive aspects to Gloucester's public realm and many opportunities for significant improvements. The linked public realms of the Quays, Docks and Kimbrose Triangle/Southgate Street have set the level of quality to a high standard which should be the benchmark for future public realm schemes.

Strategy objectives:

To develop a coherent and high quality approach to the public realm within the City Centre, based on reducing clutter and providing high quality materials

Develop principles which will enhance the safety and security of people using Gloucester's public realm

To improve the appearance of the Gate Streets and historic areas and improve the setting of heritage assets

To reduce the amount of clutter and rationalise or combine street furniture

Improve the legibility of Gloucester City Centre through the use of a coordinated palette of materials, clear signage and street furniture

To develop and set out a range of public realm principles, upon which further detailed public realm schemes will be based

To recognise the needs of all groups who use the City Centre and to develop clear design principles based on these needs

To enhance the connections between major land uses and areas of activity.
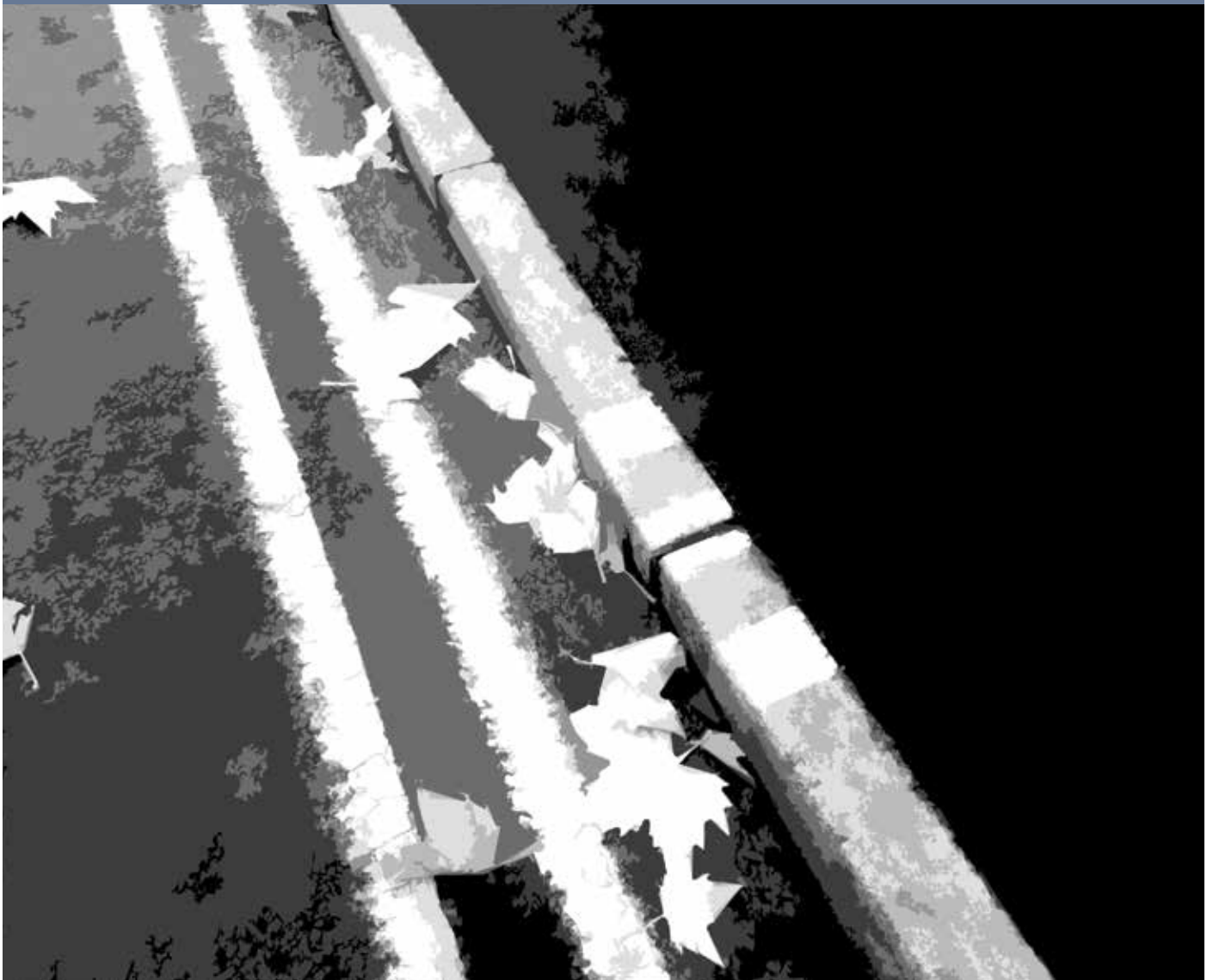
Clapham Old Town, existing and proposed images.
Project design by Urban Movement *http://www.urbanmovement.co.uk/clapham-ot_projects_urd.html*

2. Policy background & context

The creation of areas of high-quality public realm is supported by national and local planning policy and guidance, which has informed the content of the strategy.

2.1 National policy & guidance

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into effect on 27th March 2012 and sets out the Government's approach towards planning and sustainable development. The document sets out how the planning system should facilitate sustainable development, by contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, and by contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

2.1.2 The NPPF highlights the importance of creating a good quality built environment, ensuring the vitality of town centres, promoting sustainable transport, promoting healthy communities, and conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

2.1.3 Part 7 of the NPPF sets out how development should take available opportunities to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. It supports good design and good quality streets & spaces which are safe and accessible.

2.1.4 The National Planning Practice Guidance sets out how the policies in the NPPF are to be implemented and contains numerous relevant notes on the need to promote high quality design, including areas of public realm.

'Successful streets are those where traffic and other activities have been integrated successfully, and where buildings and spaces, and the needs of people, not just of their vehicles, shape the area.

In many cases shortcomings in street design reflect the rigid application of highway engineering standards in terms of road hierarchies, junction separation distances, sight lines and turning radii for service vehicles. The result is often a sense of sprawl and formlessness and development which contradicts some of the key principles of urban design.

Imaginative and context-specific design that does not rely on conventional standards can achieve high levels of safety and amenity. Each street should be considered as unique – understand its location, character and eccentricities.

Designs should relate to these local characteristics, not to something built elsewhere.' (NPPG, Paragraph 042)

2.1.5 One of the primary objectives of the Public Realm Strategy is to reduce unnecessary clutter within the public realm. Paragraph 042 of the National Planning Practice Guidance states the following;

'Every element of the street scene contributes to the identity of the place, including for example lighting, railings, litter bins, paving, fountains and street furniture. These should be well designed and sensitively placed.

Unnecessary clutter and physical constraints such as parking bollards and road humps should be avoided. Street clutter is a blight, as the excessive or insensitive use of traffic signs and other street furniture has a negative impact on the success of the street as a place.

The removal of unnecessary street clutter can, in itself, make pavements clearer and more spacious for pedestrians, including the disabled, and improve visibility and sight lines for road users. Street signs should be periodically audited with a view to identifying and removing unnecessary signs.' (NPPG, Paragraph 042)

2.1.6 National policy is clear that good design is a fundamental part of the planning process.

'Good quality design is an integral part of sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises that design quality matters and that planning should drive up standards across all forms of development. As a core planning principle, plan-makers and decision takers should always seek to secure high quality design.

Achieving good design is about creating places, buildings, or spaces that work well for everyone, look good, last well, and will adapt to the needs of future generations.

'Development should seek to promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, local man-made and natural heritage and culture, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

The successful integration of all forms of new development with their surrounding context is an important design objective, irrespective of whether a site lies on the urban fringe or at the heart of a town centre.' (NPPG, Paragraph 007).

2.1.7 Manual for Streets 1 (DfT March 2007) and Manual for Streets 2 (Dft September 2010), are the primary Highways policy guides and support the creation of quality streets.

2.1.8 The 2007 CABE document 'Paved with Gold: The Real Value of Good Street Design', in particular sets out various key aspects for the design of quality streets.

- Dropped kerbs, tactile paving and colour contrast

- Smooth, clean, well-drained surfaces

- High-quality materials, high standards of maintenance, including pavements wide enough to accommodate all users with no pinch points

- Potential obstructions placed out of the way and enough crossing points in the right places

- Traffic levels not excessive

- Good lighting and a sense of security with no graffiti or litter, with no signs of anti-social behaviour

- Signage, landmarks and good sightlines with public spaces along the street resulting in a street that is a pleasant place to be.

2.2 Local policy and guidance

2.2.1 There are a number of important local policies relating to the design of the public realm. 'Manual for Gloucestershire Streets' (Gloucestershire County Council, June 2013) sets out the various technical and design standards relating to roads and streets within the county.

2.2.2 'Gloucestershire County Council Enhanced Materials Policy' (October 2010) sets out the types of materials which are acceptable to ensure safety and ease of maintenance, but which are of a higher quality than the standard range of highways materials, such as tarmac.

This allows enhanced and often more locally distinctive materials to be used within adopted highways, with commuted sums generally being collected to allow for future maintenance over the 'whole life' of an area's materials.

2.2.3 The 4th Edition of Manual for Gloucestershire Streets (April 2016), sets out a range of criteria and guidance on the design of Highways areas.

2.2.4 The Joint Core Strategy (November 2014) is at the Submission stage of its development and is now a material consideration in determining planning applications and guiding the design of developments within its boundary.

2.2.5 Policy SD5 (Design requirements) within the emerging JCS sets out policies relating to the design of public realm. Table SD5b sets out specific design principles, including the design of public realm.

2.2.6 The Gloucester City Council 'Second Stage Deposit Local Plan 2002' provides policy guidance on design issues, including proposals for landscaping, the appearance of developments, the impact of

developments on the character and quality of an area and the need to reinforce local distinctiveness in the long term. The emerging Draft City Plan will replace the 2002 Local Plan and has specific policies on public realm quality and design.

2.2.7 The City Centre Conservation Area Appraisal has a number of policies relating to public realm and this document should be considered during the development of any public realm project within the City Centre.

2.2.8 It is intended that the strategy will form part of the emerging Gloucester City Plan, and has been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Table SD5a	
Hierarchy of Transport Modes	
Highest	1. Pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties 2. Cyclists 3. Public transport and social/community services 4. Access by commercial vehicles 5. Ultra-low emission vehicles
Lowest	1. Other motorised vehicles

3. Public realm analysis and strategy area

In order to be able to propose appropriate improvements to Gloucester's public spaces, it is first essential to analyse and understand the way in which the public realm in Gloucester is formed and used, what the character of the place is and what the positive and negative aspects of the existing public realm include.
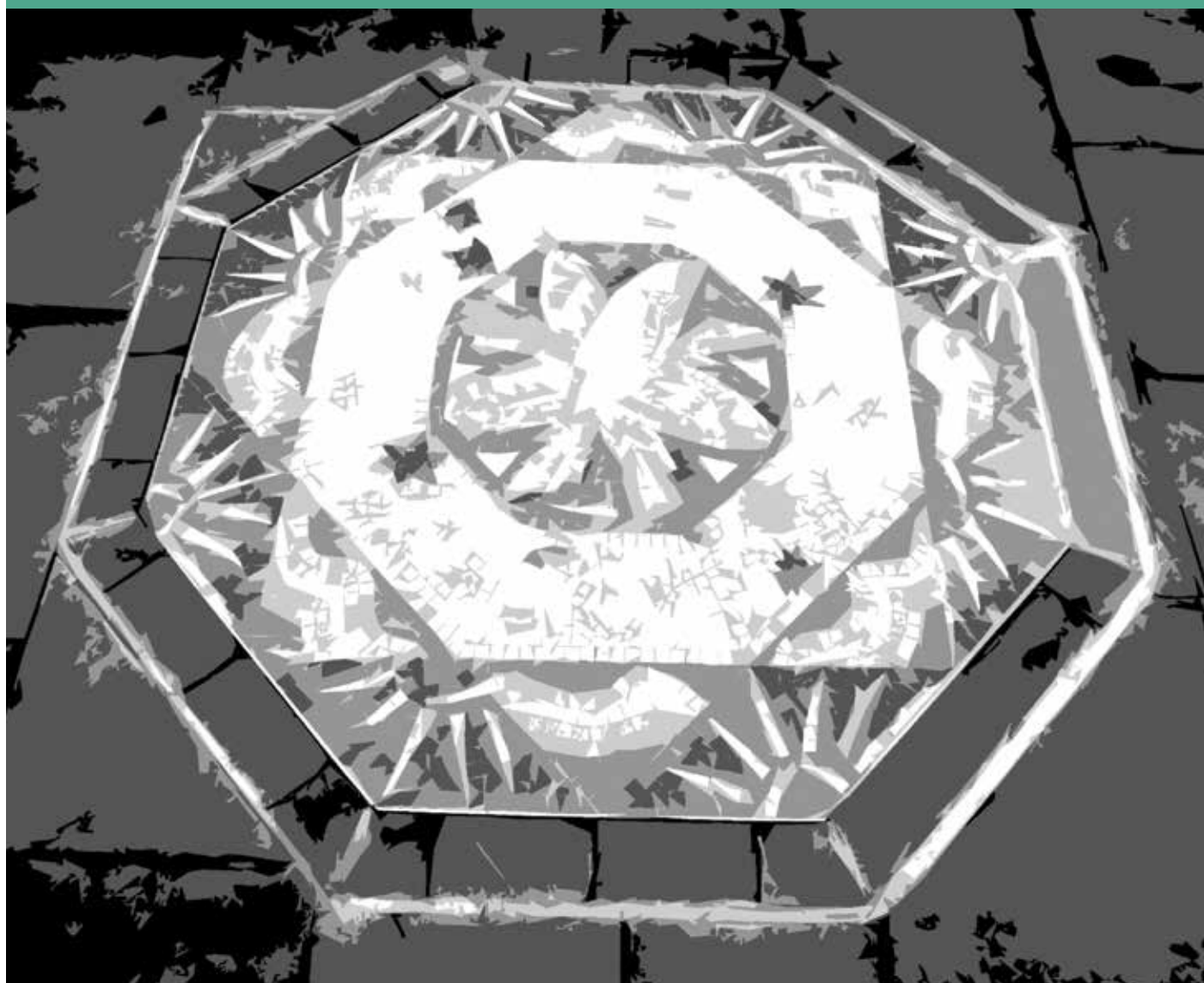
3.1 Public Realm Strategy area

3.1.1 The focus for the strategy is the centre of Gloucester, including the historic core, areas around the train and bus stations, the Docks, and the Gate Streets. A plan showing the extent of the area is below. This general area includes some of the most important historic sites in the city, as well as the main areas of employment and activity.

3.1.2 This central area also holds the most important redevelopment sites within Gloucester and will have a significant impact on the overall character and perception of the city. The central area also forms the anchor of the sequence of spaces from the Gate Streets, via the Docks, to Gloucester Quays.

3.1.3 Further public realm recommendations and strategies are encouraged for areas outside of the central core of the city but the recommendations contained in this strategy are specific to the central area.

3.2 Historic development pattern

3.2.1 The area chosen for the focus of the strategy also relates to the historic development pattern of the city, dating back to the establishment of the original Roman city of Glevum in the late 90's AD.

3.2.2 The Roman City at Gloucester (Glevum) was established on the site of the fort around 90AD and the city walls follow exactly the layout of the earlier fortress. The fundamental principles of Gloucester's layout were established at this time, and many elements remain, over 1900 years after they were established.

3.2.3 Very little is known about the development of Gloucester immediately after the Roman period (between 410 and 700AD) and the city may have been wholly or partly abandoned during this period. But by the 8th and 9th centuries Gloucester was certainly re-established as a settlement and by the end of 10th century was an important town and fortress.

3.2.4 Following the Norman conquest the City Centre underwent a number

Extent of strategy

of quite profound changes. St Peters Abbey obtained lands outside the walls – extending the Abbey Precinct to Pitt Street in the north and St Mary's Street in the West. In doing so the north-west corner of the Roman walls was removed entirely.

3.2.5 In the south west of the city the construction of a Norman' castle was followed swiftly by the creation of a large stone castle on the site of what is now the prison. For much of the medieval period the area around the castle was kept empty, hence the name 'Bearland'.

3.3 Character areas

3.3.1 There are a number of distinct character areas within the strategy area, notably formed through the distinct areas of the Cathedral and its precincts, the clear pattern and fairly continuous character of the central Gate Streets, the King's Quarter area which includes the train and bus station sites.

The Greater Blackfriars area is also included, which lies between the Westgate Street / Southgate Street boundary and the Docks (including the former prison site) and the Greyfriars area.

3.3.2 Areas which lie just outside the strategy area include the Spa, Park area and St. Oswald's Park. Detailed public realm proposals which follow the general principles set out in this strategy could be extended into these areas.

3.3.3 The distinctions between character areas can be used as the basis for proposing variations in overall and detailed public realm treatments, including types of materials and carriageway widths. This response to the local context is an important aspect of developing a style for new public realm projects which enhances and builds on the positive and distinctive aspects of the City Centre.

Historic maps

The plans below set out the historic development pattern of Gloucester through the various time periods, including settlement areas, streets, river course and emergence of The Docks.

circa AD150

*circa*1250

C21st
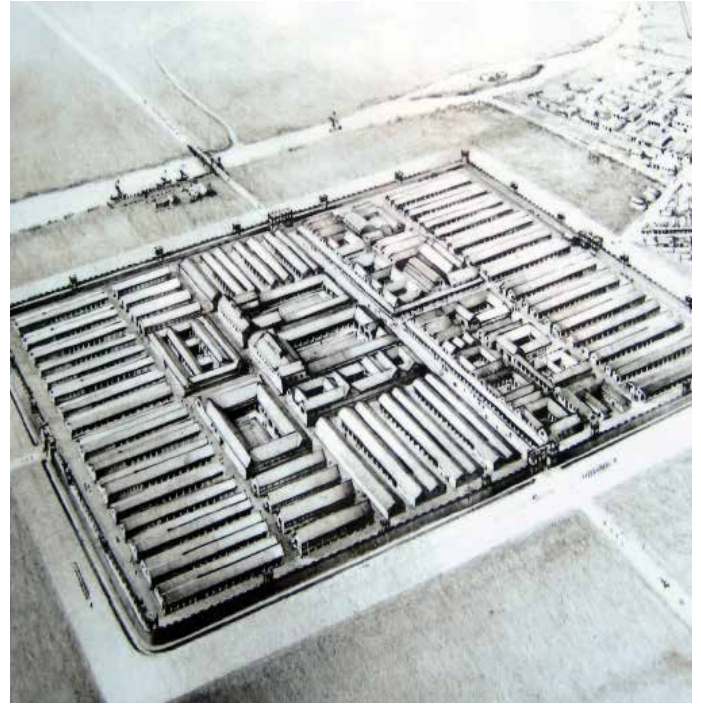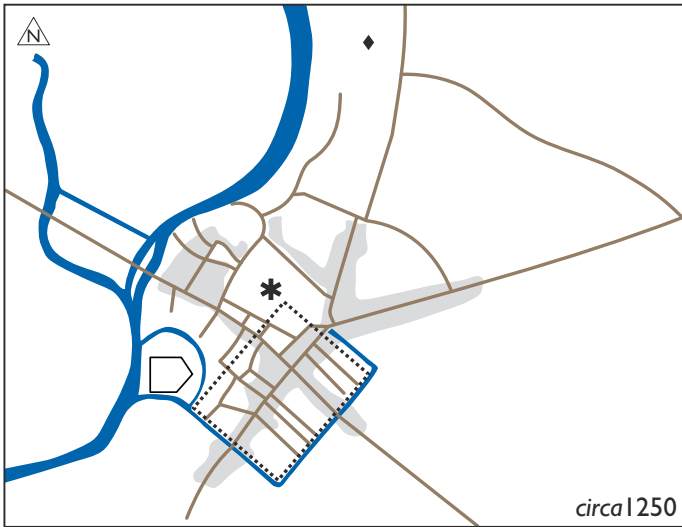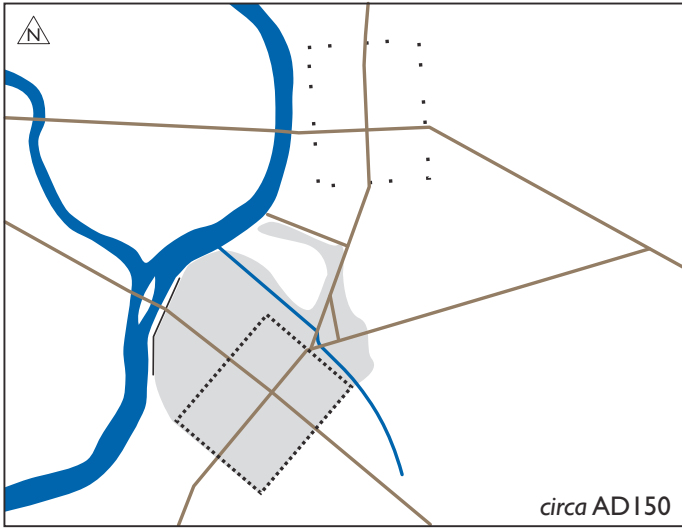
Drawing by Phil Moss (1st Century Gloucester)

Known occupied areas		Aquaduct	
Roman Colonia		Priory	
Cathedral		Manor	

Key Arrival Points and Car Parks

KEY ARRIVAL POINTS

1 Railway Station
2 Bus Station
3 Bus Stops
4 The Quays
5 Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
6 Asda
7 Go Outdoors

CAR PARKS

8 Southgate Moorings
9 Blackfriars (Barbican)
10 Blackfriars (Ladybellegate)
11 Longsmith
12 Westgate
13 Hare Lane
14 King's Walk
15 Eastgate
16 Train Station
17 Bruton Way
18 Hampden Way
19 St. Michael's Square

3.4 Arrival points

3.4.1 Arrival points into the centre of Gloucester are one of the key project areas for any regeneration or public realm improvement programme or strategy, given that these are the places which provide access into the central area and also where people will get their important first impressions of Gloucester, particularly important for visitors and for resident's daily experiences.

3.4.2 Providing efficient, appealing and highly legible arrival points, particularly regarding the major transport nodes such as train or bus stations, is one of the more important ways that any urban area can improve the overall experience of a place, for residents and visitors alike.

3.4.3 The importance placed on each transport type within this strategy broadly aligns with the following sequence, with the most important at the top. This is set out within Policy SD5 (Table SD5a - Hierarchy of Transport Modes), of the Joint Core Strategy.

1. Pedestrians and people with mobility difficulties
2. Cyclists
3. Public transport and social/ community services
4. Access by commercial vehicles
5. Ultra-low emission vehicles
6. Other motorised vehicles

3.4.4 A significant proportion of the strategy area is at least partly pedestrianised and the safety and ease of movement of pedestrians should be one of the key principles.

3.4.5 The map opposite shows the various arrival points which are located either within the strategy area or which directly border the area. These are described below.

3.4.6 Train station
Located just within the eastern boundary of the strategy area, the train station provides local, regional and national connections, and is on the mainline to London. At present, the quality of the train station and it's immediate surroundings is poor, with a limited physical connection across Bruton Way (the A430), towards the bus station and City Centre, and an overall appearance which is cluttered

and negative. There is significant potential to create a welcoming and high quality arrival point.

3.4.7 Bus station
The existing bus station falls within the Kings Quarter redevelopment area and provides a strategic public transport link on a local and national level. The quality of the bus station is limited in terms of its appearance and functioning.

The form of the development creates an illegible link towards the City Centre and the internal spaces are not overlooked by surrounding development, leading to significant security issues. A clear link between the train station, bus station and City Centre is lacking at present. There are however, plans to provide a new bus station which will greatly improve the functioning and appearance of the area.

3.4.8 Car parks
The various City Centre car parks form Gloucester's main non-public transport arrival points The main public car parks are as follows.

1. Southgate Moorings
2. Blackfriars (Barbican)
3. Blackfriars (Ladybellegate Street)
4. Longsmith Street
5. Westgate Street
6. Hare Lane
7. Kingswalk Shopping Centre (off Station Road)
8. Eastgate Centre (off Brunswick Road)
9. Train Station
10. Bruton Way
11. Hampden Way car parks
12. St. Michael's Square

3.4.9 The quality and style of the car parks varies a great deal, with some being surface level areas and others being 1960's and 70's multi-storey structures. In general, the quality of the car park corresponds to its age, with most of the car parks being decades old.

3.4.10 Bus stops
The main City Centre bus stops are located along Clarence Street and Lower Eastgate Street. Both of these streets have circulation issues with poor materials existing in many places. The central location of the bus stops does however, provide easy and direct access to the key City Centre attractions.

3.5 Land use and activity hotspots

3.5.1 Areas of concentrated retail, office and leisure uses generally create the most significant activity levels, in the most concentrated spaces. Residential areas tend to generate high activity levels, but only at peak times of the day and in a more dispersed pattern, over wider areas.

3.5.2 Due to this trend, central areas which contain high concentrations of retail uses, such as a number of the areas within the strategy boundary, are some of the most concentrated in terms of numbers of people who use those areas, both in terms of shopping activity and as employment sites.

3.5.3 People are also drawn to areas of historic interest, such as the Gate Streets, Cathedral and the Docks. There are also numerous other tourist sites, mainly centred on the historic Gate Streets, with the Gloucester Quays Outlet centre also being a draw for visitors and residents alike..

3.5.4 The following are the major land uses within the City Centre which have a direct impact on areas of public realm.

1. Eastgate Shopping Centre
2. Kingswalk Shopping Centre
3. Bus station & train station
4. GL1, Asda, Go Outdoors
5. Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
6. The Quays Shopping Centre
7. Wilkinson, Sainsbury's and Debenhams
8. Gloucester Rugby Club (Kingsholm)

3.5.5 The major land uses generate the varying activity levels which are experienced within the City Centre. Areas of more concentrated activity are linked to the major land uses. Improvement projects in, around and between the activity hotspot areas will therefore make the most difference to people's experience of the centre of Gloucester and have the most impact on raising the perceived quality of the City Centre.

3.5.6 The main City Centre activity hot spots have been identified and this is presented in the plan opposite.

Land Use and Activity hotspots

LAND USES

1 Eastgate
2 King's Walk
3 Railway Station
4 Bus Station
5 GL1
6 Asda
7 Go Outdoors
8 Gloucestershire Royal Hospital
9 The Quays
10 Debenhams, Sainsbury's and Wilkinson
11 Kingsholm RFC

ACTIVITY HOTSPOTS

12 Railway to Bus Station
13 King's Square
14 Clarence Street
15 Boots Corner
16 Eastgate Street entrance to Eastgate Shopping Centre
17a&b Greyfriars Housing sites
18 Southgate Street entrance to Eastgate Shopping Centre
19 The Cross
20 Cathedral and Shire Hall
21 Area connecting Debenhams, Sainsbury's and Wilkinson
22 Bruton Way / Northgate Street junction
23 The Quays
24 The Docks
25 Kingholm RFC

3.6 Connections

3.6.1 One of the main functions of the public realm within the centre of Gloucester is to provide routes between important destinations. Identifying and enhancing these connections between major land use and activity nodes is one of the key aspects of the strategy. The routes between activity areas not only provide access, but are also places in themselves, the quality of which is important in how the City Centre is perceived and used.

3.6.2 Before the details and approaches to the design of these connections is established, it is necessary to identify the character and quality of each connection. The following is a list of strategic connections through the centre of Gloucester.

1) The Docks, via Kimbrose Triangle to the Southgate Street entrance of the Eastgate Shopping Centre and the Cross. This route was identified as 'linkages route 1' within the LDA Design document 'Gloucester – Public Realm Links' (July, 2008).

This was one of four routes set out as in need of improvement, with the aim being greater connections between The Quays development and the City Centre. The completion of the final section of this route to the Cross is a significant strategic goal.

2) Train and bus station, via Kings Square to Gate Streets. This route is possibly the most significant within the centre, but is also dependent on the redevelopment of the train and bus stations, as well as the Kings Quarter area.

This route connects the most important historic areas of the centre, with the most significant redevelopment site and the largest activity generators. This should be considered the most strategically important connection within the centre.

3) Train and bus station, via Clarence Street, to the Kings Walk and Eastgate shopping centres. This route connects the primary arrival points with the primary activity nodes within the centre.

4) Lower Eastgate Street (GL1, Asda, Go Outdoors), via Eastgate Street shops, to Kingswalk and Eastgate shopping Centres. This route takes in major retail land uses at each end (including the GL1 leisure centre), with a collection of smaller shopping units between. The quality of this link at present is poor and a public realm improvement scheme along this route would have a significant impact.

5) The Docks, via Bearland and Westgate Street, to the Cathedral. This route connects Gloucester's two most significant historic tourist attractions. This route was identified as 'route 2' under the LDA design Public Realm Links document, and also has the significant aspect of having two of Gloucester's most important redevelopment sites along its length, in the former prison site and Blackfriars.

6) The Via Sacra. This route, established in the 1960's, connects numerous historic tourist attractions within the City Centre. This is the most popular Civic Trust tourist trail and broadly follows parts of the Roman walls. Section 4.10 (Public Realm Strategy principles) explain this route in greater detail.

7) Lower Westgate Street car park, via the cathedral to the Cross. This is one of the most significant historic connections and includes Westgate Street which holds the highest number of listed buildings of any street in Gloucester.

Connections

1 The Quays to the Cross
2 Railway Station to the Cross
3 Railway Station via Clarence Street to King's Walk and Eastgate Street shops
4 Lower Eastgate Street to King's Walk and Eastgate Centre
5 The Docks to the Cathedral
6 The Docks via the Prison to the Cathedral
7 Via Sacra
8 Westgate Street car park to the Cathedral and the Cross

3.7 Existing hard landscaping materials

3.7.1 A wide range of materials exists within the City Centre, in varying states of repair. The Gloucester Quays Outlet and linkages project, including the public realm works around the Docks and Southgate Street, have all raised the quality of public areas within the City Centre. Simple palettes of robust paving materials, combined with modern and simple street furniture have set a high standard.

3.7.2 The Gate Streets public realm dates back to the early 90's and is around 25 years old. While the overall style of the public realm is dated, there are more pressing practical

issues which need addressing, such as paving materials needing replacement and the need to invest in high quality public realm to match or exceed that developed by competing edge of centre destinations, notably the Gloucester Quays Outlet.

3.7.3 There are a number of key central areas of public realm which should be highlighted, which form a useful comparison to the character and quality of the Gate Streets.

These are as follows.
• Gloucester Quays Outlet and Llanthony Road
• Orchard Square (proposed)
• Docks public realm
• Southgate Street Linkages

• Cathedral (Project Pilgrim) public realm improvements (proposed)

3.7.4 The map below shows the sequence of spaces which these major public realm projects create and the large area which has (or is proposed to be) enhanced. The area between the Docks and Cathedral (including the Gate Streets, Kings Quarter and Blackfriars) form an obvious and important next step in the regeneration of the City Centre, both in terms of connecting areas but also in terms of creating better places for people to live in and experience.

3.7.5 It should be noted that much of areas 2 and 3 shown within the 'Public Realm Projects' plan, are

Public Realm Projects

1   Bakers Quay
2   Gloucester Quays
3   Orchard Square
4   Docks Linkages
5   Southgate Street Linkages
6   Greyfriars housing sites
7   Former prison site
8   Cathedral Precincts
9   Blackfriars / Quayside

privately owned, but are in general publicly accessible for much of the day. The same high quality treatment of these spaces in terms of materials and design are sought as for the other areas of 'public realm'.

3.7.6 There are various materials which have been installed and proposed, generally including natural materials, with granite (mixed colours), Forest of Dean sandstone and Yorkstone (slabs and pavers) being the primary hard surfacing materials. Resin bound gravel and coloured tarmac appear in specific areas to meet certain functions, such as highways

areas through the Southgate scheme. Street furniture incorporates a blend of grey metal, treated hardwood timber and stone.

3.7.7 A balance must be struck between the appearance of a palette of materials, their robustness and finally the overall cost.

3.7.8 The Gate Streets at present incorporate a combination of protected pavement areas of York Stone slabs to the sides of the streets, with smaller clay setts in a herringbone pattern around the middle areas (upper Westgate and

Eastgate Streets), or a higher quality stone sett pattern (upper Southgate and Northgate Streets) which are more robust and allow for vehicle movements. A strip of clay or stone setts in stretcher bonds are laid between the edges and middle sections.

3.7.9 One of the positive distinctive features are the outlines of previously existing buildings, laid in black engineering brick, which are set into the paving at various points along Westgate and Eastgate Streets.

Gloucester Quays Outlet and Llanthony Road

Docks public realm

Southgate Street / Commercial Road Linkages

Gate Streets

Cathedral (Project Pilgrim) public realm improvements (under construction)

4. Public Realm Strategy principles

In order to be able to propose appropriate improvements to Gloucester's public spaces, it is first essential to analyse and understand the way in which the public realm in Gloucester is formed and used, what the character of the place is and what the positive and negative aspects of the existing public realm include.

The following section sets out the guiding principles for the design of the public realm within Gloucester City Centre.

A range of well finished drain covers

4.1 Main design principles

4.1.1 Public realm schemes within the City Centre must be designed to a high standard and should be guided by the following principles.

- Create a City Centre which is legible and clearly defined, based on the three distinct categories of spaces

- Low design speeds for vehicles should be established throughout the central area, to provide a safer and more pedestrian focussed environment. This is particularly important within the areas where vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians come into contact

- Streets and spaces should be designed to maximise the pedestrian domain, while also providing an environment that is pleasant to use for various activities, including walking, socialising, shopping or just sitting, and which continue to be safe and accessible at night

- Materials and street furniture used within public realm projects must be high quality and suitable for the character of the area in which they are placed

- The palette of materials must be elegant and visually appealing, and should enhance the character of each area. Materials should respect the fabric of the historic streets, reinforce local identity and will be selected from a limited palette to ensure design continuity

- Materials must be robust and able to withstand a variety of uses, from heavy goods vehicles to cyclists and pedestrians, depending on the character and function of each space

- Public realm schemes must be designed with low maintenance principles, including easy and straightforward periodic maintenance

- Proposals for landscaped areas and street furniture should form a coherent palette with a clearly defined overall theme

- Any street furniture proposed must function well, be robust and visually appealing, but also compliment other elements within the public realm.

- The siting and amount of street furniture will be designed with the aim of reducing visual clutter, while also providing sufficient furniture to accommodate people's needs and to allow the proper functioning of the public realm

- Designs should accommodate the needs of people with disabilities that may affect mobility, sensory or cognitive impairment

- The design of spaces should be flexible enough to accommodate various uses both now and in the future, including shifting land uses and activity areas

- The design of paved areas close to the built form should emphasise and identify special places and buildings within the public realm such as the entrance to feature buildings, sitting areas and terraces of restaurants / cafes

4.2 Gloucestershire Highways

4.2.1 Much of the public realm within the strategy's area falls within the responsibility of Gloucestershire County Council. The majority of the streets and spaces which are not classified as Public Open Space (POS) are classified as highways and must be able to provide suitable environments for the full range of vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.

4.2.2 There is clear guidance set out for street design at various levels, including within Manual for Streets 1 (DfT March 2007) and Manual for Streets 2 (Dft September 2010), Manual for Gloucestershire Streets 4th Edition (April 2016) and Gloucestershire County Council Enhanced Materials Policy (October 2010).

4.2.3 The Categories of Spaces plan indicates types of public realm, split into three distinct types. Some of the areas of land indicated as 'public' are in fact privately owned, such as parts of the Gloucester Quays shopping area, the Cathedral Precincts, and the Docks. It is not intended that these privately owned areas are reclassified, rather that they are at present publicly accessible and contribute to the character of their areas and the

experience of residents and visitors. The Categories of Spaces plan should be used as guidance when considering new public realm projects, as well as during programmes of renewal and reinstatement.

4.2.4 It is critical to the success of any public realm project, including the strategy itself, that Gloucestershire County Council is involved in the process and supportive of the public realm strategy principles. The public realm within the strategy area must be designed and installed to a high standard, using high quality materials, which are robust and which provide for low maintenance over time.

4.2.5 It is critical that both the overall appearance of the public realm and the issues of robustness and maintenance are considered together during the design process.

4.3 Category of spaces

4.3.1 The analysis section of the strategy highlighted the way in which the historic development pattern through the Roman and Medieval periods still forms a significant part of the present City Centre. The existing land uses and activity patterns also contribute to an overall model for applying any future public realm schemes.

4.3.2 There are three general categories of spaces which stand out through the analysis of the City Centre and which will be used as the basis for public realm guidance.

- Lanes

- Primary streets and spaces

- Secondary streets and spaces

4.3.3 Each category has its own character and function and applying different treatments to each type of public realm will enhance each type's distinctive character and build a clear and legible series of spaces within the City Centre.

Category of spaces

Westgate Street

Cathedral

Northgate Street

Train Station

Alney Island

Gloucestershire College

Sainsburys Quays

Eastgate Street

Gloucester Park

Gloucester Quays Outlet

Southgate Street

Lanes

Primary streets and spaces

Secondary streets and spaces

4.4 Lanes

4.4.1 The lanes category forms the finest grain of public realm within the City Centre. The majority of the lanes are well maintained and consist of good quality paving and detailing. This existing character and quality should be maintained and where necessary enhanced, following the existing style.

4.4.2 The following principles should be used to guide future public realm works projects within the lanes areas.

- A very simple materials range, limited to no more than two types

- Wall to wall paving with buildings up to the edge of paving

- Large format and smooth surface paving slabs

- Generally a central drainage channel

- Although largely traffic free, paving must be able to cope with occasional emergency vehicle use

- Keep surfaces free of clutter with very limited use of posts, lighting columns and bollards. Lighting should be fitted to buildings where possible

- Areas of surviving historic surfacing should be retained as part of any scheme

- Obstructions around narrow sections of lanes, in particular by entrances, should be moved to allow less restricted movement

- Retain existing mosaics at head of each lane.

4.5 Primary streets and spaces

4.5.1 The primary streets and spaces category is formed from the most important historic character areas within the City Centre, including the Quays and Docks, the Gate Streets and the Cathedral Precincts. These distinct areas contain some of the most important spaces in the city, which have a significant impact on the perception and identity of the city itself.

4.5.2 Part of the character and quality of the Quays and Docks area is indicated in section 3.7 'Existing hard landscaping materials'. A significant part of the Quays and Docks public realm has either already been uplifted, or detailed plans drawn up. Likewise, the area around the Cathedral is due to undergo significant improvements over the next 5 years, in line with the quality and range of materials set out in this section. As such, the focus for this strategy is the Gate Streets public realm.

4.5.3 A series of bollards generally forms the edge to a fairly narrow pavement line closest to each side of the streets, where York Stone paving slabs are used to distinguish these areas from the more common central areas. No kerbs are present within the upper areas of the Gate Streets, closest to the Cross, with bollards and street furniture forming boundary lines.

4.5.4 The newly completed public realm works along the southern end of Southgate Street and Commercial Road have set a high quality standard which should generally be continued into the remaining Gate Street areas.

4.5.5 This public realm uses a combination of high quality, locally sourced natural Forest of Dean sandstone, with buff coloured tarmac to the main carriageway (where it exists), with smaller natural stone setts used in sections, depending on use. Darker edging stone provides a contrasting band separating the carriageway and the pavement, with a flat surface across the majority of the public realm, except in small kerbed sections around the junction with Southgate Street, which relates to the bus stops.

4.5.6 The following principles should be used to guide future public realm projects within the Gate Streets, building on many of the standards established in the Southgate Street and Docks projects.

- A more varied range of landscaping and street furniture to respond to the character, use and activity of each area while still forming a simple and coherent palette of materials

- Reduce clutter by simplifying landscaping and street furniture

- The focus of movement within the Gate Streets and Primary streets and spaces, should be on pedestrians, with vehicles able to access the areas but restricted to specific times of day

- Reverse the existing movement proportions within the public realm by greatly widening the pavement areas nearest the building line and reducing the carriageways. This would immediately shift the focus of the Gate Streets towards pedestrians while also protecting the cellars of historic buildings which line the Gate Streets

- Remove all non-essential street markings

- Create a series of distinct 'places' at street intersections, so that lengths of continuous, unbroken carriageway are reduced

- Loading / parking bays to be defined by small setts, which are consistent with the treatment in the Southgate Street public realm

- Use street furniture, including benches, planters/trees, light columns and bins, as a way of defining and reinforcing the edge of the main pedestrian pavements, rather than long lines of bollards

- Set out paving in a staggered pattern, in the direction of most common movement, with straight joins across the narrowest dimensions of a space.

- Higher quality Forest of Dean stone within protected pavement areas to the sides of the street, with pavers in Highway areas, with a strong edging stone between two main materials

- Granite setts or recon setts to Highways only for Upper Gate Streets, but tarmac acceptable beyond historic 'Gates'

- Much more flexibility in non-vehicle areas for higher quality paving

- Where tactile paving is required on either side of a controlled crossing over a Highway, simple metal studs should be specified, rather than single colour standard tactile slabs. Coloured metal studs can be used where greater colour contrast is required with the surrounding paving.

4.5.7 Consider the introduction of of kerbs in carefully considered and limited locations, in combination with general widening of pedestrian-priority spaces.

- Kerb heights should be set to the minimum necessary to provide tactile guidance, whilst encouraging informal pedestrian crossing, such as a 40-60mm level

- Kerbs would help define street areas

- Allow some distinction of areas for visually impaired people

- Add some interest and variety to the street scene

- Provide a notional plinth upon which the various historic buildings would sit

- Provide some protection for pedestrians from vehicles

- Define a channel along which water could be drained

- Help to protect historic cellars to the fronts of properties.

Primary streets and spaces (proposed materials)

The images below show a range of suitable high quality materials which would be suitable for the primary streets and spaces category, including a mix of natural stone products and metal tactile paving studs.
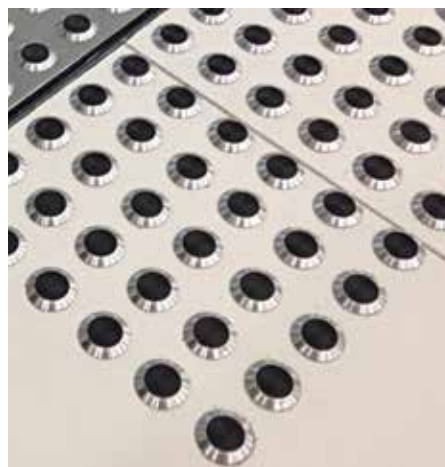

A range of colour tones and unit sizes of granite could be appropriate

Porphyry natural stone setts

Natural dark granite kerbs

Forest of Dean sandstone

Raised metal tactile studs at crossing points, set in natural stone

4.6 Secondary streets and spaces

4.6.1 The routes and spaces which surround the historic Gate Streets and lanes form the outer layer of public realm within the City Centre and have important strategic and functional roles. These peripheral routes provide the access into the core of the centre and serve all of the major arrival points, including the bus and train stations, as well as the City Centre car parks.

4.6.2 While the focus of these routes is the movement of the full range of transport types, the existing provision is heavily weighted towards vehicles of all sorts, in terms of the design of the roads and their appearance. One of the main principles of the Public Realm Strategy is to move away from standard vehicle focussed roads and towards streets which serve all types of transport types in a more balanced way.

4.6.3 The term 'streets' refers to something different from 'roads'. Roads are often interpreted or understood as routes that give precedence to motor vehicles over pedestrians and cyclists, and therefore prioritise movement over place.

4.6.4 Streets still allow movement, but they seek to provide more of a balance between pedestrian, cycle and motor vehicle movement. They also have a sense of place, in that they are locally distinctive, high quality, and they encourage social activity. This strategy promotes a move away from routes that act as roads and encourages routes that function as streets.

4.6.5 The edge of centre streets should act as a transition between the pedestrian-focussed Gate Streets and the more standard highway roads, which make up the majority of routes within the wider city.

4.6.6 Creating streets and public realm which respond to the local context is important to consider. Manual for Gloucestershire Streets (MfGS) states that, 'the NPPF and MfS place great emphasis on the benefits derived from good design and the effective context appraisal, relating a new development to the existing infrastructure. It is recommended that this process is conducted at the earliest possible

opportunity.' It is a requirement that all new public realm schemes which affect these edge of centre streets are designed taking into account the local context. The following principles should be followed.

Existing Secondary Street context

Secondary Street materials

Cairnhill pre-cast kerb, dark grey/black

- Downgrading of The Quay / Commercial Road / Southgate Street to 20 mph. This is an important strategic aspiration, as it will lead to safer streets and allow the public realm to function better for a wider range of people and transport types.

- Formal crossing points delineated with tactile paving should be positioned as close to junctions as possible, to allow pedestrians to follow desire lines along the street.

- Pedestrian crossing points across edge of centre streets are an important consideration in providing safe and easy movement. Ramped pedestrian crossings which use the same pavement material across the top, allow level access across street, which is particularly important for people with disabilities and for the movement of buggies and pushchairs

- Tactile paving must be provided on both sides of every crossing point, to make partially sighted people aware that a crossing exists. Simple metal studs should be specified, rather than single colour standard tactile slabs. Coloured metal studs can be used where greater colour contrast is required with the surrounding paving, such as either side of a controlled crossing.

- Reducing road speeds for vehicles is important to improve pedestrian and cyclist safety and to create appealing environments. This can be achieved by providing tight turning radii at junctions, providing rumble strips at crossing points and entrances to different street types (particularly into the Gate Streets) and reducing junction widths.

- An overall reduction in the width of highway space and an increase in pavement widths would help to re-balance the focus of the secondary streets away from vehicles and more towards pedestrians and cyclists. Streets which function well for all modes of transport should be the key objective.

Secondary streets and spaces

The images below show a range of suitable high quality materials which would be suitable for the secondary streets and spaces category, including a mix of natural stone products, conservation style natural aggregate, as well as simple tarmac for Highways areas.

Drivesett Tegula block paving, Pennant Grey

Tarmac, dark grey

Conservation smooth flag pavers

Forest of Dean sandstone

4.7 Summary of proposed materials

4.7.1 The following graphical matrix shows a summary of the proposed materials for the different categories of spaces. These materials are presented as a guide, with a range of specific materials available.

	Lanes	Primary streets and spaces	Secondary streets and spaces	
	N/A	Granite pavers - mixed greys	Tarmac - dark grey	Highways
	N/A	Porphyry natural stone setts	Drivesett Tegula block paving - Pennant Grey	Unloading bays
	Large natural stone slabs	Granite pavers - light grey	Conservation Smooth Flag pavers	Channels
	N/A	Granite blocks - dark grey/black	Cairnhill pre-cast - dark grey/black	Kerbs
	Natural stone rectangular setts	Forest of Dean sandstone	Forest of Dean sandstone	Pavements
	N/A	Forest of Dean sandstone	N/A	Crossings

4.8 Precedent projects

4.8.1 The recently established public realm schemes within the Quays, Docks and Southgate Street offer high quality local precedents which should be used to guide future public realm schemes within the City Centre. Other suggested references are set out in this section.

Clapham Old Town, visualisation of final scheme.
Project design by Urban Movement *http://www.urbanmovement.co.uk/clapham-ot_projects_urd.html*
Winner of the NLA 'Public Space' Awards 2015, the London Planning Awards 'Best New Public Space' 2015, the London Transport Awards 2015 'Excellence in Cycling & Walking', and 'Highly Commended' for the RTPI Awards 2015 in the 'Planning for the Public Realm' category

Place d'Youville, Quebec, Canada
by Claude Cormier + Associates
http://www.claudecormier.com/en/projet/place-dyouville

Paving, Copenhagen
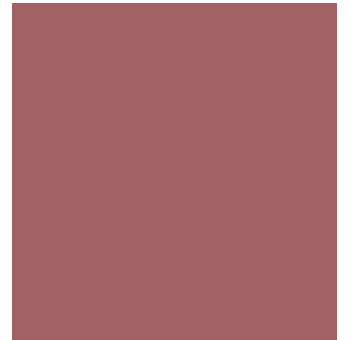
The Waterfront Promenade, Aker Brygge, Oslo (Norway) by Link Landskap

Below: Public Realm project at Stationsstraat, Sint-Niklaas, Belgium

Ribe Cathedral Square, Denmark

The Jewelery District, Providence (USA)

Below: Federation Square, Melbourne

Contrasting paving textures

4.9 Design affecting visually impaired, disabled and elderly groups

4.9.1 The public realm of Gloucester should cater for the needs of a broad cross-section of the population. The needs of visually impaired, disabled and elderly people should be taken into account when designing new areas of public realm, or when adapting existing areas.

4.9.2 The following principles should be followed.

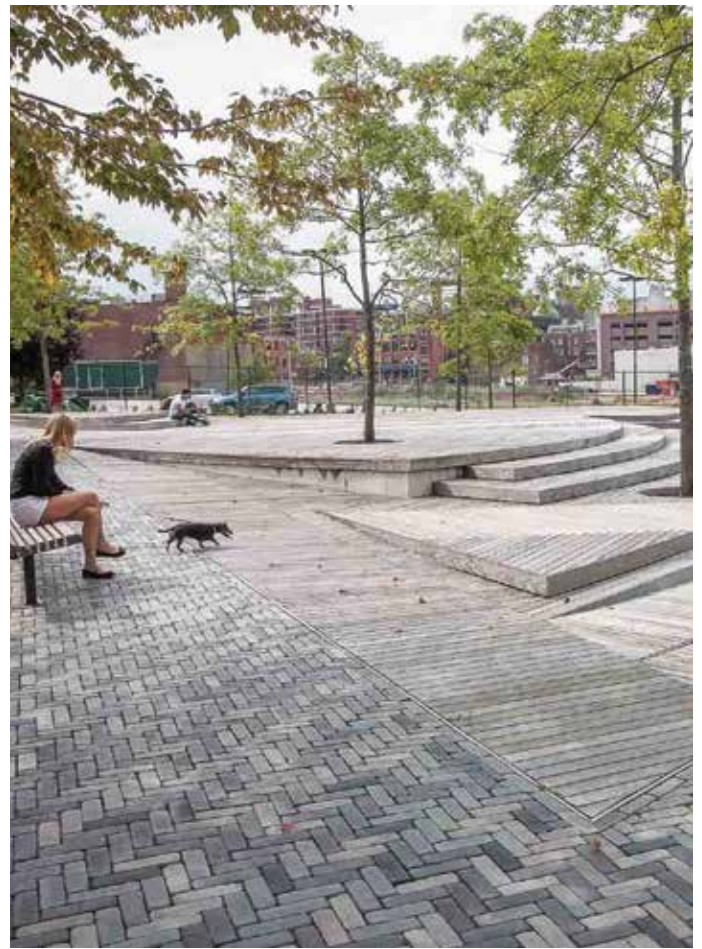- Maximising the area for pedestrians will benefit visually impaired and disabled

- Using clearly set out and unbroken boundary lines will help ease of movement

- Introducing an unobstructed raised kerb within the Gate Streets will improve the legibility of the public realm for partially sighted or blind pedestrians

- Using flat and smooth paving types will allow good movement to those in wheelchairs

- Rough or uneven surfaces can be difficult for wheelchair users and people with prams and pushchairs to cross, and they can create trip hazards or be confusing for blind or partially sighted people. A greater focus on maintaining and repairing damaged hard landscaping will provide safer and less obstructed routes

- Strong contrasts can make it easier for partially sighted people and colour blind people to find their way. Clear and consistent colour schemes within the landscaping and street furniture, can make it easier for everyone to understand streets and spaces

- Highway and planning authorities must comply with the Disability Equality Duty under the Disability Discrimination Act 2005. This means that in their decisions and actions, authorities are required to encourage participation by disabled persons in public life

- Consultation should be carried out with interest groups particularly at the detailed design stage to ensure designs meet the needs of the community

- The introduction of new street furniture should ensure that the design meets the needs of all users and is sited to ensure unimpeded routes

- Seating should be well designed and located and be provided at regular intervals

- Public lighting should be at an adequate level to help create safe routes and space for all.

- For planned new public realm schemes, a disability user audit should be undertaken to identify where improvements can be made to a scheme. This should be carried out during the design stages and not once a design has been finalised, to allow for proper integration of suitable features.

4.10 The Via Sacra

4.10.1 The Via Sacra is a circular walk around the centre of Gloucester which broadly follows the line of the Roman city walls. It's route passes numerous historic landmarks and is identified by black or contrasting alternating paving. It was established in the 1960's and is now the most popular Civic Trust walking tour within the city.

4.10.2 The existing Via Sacra route crosses all of the Gate Streets at various points and is made up of varying types of paving, in a range of states of repair. Both the concept and physical marking of the route are well supported and the route forms a useful walking route which broadly reflects the historic Roman wall line.

4.10.3 However, the Via Sacra route does miss many notable historic structures and spaces, including The Cross and the numerous historic buildings along Westgate Street.

4.10.4 The following recommendations were formed in response to the lack of a single, coherent paving style and the varying states of repair along the route (including the absence of markings in various places). Research based on precedents from other cities was also considered.

- Where possible, retain the existing cruciform pattern where materials are in good order. Examples include the route through the Kingswalk Shopping Centre and along Greyfriars Lane

- Renew existing poor quality areas of Via Sacra paving and add metallic markers set into the paving, which indicate the route. This has been used to good effect in Norwich, and would allow the Via Sacra route to essentially overlap the existing streets without the need for wholesale repaving of entire routes, while also being fairly unobtrusive and not contributing to street clutter. A marker could be positioned at every turn in the route

- The design of the markers could be inspired by a locally distinctive feature or concept, with each plate being individually artist designed, or a series of duplicated designs

- Query the inclusion of parts of the Via Sacra route, including Kings Square and Eastgate, and consider including The cross and more of Westgate Street.

5. Street furniture

The most noticeable and functional elements of the public realm are often the street furniture, which involve a wide range of items, including benches, litter bins, bike racks, light columns and signage. The following section sets out design principles and proposals for each main type of street furniture, based on the analysis carried out within Gloucester and of precedent schemes from across the UK and Europe.

5.1 Design principles

There are a number of important principles which any type of street furniture should follow.

- The design of the street furniture should be coordinated using a limited pallete of traditional materials such as stone, wood and metal. The design should have a timeless quality that is capable of accommodating future additions or changes

- Any street furniture must be robust with very low maintenance requirements, including being resistant to vandalism. Any items must be able to be treated to preserve their structure or prolong their lifetime

- Where timber is used within street furniture, a hardwood must be specified to provide a more robust and longer-lasting finish, possibly including a preservative treatment

- Street furniture must be visually appealing and enhance the character and quality of the area.

- Furniture should function well and be fit for purpose

- Surviving historic street furniture should be retained and refurbished where necessary, particularly the pin and needle bollards found within the Gate Streets

- Consideration should be given to grouping and locating furniture so that it responds to the uses and activity within the surrounding area. This would include placing fewer items of furniture in particularly busy areas, or leaving space to the fronts of cafes and restaurants to allow for outside seating areas

- A coordinated colour palette should be agreed, which helps to develop a unique local theme for street furniture within the City Centre. This colour palette should complement the choice of materials used in hard landscaped areas.

- In order to reduce clutter, consideration should be given to linking items of furniture. This could involve integrating separate sign columns onto a new lighting column, or using benches, bins and light columns in place of long rows of bollards. Consolidating furniture would also lead to a clearer and simpler public realm which would enable fewer high quality items to be provided

- Although it is advisable to reduce unnecessary street clutter, consideration must be given to not reducing the essential public realm items which support the functioning of the City Centre,

- Where rows of bollards are unavoidable to protect areas of high quality paving or existing cellars of older properties, consideration should be given to reducing the number of bollards and increasing the spacing between bollards.

5.2 Litter bins

5.2.1 Bins are one of the most important functional items within any City Centre public realm scheme. There are a number of essential requirements which any proposed bin within the Gloucester City Centre must meet.

- Seagull proof (it has a covered top with two clear openings)

- Cigarette provision including stubber and accessible ash collector, which doesn't detract from the visual quality

- A type which can be adapted for recycling

- A contemporary form and appearance must be of a high quality

- The physical structure must be very robust, using full metal construction, including the internal liner, with a minimum 5-year guarantee

- The bin must be able to be fitted into a variety of base materials, including stone and brick, with an adjustable base being preferable

- A capacity for main bins not below 110L to provide for adequate general use

- Must have wide enough opening to accept a wide range of items.

5.2.2 Following extensive research into bin types, the OMOS s16.2 bin has emerged as of the leading contenders, which meets all of the criteria, with a 10 year guarantee, robust construction and positive appearance. This bin type should be considered for inclusion within the Gate Streets. This bin has also recently been installed within the Royal Parks of Cambridge.

Examples of OMOS s16.2 bins

5.2.3. In addition to meeting the primary criteria for litter bins, the OMOS s16.2 has the following features.

- A recycling adaptation to the openings means the same bin type can be used for both recycling and general waste, which will allow better integration into street scene

- The form and appearance has a quality which means it is aesthetic but doesn't overly stand out, with a flowing curved form

- The construction is very robust with a 10-year guarantee, which is the only bin on the market to provide this level of cover. The bin is full metal construction using 10mm galvanised truck steel and aluminium top

- Fully adjustable base and fixings with robust base material allows placement in any position

- Full range of RAL colours available

- A Large capacity of 120L, which is 10L more than the standard capacity, meaning fewer bins are needed overall.

5.3 Bollards

5.3.1 There are a number of areas within the City Centre where bollards are required, however bollards also contribute to street clutter and there are often other means of achieving the same functions.

- Use of bollards should be limited to areas where potential impacts on pedestrian safety exist or where vehicular impacts could damage buildings or street trees

- The use of raised kerbs, or the placement of other essential items of street furniture, should be considered as an alternative to the introduction of bollards in most cases

- Bollard design should complement other items of street furniture

- Consideration should be given to the robustness of the bollard

types used, as well as the longer-term maintenance issues. A simple stainless steel bollard can present fewer maintenance issues over time and would complement a simple palette of materials, including stone, timber and stainless steel

- A selection of the Gate Streets pin and needle bollards should be retained but where appropriate, should be reduced in number to avoid street clutter.

5.4 Bike racks and hoops

5.4.1 In order to encourage non-vehicular forms of transport, it is essential to also provide the necessary secure storage and parking facilities for bicycles within the City Centre.

5.4.2 Bike racks must be located in easily accessible locations which are close to the main centre uses, such as shops and restaurants. At present, bike racks are located at the pedestrianized entrances to each of the Gate Streets, which is in line with the policy of only allowing cycle access through the Gate Streets between the hours of 10am and 5pm. This restriction is in place to reduce the conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians, in often crowded areas.

5.4.3 It is recommended that these general areas allocated for bike racks are retained as the main cycle parking areas for the Gate Streets. Additional bike racks should be installed adjacent to other major activity generators within the secondary streets and spaces, such as within Kings Square.

5.4.5 Stainless steel racks would not suffer from damage to paintwork and are a robust and cost-effective solution. An alternative plain metal style could also be suitable in a different finish but any material chosen must be highly robust due to the consistent impacts from daily use.

5.4.6 Covered bike racks should also be considered in high activity areas where demand for bike parking is high. This would improve the chances that people would use these facilities and potentially lead to improved use.

Summary

- Well placed, accessible and secure bike parking facilities are essential to provide, which are close to the main City Centre facilities

- Bike racks located at the pedestrianised entrances to the Gate Streets should be retained, with additional racks considered around entrances to key activity generators

- The re-painting of existing bike racks should be considered as a short-term improvement

- Introduce stainless steel bike racks as a low maintenance and robust material

- Introduce covered bike racks in areas of high activity, to encourage use.

Sheffield hoops

Edge bike shelter

Cyclehoop Ltd Public Bike Pump

5.5 Benches and seating

5.5.1 Benches are one of the essential items of street furniture that any area of public realm within the City Centre should provide.

5.5.2 Good provision of benches in strategic places will enhance people's experience of the City Centre and allow people to extend the time they spend there.

5.5.3 Where appropriate the design and layout of seats and benches should define and enclose spaces as well as provide seating. Simply providing rows of benches is not the best use of space and more imaginative options could encourage better use and enhance people's experiences.

5.5.4 The provision of benches within and adjacent to high activity areas must be promoted.

5.5.5 Seating can easily be incorporated into other forms of street furniture in order to simplify the number of items and reduce street clutter. Seating set within planters or surrounding street trees, can be an effective approach.

5.5.6 Seating should generally be positioned towards the edges of a street and face towards the centre of the street. This allows the best views of activity within the street. Another option is to place seating backing onto each other and facing up and down the street, thereby providing longer views. This also provides the opportunity for clusters of feature seating which define specific areas.

5.5.7 Multi-facing benches should also be considered if a more central position is chosen, to allow choices of facing positions for people and to maximise the views on offer.

5.5.8 In order to make seating areas easier to use and more comfortable, particularly considering elderly and disabled people, seating should generally incorporate backs and arm rests.

5.5.9 Seating can provide a good opportunity to provide forms of feature lighting, particularly under block style seating. This can create interesting and more defined areas of lighting and enhance the general appearance of a street scene after dark. Maintenance and robustness issues should be considered and the need to properly maintain lighting over time.

5.5.10 Materials for benches should be robust and able to withstand daily use. Metal will generally be the most appropriate material (either painted or stainless steel), with stone providing a more solid alternative. Timber should be considered within a small palette of materials and is recommended to break up the hard stone and metals and to provide a more comfortable surface. If timber is used, only a European hardwood which is FSC Certified should be specified.

Summary

- Seating should be positioned close to activity generators, such as shops, areas of open space, cafes and restaurants.

- Arranging benches to enclose spaces, or in positions other than in simple lines (such as backing onto each other), can create more options for people

- Main areas of seating should generally be positioned towards the edges of a street or space, to allow longer views across the public realm.

- Multi-directional seating should be considered if seating is positioned more towards the centre of a space, for example surrounding a feature tree

- Robust materials must be specified for benches.

Alcorque 1 corten bench - Lab23

Clifton hardwood bench - Woodscape

Woodscape Westbrook Circular

Docks stone block seating

5.6 Planters and street trees

5.6.1 Street trees and planting are always popular and valued aspects of the public realm. Trees can help to soften sometimes overly hard landscapes and provide an organic contrast within urban areas. Trees also provide shelter from the elements and shade on sunny days, while also helping to limit and control atmospheric pollution.

5.6.2 At present, street trees exist at limited locations within all of the Gate Streets, often in the areas within the line of the Roman walls. Their use does compliment the very defined public realm, where the majority of buildings are located hard against the street.

5.6.3 The existing street trees should be preserved and where necessary, maintained to limit their overall size. The introduction of additional street trees should be carefully considered.

5.6.4 The following principles should be considered and followed when developing designs for new public realm projects.

- The guiding principle is to provide the right tree in the right place. Inappropriate tree planting can have a negative impact in many ways

- Consider the ultimate size and shape of the tree. Will the tree frame, enhance, detract or screen a view, building, or setting? Views towards landmarks or listed buildings should be preserved

- Develop a clear rationale for why the tree is being planted

- Consider the ground and site conditions. Trees will need to cope with, and be protected from, a range of factors within the urban environment, including poor soils, pollution, drought, extremes of temperature, and underground services

- Tree characteristics, including leaf texture, size, shape, autumn colour, bark colour, flowers and fruit should be considered. Are these characteristics appropriate to the setting?

- The vast majority of tree roots grow in the top 1 to 1.5m of soils. Roots can exert direct pressure upon hard-surfacing in close proximity to the base of the tree as they grow. Tree pits can be used within hard landscapes to limit or control root growth.

- Enhanced green infrastructure should be considered, including increased tree planting, green roofs, insect-friendly areas of planting and bird & bat box provision.'

5.6.5 In general, trees should be planted in the ground rather than in planters as this will help to prolong the life of the tree and aid the growing stages. Far less on-going maintenance is required for ground-planted trees, including watering during the summer months.

5.6.6 There will be occasions when it is not possible for planting to be placed in the ground, possibly due to archaeology or services, or when a less permanent solution is desired. In this case, the following criteria should be applied to the design and construction of tree planters.

- The style of planter should be urban and modern, drawing on the references from the palette of materials established for other street furniture items

- The construction of planters should generally be limited to robust materials, including concrete, stone and metal. Timber should be avoided as a priority due to its less robust finish and on-going maintenance issues

Timber and metal bench, Kimbrose Triangle

Streetlife Rough&Ready Topseats bench

Camber bench by Forms+Surfaces

Timber bench, The Lyng - West Bromwich

- The use of planters could be considered in place of bollards or benches and would perform the multi-function of protecting sensitive areas, providing planting and seating

- A public art theme could be incorporated into the planter design and help to form a consistent theme which would run through the various street furniture elements and landscaping.

5.6.7 Tree grilles and other furniture associated with tree planting should be carefully considered as part of the overall public realm design. These elements offer opportunities for public art or decoration, which can help to improve the interest and appearance of public spaces and streets.

5.6.8 A consistent theme should be developed based on the category of spaces set out in Section 4.3. A bespoke set of grilles could be designed to link into the branding of each specific Gate Street, which could help to distinguish each area and enhance the local character and identity of those streets.

5.6.9 In general, guidelines set out in the Trees and Design Action Group document, titled 'Trees in Hard Landscapes – A Guide for Delivery', should be followed when developing planting schemes.

Aalborg City Centre tree grille

Corten tree grille and timber bench

Streetlife conical tree tubs

Streetlife Corten Shrubtubs

Tripla tree grille

Streetlife Love Tubs

5.7 Signage and road markings

5.7.1 While some street signage forms an essential part of a properly functioning City Centre, the over provision of signs can lead to confusion and clutter. Signs must only be provided if absolutely necessary.

5.7.2 Multiple signs should be placed on the same post where possible to limit the number of individual posts.

5.7.3 When designing new areas of public realm, guidance set out in Manual for Streets should be considered. A starting point of zero signage should be introduced and only introduce signage if necessary.

5.7.4 Statutory signs must give users a clear message. Limiting the number of these signs is encouraged, as this will have more impact. Providing a uniform shape and colour for the signs will aid the recognition process.

5.7.5 In general, road markings of all types should be avoided, unless absolutely necessary. For example, double yellow lines are unsightly and detract from the character of an area. Small 'no parking' signs can be used instead and fixed to existing items of street furniture to limit and control street clutter. Metal studs or a contrasting material should be used for parking bays instead of painted line markings.

5.7.6 Adshel advertising signs can have a negative impact on the functioning and appearance of the public realm. In general, these forms of signage should be removed. Where they are deemed to be absolutely necessary (or where existing contracts limit removal options), they must be positioned perpendicular to the pavement not at right angles as this blocks pedestrian flows and restricts views and desire lines.

5.7.7 The modern wayfinding map panels installed as part of the linkages project are simple and easy to understand, but display a fairly limited range of information. The quality of the finish is also very poor.

5.7.8 An updated style of map panel should be developed for the City Centre which sets out clear and legible information, which integrates the Quays linkages information and which provides an indication of walking times through the area. The Bristol Legible City project could be used as the basis for a new system in Gloucester.

5.7.9 Principles for new map panels should include;

- Clear and easy to read and understand

- Strong structurally and hard wearing

- Must show all of the major tourist attractions and places of interest

- Must not block desire lines or visibility lines

- Must visually and stylistically relate to the Linkages map panels, to promote continuity between areas

- Should be elegant in appearance and not visually dominate the appearance of the streetscene.

5.7.10 The fingers element of the wayfinding signs are an important feature and clearly direct visitors to key City Centre locations. This fingers element of the existing signage should be replicated in a similar way in any new form of City Centre wayfinding signage.

5.7.11 The use of A-boards is controlled by separate guidance produced by the Licensing team within the City Council.

5.7.12 Digital signage is another method of displaying a range of content, including advertising, wayfinding and targeted local events information. Content is able to be regularly updated to reflect specific local needs, for example to alert people to festival information or when an event is being held at a local venue.

5.7.13 Due to limitations with existing display technology and the need to provide very robust outer shells, the overall depths of external digital signage units remain high. The bulkiness of these digital units, whether single or double-sided displays, must be carefully considered when assessing their impact on the character of an area, particularly within areas of significant historic interest.

5.7.14 The colour of signage in general will have an impact on how much they stand out within the streetscene. Darker colours, tend to stand out more and in general, should be avoided. Items of street furniture which have a heavy appearance and which dominate the appearance of the streetscene, should be avoided and lighter alternatives considered.

Wayfinding signage in Mulhouse, France

Birmingham City Centre digital signage

Signage - precedent images for signage options

The following images show examples of potentially suitable signage.

Rivermeade Linkages wayfinding signs

Wayfinding signs, Millennium Square, Sheffield

Bath wayfinding signage by Pearson Lloyd

Reddacliff Place, Brisbane, Australia

5.8 Lighting

5.8.1 Public realm lighting is an important element of the overall functioning of the City Centre and has a significant impact on the actual and perceived safety of people. Good lighting allows the use of the public realm to be extended beyond daylight hours, particularly during the winter months.

5.8.2 The existing lighting within the City Centre is predominantly based on standard Highway lighting design principles, where high lamps are mounted on columns. The public realm lighting within the Gate Streets is based on building-mounted, high-level floodlights, set at regular intervals.

5.8.3 It is recommended that lighting within the edge of centre streets follows the standard highway approach, given that this is functional and this lighting is generally in areas outside of the historic core.

5.8.4 The Gate Streets and Lanes provide a different type of public realm, generally being pedestrianised at most times, with a focus on the quality of the spaces and buildings. People experience these areas at a lower speed and it is important to provide the best experience possible.

5.8.5 The existing lighting within the Gate Streets in particular provides a very functional and even effect, which supports CCTV operations. The Gloucester Lighting Strategy (2008) sets out numerous lighting projects and design principles, with one of the suggested projects being to re-light areas of the City Centre. Part of that approach would be to move from the high-level building mounted floodlights, to column based lighting.

5.8.6 A more efficient and focussed approach is proposed, whereby only key junctions are re-lit. The Kimbrose Triangle area has already been provided with lighting based on a limited number of multi-head light columns. This approach could be applied to The Cross, which would eliminate four building-mounted floodlights on historic buildings and create the opprtunity to provide remote architectural lighting. The final area could be by the Cathedral, at the junction of Westgate and College Streets.

- Multi-head systems offer the opportunity to provide not just ground lighting, but feature lighting of specific items within the public realm, such as seating areas or ground paving artworks

- The existing building-mounted floodlights could be removed, leading to less intrusion onto historic or listed buildings within the conservation area

- Architectural lighting would become very easy with one lamp directed at a building of interest, without the need to fix costly and intrusive equipment to the buildings themselves. This would avoid the need for contracts with building owners and for Listed Building Consent in most cases

- Maintenance and repairs would be straightforward and limited to specific columns which are easily accessible from the public highway. Each component is easily ordered when necessary and come in energy saving LED options

- Power would be taken from the County's supply rather than multiple individual property owner's supplies, resulting in a far more efficient system

- CCTV can be incorporated into lighting columns to remove additional items of clutter

5.8.9 Lighting within benches is a further option available, which can have the benefit of producing more subtle lighting within specific areas, as well as creating or enhancing artworks or features within the streets.

5.8.10 In any situation where lighting is provided, robustness of equipment and a long lifespan is essential to reduce on-going maintenance costs and to preserve the intended effects.

Public realm lighting

The following images show examples of high quality public realm lighting, which focus on multi-head, column-based types.

Charlie Davidson, Sunniside Gardens Sunderland, UK

Budapest street lights

Pere Cabrera multi-head light column, Barcelona

Gloucester Docks public realm light columns

Woodhouse Olivio light

5.9 Public art

5.9.1 Any area of public realm can potentially be enhanced and made more interesting through the installation of public art features. Public art is particularly good in areas where a focus is needed or where large groups of people congregate. The following can be achieved through public art.

- Create a sense of place and local distinctiveness

- Enhance the architectural and historic heritage of a place

- Develop new relationships within the community

- Inspire a creative and imaginative approach

- Improves the quality and interest within the public realm

- Helps to express local identity and cultural diversity

- Brings social and economic benefits.

5.9.2 Public art can take many forms, including paving features, street furniture, planting, enhanced materials or building-mounted forms, including the design of cladding or sculptures.

5.9.3 In general, public art which has a connection to the local people or area is best and in addition to trained artists, this can involve community groups, college students and members of the public in the design process. For example, the stone wave bench sculpture at the cross by Peter Yarwood illustrates the Severn Boar which periodically runs up the River Severn.

5.9.4 The 2006 document 'A Place for Art – A Public Art Strategy for Central Gloucester' (by Ginkgo Projects Ltd), should be used to guide the provision of public art within the Public Realm Strategy area. This strategy document highlighted the historic city gates as potential areas for public artworks and sets out management strategies for the existing artworks.

5.9.5 One of the more interesting but often overlooked public artworks within the Gate Streets is the series of building outlines along Westgate and Eastgate Streets. These outlines, formed in black engineering brick, show the locations of historic buildings which stood within these streets, which is a real link to the history of the place.

- It is recommended that these features are retained within any new public realm works project

- The existing form of the outlines needs reviewing to help the feature stand out more

- Coloured metal strips could be used for the outlines, against a lighter paving background to increase the contrast between colours and materials

- Alternating colours, from bright yellow, through orange and red down the street, could draw further attention to these features

- The use of textured materials could be appropriate.

5.9.6 A series of recently reconstructed mosaics are set into the ground at the head of each lane off Westgate Street and older mosaics along Northgate and Southgate Streets. These broadly illustrate the types of historic activities which were carried out within each of the specific lanes or buildings. Each of the new mosaics is set within a metal tray which should allow them to be temporarily removed during any public realm works. These mosaics should be retained within any new public realm project.

5.9.7 Some form of artistic branding of the Gate Streets using artist designed decorative signs could be an interesting way of signifying each streets' identity and character, possibly linking into an individual theme for each.
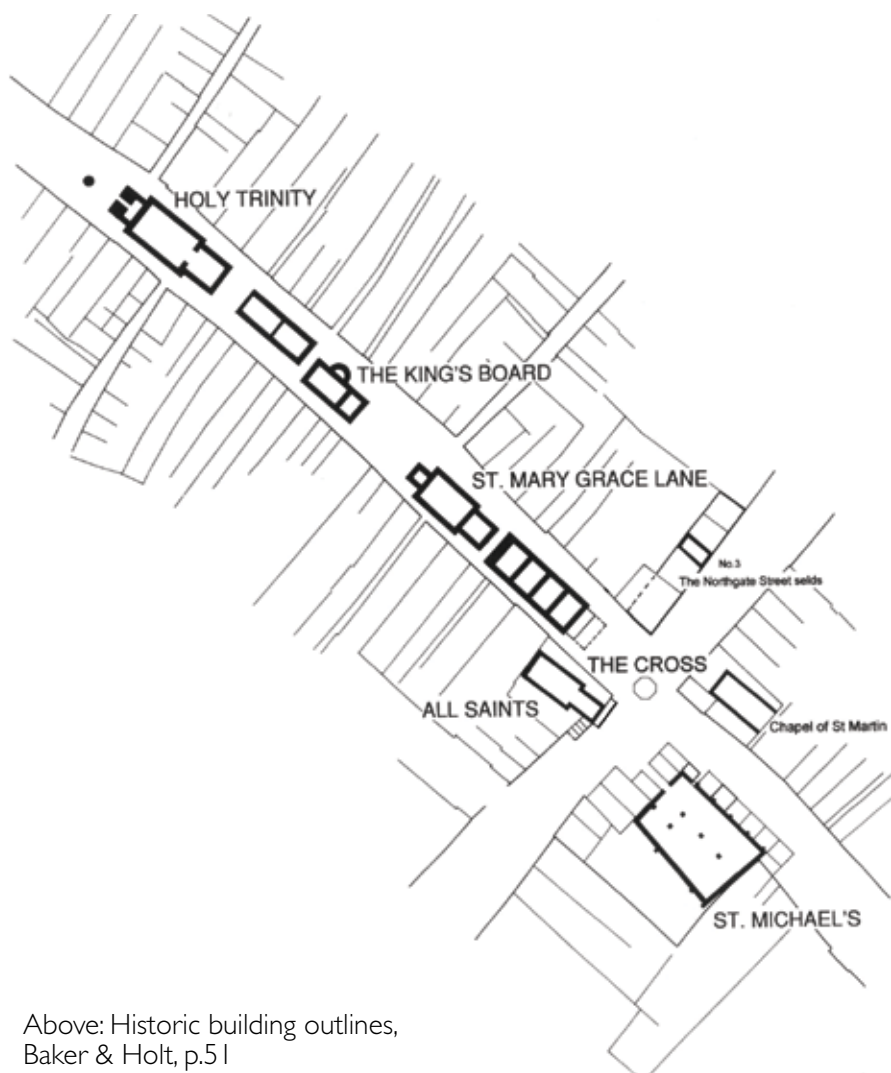
Above: Historic building outlines, Baker & Holt, p.51

Precedent images of different forms of public realm art

Berlin Wall paving marker
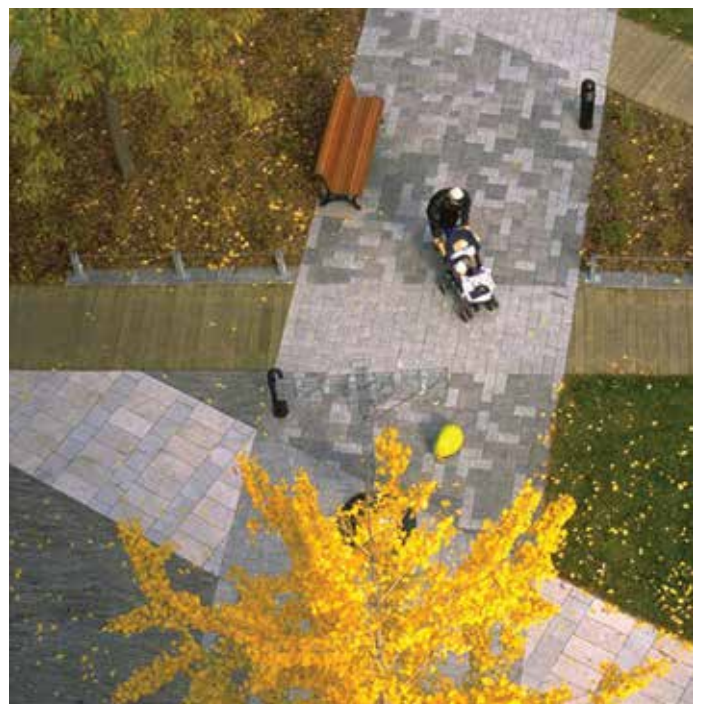

Paving and Corten marker, Arminza, Spain

A 22 metre high Corten steel candle in the Docks, by artist Wolfgang Buttress

Paving directional tile

Lighting of the 16m tall Kyneburgh Tower artwork at Kimbrose Square, Gloucester, by artist Tom Price

Landscaping and paving detail, Place d'Youville, Quebec, Canada by Claude Cormier + Associes

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