

Local development framework

CHELTENHAM

# Local development framework

**CHELTENHAM CIVIC PRIDE URBAN DESIGN  
FRAMEWORK**

**2010 Revision**

**SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

**Adopted**

**December 2010**

Cheltenham Borough Council

[www.cheltenham.gov.uk](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk)



# Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework - Supplementary Planning Document -

## Preface

### Original 2008 Preface

The draft Supplementary Planning Document was approved for consultation by Cheltenham Borough Council Cabinet on 12 February 2008.

It was published on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2008 and can be viewed electronically via the following link [http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents\\_info.php?documentID=670&pageNumber=2](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=670&pageNumber=2)

A hard copy of the Supplementary Planning Document together with supporting documentation can be accessed at all Cheltenham libraries, neighbourhood centres and the Municipal Offices.

The draft Supplementary Planning Document was subject to public consultation between 3<sup>rd</sup> March and 28<sup>th</sup> April 2008. Following consideration of representations received it was adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2008 as a Supplementary Planning Document within the Local Development Framework (LDF) and will be a material planning consideration when the Borough Council determines any relevant planning applications.

### 2010 Revision Preface

The economic slump and other factors have led to questions as to whether it is possible to effectively deliver the North Place and Portland Street Development Brief – a Technical Appendix to this SPD adopted as part of it in July 2008. This is a conclusion which has been reached by the Cheltenham Development Task Force which was set up by the Council and its partners to drive forward the Civic Pride programme and bring key regeneration sites forward for Cheltenham.

While there is a commitment to retain the principles embodied within the 2008 document the fixed interpretation – particularly the range of uses - needs to be made more flexible in the light of changing circumstances.

In order to incorporate the changes into the statutory planning framework, this Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD and its Technical Appendix - North Place and Portland Street Development Brief have been amended and readopted. They were put through the adoption process jointly. Both were subject to a consultation which ran between 23<sup>rd</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> October and were adopted by Cheltenham Borough Council on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2010.

Revisions to this SPD were only made in respect of changes necessary as a consequence of

<b>2010 Revision – Schedule of changes</b>	
Figure 10	replaced
Paragraphs 3.37 to 3.42	revised

those made to the Technical Appendix. These are in the following sections:

The documents form part of the Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD sitting within the Council's Local Development Framework and are each a material planning consideration when the Borough Council determines any relevant planning applications.

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Documents can be viewed on-line at [www.cheltenham.gov.uk/urbandesign](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/urbandesign).

# Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework - Supplementary Planning Document -

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Civic Pride is a project to boost the local economy of Cheltenham through an enhancement of its town centre streets and public spaces. Cheltenham Borough Council, together with Gloucestershire County Council and the South West Regional Development Agency (the Partnership) have jointly funded a consultancy study with four main parts:

- i) Urban Design Strategy
- ii) Transport Strategy
- iii) Public Realm Strategy
- iv) Development proposals for three sites

This study is called the Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework



### What is an Urban Design Framework?

1.2 An Urban Design Framework (UDF) is a collection of documents that will help to guide decisions on the planning and development of our town centre. The UDF is a comprehensive study that seeks to address various issues. These include how to make the town more attractive, how to make the transport system more efficient and how to support sustainable lifestyles, making it easier for people in Cheltenham to live and work in a more sustainable way.

1.3 The UDF must also consider that the proposed improvements to the town centre will not be funded through grants. This is because Cheltenham, due to its relative affluence, is not a national priority for central government intervention. It is therefore intended that improvements will be funded through the redevelopment of three council owned sites:

### Jargon Buster

#### What is Public Realm?

The parts of a village, town or city (whether publicly or privately owned) that are available without charge for everyone to use or see, including streets, squares and parks.

#### What is Urban Design?

Urban design involves the design of buildings, public spaces, landscapes and streets. It considers how these different elements work together and then creates guidance and processes to guide successful development.

#### What is Planning?

In England and Wales, the planning system details what can be built and where. It sets down the principles and regulations that help to protect the environment in our towns, cities and countryside.

1.4 Royal Well, North Place/Portland Street and St. James Square. The UDF must therefore consider the commercial viability of developing these sites, whilst still adhering to the urban design, transport and sustainability objectives of the project.

### **A Balanced Project**

1.5 The UDF has to balance the different agendas described above before arriving at its final proposals. This has sometimes involved compromising certain objectives and trading-off others, in order to create an overall framework for improvement that will not only make the town centre more attractive and accessible for its residents, visitors and businesses, but will also be the basis of a project framework that is realistic to deliver. A simple analogy would be that of a table. Each of the four strands of the UDF is like the leg of a table - if one of the legs is taken away the table becomes unstable.

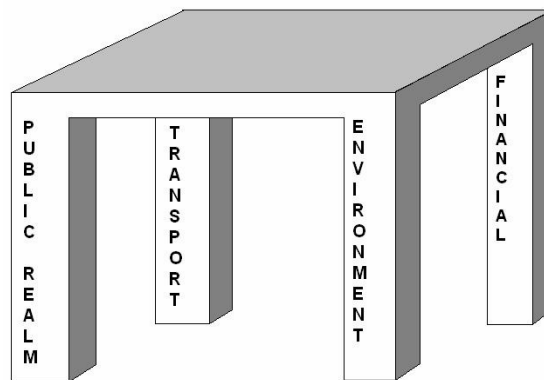


Figure 1: Urban Design Framework

## **2. The Project**

### **Basic Facts**

2.1 The funding for the UDF has come from the South West Regional Development Agency SWRDA, Cheltenham Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council. The consultancy firm Halcrow was commissioned in May 2006 to produce the UDF.

2.2 Following consultation and adoption by Council, the Cheltenham Civic Pride Urban Design Framework has become a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) within the Local Development Framework (LDF). This means that it will become an important or 'material' consideration in planning decisions. Details of what this means are explained below:

## Planning Context:

2.3 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act came into force in 2004 and set out significant changes to be made to the planning system. It requires the existing Cheltenham Borough Local Plan to be replaced with a new style of development plan known as a Local Development Framework (LDF).

2.4 The Cheltenham Borough Council LDF will be one of the most important series of documents published by the Council. It deals with development, helping to conserve the special environment of Cheltenham and identifying land which will be needed for future development. The policies set out in the LDF will influence decisions on planning applications and support the council's proposals for managing traffic in the town<sup>1</sup>.

2.5 The LDF is a folder of local development documents that outlines how planning will be managed in Cheltenham. For an indication of its structure see figure 2 below. The Civic Pride Urban Design Framework will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) within the LDF<sup>2</sup>. Supplementary Planning Documents expand or add details to policies laid out in development plan documents.

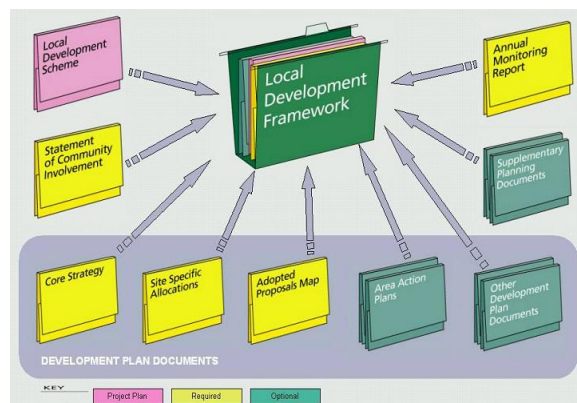


Figure 2: LDF structure

2.6 There are a number of relevant local plan policies to which this SPD relates. These can be viewed via the following link:

<http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/libraries/templates/thefuture.asp?FolderID=59>

Principal local plan policies include:

- Core polices CP1 – CP7 – sustainable development
- Policy PR2 – land allocated for mixed use development

<sup>1</sup> Transport issues affecting Cheltenham are comprehensively covered in The Local Transport Plan (LTP). The LTP is administered by Gloucestershire County Council.

<sup>2</sup> For more information about the LDF process visit the planning portal at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/uploads/ldf/ldfguide.html>

## **The Consultants' Reports**

2.7 As part of the UDF the consultants have produced a number of reports. These are listed below. The purpose of this report is to summarise the main themes in the consultants' reports and clarify the policy of the Council. The consultants' reports will be referenced in this document as technical appendices. Owing to the length of the technical appendices these reports are available online at the Cheltenham Borough Council website<sup>3</sup>.

- i) Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD (this document)

## **Technical Appendices**

- ii) Civic Pride Baseline Study – Halcrow July 2006
- iii) Urban Design Strategy (UDS) - Halcrow October 2006
- iv) Public Realm Strategy (PRS) - Halcrow Jan 2008
- v) Transport Strategy (TS) - Colin Buchanan October 2006
- vi) Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) - Colin Buchanan March 2007
- vii) North Place & Portland Street Development Brief (NPDB) - Halcrow Jan 2008; Revised 2010
- viii) Royal Well Development Brief (RWDB) - Halcrow Jan 2008
- ix) Sustainability Appraisal (SA) – Halcrow Feb 2008
- x) Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Halcrow Feb 2008 (incorporated into SA document)

## **How the proposals have been formed**

2.8 The work of the consultants has been monitored and regularly reviewed by two different groups. These are an Officer Working Group (OWG) and a Member Steering Group (MSG). The OWG is a multi disciplinary group consisting of experts from the three different partners. It meets monthly to offer technical advice to the consultants. The MSG contains a member from each of the three political parties in Cheltenham and the Gloucestershire County Council Lead Cabinet Member for Environment and Community. It meets on a regular basis and acts as a sounding board to help guide Civic Pride policy.

2.9 The proposals in this report are a summary of the professional views of the consultants, modified where appropriate by the guidance of the Officer Working Group and Member Steering Group. The technical appendices consist entirely of the consultants work and support this document. The features of the Civic Pride Urban Design Framework SPD are as follows.

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<sup>3</sup> [www.cheltenham.gov.uk/urbandesign](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/urbandesign)



### 3. Civic Pride Urban Design Framework

#### Baseline Study:

3.1 The first task for the consultants was to produce a baseline study that defined the objectives of the project. This study built on the work of an unadopted 2001 Cheltenham Urban Design Framework<sup>4</sup> and incorporated the SWRDA Civic Pride Initiative objectives<sup>5</sup>. The main objectives of the Civic Pride Project can be summarised as follows:

3.2 **Environmental Objectives:** To provide a context for decisions on urban design, planning, transportation, street scene and maintenance issues that will produce high quality and imaginative public realm. To deliver an exemplar sustainable solution to provide benefits for people living, visiting and working in the town.

3.3 **Economic Objectives:** To stimulate economic development within the town centre. To link economic growth to skills retention and development. To enhance the town's reputation as a national centre of culture and encourage investment in the leisure, tourism and retail sectors.

3.4 **Transport Objectives:** To set the context for reducing town centre traffic impact, improving accessibility for walking, cycling, disabled people, public transport users and businesses. To provide the context for the provision of accessible and safe public car parking and for integrating local, regional and national bus and coach nodes. To establish a basis for reclaiming street space in order to introduce public realm enhancements.

3.5 **Property Objectives:** To provide the context for decisions on the development of the three sites.



3.6 Following the baseline study the consultants produced three distinct strategies: an Urban Design Strategy, Public Realm Strategy and Transport Strategy. They also produced development briefs for Royal Well and North Place/Portland Street<sup>6</sup>. The main features of these strategies and development briefs are as follows:

#### Urban Design Strategy (UDS):

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<sup>4</sup> The 2001 Urban design Framework (Latham Architects) was effectively a study for further work or feasibility study that informed the present piece of work.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.southwestrda.org.uk/what-we-do/regeneration/civic-pride.shtm>

<sup>6</sup> St. James Square has been taken out of the statutory consultation process and will be consulted on separately

3.7 The UDS is a strategic framework to ensure that individual projects and interventions are not conceived of as isolated schemes, but rather, contribute to a coherent urban design structure for the town. Key features include:

3.8 **Urban Structure:** Cheltenham should have a more integrated and permeable town structure (figure 3). Boots Corner should have pedestrian priority so that it forms the heart of the town as the intersection of two important pedestrian/shopping axes; the medieval High Street and regency Promenade. The North/South promenade route should be extended north from Boots Corner to North Place and then Pittville Park. This would allow Albion Street area to be regenerated in line with the DPDS retail study<sup>7</sup>. This will also help with the regeneration of North Cheltenham. Gateways to the town centre, such as Tewkesbury Road, London Road and Gloucester Road should be made more attractive and marked by landmarks. The River Chelt should be celebrated where possible (UDS p 22).

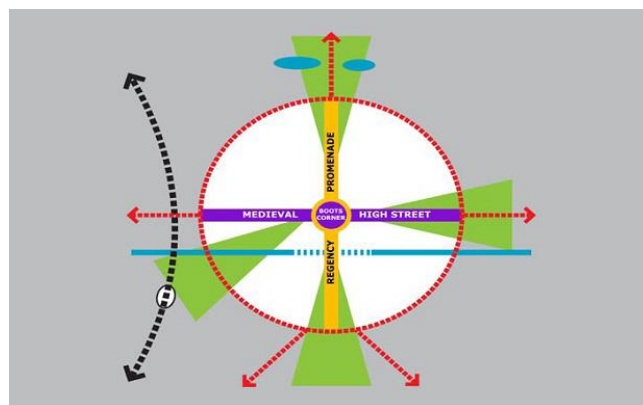


Figure 3: Urban Design Structure

3.9 **Green Structure:** A green corridor connecting Montpellier Park with Pittville Park should be created, encouraging a promenading theme to reflect Cheltenham's spa town past. Increased planting where possible in new public squares, on St. Margaret's Road, on buildings and on town centre approaches and gateways (UDS p26).

3.10 **Public Spaces:** There are opportunities for new or enhanced public spaces at Boots Corner, North Place, Royal Well/Crescent Place, Montpellier Walk, Imperial Square, Winchcombe Street/Regent Arcade & Brewery/St. Georges Place. (UDS p25). The main priorities for the creation of new public spaces are Boots Corner, North Place and Royal Well. A high standard of design and finish will be expected at these sites.

<sup>7</sup> Cheltenham Retail and Leisure Study, DPDS Consulting, December 2006

**3.11 Streetscape Improvements:** There should be more shared space in the town centre where possible. Street clutter, such as superfluous signs, lampposts and street furniture should be reduced where possible. Buses should be discouraged from laying over or stopping for unnecessarily long times. Improved materials should be used wherever possible (further details in Public Realm Strategy below) (UDS p29).

**3.12 Quarters Concept:** Cheltenham town centre has seven distinct but overlapping quarters. The UDS sets out general principles for land use and design parameters that could help to target public intervention, inward investment and marketing within each of these quarters (UDS p41)<sup>8</sup>.

### **Transport Strategy:**

**3.13** The consultants analysed Cheltenham's transport network and proposed four traffic management schemes. These schemes modified the existing road network in order to allow the public realm improvements identified in the UDS and PRS. Two preferred schemes were tested using the Gloucestershire Highways 'SATURN' Transport Model<sup>9</sup>. The findings of this modelling process were detailed in the Traffic Impact Assessment Report (section 3.19). The main features of the two schemes tested are set out below:

**3.14 Phase I:** removes vehicle traffic from Boots Corner, Royal Well Rd and North Street. These roads will remain open to public transport and taxis (TS p22)<sup>10</sup>.

### **Jargon Buster 2**

#### **What is Streetscape?**

The elements within and along the street that define its appearance, identity, and functionality, including adjacent buildings and land uses, street furniture, landscaping, trees, highway, and pavement treatments.

#### **What is Shared Space?**

Shared space is the design, management and maintenance of public spaces which reduces the adverse effects of conventional traffic engineering. It is based on the observation that individuals' behaviour in traffic is more positively affected by the environment of the public space than it is by conventional traffic control devices (signals, signs, road markings, etc) & regulations.

#### **What is Street Furniture?**

Street furniture includes bus shelters, litter bins, seating, lighting, railings and signs. It includes any structure in and near to the highway.

<sup>8</sup> The detailed design and implementation of the Civic Pride projects will preserve and enhance the character of the Conservation Area in a manner compatible with the relevant Character Area Appraisal.

<sup>9</sup> The Central Severn Vale SATURN Model is a strategic traffic assignment modelling facility and provides a detailed picture of Cheltenham's town centre vehicle movements.

<sup>10</sup> In the Transport Strategy 2006, Phase 1 is referred to as 'Do Minimum, Phase II is Option 2

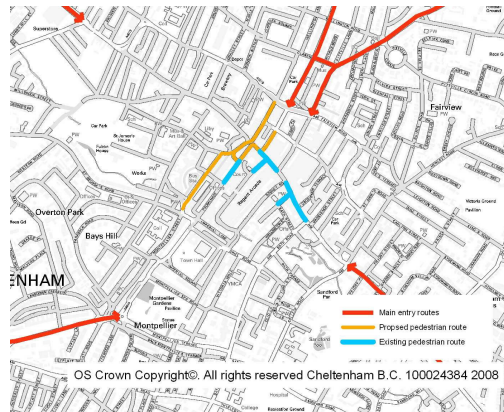


Figure 4: Transport Strategy Phase I (Larger scale image at appendix II)

**3.15 Phase II:** Phase II is based on Phase I but it takes the key objective of reducing traffic in the town centre further, by removing the remaining section of the inner ring road formed by Bath Road and Oriel Road (TS p24). The strategic traffic currently using this route would be dispersed on to other roads around the town centre. However, Phase II is not to be pursued at this time, as it does not currently have the backing of the Highway Authority (GCC). It will remain a possible future option or second phase, subject to funding, planning policy and the support of the Highway Authority.

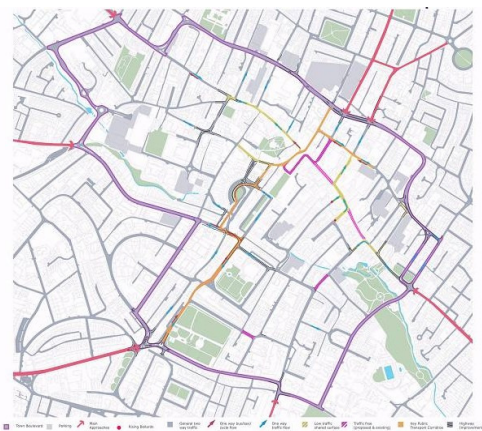


Figure 5: Transport Strategy Phase II

**3.16 Public Transport:** Crucial to the Transport Strategy, and something included in both phases, is the creation of a two-way public transport spine running from north to south. This will allow a rationalisation of the bus network, with operator cost savings and more efficient routes for customers. This is in line with the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy (TS p45).

**3.17 Cycling:** A mesh of cycle routes could be established across the town centre with interchanges at approximately 300m centres. This was a philosophy adopted in Delft in Holland which is widely seen as an exemplar in Europe. Streetscape and design improvements such as removal of street clutter could assist in reducing on-street cycle accident rates and will improve the cyclist's experience.

3.18 **Parking:** As Civic Pride is reliant on developing existing surface car parks, there may be a reduction in parking capacity in future years<sup>11</sup>. This is however subject to many factors and needs to be weighed against the advantages of developing these car parks which will achieve significant economic and social benefits that outweigh any potential issues arising from a loss of capacity<sup>12</sup>.

3.19 **Mitigation:** Mitigation measures are being investigated to offset any future shortfall in parking capacity, these include:

- i) *Park and Ride* – There are plans to expand the number of spaces at Arle Court Park and Ride and to create new facilities at Uckington and Shurdington. Cheltenham Racecourse will continue to provide a park and ride facility.
- ii) *Improved public transport* – The transport strategy will increase the attractiveness of public transport to the town centre, by encouraging quicker and more frequent bus services. The availability of free public transport for the elderly has already had some impact in reducing the demand for town centre parking.
- iii) *Retaining and improving existing car parks* – An appropriate level of parking capacity will be retained at North Place/Portland Street car park and there is the possibility of increasing the capacity of other town centre car parks through sensitive development<sup>13</sup>.
- iv) *Provision of seasonal spaces* – CBC and GCC are actively investigating the possibility of using the car parks of large local firms at weekends to provide additional parking at peak times such as Christmas and during festivals.



Figure 6: Example of multi-storey car park (left) overlooking public space

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<sup>11</sup> Physical counts of car park usage on both a typical shopping day and during the busy Christmas period were carried out. These studies demonstrated that there is currently an over provision of public parking in Cheltenham town centre.

<sup>12</sup> The specific location for disabled parking is a level of detail that will be worked out at the planning stage. There is no plan to reduce the overall number of town centre disabled parking places. There may be opportunity to increase the number of spaces. There may be some reassignment of disabled parking locations.

<sup>13</sup> For example, decking could be 'wrapped' with single aspect uses to reduce visual impact.

**3.20 Transport Contributions:** The Council has an adopted SPG on development contributions towards transport infrastructure cost. The Civic Pride SPD establishes a higher materials specification than the Transport Contributions SPG had envisaged within the town centre. Accordingly where the Transport SPG triggers a contribution towards work, which the Civic Pride requires to be at an enhanced level, the contribution will be enhanced accordingly to enable the Civic Pride specification to be implemented.

### **Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA):**

3.21 The consultants tested the two proposed traffic schemes (Phase I and Phase II) using the SATURN Transport Model. It was expected that this could demonstrate a displacement of traffic on the network when sections of the inner ring road were blocked to normal traffic. The results of the modelling are set out in the TIA report (appendix) - in summary it can be noted that:

3.22 **Phase I:** The model demonstrated no significant build up of traffic in any particular road. There is a significant decrease of traffic in the town centre. Displaced traffic will be evenly distributed across the road network. With traffic management improvements on St Margaret's Road and junction improvements on Albion Street, Phase I could be accommodated within the existing road network (TIA p20).

3.23 **Phase II:** The model showed a greater reduction in town centre traffic, but there would be significant increases in traffic at peak times in certain parts of the road network. Additional road improvements would be required at Lansdown Road/Montpellier Walk junction and Bath Road/Montpellier Terrace. These junction improvements would create a significant capital cost (TIA p33).

### **3.24 Key Outputs of Phase I:**

- i) Allows re-development of Boots Corner, Royal Well and Albion Street
- ii) Improved and more 'pedestrian friendly' town centre
- iii) Allows streetscape improvements and the creation of high quality public spaces
- iv) Impetus for regeneration of west High Street through increased pedestrian footfall

### **3.25 Key Outputs of Phase II:**

- i) Outputs as per Phase I, plus:
- ii) Allows streetscape improvements to Oriel Road/Bath Road.

3.26 **Transport Conclusion:** Due to the results of the TIA and after consultation with the Highway Authority it is proposed that Phase I is the transport option that is the most realistic to implement in the short term. Phase II is reserved as a possible future option subject to Gloucestershire Highways support, further feasibility studies and funding being identified.

## Public Realm Strategy (PRS):

3.27 The PRS builds on the work of the UDS and Transport Strategy by providing a more detailed rationalisation of CBC and GCC's approach to both the management of and intervention in the public realm. It sets out a cohesive approach to unifying elements such as signage, lighting, public art, street furniture and materials across a hierarchy of different street types (figure 7 and figure 8). The main features of the PRS are as follows:

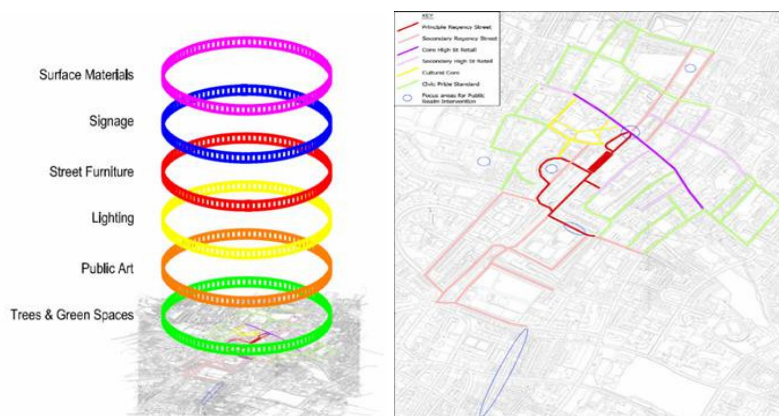


Figure 7: Public Realm: Thematic Approach

Figure 8: Street Types (appendix ii)

3.28 **Materials:** The report builds on the UDS quarter approach by suggesting a hierarchy of different paving materials and laying techniques for different quarters. For example, the cultural core streets should have 400-900mm random length high quality natural stone paving and principal regency area streets a 600mm random length yorkstone slab<sup>14</sup> (PRS p10). An appropriate maintenance budget for enhanced materials must be considered.



3.29 **Direction and Location Signage:** Signs should be clear and accessible but not dominating the streetscape; only located where relevant; reinforcing a qualitative statement about the value of the public realm; not following a specific period style in order to unify historical and modern developments; and using specifically designed 3D maps to display easily recognisable landmarks. Signs could be colour coded by quarter and should use a bespoke and contemporary design (PRS p11).

<sup>14</sup> The exact choice of materials is subject to Highway Authority approval.

3.30 **Street furniture:** Street furniture, including seats, benches, bins, bollards, cycle racks, bus shelters and tree surrounds, should not reflect any heritage style or imitate a point in history. The materials used should be durable and vandal proof. The designs should be simple, stylish, elegant and versatile (PRS p13).



Figure 9: Quality distinctive environment

3.31 **Lighting:** Lighting of the public realm will enhance the town after dark by providing a clear sense of place and vibrancy, whilst proving a safe environment for all users of the town centre. Where possible lighting should be upgraded to more sustainable contemporary styles. Lighting of significant buildings during festivals will improve legibility. Any new lighting should use low carbon LED technology (PRS p14).

3.32 **Public Art:** Public Art should establish a coherent pattern to understand the town. This should be expressed through quarters, gateways, linkages and movement. Gateways are possible locations for public art and lettering and paving materials can also be used. One major piece is better than many unsuccessful ones (PRS p16).

3.33 **Decluttering:** The PRS sets out the principle of rationalising street furniture and signage and removing unnecessary street clutter (PRS p7).

### **North Place and Portland Street Development Brief:**

3.34 The consultants have produced a development brief to guide the redevelopment of North Place and Portland Street. This will be submitted to the market with an invitation to tender for development proposals. The main principles of the development brief are as follows:



3.35 **Urban Design:** There is a key opportunity to form a northern gateway to the town centre. Focussed on a high quality civic square addressing Holy Trinity Church to the east of the site and becoming a magnet/destination area north of the High Street. Clear pedestrian linkage to the Brewery and High Street through a strong east-west diagonal link between Dowty House and Holy Trinity Church. This should exploit the meeting of geometries and views of these historic buildings. (NPDB p10).



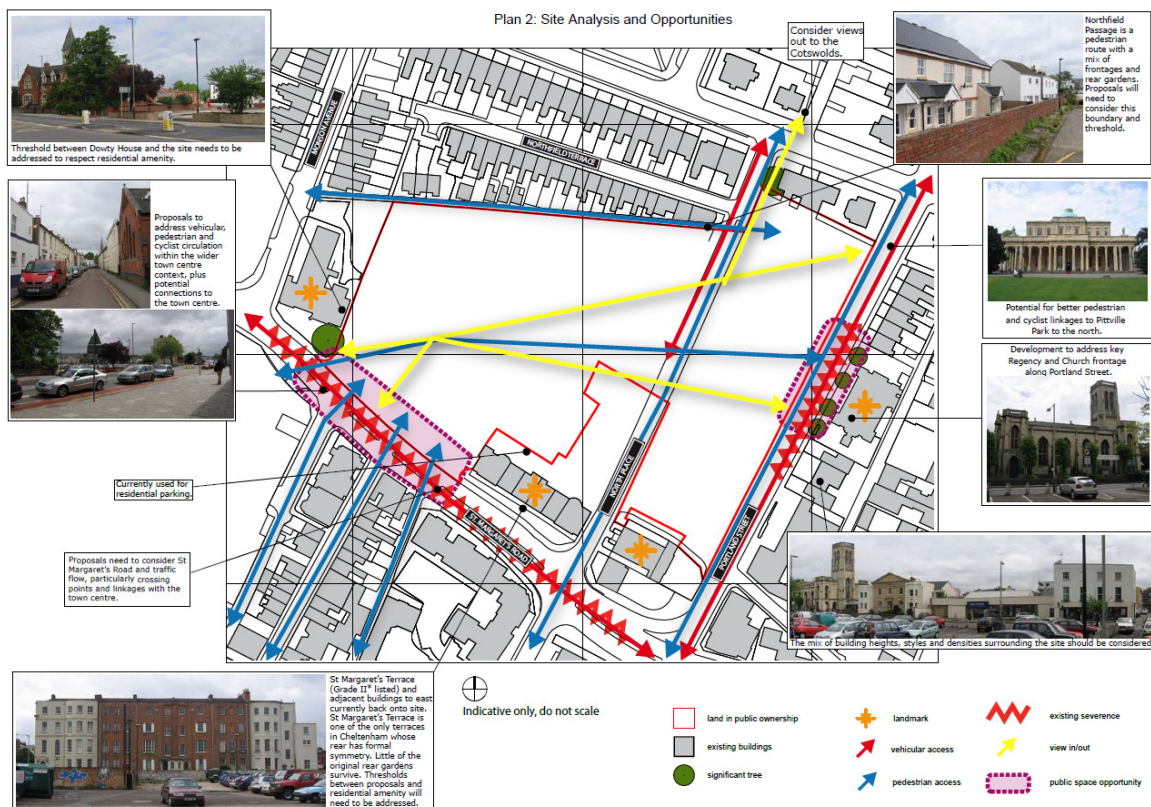


Figure 10: North Place Development Principles (appendix ii)

3.36 There is an opportunity to create a striking contemporary northern extension to the town centre using high quality materials and design and public art. There should be increased planting to continue the green corridor from the Promenade to Pittville Park using the new space in front of the Church to shift the axis. There should be shared space on North Place. There is an opportunity for landmark building on south west portion of site.

3.37 **Land Use:** The site should be mixed town centre uses, including residential (including a minimum of 40% affordable dwellings), commercial (e.g. office, retail etc.), leisure, arts, bus interchange, parking and public spaces. Residential should be a mix of apartments and townhouses and must conform to Cheltenham Borough Council's existing planning policies. The residential units can have a maximum of five storeys.

3.38 **Transport:** There are a variety of access opportunities to the site. However, the Highway Authority's view is that the introduction of a new junction onto St Margaret's Road would introduce further delays and congestion to an existing vital transport corridor and vehicular access to the site here is unlikely to be acceptable. Additionally, choice of access points will not be allowed to compromise urban design objectives which are seeking the creation of vibrant streets and spaces, good pedestrian linkages and enhanced street scene. Portland Street would remain part of the existing road network to ensure access and permeability. There is a major opportunity to enhance the quality and appearance of both St Margaret's Road and Portland Street. Also, improving junctions will help pedestrian and traffic movement and thus address existing congestion. Any access proposals to the site will be subject to modelling. (NPDB p17).



3.39 **Parking:** The site needs to provide car parking for the following:

- i) Residential parking levels will be agreed with the planning and highway authorities and will be based on evidence related to the need of accommodation provided and the availability of parking in and around the development overall.
- ii) About 300 public car parking spaces.<sup>15</sup>
- iii) Other uses will be provided with limited parking to meet their essential operational and service requirements only. It is expected that any office parking would be available at weekends for public parking.

3.40 There are a variety of options for the location of parking. Residential and commercial parking will be designed to provide safe and secure areas for both person and vehicle, offering well lit spaces with good natural surveillance. This parking can be provided on-street in secure, overlooked locations. Undercroft parking is acceptable if the buildings in which it is located provide active frontages. Underground public parking may be acceptable subject to the suitability of ground conditions. Decked parking may also be acceptable if suitably designed and screened, for example with green walls and/or single aspect development to provide active edges. Rear parking courts in residential and general commercial areas are not acceptable as they create insecure intrusions into the core of blocks and are inefficient in their use of space (NPDB p17). Adopted parking solutions will be expected to respect the Council's ambition for quality public realm and development that enhances the character of the town. Public parking will need to positively consider the needs of the evening economy in terms of charging regimes, opening and closing times etc.

3.41 **Sustainability:** There is an opportunity to incorporate a range of sustainable design and construction techniques into the development, including maximise the 'due south' orientation of new buildings, using the diagonal axis as a key structuring element, thereby improving passive solar gain and low-carbon energy systems. Green roofs on buildings on the civic building and green walls to improve air quality and screen car park development are examples of best practice. Opportunities to create exemplar eco build will be actively

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<sup>15</sup> The St. Margaret's SPG (adopted 1999) sets a target of 800 parking spaces for the North West portion of the town centre. As the NCP and High Street car park provide approximately 500 spaces there is a need for at least 300 spaces at North Place and Portland Street.

encouraged. The development should aim to achieve at least Level 5 of the code for Sustainable Homes and ‘very good’ under the BREEAM environmental building standards; to assist in achieving each standard design should incorporate Crime Prevention and Secured by Design. (NPDB p15)<sup>16</sup>.

3.42 **Constraints:** Land adjoining existing residential areas must be carefully considered. Sensitive consideration must be given to Holy Trinity Church & St. Margaret’s Terrace (grade II\*) in terms of heights, setbacks, development intensity and elevational treatments. English Heritage consent will be required for this development.

### Royal Well Development Brief:

3.43 The consultants have produced a development brief to guide the redevelopment of Royal Well. This will be submitted to the market with an invitation for development proposals. The main principles of the development brief are set out below:



Figure 11: Concepts for Royal Well

3.44 **Urban Design:** The Royal Well site creates an opportunity for a unique development utilising the existing landmark architecture, public space, trees and green space. There is a chance to better integrate the currently ‘hidden’ public space into the town centre; creating a new “destination” and creating links to the cultural quarter at Clarence Street. Improving the rear of the Municipal Offices will enhance the setting of the historic Royal Crescent. The removal of through traffic will enable Royal Well to become a pedestrian dominated space. An improved Royal Well will also act as a new town centre gateway for people accessing the town centre on foot or cycling via the Honeybourne Line (RWDB p 16).

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<sup>16</sup> New developments should conform to Cheltenham Borough Council Supplementary Planning Guidance “Waste Minimalisation in Development Projects” Sept 2006.

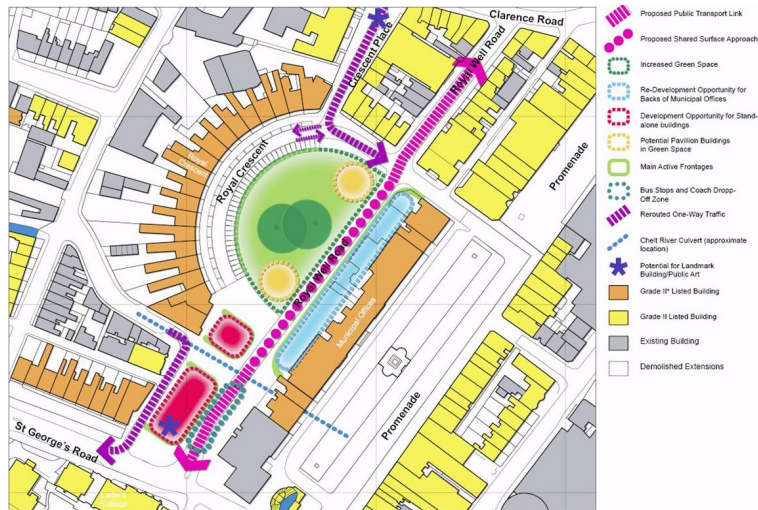


Figure 12: Royal Well Development Principles (appendix ii)

**3.45 Land Use:** Mixed use development with potential for leisure, retail and residential uses (RWDB p9). The scale and form of development to the rear of the Municipal Offices will be dependent on English Heritage approval and will be subject to an in depth conservation management plan (currently being commissioned).

**3.46 Transport:** As Royal Well Road forms an important part of the North-South bus spine it is proposed that the road will be closed to all normal vehicular traffic, but will remain accessible to public transport, taxis, cyclists and walkers. This will help to improve permeability in the town centre. However, because one of the principal drivers for the redevelopment of this important site is that an attractive new public space is created, the location of bus stops is an important consideration (RWDB p15).

**3.47** It is proposed that a more thorough analysis of the most suitable locations for the various types of bus and coach services across the town centre be undertaken (town, country and national). However, the initial analysis has identified four options for the coach station: 1) Coach drop off point remains at current location but is rationalised and given sensitive design treatment. 2) Coach station moved to alternative site. 3) No specific coach station. Coaches drop off where appropriate e.g. National Express on the Promenade, day trips outside the Town Hall, country buses along the bus spine - lay offs discouraged within the town centre area. 4) Coaches pick up/drop off at Park and Ride.

**3.48 Parking:** The current private parking along Crescent Place will remain, but the public car park at Chapel Walk will be removed and redeveloped. It is unlikely that there will be opportunities for the creation of significant amounts of new car parking within Royal Well. There will also be limited opportunities related to the new building. However, in line with sustainable transport policies and due to enhanced public transport access, the Council will discourage parking for non-residential uses. In any event, residential parking will not be permitted to exceed an average of 0.8 spaces per unit. Underground car parking is unlikely to be possible owing to the location of the site within the floodplain, but it would be considered if a technical solution could be identified which was acceptable to the Environment Agency.

**3.49 Environment:** The retention of the London Plane trees on Royal Well green is essential.

There should be careful consideration of potential flood risk and the development proposal should demonstrate the application of sustainable development principles and provision of “beacon” sustainable solutions (RWDB p13).

**3.50 Constraints:** The River Chelt culvert runs east to west in the south of the site. In order to retain access to the culvert no development is permitted above and within eight metres either side of the culvert. The site is currently in flood risk zone 3. A site specific Flood Risk Assessment is required to ascertain the extent of the highest risk sections of the site. English Heritage permission will be required for any new building to rear of the Municipal Offices. There is a need to retain views of the Ladies College, Chapel and Royal Crescent.

## Appendix One: Source of additional information

### Contacts

Cheltenham Borough Council Planning		
Urban Design &	Wilf Tomaney	01242 264145
Landscape	Claire Stenson	01242 264191
Planning Policy	Tracey Crews	01242 264382
North Place Development Control	Ian Crohill	01242 264249
Royal Well Development Control	Martin Chandler	01242 774940
Conservation	Karen Radford	01242 775218
Building Control	Iain Houston	01242 264293
Gloucestershire Highways	Amanda Lawson-Smith	01452 425609
Cheltenham B.C. Housing Enabling	Lois Taylor	01242 774718
Cheltenham B.C. Legal	Jonathan Noel	01242 775117
Environment Agency	Ruth Clare	01684 864383

## Appendix Two: Larger scale diagrams

Figure 4: Transport Strategy Phase I

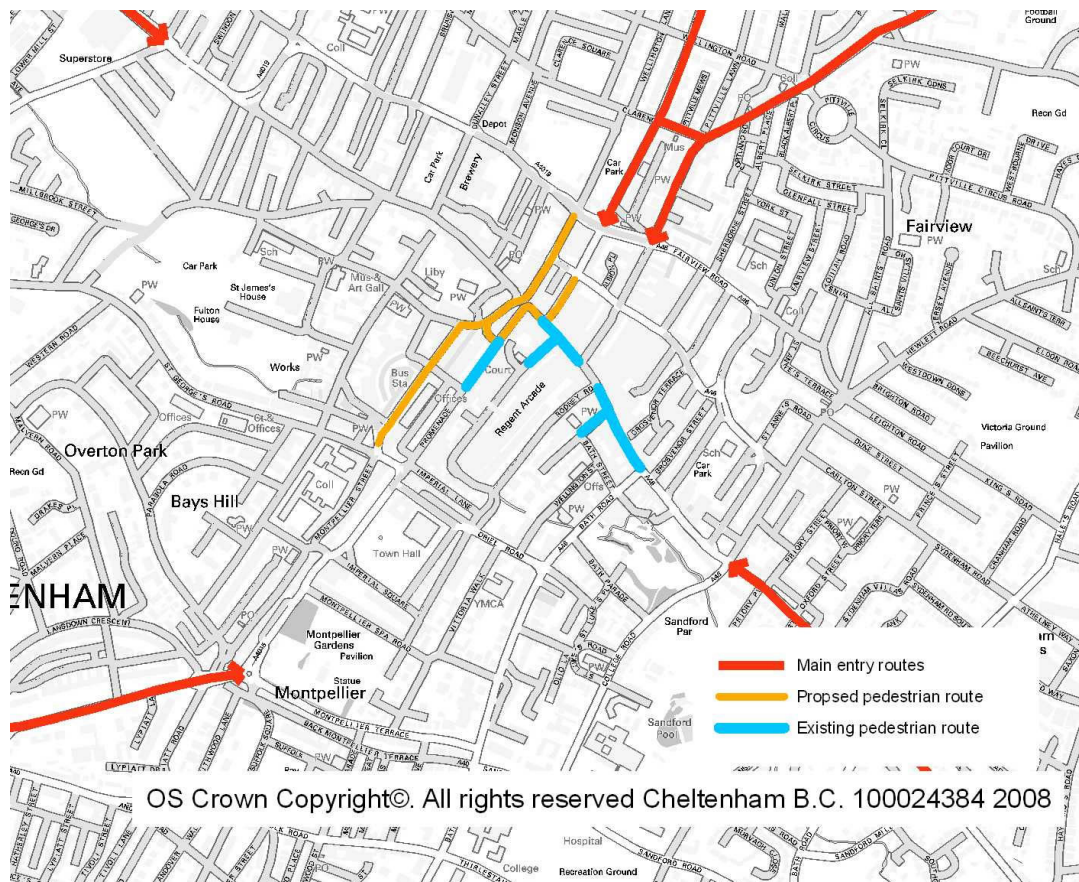


Figure 7: Public Realm: Thematic Approach

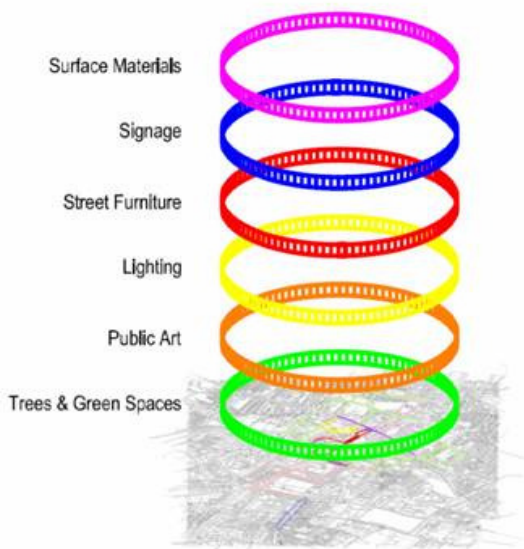
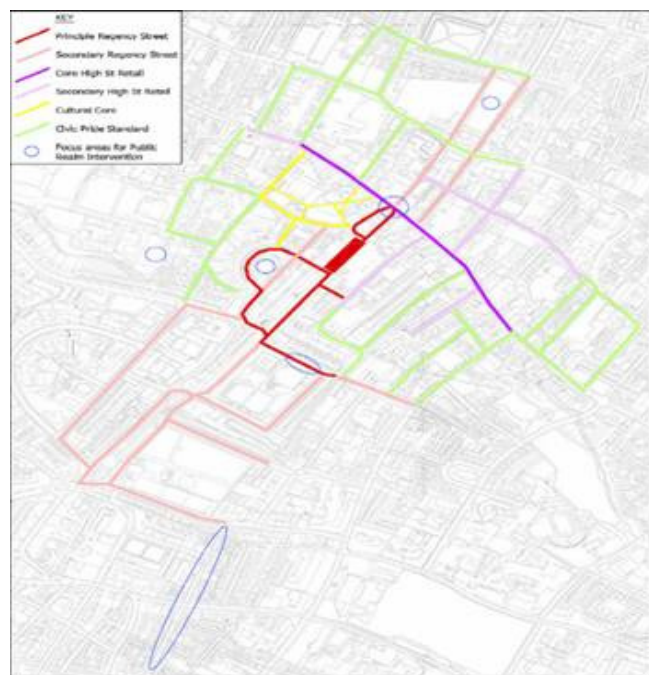
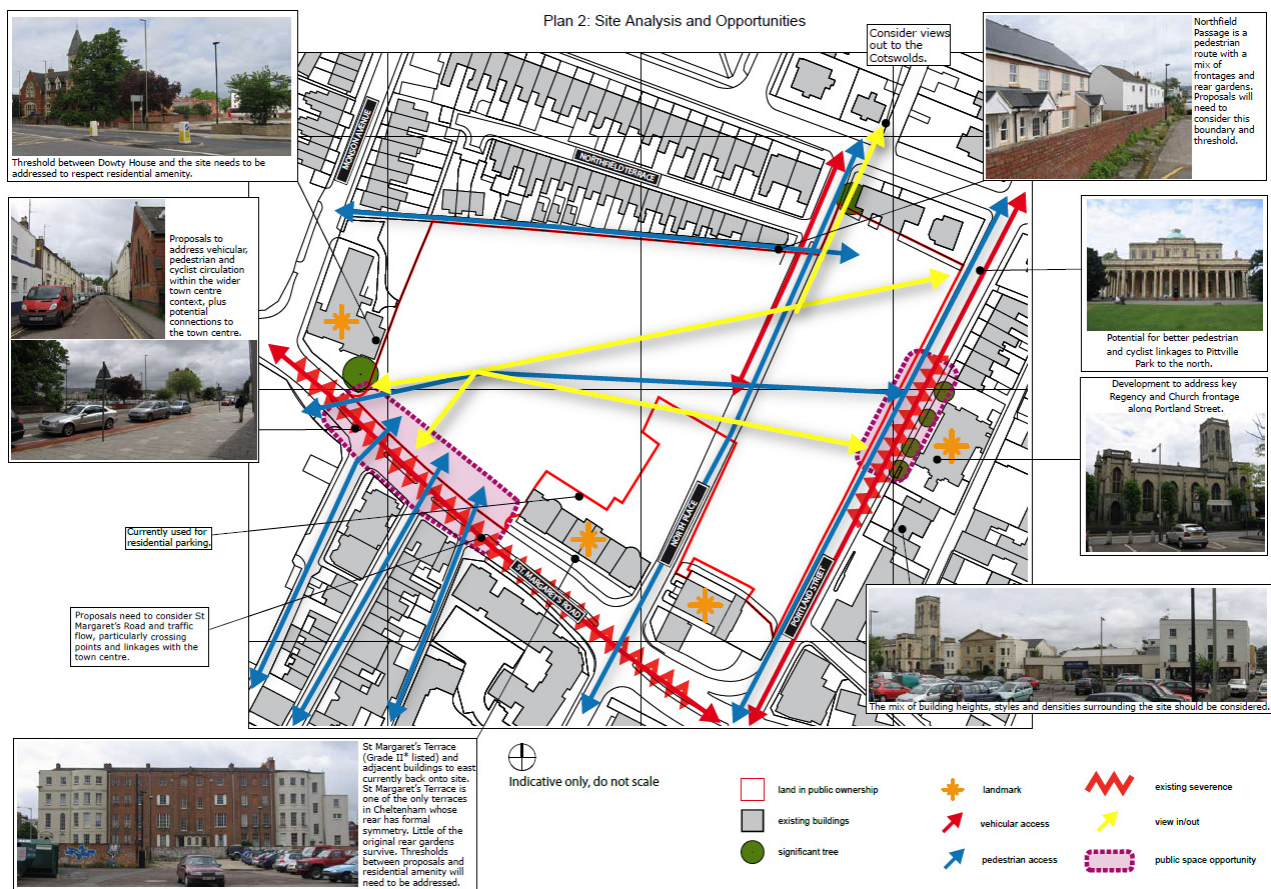


Figure 8: Street Types



**Figure 10: North Place Development Principles**



**Figure 12: Royal Well Development Principles**

