

# North Northamptonshire Town Centre Regeneration

Wellingborough Masterplan  
April 2026

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theurbanists



Urban  
Foresight



North  
Northamptonshire  
Council

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**Issue date:** 01.05.2026

**Drawing status:** DRAFT

**Revision:** D

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# Introduction

The Wellingborough Town Centre Masterplan establishes a strategic framework to shape and direct future development. Designed to align with the **North Northamptonshire Local Development Plan** and the **North Northamptonshire 'Big 50'**, this document ensures a coordinated approach to growth.

The work in this report is built upon local knowledge gathered from engagement undertaken with the community and local stakeholders. It also takes into account an extensive existing evidence base and will be used to support the Local Development Plan and future funding opportunities needed to revitalise our town.

## Masterplan Process

The North Northamptonshire Town Centre Regeneration project is structured in two phases. Phase 1 involved undertaking a health check of the four growth towns (Kettering, Wellingborough, Corby, and Rushden), reviewing key information to inform the selection of a town to progress into Phase 2. This report summarises Phase 2, which focuses on the preparation of a Town Centre Masterplan for Wellingborough.

This phase involves developing and designing a long-term vision and action plan covering land use, movement, public realm, and delivery strategies through a series of regeneration plans.

## Masterplan Components

The Wellingborough Town Centre Masterplan is structured in the following format to cover strategic wider town aspects as well as breaking the town centre down into intervention areas each with an individual concept.

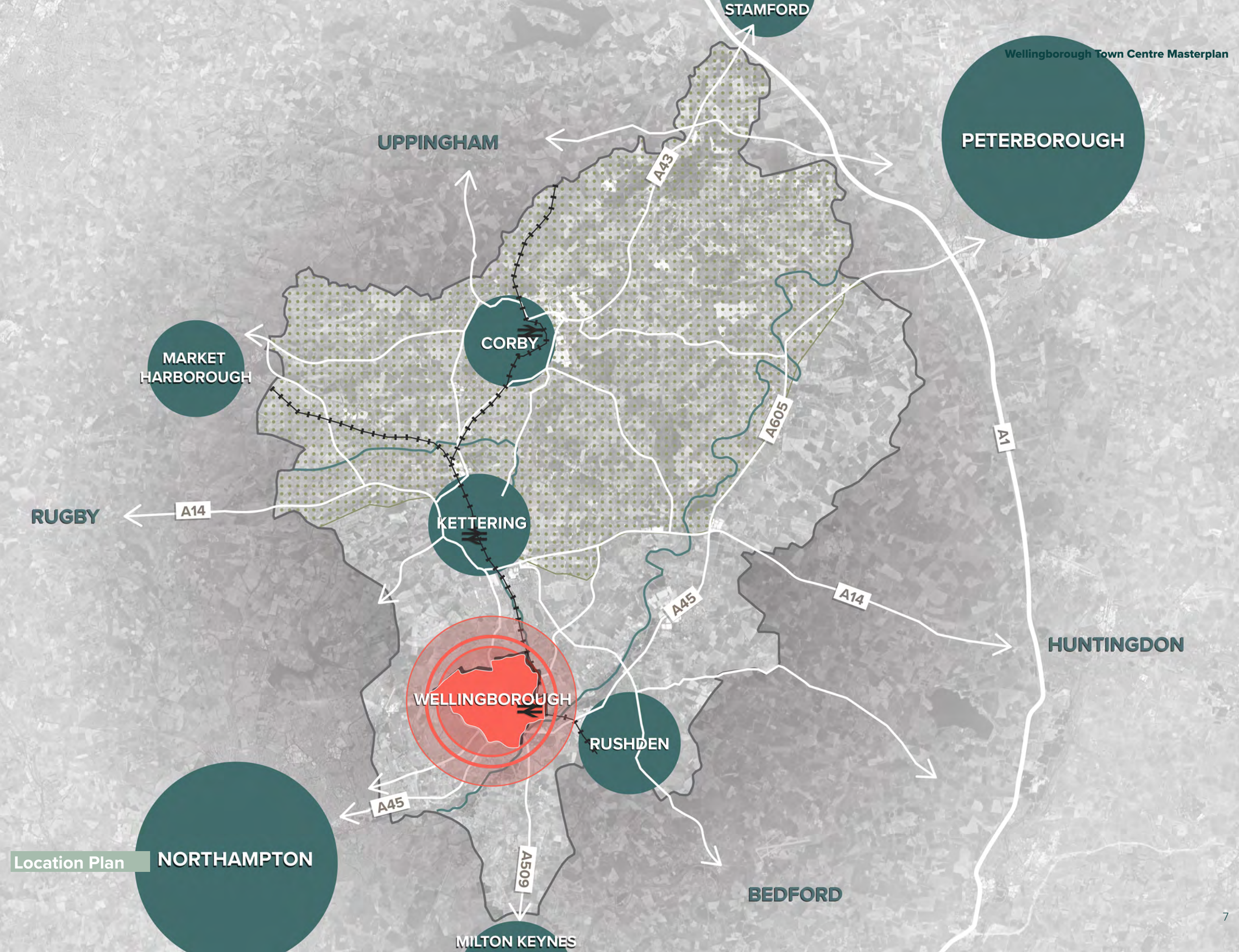
- **Strategic Context and Baseline:** An analysis of the existing situation, featuring 'Health Check' headlines, current planning policy, and a summary of the community engagement and stakeholder consultation.
- **The Vision Framework:** This section defines the core vision statement and its four supporting objectives. It brings the vision to life through 'Day in the Life' profiles, and a series of town centre-wide strategies that underpin and help establish the intervention areas.
- **Spatial Proposals:** A detailed exploration of five distinct intervention areas: The Civic Heartbeat, The Engine Room, The Green Network and Culture Edge, The Eastern Gateway, and The New Town Centre Neighbourhood.
- **Action Plan and Delivery:** A concluding summary of next steps and implementation priorities.

### Delivering change

The fundamental purpose of this Masterplan document is to act as a catalyst for delivering change. While North Northamptonshire Council maintains ownership of key assets and oversees town centre functions, the full realisation of this vision requires resources beyond the public sector's direct control.

Consequently, this document serves as a strategic framework for engaging with private landowners, a foundation for future planning policy, and a justification for public sector funding bids. Ultimately, it is a formal statement of intent designed to form a collective action toward a unified vision for Wellingborough.

### Location Plan



## Why

### Wellingborough?

The decision to focus on Wellingborough was the outcome of a data and physical evaluation undertaken as part of Phase 1. Based on the health check scoring metrics, Wellingborough emerged as the most critical site for intervention due to its balance of development potential and existing infrastructure needs.

The health checks focused on a physical analysis of each town centre which provided support to the primary data-led analysis town centre health checks and scoring matrix developed by Urban Foresight. The key takeaways and conclusions for Wellingborough Town Centre which helped shape where to focus attention during Phase 2 were:

#### Economic Resilience and Need



Swansgate Shopping Centre

**Vacancy Levels:**  
Wellingborough's vacancy rate stands at 19.4%, (national average of 13.8%) and the highest among North Northamptonshire's larger centres. (North Northamptonshire Retail Capacity Study Update - 2024).

**Retail:**  
The town has seen a decline in comparison retail, falling from 33.3% in 2011 to 18.2% in 2022. Partly due to the competition from Rushden Lakes.

**Post-War Building Stock:**  
Large, outdated retail units (e.g. Swansgate Centre) create 'dead spaces' that disconnect the town and make modern mixed-use conversion difficult.

#### Strategic Growth and Connectivity



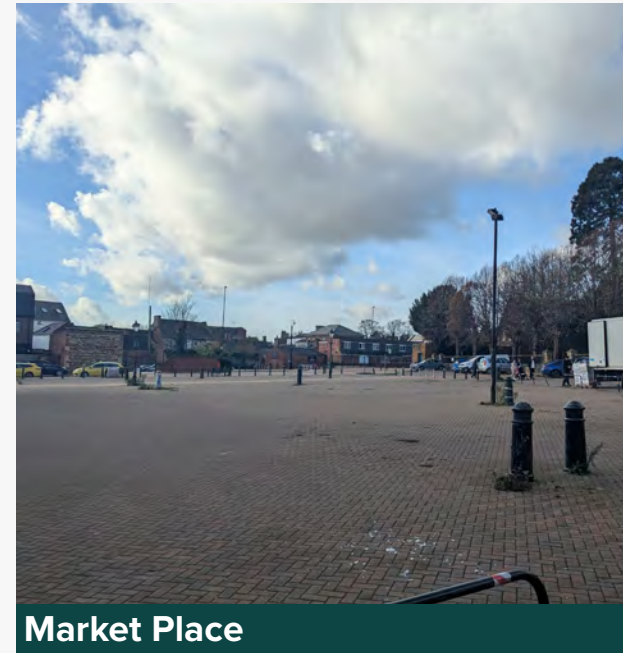
Wellingborough Station

**Designated Growth Town:**  
Identified as a primary focus for infrastructure investment, housing, and major employment growth.

**Surrounding Residential Expansion:**  
Significant housing developments at Stanton Cross and Glenvale Park provide a larger future catchment that requires a revitalised service and leisure hub.

**Regional Rail Gateway:**  
Direct rail links to London St Pancras (approx. 1 hour) position the town as a strategic commuter node within the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor.

#### Regenerative Opportunity



Market Place

**Authentic Medieval Identity:**  
A strong historic core and landmark assets, such as the Grade I listed Church of All Hallows, provide a unique foundation for heritage-led regeneration.

**Public Ownership and Control:**  
A high degree of Public/Council ownership within the core area provides the control necessary to deliver bold, large-scale masterplan interventions.

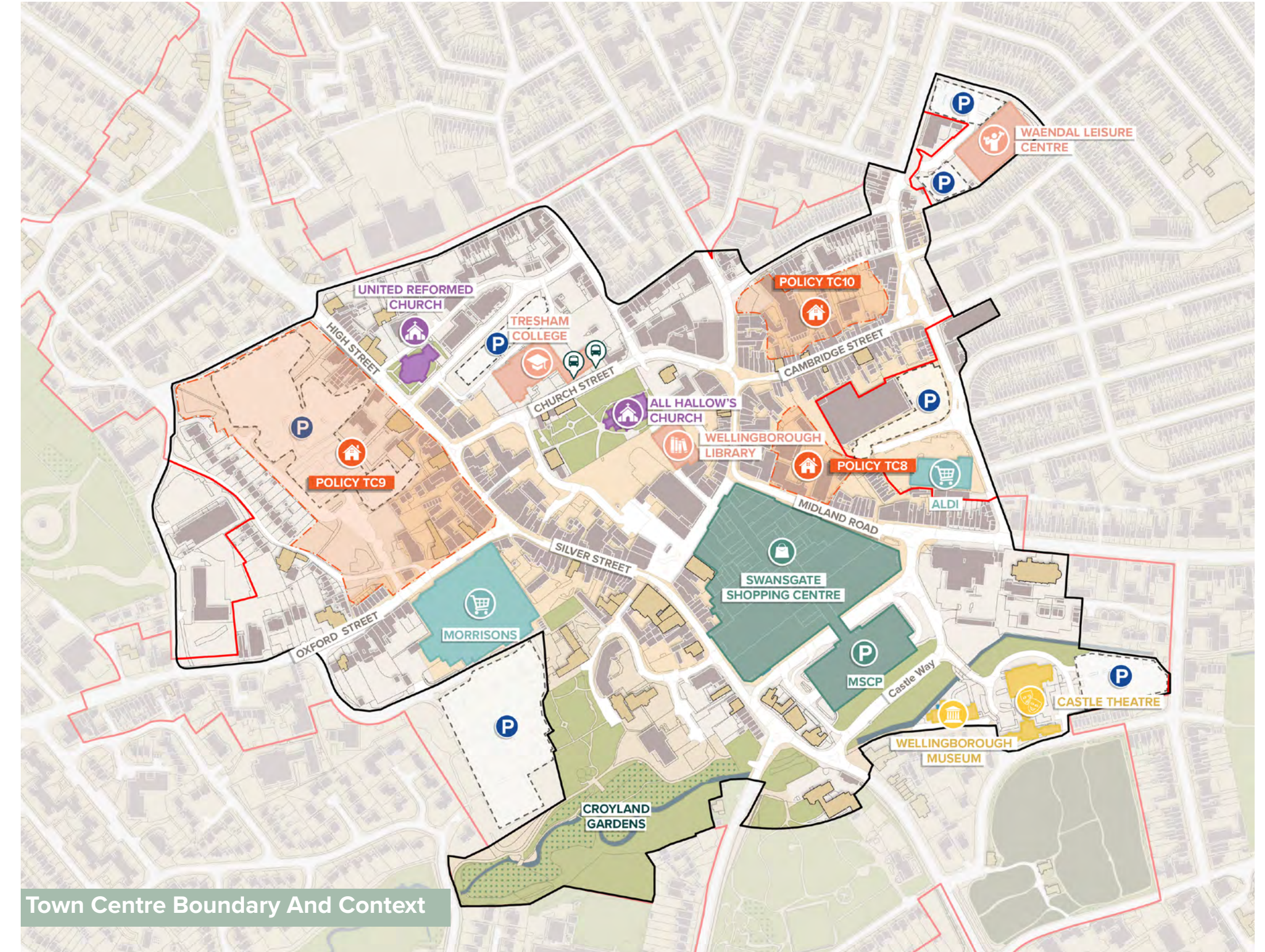
**New Connections:**  
The physical disconnect between the railway station and the town core presents a clear, actionable opportunity to improve connectivity.

**Public Realm and Active Frontages:**  
Quality of public realm requires improvements and street-level activity to connect town assets to improve town centre aesthetics and increase dwell-time and safety.

#### Town Centre Boundary

The Wellingborough town centre boundary encompasses much of the historic market town's key heritage assets, including the Market Place and All Hallows Church. The Swansgate Shopping Centre and associated multi-storey car park have a large presence in the town centre, bounded to the south by key green assets - Croyland Gardens and Swanspool Park. There is a strong cultural offering, with the Castle Theatre and Wellingborough Museum located within the south eastern corner of the town centre. Housing allocations are located within the boundary, as well as community assets - such as the Wellingborough Library, Tresham College and Waendel Leisure Centre.

Whilst this is the defined Town Centre Boundary, there is scope to alter this where necessary to include more key context when making strategic decisions near the boundary line. The masterplan also strongly considers movement to and from the town centre to the surrounding areas and assets, and also to the key transport hub Wellingborough Train Station.



Town Centre Boundary And Context

**Strategic Context**

Located east of Northampton, Wellingborough is a designated 'growth town' undergoing significant expansion. Major urban extensions, including Glenvale Park and Stanton Cross, are projected to increase the population from 50,000 to approximately 70,000.

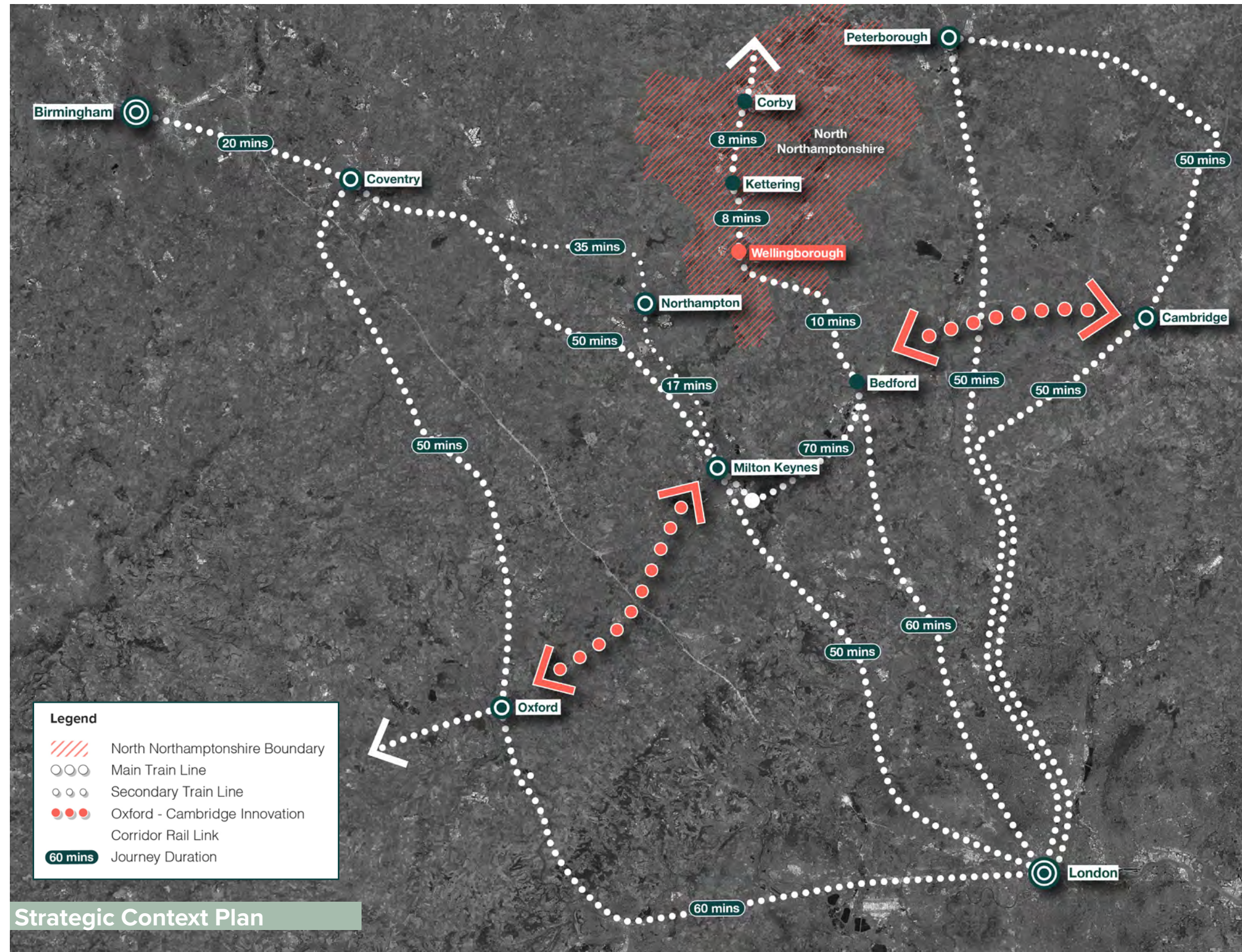
Wellingborough's strategic connectivity - including a 45 to 55-minute London rail link and a key position on the Oxford to Cambridge Growth Corridor - is a major economic driver. By offering access to global institutions and high-value employment, the town is uniquely placed to attract high-earning commuters and entrepreneurs seeking a competitive balance of affordability and world-class connectivity.

Wellingborough is currently the second largest settlement within Northamptonshire and is located between Northampton, Kettering and Rushden and accordingly is well connected to employment opportunities and a sizeable workforce.

Another notable local development is the **Pride in Place fund**, of which Queensway (a neighbourhood within Wellingborough) has been awarded £20 million for community-led regeneration of the area which includes improvements of green spaces, improved safety and other community focused improvements.

Wellingborough is strategically positioned to benefit from the regional economic uplift from the **Universal Studios UK project** (scheduled 2031). With the development forecast to generate £50 billion for the UK economy, Wellingborough's proximity - 22 miles from the site with a 13-minute rail link to Bedford - offers a prime opportunity to capitalise on this. Including:

- **Capacity:** Developing high-quality visitor accommodation and overnight stay options.
- **Leisure:** Expanding the town centre's food and beverage and 'experience' offer to serve increased tourist footfall.
- **Branding:** Promoting Wellingborough as a historic, well-connected base for international and domestic visitors.



Strategic Context Plan

**Conservation Area Considerations**

Protecting its unique architectural and historic character, the **Wellingborough Town Centre Conservation Area** extends beyond the town centre boundary, as far as Swanspool Gardens and London Road Cemetery to the south east and Broad Green to the north west.

The conservation area provides a strong foundation for heritage-led enhancement and regeneration, highlighting key assets, such as the All Hallows Church and the Tithe Barn - both Grade I listed buildings in the town centre.



Tithe Barn



Tithe Barn Road



Hind Hotel



All Hallows Church

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**Policy Background**

There are a series of key policies related to the future regeneration and development of Wellingborough and its town centre area. These are listed here, with relevant details:

**North Northamptonshire Big 50**

The North Northamptonshire Big 50 is a long-term strategic framework looking toward the year 2050. It is designed to move the region from simply being a 'fast-growing area' to becoming a place that offers the 'best life' for all its residents.

It centres on the idea that while the region is already a 'good' place to live for many, the next few decades should focus on ensuring that growth benefits everyone - addressing inequality, improving connectivity, and protecting the environment.

The vision is built around three primary pillars that define what North Northamptonshire aims to become:

- A Proud Place
- A Prosperous Place
- A Proactive Place



What it means for Growth Towns, including Wellingborough:

- **Sustainable Connectivity:** Reducing the 80% reliance on cars by creating green links for active travel (walking / cycling) and reliable, green public transport.
- **Holistic Development:** Moving beyond just building houses. New developments must include the 'physical, digital, and social infrastructure' required to support a growing population from day one.
- **Revitalised Town Centres:** Transforming town centres into 'thriving, pleasant places' that offer the facilities people actually want, ensuring they are accessible and welcoming for all generations.

**North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011 - 2031 (Adopted July 2016)**

**Policy 8 - North Northamptonshire Place Shaping Principles:** Development creates connected places; makes safe and pleasant streets / spaces; ensures adaptable, diverse and flexible places; creates distinctive local character; and ensures quality of life and safer and healthier communities.

**Policy 11 - The Network of Urban and Rural Areas:** Identifies Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and Rushden as 'Growth Towns' which will be the focus for infrastructure investment and higher order facilities to support major employment, housing, retail and leisure development. These areas are to provide the focus for major co-ordinated regeneration.

**Policy 12 - Town Centres and Town Centre Uses:** The vitality and viability of town centres in North Northamptonshire will be supported by:

- Securing a vibrant mix of uses;
- Enhancing the public realm;
- Maintaining and regenerating Kettering and Corby town centres

- Adapting and diversifying Wellingborough and Rushden town centres

**The Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough - Adopted**

Chapter 9 of the Plan for the Borough of Wellingborough defines the role of the Town Centre. Objectives include:

- Strengthening the town's retail provision, emphasising the importance of the market, encouraging independent businesses and reducing vacant units.
- Diversifying the towns offering, including cultural, entertainment and leisure provision whilst improving the community offering.
- Improving placemaking strategy to enhance character, heritage and environment.
- Maintaining town centre accessibility - keeping free public parking in the town centre and creating a safe pedestrian environment.

**Key Policies Include:**

**TC3** - Retaining the market within the area of the Market Place as an integral part of the town centre.

**TC4** - Standards for new shop fronts and advertisements should be to the highest standard.

**TC5** - Provision of high quality public realm with new development proposals in the town centre being required to contribute towards environmental or public realm improvements.

**TC6** - Should be no net loss of off-street car parking in the town centre unless no long term demand can be demonstrated.

Specific sites for development are also

highlighted as Town Centre Opportunity Sites

**TC9** - High Street / Jacksons Lane

The council will be engaging with developers to consider a cohesive development of the site. In line the local plan policy, proposals will include:

- Heritage Impact Assessment which will be used to inform the Masterplan for the site;
- Active frontage along the High Street;
- Car parking for general public use;
- Safeguarding of suitable access for the maintenance of water supply and foul drainage infrastructure; and
- Small proportion of other town centre uses.

Please note: A separate masterplan will be developed for this site.

**TC10** - Alma Street/Cambridge Street

Proposals for the site should include:

- A high quality building with an active frontage on the corner of Alma Street/Park Road;
- Predominately residential units on the remaining backland area; and
- The safeguarding of suitable access for the maintenance of water supply and foul drainage infrastructure.

**Relevant Key Policies**

**North Northamptonshire Greenway Strategic Masterplan (Aug 2024)**

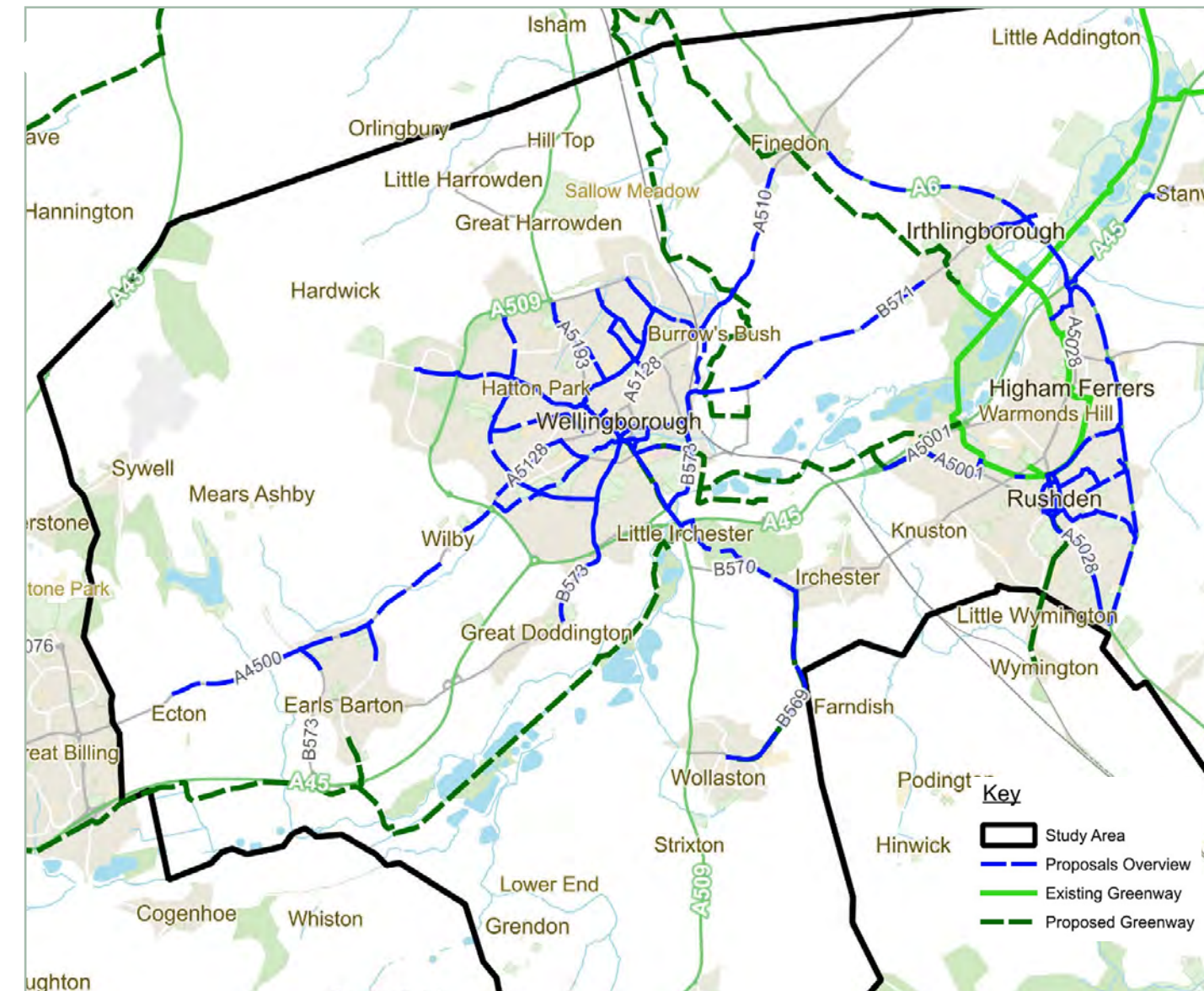
The adopted plan seeks to develop a strategic rural network of safer, largely traffic-free routes suitable for walker, wheelers, cyclists and equestrian users, connecting settlements, employment, leisure and tourism across North Northamptonshire and beyond.

In particular Wellingborough will strengthen links to Rushden, Kettering and other smaller settlements in the region.

**Wellingborough & Rushden Area Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) (Aug 2024)**

The LCWIP has been developed alongside the Greenway Strategic Masterplan to improve the environment for cyclists and pedestrians over the short, medium and long term.

The proposed infrastructure upgrades will therefore significantly improve the active travel network both locally and regionally.



**Policy Integration**

Integrating strategic interventions with broader policy intentions is essential for a cohesive masterplan. Consequently, the masterplan objectives are directly derived from and supported by these overarching policy narratives.

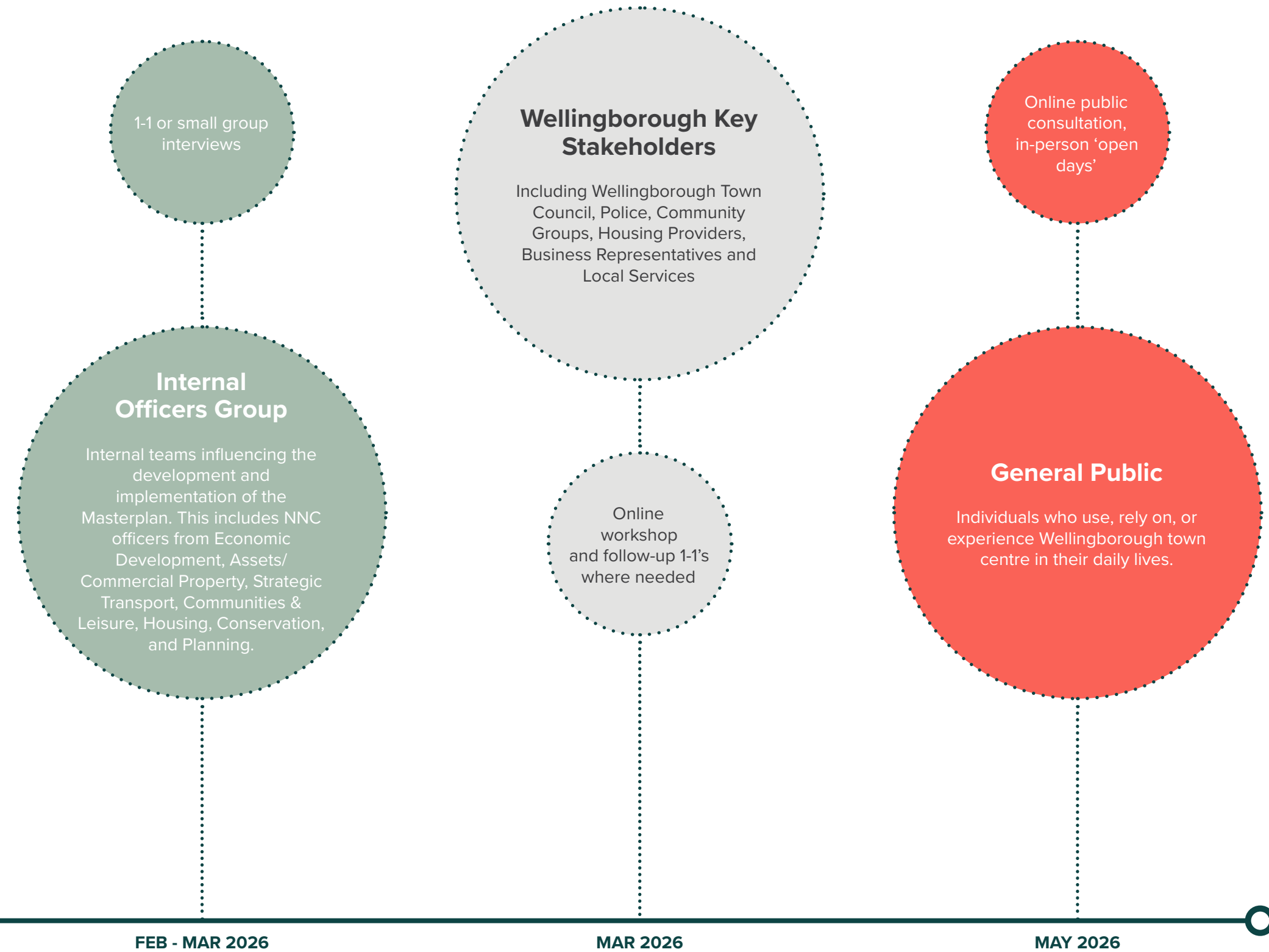
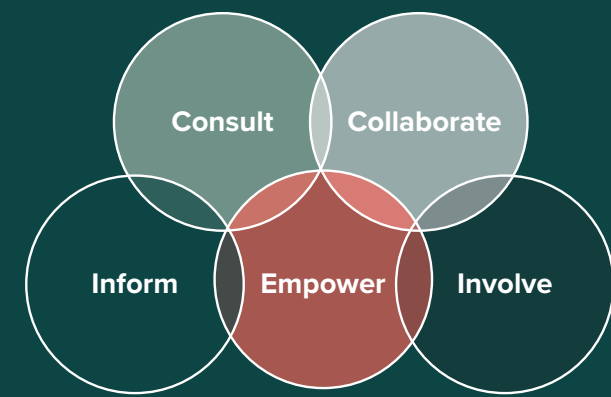
**Masterplan Objectives:**

- 1. Capitalise on Strategic Links and Developments to Stimulate Growth**  
By maximising the connectivity to the railway
- 2. Ensure Long-Term and Sustainable Growth**  
By facilitating, expanding and improving the robust active travel network
- 3. Preserve and Enhance the Local Identity**  
By respecting the existing conservation area and shopfront design guide whilst maximising on the existing heritage assets

### Engagement Summary

A series of engagement sessions were conducted with NNC officers and key stakeholders to identify the current conditions and key challenges affecting the area. Engagement methods include both online and in-person events in group and individual scenarios. Initial engagement has taken place across February and March 2026, with planned public consultation beginning in May.

This process will be crucial for building an understanding of the town's needs whilst ensuring shared ownership by providing stakeholders an active role highlighting key issues and opportunities in Wellingborough town centre and providing valuable input into the emerging vision and strategy.



### Engagement Response

Following the initial engagement with NNC officers and key stakeholders, key points from their feedback have been summarised in Table 1. Responses have been considered in relation to key placemaking principles.

Engagement Headline	Further Comment
Lack of Reasons to Visit Town Centre	Essential services and leisure offer leaving the town centre.
Antisocial Behaviour	Particularly in areas with poor natural surveillance and derelict sites.
Library Well-Used but Ageing	The library is old and often faces issues with access due to its location on the second floor of a commercial unit.
Quality of Public Realm	Dated infrastructure and "dead frontages" create a neglected feel.
Disconnected Assets	Strong cultural and green assets hampered by poor accessibility.
Car Dominated Streets	The centre is well-used by cars travelling through Wellingborough.
Poor Night-time Economy	Lack of footfall in evenings has caused some pubs and restaurants to close, further reducing footfall at night.
Lack of Greenery Within Town	The town centre can feel oppressive due to a lack of planting and green spaces.

Table 1: Summary of Engagement Feedback (To be updated following general public consultation)

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**Draft Vision and Objectives**

“Wellingborough will be a proud, vibrant, and welcoming town with a strong heart - a ‘Growth Town’ where our rich heritage and future ambition come together.

We will stitch our neighbourhoods, green spaces, and historic and modern assets together with safe, walkable streets that lead to a vibrant **new Civic Heart**.

We will create a town centre **patchwork of activity, business, culture, and community** where every piece of the town connects.

This is our route map to a 21st-century heart where heritage and future are woven together, restoring a deep, shared pride in Wellingborough.

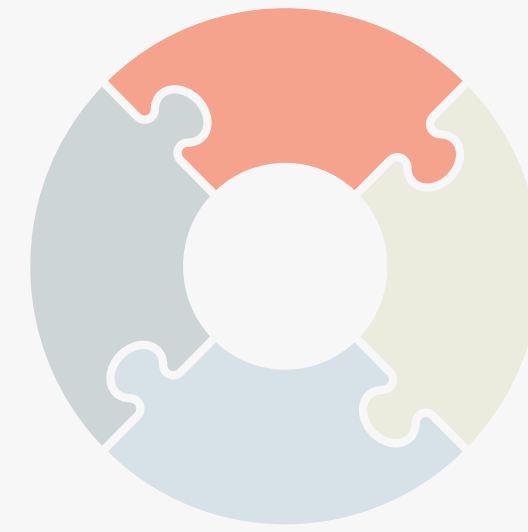


**WELLINGBOROUGH: WEAVING OUR HERITAGE INTO A CONNECTED 21ST-CENTURY HEART**

**Objectives**

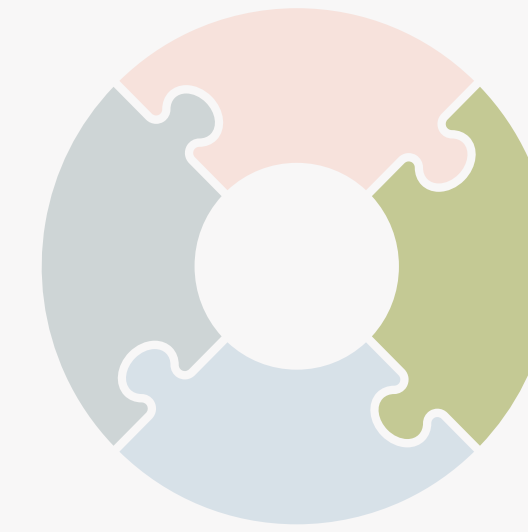
To support the overall town centre vision we have identified a series of supporting objectives that the town centre masterplan will align with.

**1. Deliver a Civic Heart and Unified Cultural Experience**



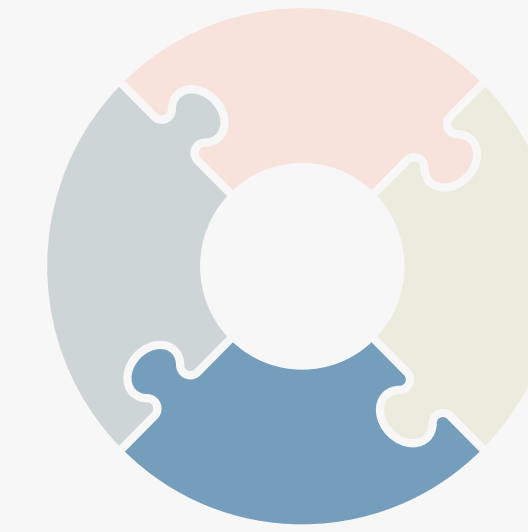
- Create a **'Civic Heart'** in the town centre to be proud of - a public space for everyone.
- Integrate existing **green spaces** and enhanced **cultural assets** into the daily life of the town centre environment physically and operationally.
- Provide a **high-quality public realm** and a **pedestrian-priority experience**.
- **Encouraging 'dwell time'** through a programme of community events which support civic and other economy-based objectives, whilst maximising existing cultural events like the Waendel Walk.

**2. Coordinate 'Big and Small' Connectivity**



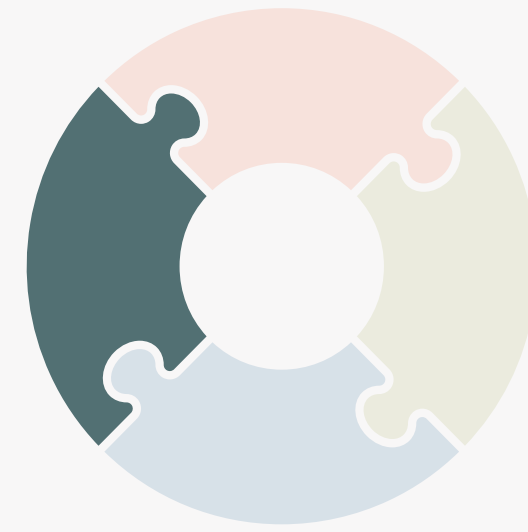
- Capitalise on the regional rail gateway by **creating safe, legible active travel routes** to and from the town centre.
- Reduce car dominance on peripheral streets to **improve town centre walkability**.
- Upgrade **strategic and local gateways** defining a welcoming and accessible town centre environment for all users.
- Deliver a street 'greening' strategy to **enhance environmental quality** and connect existing green/blue corridors providing access to nature and biodiversity.
- Enhance key streets like Market Street, and Cambridge Street creating **safe, inclusive, and lively connections**.

**3. Harness Heritage and Repurpose 'Tradable' Assets**



- **Transition to a mixed-use core** by repurposing post-war structures like Swansgate Centre and the library to create a 21st century town centre offer - flexible hubs to work, shop, and live.
- Focus on **consolidation over expansion** by filling 'negative voids' and gap sites.
- **Encourage 'anchor' uses** into the town centre, such as healthcare, education, local services and new experience-based leisure.
- Reintroduce the historic street plan and **frame views of landmark heritage assets**.
- Enhance existing blue infrastructure - by **'Reclaiming the Brook'**.
- **Celebrate** our historic buildings like All Hallows Church and The Hind Hotel.

**4. Empower an Integrated Mixed-Use Economy**



- **Support local entrepreneurship and independents**, encouraging a diverse mix of businesses by providing flexible workspaces and retail spaces.
- Support a **vibrant daytime and evening economy** by utilising public space for activities around the 'Civic Heart' space.
- **Reactivate vacant frontages and diversify land uses** to serve both established neighbourhoods and new residential growth areas.
- Encourage a **resilient mix of town centre living** types to sustain footfall and increase natural surveillance.

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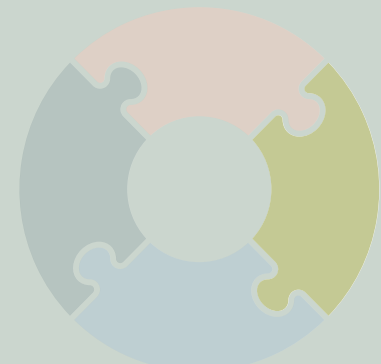
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# Movement & Green Space

## 1. Deliver a Civic Heart and Unified Cultural Experience



## 2. Coordinate 'Big and Small' Connectivity



The Movement and Green Space Strategy leverages the existing Greenway Masterplan and the strategic importance of the railway link. Through a holistic design approach, the strategy will extend green infrastructure toward the town centre while enhancing active travel connectivity towards the railway station, local neighbourhoods and urban extensions.

### Key Interventions

#### 1. Improved Connectivity and Wayfinding to the Train Station

Improve connectivity between the railway station and town centre through implementation of a cycle lane along Midland Road alongside wayfinding and redevelopment of vacant sites where possible.

#### 2. Improved Public Realm Along Key Streets

Encourage movement between existing green assets and active travel between Stanton Cross and the town centre by improving public realm along key streets such as Mill Road and Stanley Road.

#### 3. Improve Strategic Gateways into Wellingborough

Improve the public realm at key gateways into the town centre, including the railway station and bus interchange. Include high-quality arrival public spaces and active frontages where possible.

#### 4. Improve Local Gateways into the Town Centre

Ensure arriving into the town centre is both legible and desirable through improvements to public realm, improved frontages, greening and where necessary development of new buildings.

#### 5. Remove Barriers to Movement Between Key Assets

Improvements to existing road network to facilitate an improved pedestrian connectivity between assets such as the town centre and

Swanspool Brook, Wellingborough Museum and Castle Theatre. Undertake traffic impact study to determine the feasibility for road network changes around the town centre, and ensure alignment with the Local Plan and Local Transport Plan.

#### 6. Extend Cycle Connections

Expand on the existing and planned cycle network through the provision of new routes between the town centre and residential neighbourhoods, including Glenvale Park.

#### 7. Street Improvements

Capitalise on the historic streets which run through Wellingborough through pedestrian improvements, street greening, spill-out space provision and shopfront improvements.

#### 8. Improve Swanspool Brook Route

Upgrade the Swanspool Brook active travel link through the provision of frontage into the space, consistent lighting, improved access and the removal of unnecessary barriers to movement.

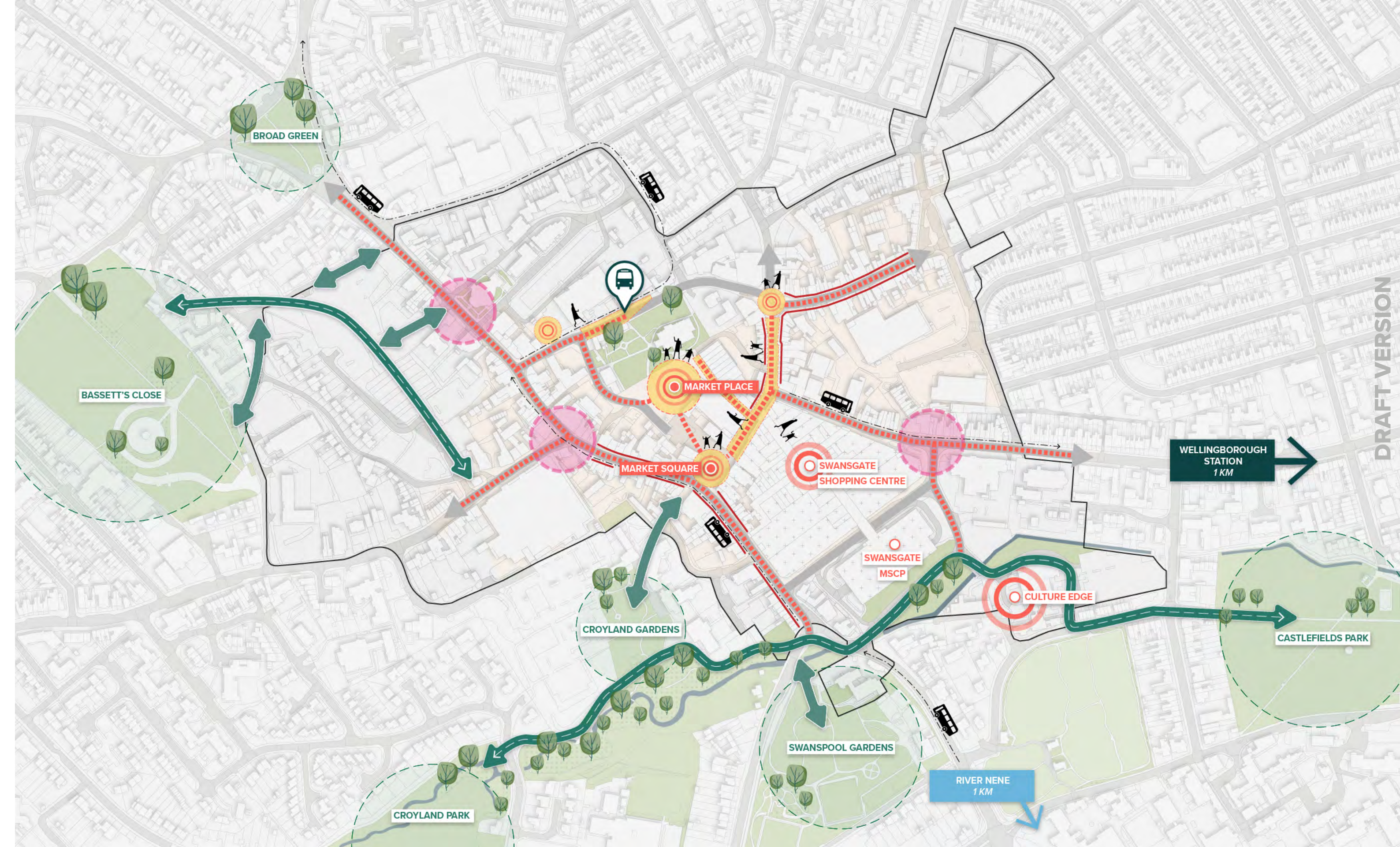
#### 9. Extend Green Links into the Town Centre

Through the development of vacant land and the introduction of street greening, extend links from the existing green corridors into the town centre to promote access and improve access to nature for visitors.

**Legend**

- Town Centre Boundary
- Key Public Space
- Key Green Space
- Primary Green Route
- Primary Pedestrian Route
- Roads
- Key Gateway
- Key Asset

## Movement and Green Space Overview



# Mix of Uses & Economic Vitality

## 3. Harness Heritage and Repurpose 'Tradable' Assets



## 4. Empower an Integrated Mixed-Use Economy



The **Mix of Uses** and **Economic Vitality** Strategy seeks to stimulate activity within the town centre through leveraging Wellingborough's unique assets through a low-cost approach designed to bring growth through its existing and improved town centre offer.

The strategy focuses on three key actions:

- **The Welcome (Gateways):** Identify and upgrade key entry points to improve accessibility and create a more welcoming first impression of the town centre;
- **The Journey (Routes):** Improve pedestrian links between gateways and key destinations (and between destinations) to encourage natural circulation and promote activity within the centre;
- **The Purpose (Destinations):** Enhance and diversify existing landmarks while introducing new uses, and build on existing, to attract a broader demographic of residents and visitors. Including: leisure, education, health and other local services.

### The Role of the High Street (A Destination and Route)

Unlike modern developments Wellingborough's high street boasts a rich heritage currently obscured by car-centric design. Narrow footways and at times heavy congestion prioritise vehicles over people, resulting in a lack of greenery and social spill-out spaces that leaves the town centre feeling vacant and lacking in character.

By widening footpaths where possible, introducing tree planting, and implementing, or making more of existing, pedestrianised areas, Wellingborough can reclaim its historic street and architecture as a central feature. These interventions would transform the high street from a transit corridor into a vibrant, pedestrian-first destination that celebrates local enterprise and its unique architectural identity.

### Key Destinations

#### 1. Wellingborough Market

Restore Wellingborough Market Place as a central town square with regular events which is well overlooked and high-quality.

#### 2. Market Street

Support existing retail businesses through streetscape improvements including seating and street greening.

#### 3. Croylard Gardens

A large green space within the town centre, could be improved with new frontage.

#### 4. Swansgate Centre

The large existing shopping centre to be adapted to accommodate and promote a new mix of uses alongside existing retail.

#### 5. Swanspool Gardens

A high-quality green space with sports provision, active frontage within Swanspool House could encourage usage of the space.

#### 6. Castle Theatre & Museum

Rich cultural experiences but currently disconnected.

#### 7. Cambridge Street

A characterful street with a wide range of food and beverage offer, currently car dominated and lacking spill-out space.

#### 8. Waendel Leisure Centre

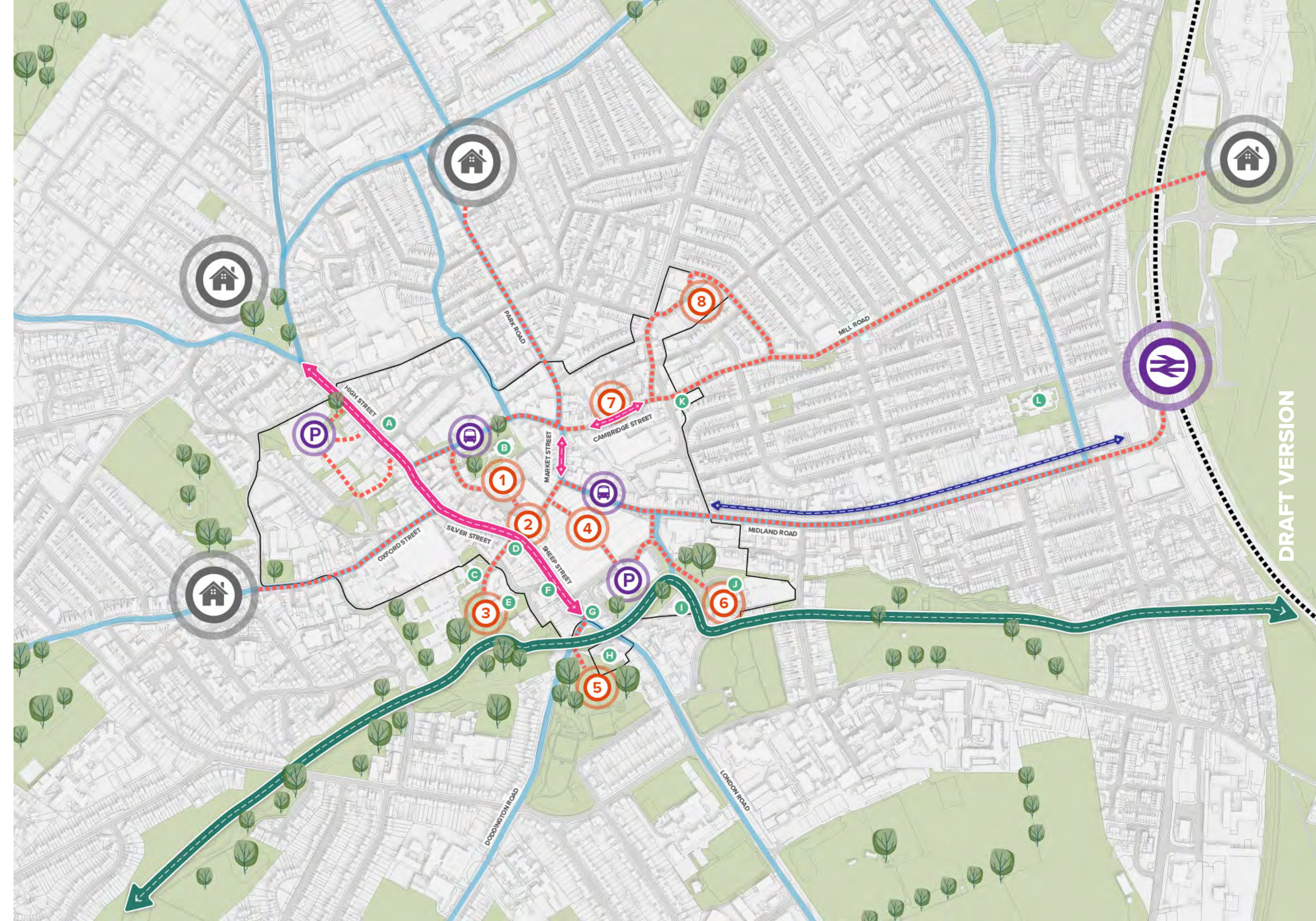
A centrally located leisure centre however also disconnected by car-dominated streets.

### Cultural and Heritage Assets Legend:

- A** Wellingborough United Reformed Church
- B** All Hallows Church
- C** Tithe Barn
- D** The Hind Hotel
- E** Croylard Abbey
- F** Tudor House and Zoo Park Gateway
- G** Ye Golden Lion
- H** Swanspool House
- I** The Wellingborough Museum
- J** Castle Theatre
- K** BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir Hindu Temple
- L** Church of St Mary the Virgin

**Legend**

- Town Centre Boundary
- Key Pedestrian Route
- Key Destination
- Key Arrival Point
- Residential Area
- Primary Green Route
- High Street Restoration
- Key Culture/Heritage Asset
- Bus Route



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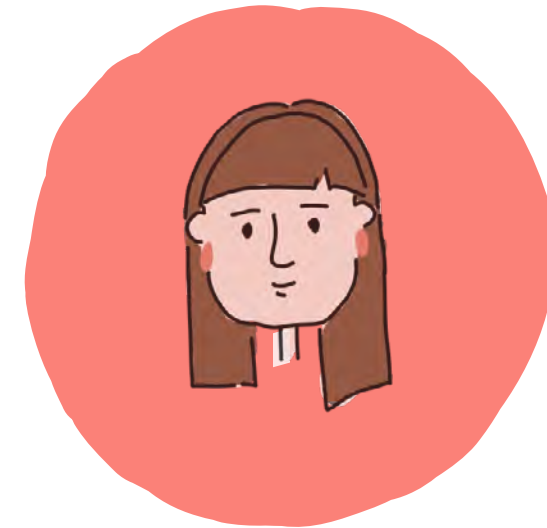
Shaping the Vision

A day in the life

We have imagined a day in the life of six potential users of Wellingborough town centre as a way of illustrating how people currently interact with the town centre and how the aspirations of the town centre vision can look to improve their experience.



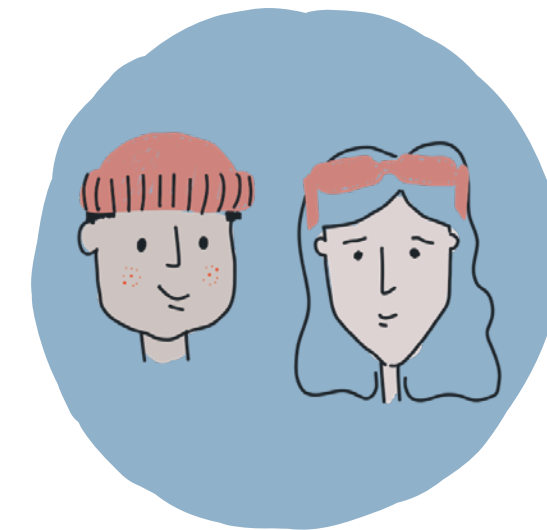
Molly, a teacher and mother to Leo



Chloe, a teenage student who is attends Tresham College



David, a Wellingborough resident and local business owner



James and Sarah, a couple who live in Bedford



Margaret, a retired nurse who lives in the town centre



Jane, an adult-learning advisor who works in the library.

Molly, a teacher and her son, Leo

Molly is a 31-year-old teacher living in a nearby village; Leo is 4 years old.

Current Experience

Due to poor wayfinding and pedestrian street layouts, Molly may find herself driving between areas of the town rather than walking, or in some cases she may avoid travelling to do activities all together, such as visiting the Wellingborough Museum and Swanspool Brook. Poor links to greenspace can mean that Leo spends less time interacting with Wellingborough's green spaces.



Molly drives into town with ease, enjoying a smooth journey. Navigation is simple and provides efficient routes in and out of the town centre. They arrive at the improved multi-storey car park, where the atmosphere is welcoming and safe.

Molly and Leo safely walk toward the Wellingborough Museum which is now a pleasant stroll along wide, well-lit pavements designed with families in mind. They enjoy the improved greenspace along the edge of Swanspool Brook.

At the museum, they explore the Victorian schoolroom and the vintage bus, celebrating the local heritage that sits at the heart of the town's identity. They enjoy a drink in the outside 'plaza' area around the Theatre and Museum.

After their visit, they enjoy a scenic walk along the Swanspool Brook green corridor, a lush "stitch" of nature that connects the town's historic and modern spaces.

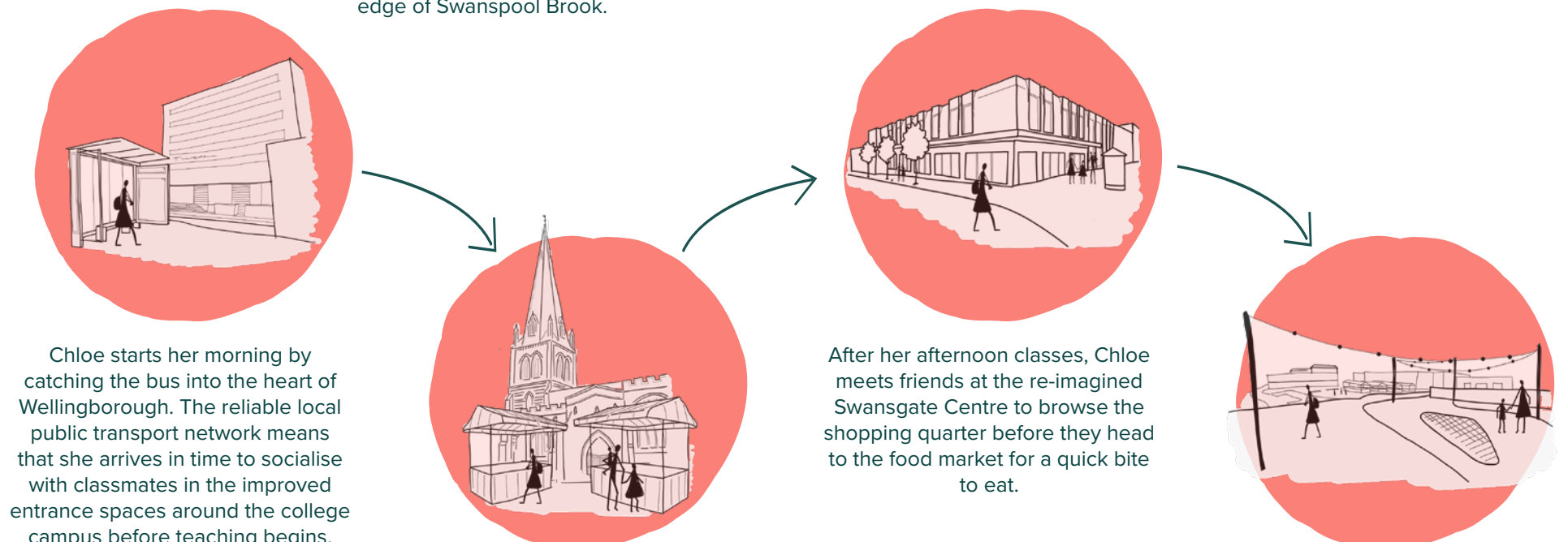
They then walk towards Market Street, through Croyland Gardens, to a local independent coffee shop for a well-earned slice of cake, soaking in the energy of the vibrant new Civic Heart at the Market Place. Finally, they navigate back through the re-imagined, flexible spaces of the Swansgate Centre to the car park.

Chloe, a teenage student who is attends Tresham College

Meet Chloe, a 17-year-old student at Tresham College who relies on public transport to get from her home in a surrounding suburb into the town centre.

Current Experience

The existing town centre offering may not appeal to Chloe and her friends' tastes, meaning that they spend their lunch break in the college or socialise in poor quality public spaces - such as the empty market place. Fellow students may opt to head straight home after college rather than interacting with the town centre as there is little draw for them.



Chloe starts her morning by catching the bus into the heart of Wellingborough. The reliable local public transport network means that she arrives in time to socialise with classmates in the improved entrance spaces around the college campus before teaching begins.

During her lunch break, Chloe heads to the vibrant new Civic Heart at the Market Place, finding a spot in the lively patchwork of activity to eat and catch up with friends amidst the town's historic icons. She quickly stops in at the Library to return books before heading back to class.

After her afternoon classes, Chloe meets friends at the re-imagined Swansgate Centre to browse the shopping quarter before they head to the food market for a quick bite to eat.

Chloe and her friends walk through an improved Market Street and Orient Way, with improved lighting, artwork and seating areas to wait for the evening bus home at Church Street.

**David, a Wellingborough resident and local business owner**

David is a 45-year-old Wellingborough resident who owns a specialist hobby shop on Silver Street and is an active member of a local historical society.

**Current Experience**

David's business relies on footfall in a town centre that is struggling to compete with offerings further afield - such as Rushden Lakes. For those travelling in from many of the neighbouring towns and villages, Rushden Lakes is more convenient than the town centre. David believes the town's heritage assets are not being leveraged in a way that shows Wellingborough's unique character, attracting more footfall.



David starts his day with a short walk to Silver Street, where his shop sits at the centre of Wellingborough. The shop has a new improved shopfront with signage which showcases the business and adds to the street's character.



During his mid-morning break, he heads to the Wellingborough Library, which has been re-imagined into a flexible community hub with the upgraded facilities needed to support his archive group and other vital key community groups.



He spends his afternoon at the shop, enjoying a steady and reliable flow of footfall now that the disconnected 'islands' of activity been improved with a more seamless, walkable street network.



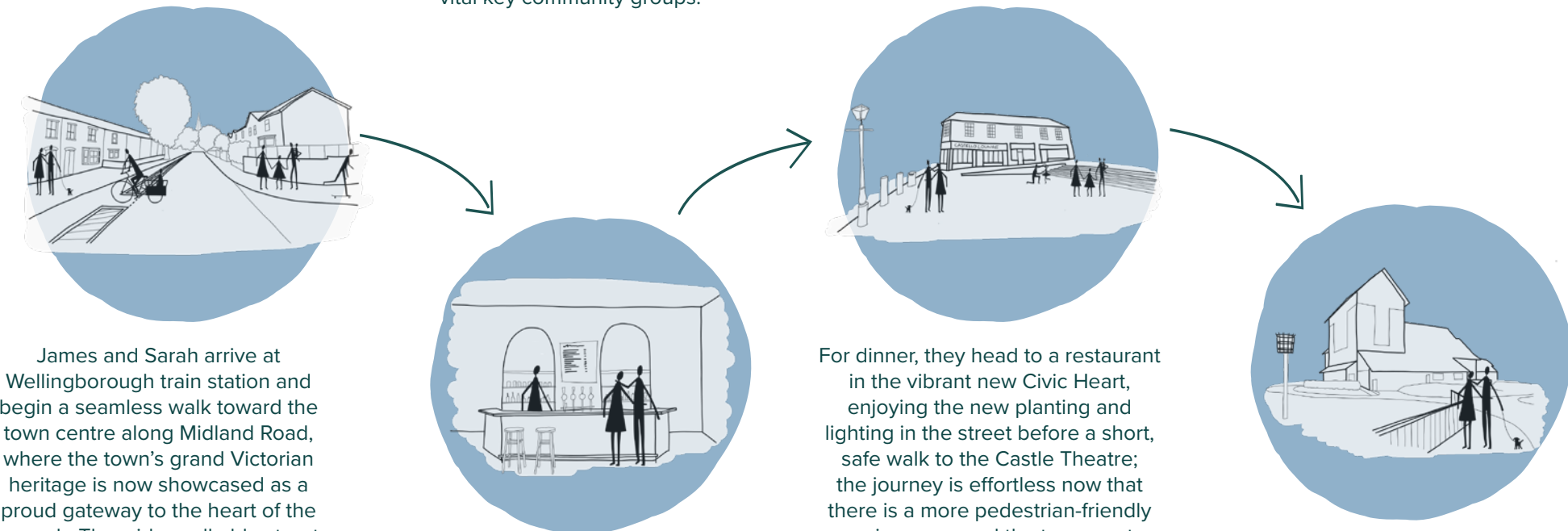
Before heading home, he stops at a local pub for a quick pint, soaking in the lively culture of a town centre where heritage and future click together, restoring a shared sense of pride among the locals.

**James and Sarah, a couple who live in Bedford**

James and his partner Sarah are in their 30s and live in Bedford; they are visiting Wellingborough specifically for a touring show at the Castle Theatre.

**Current Experience**

It's currently quicker for the couple to drive to the theatre than use public transport. They would consider walking to and from the station if there was a better pedestrian link between the town centre, suitable in the evening after the show has finished.



James and Sarah arrive at Wellingborough train station and begin a seamless walk toward the town centre along Midland Road, where the town's grand Victorian heritage is now showcased as a proud gateway to the heart of the borough. The wide, walkable streets making the stroll into the town's core an inviting experience.



Before the show, they head to the vibrant new bar at the re-imagined Swansgate hub, enjoying a pre-show drink in a flexible, modern space that buzzes with the energy of the town's new culture.



For dinner, they head to a restaurant in the vibrant new Civic Heart, enjoying the new planting and lighting in the street before a short, safe walk to the Castle Theatre; the journey is effortless now that there is a more pedestrian-friendly experience around the town centre.



After the show, they navigate the walk back to the station through a well-lit environment, finding that the energy of the town's lively culture extends right to the late-night train home.

**Margaret, a retired nurse who lives in the town centre**

A retired nurse living in a new town over 60s housing community.

**Current Experience**

Margaret may currently live outside the town centre and be more reliant on support from her children, needing to be driven to the supermarket to do her weekly shop. She may also find herself spending more time with her grandson inside, due to a lack of high quality green and public spaces.



Margaret lives in a new housing community within the town centre, where a once-vacant retail unit has been re-imagined into high-quality, accessible accommodation. She has many friends who live in the community and they share amenity areas which makes it a social and safe place to live and enjoy her retirement.



Margaret enjoys living here where smaller shops and tailored facilities sit right on her doorstep, allowing her to easily contribute to the local economy while accessing the services she values most.



During her weekly visit to the local market, she meets her grandchild at the vibrant new Civic Heart at the Market Place. They spend the afternoon in the new open space, a beautiful environment overlooked by the iconic All Hallows Church.



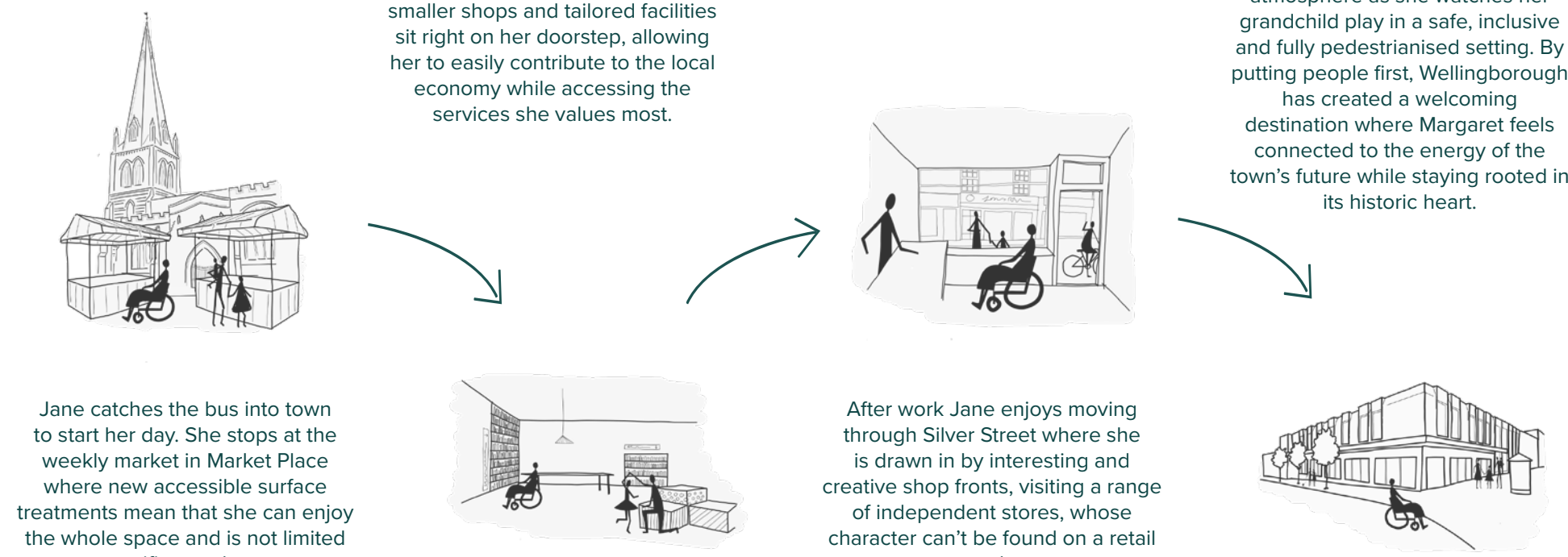
She enjoys the lively community atmosphere as she watches her grandchild play in a safe, inclusive and fully pedestrianised setting. By putting people first, Wellingborough has created a welcoming destination where Margaret feels connected to the energy of the town's future while staying rooted in its historic heart.

**Jane, an adult-learning advisor works in the library. She travels to work from a nearby village.**

Jane is a wheelchair user who travels in to Wellingborough on the bus or car to work, and to use the shops and local services.

**Current Experience**

Existing surface treatments and layouts make travelling around the town centre slow for Jane. The large open and hard-landscaped area between the bus stop and her work place are not well-lit or well-used which can make the experience feel unsafe and not enjoyable.



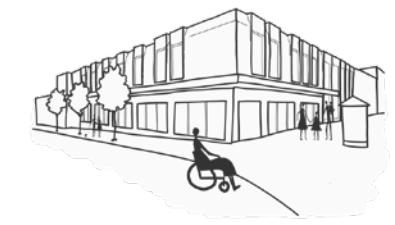
Jane catches the bus into town to start her day. She stops at the weekly market in Market Place where new accessible surface treatments mean that she can enjoy the whole space and is not limited to specific travel routes.



She heads to the Wellingborough Library to start her working day. She loves her working environment in the new refurbished building with accessible entrance foyer and new well-lit and flexible adult learning suite. When Jane's partner drops her off by car they are able to utilise the new improved Whitehorse Yard car parking and drop-off area, next to the Library.



After work Jane enjoys moving through Silver Street where she is drawn in by interesting and creative shop fronts, visiting a range of independent stores, whose character can't be found on a retail park.



Finally, Jane heads into the re-imagined Swansgate Centre to collect a prescription. While she's there she finds a spot for some lunch and picks up a new pair of jeans before heading back to the bus stop along an improved Market Street and Orient Way.

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**Intervention Areas**

To progress the wider town centre strategy for Wellingborough we have established a series of strategic intervention areas. These locations serve as the primary catalysts for regeneration, bridging the gap between high-level ambition and a more focused project-led masterplan.

Each Intervention Area is guided by a bespoke 'mini-vision' - a focused set of principles that ensures local improvements remain intrinsically linked to our wider town centre objectives.

This approach allows us to maintain a consistent strategic direction while addressing the unique character and specific requirements of different parts of the town.

The projects identified within these areas have been selected to achieve three key goals:

**Healthcheck Headlines:** Addressing the specific economic and structural weaknesses identified in the baseline Healthcheck Report.

**Stakeholder Inputs:** Responding directly to the lived experiences, concerns, and aspirations shared by the community and key partners during the engagement phase.

**Vision Alignment:** Ensuring every physical intervention - no matter the scale - contributes toward a more connected, green, and "whole" Wellingborough.

**Project Prioritisation and Phasing:** Providing a mix of "Quick Wins" and long-term interventions to ensure immediate visible progress while securing a route map for major future change.

The identified Intervention Areas and their supporting projects are detailed here:


**Intervention Area 01:**  
The Civic Heartbeat



The historic and functional core of the town centre for people.

- Key Streets: Market Street and Sheep Street.
- Public Space: Market Square and Market Place.
- Community Assets: Wellingborough Library and Tresham College.
- Heritage: All Hallows Church and The Hind Hotel.

**Intervention Area 02:**  
The Engine Room



A major commercial hub and town centre gateway that provides a mix of uses to stimulate the town centre economy.

- Primary Gateway: Midland Road.
- Commercial Anchor: The Swansgate Centre and Multi-Storey Car Park.
- Roadways: Commercial Way and Castle Way corridors.


**Intervention Area 03:**  
The Green Network and Culture Edge



The improved intersection of Wellingborough's cultural venues and natural assets with the town centre.

- Cultural Hub: The Castle Theatre and Wellingborough Museum.
- Blue Infrastructure: Swanspool Brook.
- Green Spaces: Swanspool Gardens and Croyland Gardens.

**Intervention Area 04:**  
New Town Centre Neighbourhood



A residential-led transition area on the northern edge of the town core.

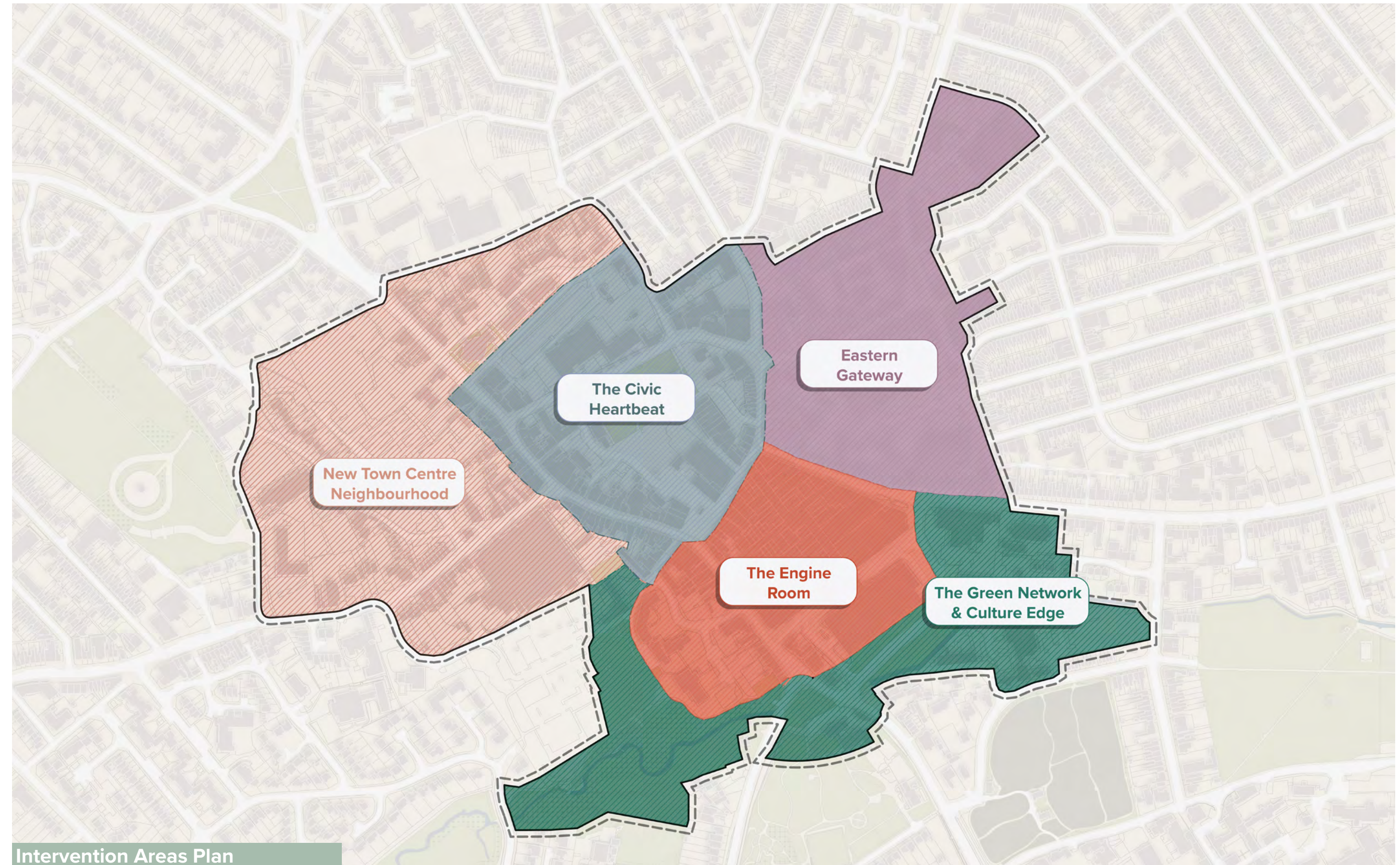
- Policy Focus: Housing Policy Site TC9.
- Key Infrastructure: Jacksons Lane car park.
- Connective Streets: Oxford Street and Derek Hooton Way.

**Intervention Area 05:**  
The Eastern Gateway



A mix of high-street frontage, improved streetscape and gateway, large-format retail and new infill residential opportunities.

- Policy Focus: Housing Policy Sites TC8 and TC10.
- Retail and Food and Beverage Destination: Cambridge Street.
- Commercial Anchors: Large-format retail including Matalan and Aldi (Victoria Road).



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01.

# The Civic Heartbeat

## Vision Alignment

The area will be transformed into Wellingborough's new and improved primary social anchor:

- 1 Creating a 'Great Street' and a landmark civic square
- 2 Connecting the Bus Interchange and Tresham College to the historic core
- 3 Strategic refurbishment, demolition and adaptive reuse with new high-quality mixed-uses such as local services and market
- 4 Deliver a flexible, multi-generational public space designed for markets, play, and community events.

**KEY USES**

Markets and Events	Play Provision	Education
Seating and Greening	Local Services	Independent Retail



## Existing Context

**Public Realm and Streetscape:** The area currently has a series of fragmented public realm spaces and lacks a high-quality civic space, with the historic significance of the Market Place undermined by poor-quality design and inappropriate modern development.

**Poor Pedestrian Environment:** Despite being a high-footfall area within the town centre, the public space is currently dominated by hard landscaping and poor quality pedestrian connections that can feel unsafe.

**Service Areas:** There are a number of back of house areas (e.g. rear of Market and Sheep Streets) which are cluttered and uncoordinated with parking, bins and back of business areas. This can create an unappealing environment.

**Key Assets:** The Market Place is strategically located in the centre of the town but is hard-landscaped and underutilised as a space.

The library is centrally-located and is a very popular but ageing facility. It offers a series of local services which require additional space.

**Road Infrastructure:** Road infrastructure and gateways on High Street create a poor pedestrian experience which disincentive walking to and from the town centre and also detract from the town's traditional character architecture.

**Green Corridors:** The area lacks green space and tree-planting generally, however there are existing 'green anchors' like All Hallows Churchyard, and within the wider area Broad Green, and Croyland Abbey. Wellingborough has high-quality spaces that could be better linked via street greening initiatives, such as extending and enhancing the existing tree planting on Market Street.



Market Street



Market Square and Street



Market Place



Market Street



Wellingborough Library

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**Area Strategy**

**Objective 1: Deliver a Civic Heart and Unified Cultural Experience**

By creating an improved **open civic space**, this area becomes the focal point for Wellingborough's growing population to gather for **markets and recreation**. It directly relates to the historic Corn Exchange area, using public artwork and play provision to help **foster a unique Wellingborough identity**.

**Objective 2: Coordinate 'Big and Small' Strategic Connectivity**

This area acts as a critical 'Big' connection point between the Bus Interchange, the College, and the retail core, while facilitating 'Small' **pedestrian-priority links toward the surrounding green spaces** e.g. Burystead Place to Croyland Gardens.

**Objective 3: Harness Heritage and Repurpose 'Tradable' Assets**

The strategy involves the **selective demolition/refurbishment of 'tradable' assets**, (e.g. part of the 40-47 Market Street building and outdated library block), to reveal and **reinstates a historic street fabric**. Environment improvements to Orient Way and back of Silver Street will front onto and add-to the Market Place project.

**Objective 4: Empower an Integrated Mixed-Use Economy**

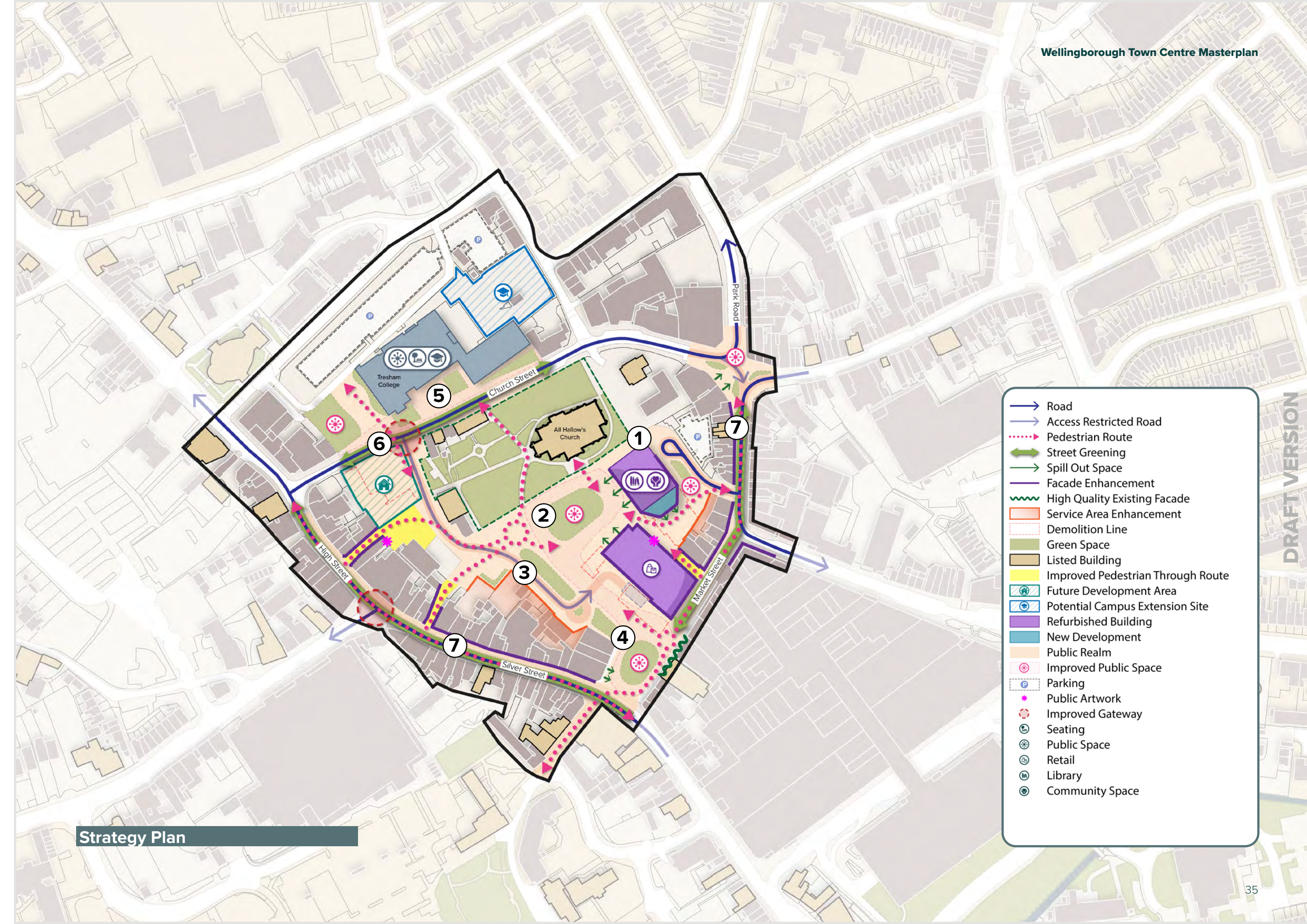
This intervention supports a cross-sector economy by **creating a civic square and improved 'anchor uses' within the library**, which encourages people to visit, gather and spend within the town centre.

**List Of Projects**

Key Project Opportunities	Project Description	Timescales	Place Objectives
1. <b>Wellingborough Library Hub</b>	Refurbish library - building on its current reputation as a key local services hub; removal of buildings in this area to allow the extension of the library to create a new southern entrance and public realm; improve pedestrian links to Whitehorse Yard.	Medium-term	
2. <b>Market Place Civic Space</b>	Deliver a new civic public space and centre for Wellingborough with seating, greening and play provision. Include an area for the outdoor market and for a flexible event space with community event programme.	Short to Medium-term	
3. <b>Orient Way &amp; Alleyways</b>	Upgrade public realm, back of house areas, parking, and taxi rank; revitalise alleyway connections to create safer and more vibrant routes and gateways between Sheep Street and the Market Place via lighting, artwork, and resurfacing of ground treatments.	<b>Quick Win</b>	
4. <b>Market Square &amp; Street</b>	Create a tree-lined pedestrian route from Market Square to Market Place; remodel parts of the 40-47 Market Street building to open vistas; improve Sheep Street public space.	Medium-term	
5. <b>College &amp; Bus Interchange</b>	Masterplan the Tresham College public realm to better integrate into Church Street and to the town centre. Declutter Church Street public realm and reconfigure bus parking to reduce congestion and enhance the pedestrian experience.	Medium-term	
6. <b>Orient Way Gateway Site</b>	Potential future development site for mixed-use e.g. new town centre residential, office accommodation or further educational provision linked to the college.	Long-term	
7. <b>Streetscape &amp; Shopfronts</b>	Reclaim road space for wider pedestrian walkways; install street greening/seating; implement existing town-wide shopfront design scheme to restore historic character.	<b>Quick Win</b> to Medium-term	

**Intervention Area 01: Quick Wins Opportunities and Delivery at a Glance**

- **The Big Move:** Transforming the Market Place into a flexible, green Civic Heart to drive footfall and community events.
- **Quick Win:** Introduce low-cost interventions with minimal delivery constraints in Sheep Street alleyways e.g. lighting and art to instantly improve safety and pedestrian connections.
- **Area's Anchor Project:** Library Hub project to bring together local, learning, and council services under one roof.
- **Heritage Focus:** Reclaiming the historic street grain by remodelling 40-47 Market Street and library blocks to open key vistas and connections toward All Hallows Church.
- **Connectivity:** Decluttering areas of Church Street to better integrate Tresham College and the Bus Interchange into the town core.
- **Future Investment:** Using public realm gains to de-risk and incentivise the Orient Way Gateway for new mixed-use residential.



**Strategy Plan**

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**Market Place Concept**

- A** Enhancing the public realm through facade improvements to building rears and upgraded lighting along Angel Lane, complemented by improvements to the pocket park and seating area at the Orient Way junction.
- B** Rationalising the taxi rank area to provide a shared surface pedestrian crossing point and sheltered waiting areas.
- C** Shared surface road through with retained disabled parking.
- D** Fixed activity space with greening and benches surrounding with direct visual link to Market Square.
- E** Green boulevard walkway with planters, benches and lighting linking Market Place to Market Square.
- F** A versatile, high-quality public space designed as a flexible civic hub for seasonal events.
- G** A green edge with play provision and seating.
- H** Modernisation of Wellingborough Library through partial demolition for an extension. This revitalisation includes a new southern entrance, high-quality public realm upgrades, and a rationalised rear loading area, with disabled parking relocated adjacent to the new primary entrance for improved accessibility.
- I** Improvement to rear building parking.
- J** Back of house public realm improvements including surface treatments and boundaries for Orient Way and Market Street



Artist Impression - New Public Space - Market Place

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Concept Plan

	Public Realm Focus
	Shared Surface
	Road
	Buildings
	Key Listed Buildings
	Demolished Buildings
	Loading Areas
	Disabled Parking Areas
	Parking
	Library Enhancements
	Library Extension
	Back of House Improvements
	Green Opportunities
	Market Areas
	Play Opportunities
	Mixed-Use Open Space
	Improved Frontage
	Mural
	Green Wall
	Taxi Rank Improvements
	Taxi Rank Shelters
	Benches
	Trees
	Lighting

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Artist Impression - Public Realm And Environment Improvements - Orient Way



**Orient Way**

There are many opportunities within the town centre to improve back of house, service areas, and alleyway connections which are currently: cluttered, disorganised and unappealing.

Some of these areas also front onto other important areas of improvement identified within the masterplan e.g. the back of house areas of Sheep Street and their frontage towards Orient Way and the Market Place.

A coordinated designed approach to these areas will make environmental improvement, making the areas more vibrant, lighter, safer and less cluttered by bin stores and disorganised parking areas.

Upgrade public realm, back of house areas, parking, and taxi rank; revitalise alleyway connections to create safer and more vibrant routes and gateways between Sheep Street and the Market Place via lighting, artwork, and resurfacing of ground treatments.

- A** Upgrade surface treatments
- B** New lighting
- C** Mural artwork that celebrates heritage and makes places more vibrant
- D** Add tree planting and green elements
- E** Coordinated bin store strategy with bin screening
- F** New organised parking and drop-off areas
- G** Facade improvements e.g. painted brickwork and signage

Artist Impression - View From Market Street Towards East Elevation Of Library



**Wellingborough Library**

Refurbish library into a modern services hub - with mix of community and local service uses, including, for example: banking, adult learning, council services, community-led businesses or social enterprises.

Demolish vacant units to create a new southern entrance and public space with an improved pedestrian link to Whitehorse Yard, and back-of-house, servicing and parking areas.

- A** Refurbishment of the existing library building with new main library, flexible meeting spaces, and reuse ground floor units for local services e.g. adult learning, and a library cafe that activates the new public space on Market Place.
- B** Part demolition / refurbishment of southern entrance with new southern extension and entrance area
- C** Replace 1 or 2 existing vacant units to create a new throughway which reintroduces the historic grain and creates a new public realm space with planting and seating
- D** Improve parking and back-of-house service areas



02.

The Engine

Room

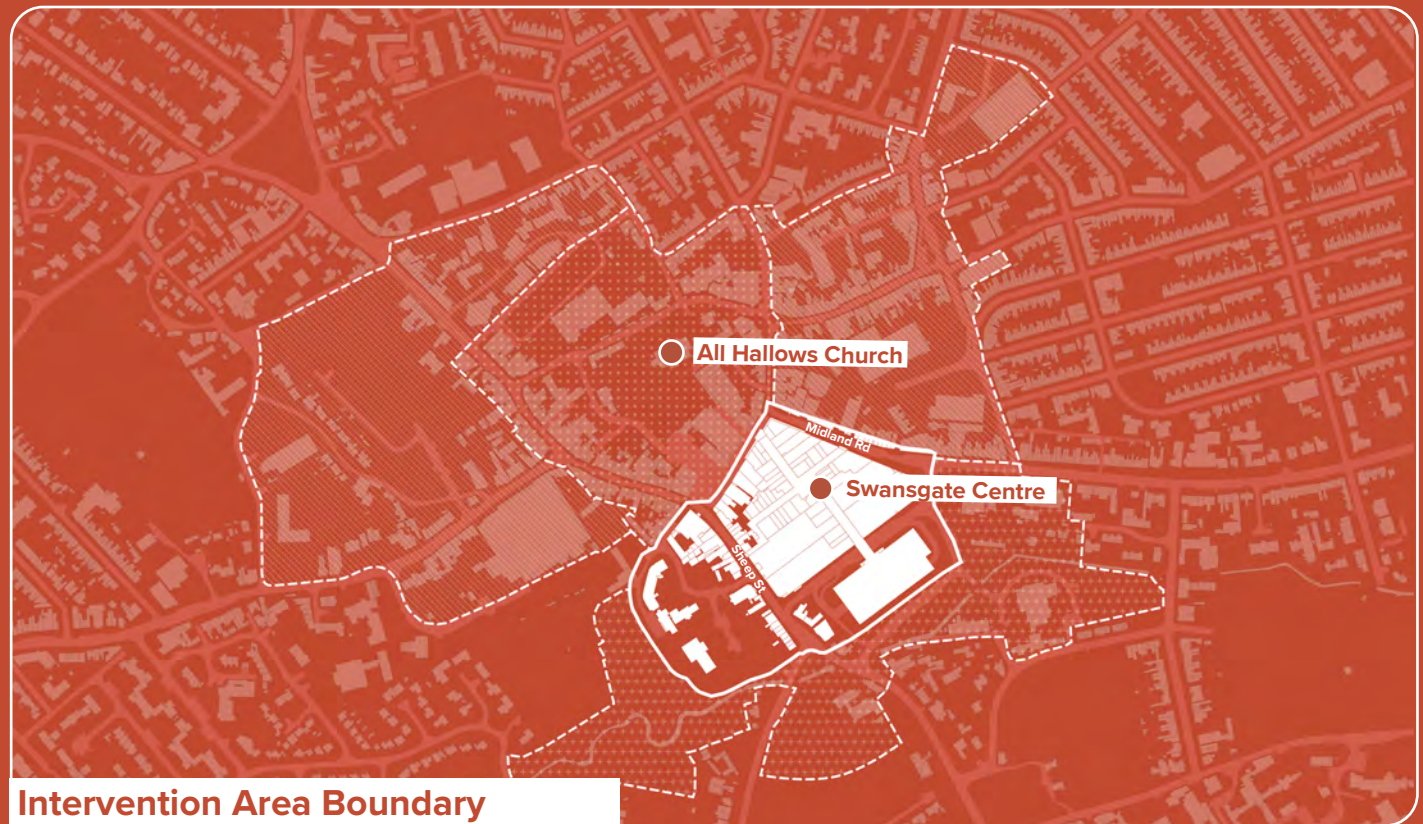
Vision Alignment

The area will transform an outdated retail environment into a resilient, multi-functional multi-use area of change:

- 1 Adaptive reuse of the Swansgate Centre and the surrounding 'tradable' assets
- 2 Integrating anchor-uses, high-quality town centre living, and pedestrian-priority streets with an improved gateway to the town centre
- 3 Bridge the gap between the historic civic core and the town's green spaces and cultural assets through new connections and frontages

KEY USES

Independent Retail	Local Services	Residential
Greening	Car Parking	Workspaces



Intervention Area Boundary

Existing Context

**Car Dominance and Poor Pedestrian Experience:**  
Castle Way and Midland Road area currently car-dominated barriers for people between areas to residential areas, green spaces and cultural assets. Many footpaths are relatively narrow pavements along busy roads with no barriers between them and the road.

**Inactive Frontages:**  
Commercial Way is currently characterised by large brick elevations of inactive frontages from the Swansgate shopping centre and its multi-storey car park. This creates a harsh urban environment and a poor sense of arrival at one of the key gateways. It also adds to the perception of the area being unsafe.

**Architecture:**  
High-quality and characterful architecture does exist within the town, however, it is overshadowed by large poor quality buildings, some of which are unoccupied and therefore poorly maintained. This includes part of the Swansgate Centre, Beeswing House and Swanspool House.

**Retail Uses:**  
Retail uses remain within the town centre with the Swansgate Centre playing a key role within this sector. However, the offer is largely traditional shopping with a relatively low diversification of offerings. Further competition with the Rushden Lakes scheme has meant the current offer has struggled to attract footfall.

**Unoccupied Units:**  
A higher vacancy rate than the national average has resulted in some larger units within the Swansgate Centre being vacant.

**Safety Concerns:**  
The presence of inactive frontages, blank façades and unoccupied frontages has resulted in areas that are poorly observed and can often generate safety concerns. In some areas (including the multi-storey car park) this has resulted in cases of antisocial behaviour which adds to the concerns for safety.

**Poor Night-Time Economy:**  
The majority of uses within the city centre are focused towards the daytime economy and are largely closed during evening hours. As a result the centre has failed to attract footfall during the evenings. This can further exacerbate safety concerns by a lack of natural surveillance and could mean further closures to other businesses which require evening footfall such as pubs and restaurants.

**Sheep Street:**  
Sheep Street is dominated by car use and is regularly congested with traffic trying to move through town. This can further add to the poor pedestrian environment and discourage walking, and dwell time within the area. This can result in lack of support for businesses. Additionally, parts of the public realm and many shopfronts are poor quality.

**Swansgate MSCP:**  
The council owned Multi Storey Car Park provides 936 free parking spaces in the town centre with 5 charging bays for electric vehicles. The car park is connected to the Swansgate Shopping Centre via a bridge that crosses Commercial Way.



Midland Road 'Gateway'



Swansgate Centre Northern Corner



Sheep Street



Council Offices on Tithe Barn Road



Commercial Way / Swansgate Shopping Centre Multi-Storey Car park

**Area Strategy**

**Objective 2: Coordinate 'Big and Small' Strategic Connectivity**

Enhance the environment along Commercial Way by introducing more **pedestrian-friendly streetscape** measures. This approach focuses on **reducing car dominance** to create a safer, more vibrant, and high-quality connection for people moving through the town centre.

**Objective 3: Harness Heritage and Repurpose 'Tradable' Assets**

This area targets the **'right-sizing'** through adaptive reuse and 'opening-up' of Wellingborough's largest post-war assets, transitioning from a retail-only model to a **sustainable mix** that could include **local services**, and **educational hubs**.

By making improvements externally to the multi-storey car park building, and **planning good quality public realm** around the area, the masterplan focuses on **consolidation and adaptable architecture** to create a safer gateway to the town centre for vehicle users.

**Objective 4: Empower an Integrated Mixed-Use Economy**

Support a more varied economy by subdividing large, inflexible retail units for new uses, including: **food and beverage**, **creative studios**, **small-scale independent retail**, and **flexible workspaces**.

**Support both daytime and evening vitality** by introducing **new leisure-based retail** and new upper-level **residential units** in the southern area that capitalises on **connections and views toward existing amenities**.

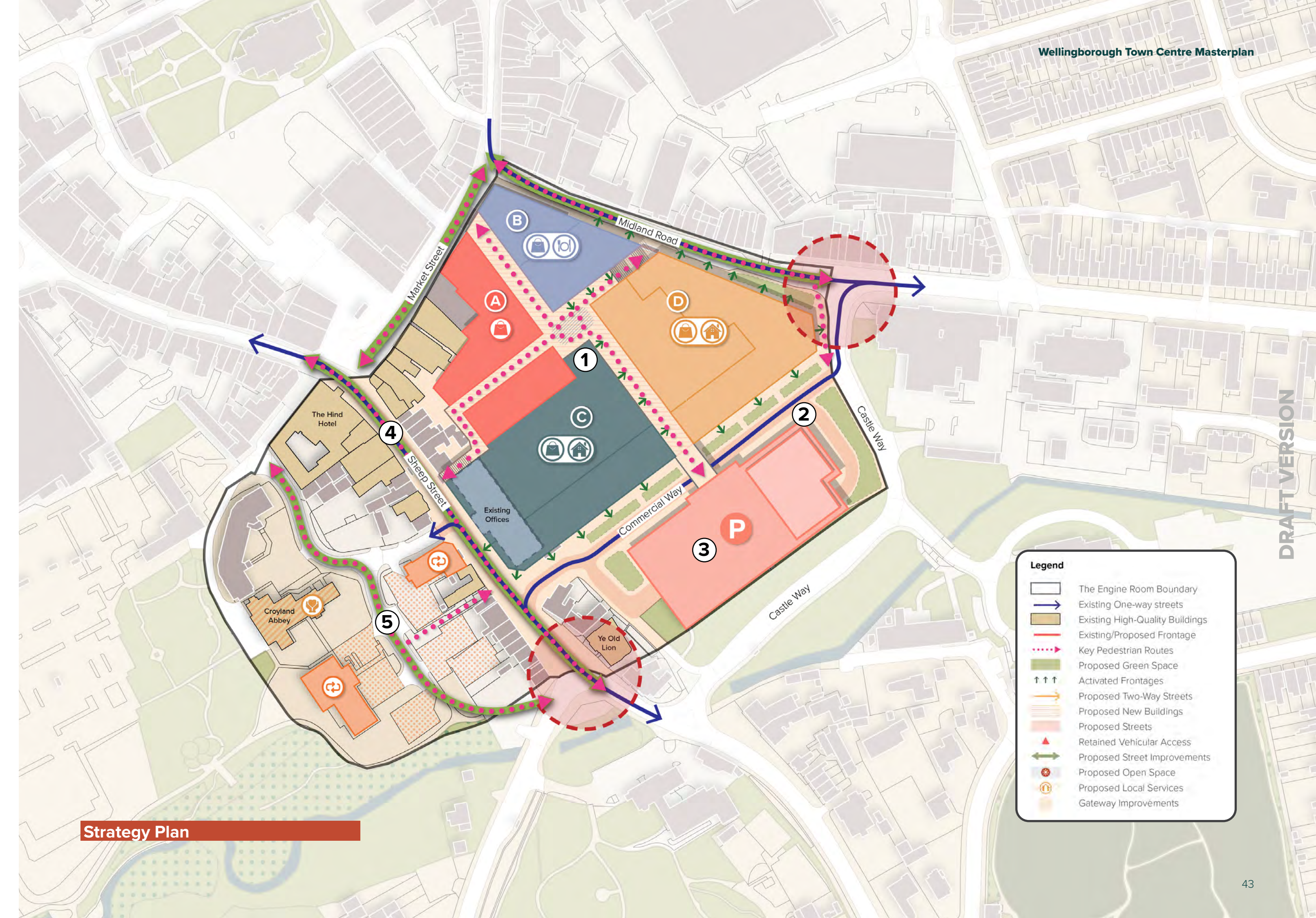
**List Of Projects**

Key Project Opportunities	Project Description	Timescales	Place Objectives
<b>1. Swansgate Centre:</b>	Prepare an architectural and strategic framework for the shopping centre which proposes transforming the existing shopping centre into a permeable, mixed-use destination through structural reconfiguration and public realm enhancements.	<b>Quick Win</b> to Long-term	
<b>2. Commercial Way</b>	Undertake transport study to explore feasibility to reduce car-dominance (possible reduction of number of road lanes) and reconfiguring vehicle movements (e.g. transitioning to a two-lane/two-way system) to break the 'inner ring road' feel. Integrating improvements where possible, including: a widened public realm, dedicated cycle lanes and street greening to support the shopping centre's new 'outward-looking' mixed-use strategy, and create a new town centre street.	Medium-term	
<b>3. Multi-Storey Car Park &amp; Bridge Link</b>	Further improvements to the multi-storey car park by integrating an Active Travel Hub, additional EV charging, and upgraded security systems, while softening its visual impact with green walls and mural artwork. Guided by parking survey data, a feasibility study will evaluate repurposing surplus capacity on top floor for possible new uses.	Short-term	
<b>4. Sheep Street Improvements</b>	Where possible reclaim road space to create a wider, more accessible environment for pedestrians. Restore the area's historic market character by implementing town-wide Shopfront Design Guidance to ensure a high-quality, coherent facade scheme.	<b>Quick Win</b> to Medium-term	
<b>5. Tithe Barn Area</b>	Improve area with enhanced natural surveillance, through refurbishment of key buildings. To bridge the green space and town core, the plan should introduce safe, well-lit pedestrian links rooted in 'Designing Out Crime' principles.  Key building asset strategies include transforming The Hind Hotel into a boutique stay, cultural hub, or premium workspace; refurbish Beeswing House for mixed-use retail and upper-level residential option; and repurposing Croyland Hall and Croyland Abbey for use by the Northamptonshire Children's Trust as offices (project by NNC).	Medium to Long-term	

**Intervention Area 02:**

**Quick Wins Opportunities and Delivery at a Glance**

- **The Big Move:** Transforming the Swansgate Centre from an inward-facing mall into a permeable, 'outward-looking' mixed-use streetscape.
- **Quick Win:** Aesthetic 'facelift' of the Multi-Storey Car Park with murals and greenery to soften the town's main gateway.
- **Economic Diversification:** Subdividing large retail units for creative studios, food and beverage, and flexible workspaces to ensure a resilient daytime and evening economy.
- **Heritage Anchor:** Securing the future of The Hind Hotel as a boutique cultural or commercial destination at the heart of the 'Engine Room.'
- **Infrastructure Shift:** Reconfiguring Commercial Way to reduce car dominance where possible and create a more green, pedestrian-friendly 'town centre street.'
- **Adaptive Reuse:** Repurposing the Tithe Barn area and Council Offices into high-quality residential edges to increase natural surveillance.



**Strategy Plan**

**Swansgate Centre**

The proposed feasibility study for the Swansgate Shopping Centre should consider both architectural and operational strategy for the existing building. Some key considerations are noted here:

**(i) Architectural Refinement and Enhanced Frontages:**

Consider the introduction of new high-quality palette of materials - including painted brickwork, contemporary cladding and expanded glazing - to modernise the centre's elevations. These treatments will improve the visual interface between the centre and the surrounding historic streetscape. (See page 45 for visual examples of facade improvements).

**(ii) Branding and Perception:**

There is a need to consider the current public perception of the Swansgate Shopping Centre and the Multi-Storey Car Park. A comprehensive branding exercise could be integrated into future strategic plans to promote the centre's evolution and support its transition toward a modern, mixed-use destination.

**(iii) Strategic Reconfiguration and Permeability:**

Undertake further feasibility work to assess longer-term options for reconfiguring the existing centre's building footprint. The goal is to improve permeability and connectivity by exploring how the existing structure can better align with a traditional market town street pattern.

**(iv) Diversified 'Anchor' Uses and Leisure Strategy:**

Encourage a broader mix of uses within the centre to move beyond a retail-only model. This could include attracting new leisure attractions, creative arts and community-led businesses or social enterprises, diverse food and beverage operators, and essential local services to ensure a resilient, multi-purpose destination. It could also include new residential opportunities as part of any future building adaptation plans.

**Potential Mix of Uses**

**Key Uses:**

- Retail Mix
- Workspaces
- Leisure
- Community and Local Services



**Ty Pawb, Wrexham - Former Market for Community Use**



**Foundations, Altrincham - Mixed Use Town Centre Redevelopment**



**Shredenhams, Bristol - Indoor Skatepark**



**Peckham Levels, London - Soft play provision**



**Peckham Levels, London - Workspaces and Food and Beverage Offering**



**Wood Green Community Diagnostic Centre, London - Healthcare Provision in Community Shopping Centre**



**Elevation and Streetscape Improvements**

Part of this project looks to address the post-war architecture and large blank façades of the existing Swansgate Centre. This could be explored through several key moves, including:

- A** Improvements to existing elevations as part of a new contemporary refurbishment, including: painted brickwork, replacement windows, green walls, and 'decluttering' of large overhangs.
- B** Refurbish and possible extension for upper-floor areas for new uses.
- C** Introduce new uses including residential, workspaces, local services and food and beverage destinations.
- D** Open up façades to activate ground floor on key town centre streets to create improved gateways to the town centre.
- E** Improve the surrounding public realm areas, where possible, with new street greening including rain gardens and tree-planting and pedestrian priority surface treatments.



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03.

The Green Network and Culture Edge



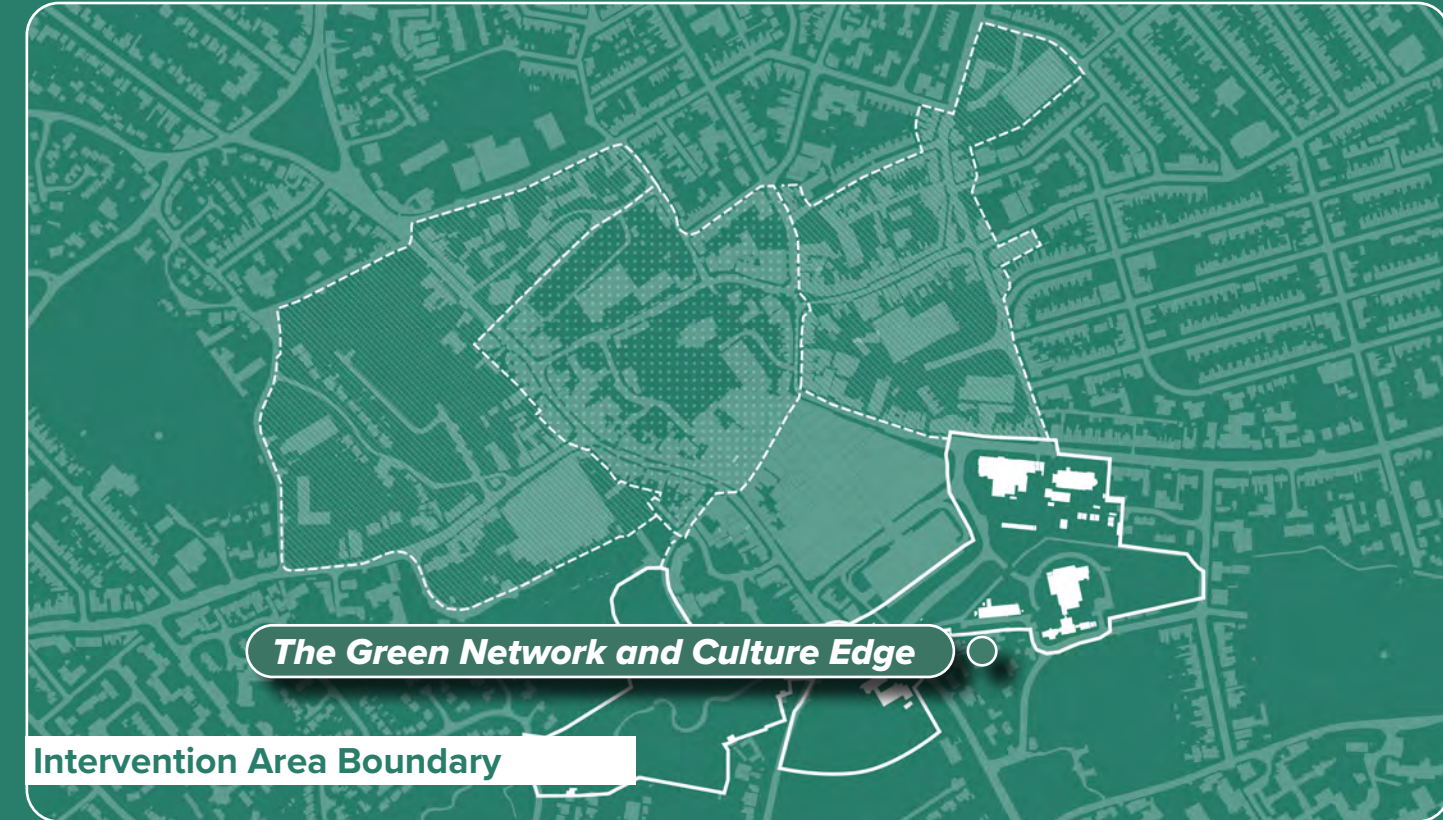
Vision Alignment

The area will create a unique, cultural and green environment that ‘hugs’ the town centre and reconnects important assets:

- 1 A town centre destination for urban nature
- 2 Transform marginalised and peripheral watercourses and green spaces into an ecological corridor
- 3 Deliver high-quality ‘Nature Walks’
- 4 Re-integrate and enhance cultural landmarks like the Museum and Theatre

KEY USES

Theatre	Cycle Routes	Museum/Culture
Green Spaces	Park	Sports



Existing Context

**Poor Connection to Cultural Assets:**  
Wellingborough Museum and the Castle Theatre are important parts of the town’s cultural offering and are ‘anchor’ uses that should be capitalised on to attract people to the town centre, yet they feel disconnected.

**Interconnected Green Spaces:**  
A corridor of greenspaces form the southern edge of the town centre. There are existing pedestrian and cycle routes linking these spaces but existing junctions prioritise vehicle movement, straining the connection between greenspaces.

**Town Centre Gateway:**  
London Road divides the intervention area heading southbound, becoming the A509 and leading to Bozeat, Olney and Milton Keynes.

**Croyland Gardens:**  
There are existing high-quality green spaces with play provision within the area which are underutilised. This is likely due to a combination of poor quality gateways to and from the space and a lack of active frontages resulting in the areas having a perception of being unsafe.

**Swanspool Brook**  
The existing brook is a key natural asset within this area of the town centre and runs past the cultural assets in the east to the greenspaces in the west. It has existing pedestrian routes alongside the running watercourse which in some areas are underutilised and could be upgraded to improve the vibrancy of the area and create safer and seamless connections.



**Area Strategy**

**Objective 1: Deliver a Civic Heart and Unified Cultural Experience**

This area **enhances the setting of Wellingborough's key cultural anchors**, specifically the Museum and Castle Theatre, by integrating them into a **high-quality green environment**.

By **improving the public realm** around these assets, it creates a **unified 'experience-led' destination** that complements the primary civic square and provides social space for all generations.

**Objective 2: Coordinate 'Big and Small' Strategic Connectivity**

This intervention delivers 'Big' strategic connections by **linking the town centre to wider regional green infrastructure** and active travel routes.

It also focuses on **'Small' local connectivity through a network of permeable 'Nature Walks'** and improved pedestrian links that lead users seamlessly between the urban areas to greenspace and blue infrastructure e.g. Swanspool Brook.

**Objective 3: Harness Heritage and Repurpose 'Tradable' Assets**

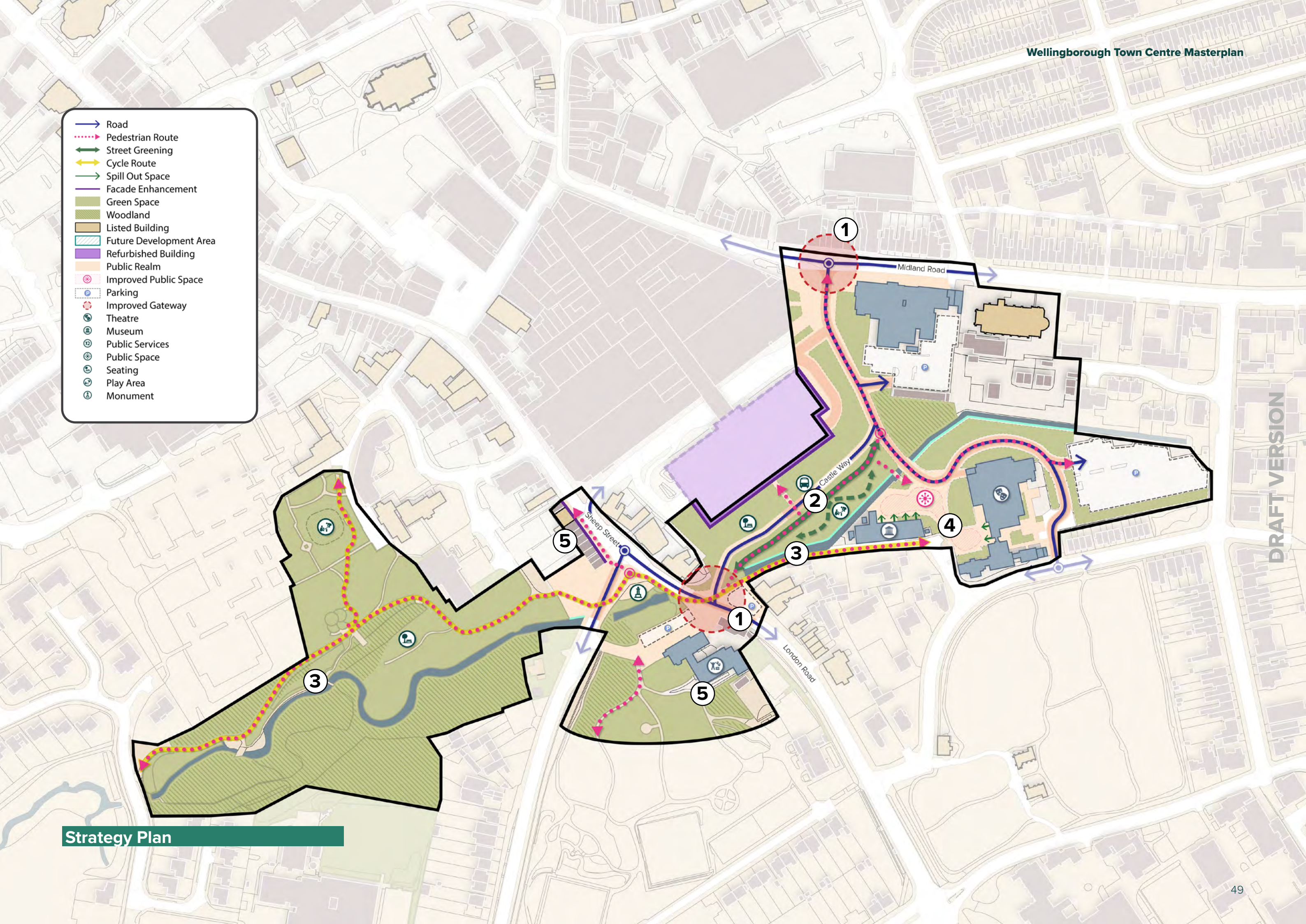
By removing infrastructure barriers and re-imagining the watercourse corridor (Reclaiming the Brook), the masterplan **creates a more cohesive townscape** that aims to respect Wellingborough's historic grain.

**List Of Projects**

Key Project Opportunities	Project Description	Timescales	Place Objectives
<b>1. Town Centre Gateways:</b>	Improve pedestrian crossings and public realm areas at Midland Road, Doddington Road, London Rd, and Sheep St to improve pedestrian safety, public realm quality and create an improved gateway area to the town centre and connection area along Swanspool Brook connecting the cultural assets to greenspaces.	Medium-term	
<b>2. Castle Way Improvements</b>	Undertake traffic impact study to consider the viability to reduce or remove vehicular traffic to create a green pedestrian corridor; enhance lighting and create a new pedestrian crossing to create a safer connection between the theatre, museum, and multi-storey car park.	Medium-term	
<b>3. Swanspool Brook &amp; Nature Walks</b>	Enhance the green edges of Castle Way along the northern edge of Swanspool Brook walk with 'play on the way' provision and seating areas which connect to the new masterplan for the cultural assets, and beyond to greenspaces to the west including Croyland Gardens.	<b>Quick Win</b>	
<b>4. Cultural Asset Masterplan</b>	Masterplan the public realm surrounding the Theatre and Museum to enhance pedestrian connectivity between the Midland Road gateway, the theatre parking, and the revitalised greenspace along Swanspool Brook. Provide new seating and landscaping at the entrances of both buildings, transforming the area into a cohesive 'entrance plaza'. Consider an improved food and beverage offer within this area e.g. as part of cultural assets offer. Improve the existing Theatre facade with feature light-based artwork to ensure the environment remains vibrant and safe after dark.	Medium-Longer term	
<b>5. Building Revitalisation</b>	Repurpose existing buildings for local services; incentivise the restoration and reopening of traditional pubs along London Road and Sheep Street.	Medium-term	

**Intervention Area 03: Quick Wins Opportunities and Delivery at a Glance**

- **The Big Move:** Creating a unified Culture Plaza that integrates the Theatre and Museum into a continuous green landscape along the Brook and to Croyland Gardens.
- **Quick Win:** Feature lighting, wayfinding, artwork and 'Play on the Way' installations to make the Swanspool Brook walk safe and family-friendly today.
- **Blue-Green Catalyst:** 'Reclaiming the Brook' as a primary nature walk that better connects the urban core to the wider greenspaces.
- **Strategic Connectivity:** Redesigning Town Centre Gateways at Midland and London Road to prioritise pedestrians over vehicles.
- **Heritage and Leisure:** Supporting the restoration of historic pubs and cultural assets to create a more 'experience-led' destination and support night-life.
- **Environmental Quality:** Reducing 'infrastructure barriers' by minimising impact of road infrastructure and adding integrated seating and landscaping.



**Strategy Plan**

Artist Impression Of Cultural Masterplan At Castle Theatre And Museum

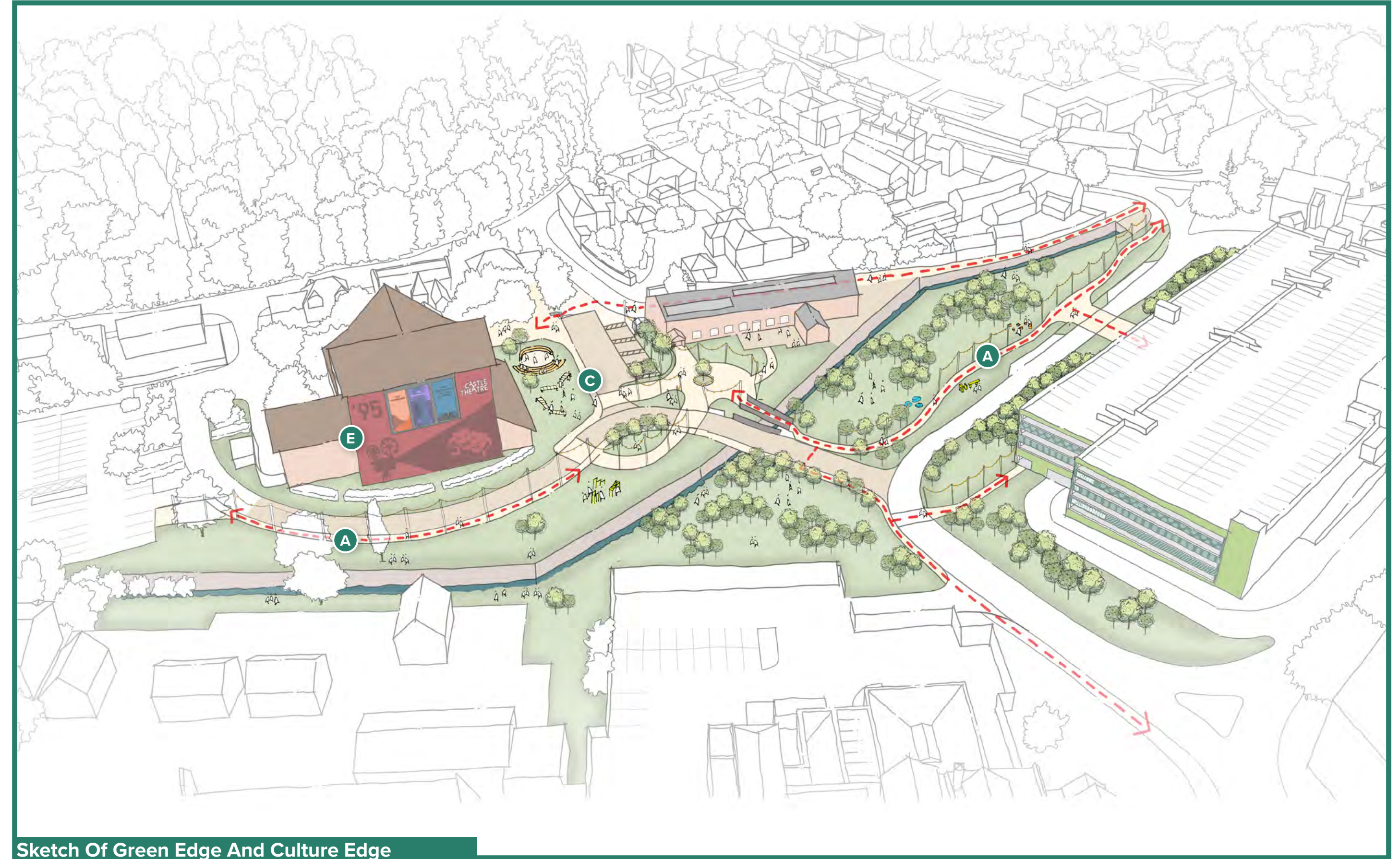


Theatre And Museum Concept

This project reimagines the public realm surrounding the Castle Theatre and Wellingborough Museum to create a cohesive, high-quality 'Entrance Plaza'.

- A** Improved pedestrian links between the Midland Road gateway, theatre parking, and the revitalised Swanspool Brook greenspace.
- B** New surface treatments and improved connections between key assets to create a more open and unified public realm.
- C** Introduce integrated seating, wayfinding and landscaping to transform fragmented areas into a unified social destination.
- D** Provide an expanded food and beverage presence, leveraging the cultural assets to drive dwell time.
- E** Upgrades to the Theatre facade with feature light-based artwork, improving aesthetic appeal and natural surveillance after dark.

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Sketch Of Green Edge And Culture Edge

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04.

# The New Town Centre

# Neighbourhood

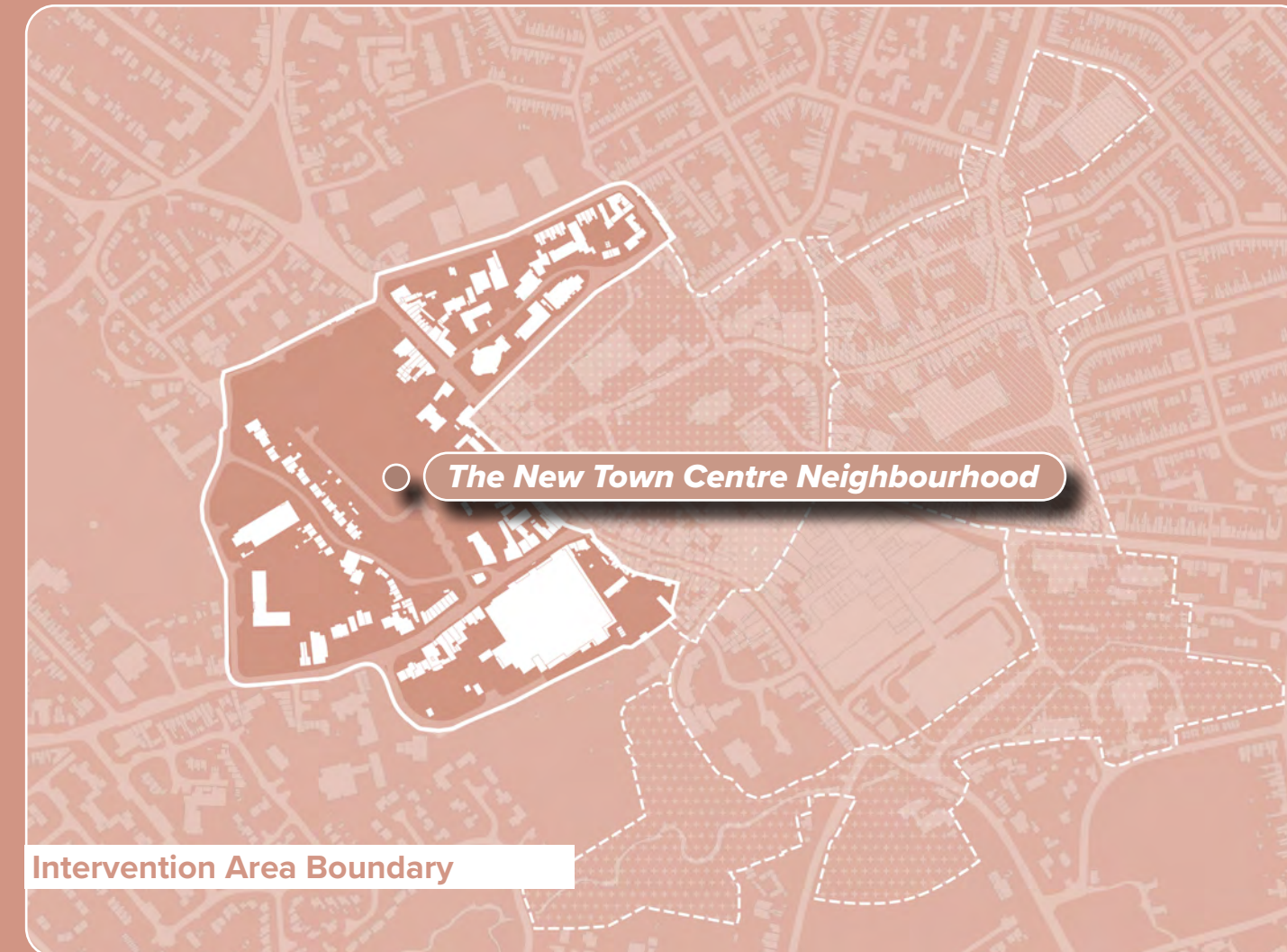
## Vision Alignment

These areas will support Wellingborough's new and improved town centre with residential infill and gateway improvements:

- 1 Support existing housing policy and site allocations to repair the urban grain through sensitive residential infill and distinctive high-quality architecture
- 2 Transform underutilised gap (and 'tradable') sites and service areas into well-defined streets that screen 'back-of-house' functions and enhance the historic setting
- 3 Deliver a high-quality new town centre neighbourhood equipped with local amenities, play spaces, and green links that support a growing local population

### KEY USES

- Residential
- Amenity Spaces
- Retail
- Green Spaces
- Parking



Intervention Area Boundary

## Existing Context

### Car Dominance:

High Street currently functions as a car-dominated barrier. Integrating strategic crossings and pedestrian-first infrastructure would 'soften' these corridors, improving permeability and the overall walking experience.

### Architecture:

High-quality and characterful architecture does exist within the town, however, is often overshadowed by large poor quality buildings, unoccupied and therefore poorly maintained or lacking the public realm necessary for them to be adequately appreciated. In particular there are two mews to High St which could be improved.

### Poor Pedestrian Experience:

Car dominance has significantly diminished the pedestrian experience, with much of the town centre frequently congested and a poor provision of pedestrian-only spaces. Accordingly most footpaths are relatively narrow pavements along busy roads with no barriers between them and the road.

### Gateway Blockers Between Areas:

Inactive frontages, poor quality buildings and vacant spaces are common along key gateways into new areas and consequently discourage movement between different parts of town. In particular access points for parking have left partially demolished façades which discourage movement.

### Safety Concerns:

The presence of inactive frontages, blank façades, urban voids and unoccupied frontages has resulted in areas that are poorly observed and can often generate safety concerns. In some areas this has resulted in cases of antisocial behaviour which adds to the concerns for safety.

### Urban Voids:

The majority of the area is derelict and accordingly creates an unpleasant environment which bleeds into the surrounding area. The underutilised land could be developed to have a transformational affect on the surrounding area.

### Parking Oversupply:

The average usage of the Jacksons Lane car park hovers at approximately 25% suggesting there is a major oversupply of parking. This has produced an expansive unobserved hard landscape which is unpleasant to visit and often can feel unsafe.



Access to Car Park via High St



Access to site via Oxford Street



Wellingborough Job Centre



Jacksons Lane Car Park



Parking behind High Street

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Area Strategy

Objective 1: Deliver a Civic Heart and Unified Cultural Experience

The creation of a 'new urban quarter' that is distinctive and vibrant will transform an underutilised brownfield site into a high-quality destination that extends the town's social fabric. **Active frontages** along the High Street will add life and interest to the public realm, ensuring the route toward the civic heart feels safe and animated.

Objective 2: Coordinate 'Big and Small' Strategic Connectivity

A new neighbourhood at the town's northern edge, will encourage more **sustainable 'small-scale' pedestrian movements** between the new residential quarter and the other town centre areas.

Objective 3: Harness Heritage and Repurpose 'Tradable' Assets

An emphasis on high-quality architecture which enhances the historic environment, and respect **Wellingborough's established character**. This 'gap site' strategy will both **repair the urban fabric**, reduce a 'run down' part of the town centre, filling a negative void in the townscape without expanding the town's footprint.

Objective 4: Empower an Integrated Mixed-Use Economy

By introducing new housing to the area this site is a primary catalyst for **'town centre living'**. Increasing the resident population which directly **supports the vitality and viability of local businesses** through consistent daytime and evening footfall.

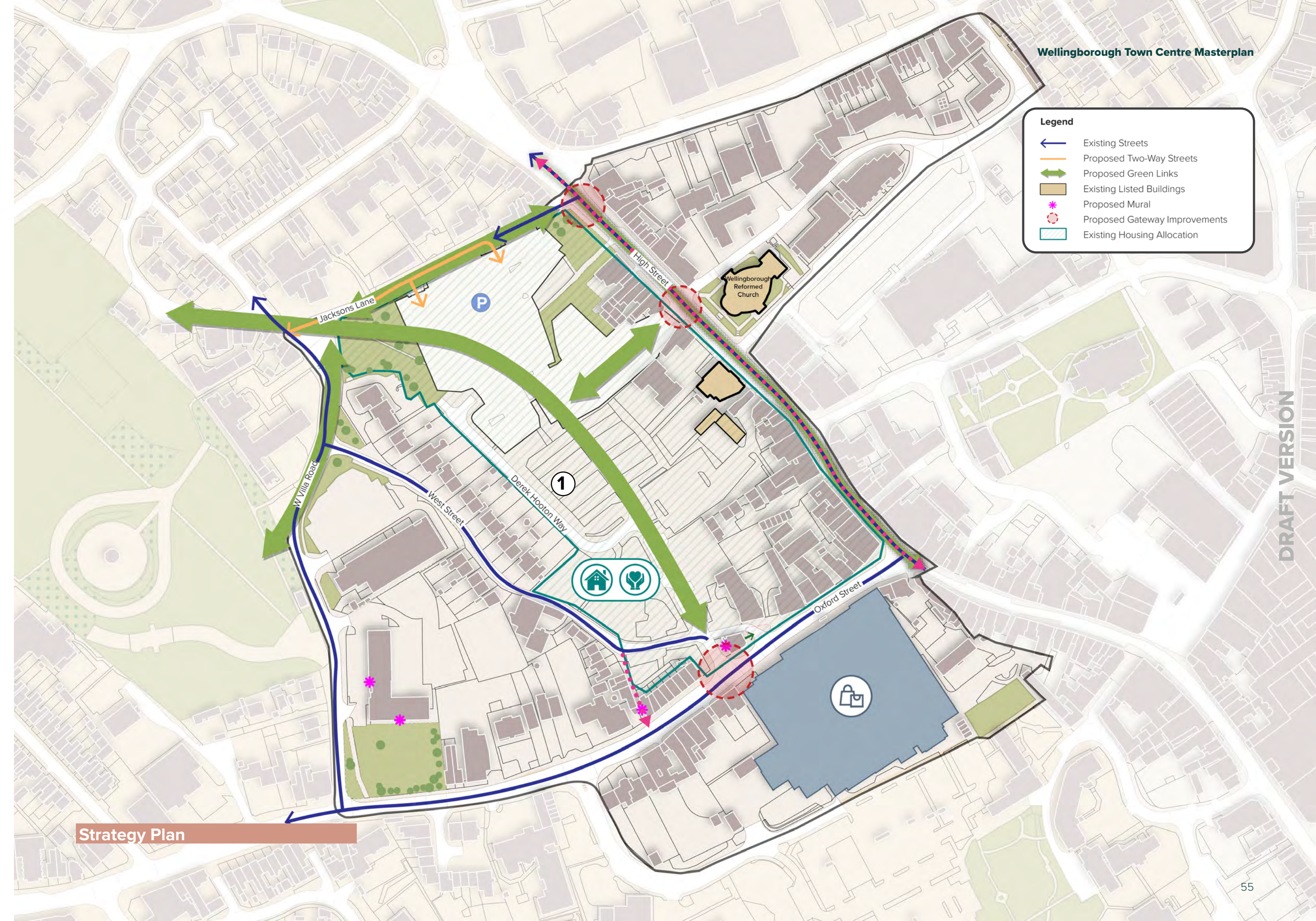
List Of Projects

Key Project Opportunities	Project Description	Timescales	Place Objectives
1. New Town Centre Neighbourhood - aligned with Local Development Plan with TC 9	<p>The council will be engaging with developers to consider a cohesive development of the site in line with the following policy guidance as per 'Policy TC 9 for High Street/Jacksons Lane'. Detailed below:</p> <p><i>The site as identified to be redeveloped for a predominantly residential scheme.</i></p> <p><i>Proposals should include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heritage Impact Assessment which will be used to inform the Masterplan for the site;</li> <li>Active frontage along the High Street;</li> <li>Car parking for general public use;</li> <li>Safeguarding of suitable access for the maintenance of water supply and foul drainage infrastructure; and</li> <li>A relatively small proportion of other town centre uses.</li> </ul>	Long-term	
2. Expansion of Green Networks	Expansion of green networks from Basset's Close towards the town centre, including new green spaces, street planting and the upgrading of existing green spaces to be well-overlooked, biodiverse and equipped with locally responsive amenities.	Quick Win	

Intervention Area 04:

Quick Wins Opportunities and Delivery at a Glance

- The Big Move:** Transforming currently vacant land into a new town centre neighbourhood, complete with a range of amenities for the local community.
- Quick Win:** Expansion and improvement to existing green corridors and spaces, including Basset's Close, increasing the desirability of the area.
- Area's Anchor Project:** New urban living injecting residences directly into the town centre to use local businesses.
- Heritage Focus:** Ensuring new development consider the historic environment pattern of the town centre.
- Connectivity:** Improved access to Jacksons Lane Car Park with urban design intervention to make the gateway more desirable park up.
- Future Investment:** Attracting new residents to the town will increase demand for local businesses, attracting local investment.



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**05.**  
**The Eastern Gateway**

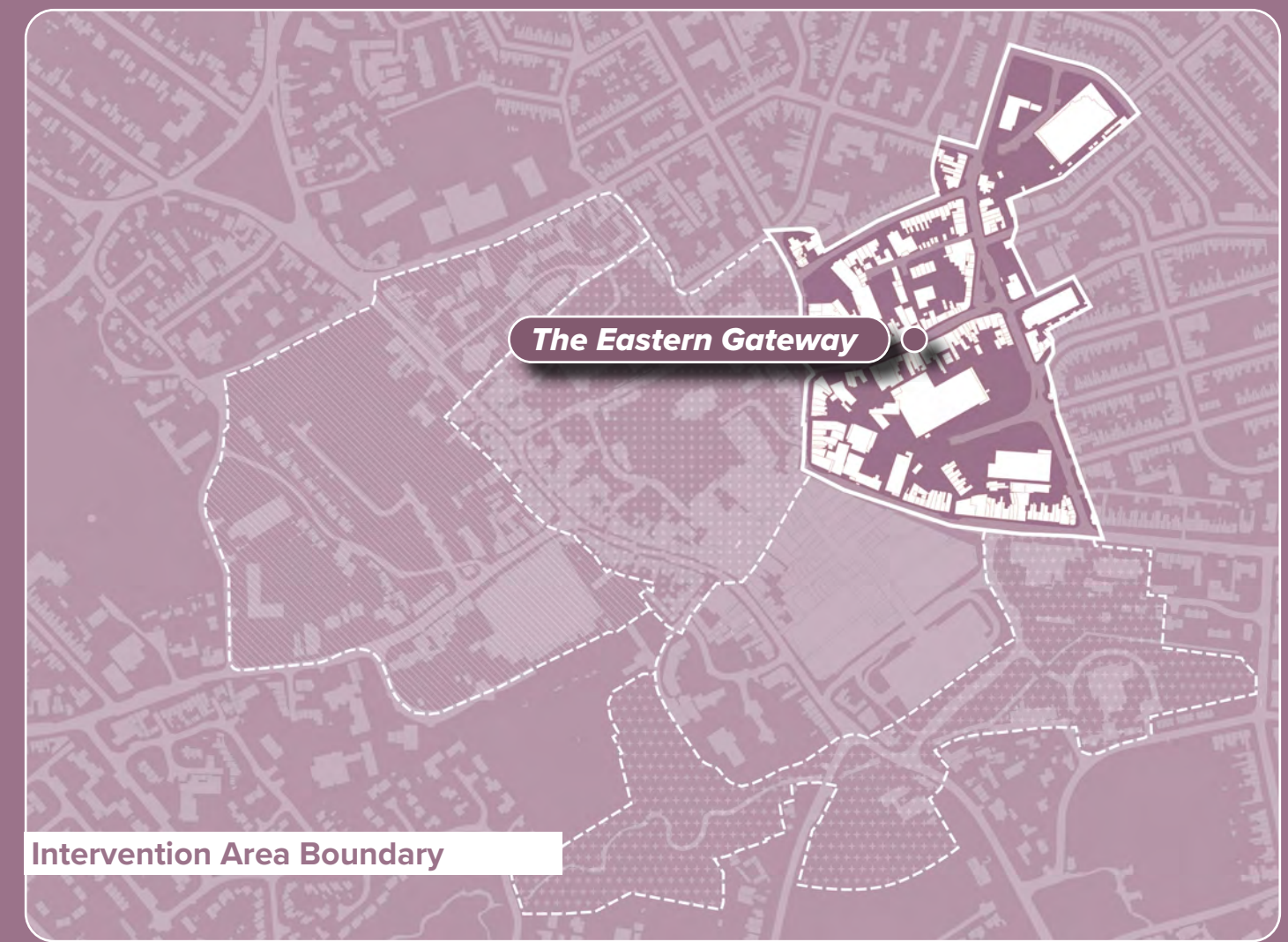
**Vision Alignment**

These areas will support Wellingborough's new and improved town centre with residential infill and gateway improvements:

- 1 Support existing housing policy and site allocations to repair the urban grain through sensitive residential infill and distinctive high-quality architecture
- 2 Transform underutilised gap (and "tradable") sites and service areas into well-defined streets that screen 'back-of-house' functions and enhance the historic setting
- 3 Improve key streets with new shop frontages, greening and surface treatments to create an improved pedestrian environment

**KEY USES**

Residential	Amenity Spaces	Retail
Green Spaces	Parking	



Intervention Area Boundary

**Existing Context**

**Car Dominance:**  
Characterful and historic streets are currently car dominated and there is little room for pedestrian movement or spill-out-spaces. This is particularly prevalent along Market St and Cambridge St which would benefit from some on-street seating for local food establishments.

**Inactive Frontages:**  
Currently there are some inactive areas due to a mix of blank and vacant frontages which dissuade circulation. This is particularly prevalent along the Swansgate Shopping Centre & along Victoria Road.

**Architecture:**  
High-quality and characterful architecture does exist within the town, however, is often overshadowed by large poor quality buildings, and car dominated streets which means there are few opportunities to observe and dwell around high-quality assets.

**Poor Pedestrian Experience:**  
Car dominance has significantly diminished the pedestrian experience, with much of the town centre frequently congested and a poor provision of pedestrian-only spaces. Accordingly most footpaths are relatively narrow pavements along busy roads with no barriers between them and the road.

**Safety Concerns:**  
The presence of inactive frontages, blank façades, urban voids and unoccupied frontages has resulted in areas that are poorly observed and can often generate safety concerns. In some areas this has resulted in cases of antisocial behaviour which adds to the concerns for safety.

**Low-Quality Shopfronts:**  
Despite the existence of a shopfront design guide & associated fund to enable shopfront investment (now exhausted) newer businesses have introduced low quality shopfront advertisements which detract from the quality and character of the High Street.

**Disconnected Assets:**  
High-quality assets such as the library and leisure centre often feel disconnected due to the car dominance of the town centre. As a result residents are more likely to drive to these assets rather than walk/cycle adding to congestion issues and reducing high-street quality.

**Parking Supply & Negotiation:**  
Currently the Matalan & Aldi, larger retailers on Victoria Road, have large parking provisions but dissuade usage due to the levy of fines to those using the provision. The parking provision could be negotiated to be public outside of operating hours or parking times extended to enable visitors to visit the town centre whilst also visiting the respective retailers.

**Poor Quality Gateways:**  
The current gateways into the town centre are currently low-quality and largely vacant. As a result visiting the town centre can often be more of a psychological blocker rather than a physical one. Improving these gateways could attract more visitors to the town centre.

**Underutilised Land & Assets:**  
Within the town centre there exists many vacant buildings and undeveloped land which presents opportunities to implement new housing and attract additional residents to the town, increasing natural footfall to existing businesses. In particular there are some existing heritage buildings which could be converted into residential or mixed-use developments.



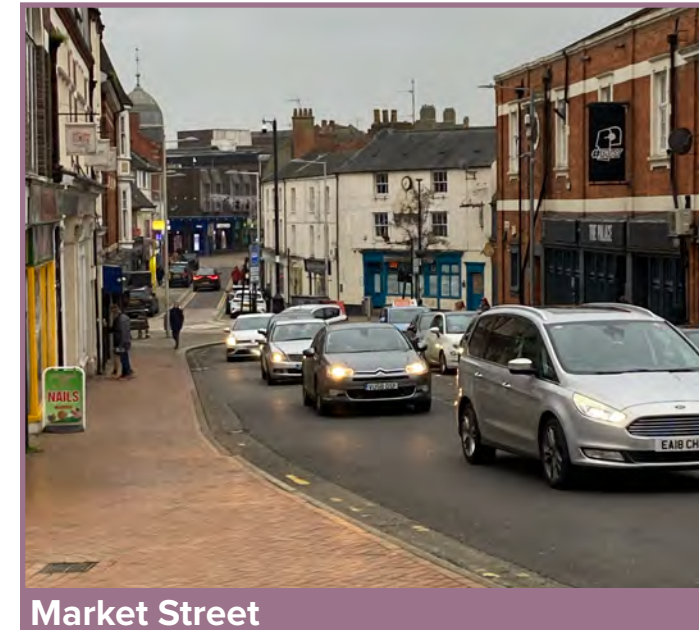
Existing Gateway (Park Road)



Existing Gateway to Cambridge Street



Car Park & Large Low Quality Building



Market Street



Low-Quality Shopfronts

Area Strategy

Objective 1: Deliver a Civic Heart and Unified Cultural Experience

Maximising the potential of the diverse mix of food and beverage available on Cambridge Street by improving the public realm to enable **spill-out spaces** into the street where locals and visitors alike will go to dine in a **street rich in architecture and character**.

Objective 2: Coordinate 'Big and Small' Strategic Connectivity

Improve the pedestrian connectivity to key assets within the town centre through **wider pavements, street planting and active frontage**. With 'big connectivity' being supplied by a consolidated **supply of public parking** which already exists but is often underutilised.

Objective 3: Harness Heritage and Repurpose 'Tradable' Assets

**Restoration of the High Street** through the enforcement of by replacing current low-quality frontages with **characterful signage** and shopfront treatments which emulate the **historic nature of the town**.

Objective 4: Empower an Integrated Mixed-Use Economy

By introducing **new housing alongside a mix of other uses**, diversify the local economy whilst **increasing the natural footfall**.

Further, the 'restaurant quarter' would create an **anchor location** which residents and visitor **want to visit**. By doing so the night-time economy could be improved and capitalised on by other similar industries.

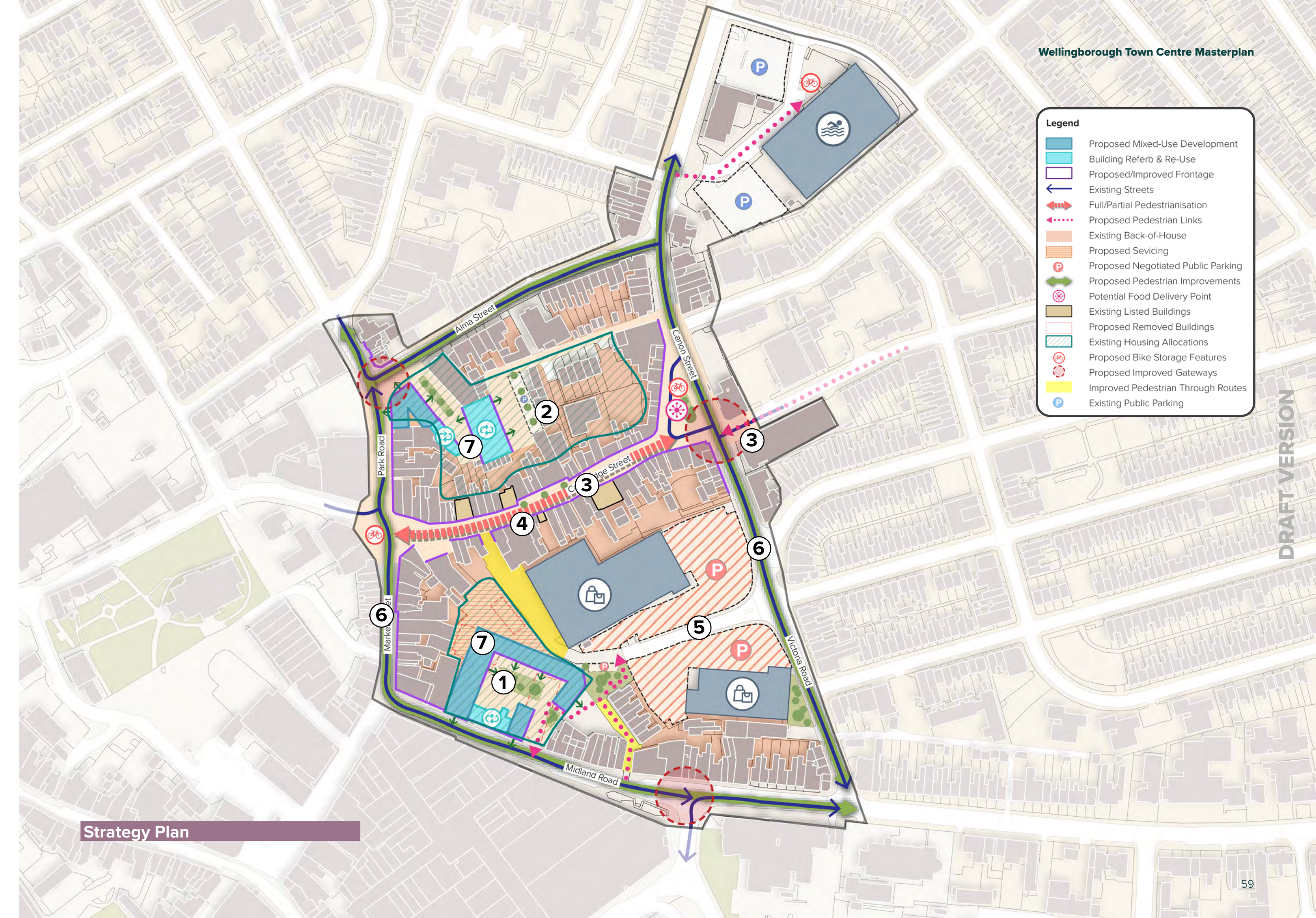
List Of Projects

Key Project Opportunities	Project Description	Timescales	Place Objectives
<b>1. Policy TC8 Compliance</b> <small>(Former Post Office Sorting Depot/BT Exchange, Midland Road)</small>	<i>'The site should be comprehensively redeveloped for mixed uses to include: new retail units on the ground floor with residential above, retention of the former Post Office sorting depot façade; and safeguarding access to existing utilities.'</i>	Long-term	
<b>2. Policy TC 10 Compliance</b> <small>(Alma Street/Cambridge Street)</small>	<i>'Proposals for the site should include: high quality building with an active frontage on the corner of Alma Street, predominately residential units on the remaining backland area; and safeguarding access to existing utilities.'</i>	Long-term	
<b>3. Develop the "Restaurant Quarter"</b>	Capitalise on the existing success of Cambridge Street as a food and beverage destination by improving the pedestrian environment to enable on-street spill-out spaces which local enterprise could use to create activity within the area.	Short-term	
<b>4. Shopfront Improvements</b>	Enforcement and if possible grant funding of the existing shopfront design guide along Market and Cambridge Street to emphasise the existing character of Wellingborough and improve the quality of the public realm.	<b>Quick Win</b>	
<b>5. Negotiate Parking Provision</b>	Negotiation with existing larger retailers on Victoria Road, such as Matalan and Aldi, to enable public parking in the existing car parks with extended hours or outside of operating hours.	<b>Quick Win</b>	
<b>6. Improve Active Travel Infrastructure</b>	Improve access to key assets by introducing pedestrian improvements to currently car-dominated streets and include secure and safe bicycle parking provisions in key locations.	Short-medium-term	
<b>7. Mixed-Use Infill</b>	Introduce new mixed-use infill which renovates existing high-quality assets into new uses, replaces low-quality buildings and develops vacant land to improve the vitality of the area with new housing where possible.	Long-term	

Intervention Area 04:

Quick Wins Opportunities and Delivery at a Glance

- **The Big Move:** Redevelop the area to remove or refurbish poor-quality buildings and replace them with a diverse mix of uses.
- **Quick Win:** Improvements to active travel between key assets and provision of public parking to the east of town.
- **Area's Anchor Project:** Enhancing and supporting the creation of a distinct 'Restaurant Quarter' which will attract visitors seeking a vibrant area to dine out.
- **Heritage Focus:** Restoration of the historic high street with spill-out spaces enabling people to dwell in a character street with rich architecture.
- **Connectivity:** Improved access for both drivers and pedestrians travelling through the town centre.
- **Future Investment:** New investment into area through a mix of new housing and active public realm which will encourage investment into local business.



Strategy Plan



**Streetscape Improvements - Market Street**

There are key streets within this area that have been identified as an areas for improvements within the masterplan. These include Market Street and Cambridge Street. Key moves could include the following:

- A** Series of shopfront improvements that follow the existing town shopfront design guidance
- B** Surface treatment that prioritise pedestrians, or alternatively consider options for further pedestrianised areas
- C** Outdoor seating for food and beverage businesses
- D** Improving and extending greening and planting to the area to help prevent illegal parking and to make the streets more vibrant and green



**Streetscape Improvements - Cambridge Street**

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